

FEEDBACK FOR APPLICANTS

OVERVIEW

The Australian Government continues its commitment to ensure there is a reduction in the incidence of preventable mortality and morbidity, including through national public health initiatives, promotion of healthy lifestyles and approaches covering disease prevention, health screening and palliative care.

The Early Childhood Nutrition grant opportunity falls under the Public Health and Chronic Disease Program. Funding is provided through this program to support implementation activities aiming to improve the nutrition of children aged 0 to 5 years of age to support optimal health, development and reduce the risk of developing diet related chronic conditions and obesity. The grant opportunity's outcomes will improve eating patterns for children aged 0 to 5 years through increased adherence to the recommendations in the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Applications were assessed on their merits and comparatively against other applications based on:

- how well they met the assessment criteria
- how they compared to other applications
- whether they demonstrated value with relevant money
- how they proposed to meet program objectives and outcomes.

40 applications received through this grant opportunity met eligibility requirements as identified under the grant opportunity guidelines.

Individual assessment of each application was undertaken and assessors allocated scores using the 5 point numerical scale (excellent, good, average, poor and does not meet criterion at all).

All criterion were considered to be of equal importance and no weighting was used.

ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

Strong applications provided clear and concise evidence against the selection criteria demonstrating the organisation's ability to achieve project objectives to the highest standard.

Criterion 1 - Contribution to Grant Opportunity Objectives and Outcomes

Strong responses:

- used strong evidence to provide a clear description of how activities will appropriately reach and target the identified population and lead to changes in dietary habits.
- described grant activities that supported improved nutrition for children 0-5 years of age with a large net benefit, commensurate to funding requested.
- demonstrated a clear ability to meet key performance indicators to a high degree.
- described timelines and key dates that provide a clear picture of activities and outputs, with a strong application demonstrating benefit to the community with a short lead time.
- provided specific and detailed information on how the activity will be evaluated to ensure understanding of how the benefit of the grant will be captured and reported.

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Weaker responses:

- did not provide sufficient detail or evidence on grant activities and how they were expected to contribute to the objectives and outcomes of the grant opportunity.
- provided a workplan that lacked detail on the proposed activities, their timeframes, outputs, key performance indicators and staffing requirements.
- provided incomplete budgets or budgets with inaccuracies and errors.

Criterion 2 – Address a Specific Need

Strong responses:

- used high quality evidence to demonstrate a strong need or gap being addressed in an identified population.
- outlined specific and detailed information on the mechanisms for dissemination of nutrition information in a manner that would be understood and utilised by the intended audience.
- provided evidence of understanding current resources and activities available to show how gaps would be addressed.
- Demonstrated that activities would support equity such as by reaching at-risk populations including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, low socio-economic status populations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations.

Weaker responses:

- lacked sufficient high quality evidence and appropriate referencing to demonstrate a specific need.
- did not fully demonstrate with appropriate evidence that existing resources or activities were not already available.

Criterion 3 – Capacity and Capability to Deliver the Proposed Grant Activity

Strong responses:

- demonstrated organisational experience in undertaking activities in children's nutrition, with regard given to experience at a national level.
- provided evidence of exceptional staff experience and how expertise would be utilised to achieve the objectives of the grant opportunity. Particularly, identification of highly qualified and experienced staff members with qualifications and accreditation in nutrition and/or dietetics fields.
- provided evidence of well-structured risk management policies and frameworks within the organisation.
- provided risk management plans that demonstrated excellent understanding of well-considered risks specific to the project and practical mitigation strategies to minimise potential risks.
- Demonstrated the organisation's long history of effective and productive relationships with key stakeholders for nutrition focused activities, including previous history using Government grant funding for successful activities.

Weaker responses:

- demonstrated limited experience on similar projects and limited demonstrated results for improving children's nutrition.
- provided insufficient detail on organisational capacity and experience to provide reassurance that grant activities could be achieved on time, within budget and to a high degree.

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Value for money assessments

Strong responses:

- clearly demonstrated value for money through appropriate costings and inclusion of all relevant project costs.
- provided a clear and detailed budget that was balanced appropriately between staffing and tangible project outcomes.
- budget was appropriately commensurate to the anticipated benefit to children's nutrition including number of children serviced and addressing a specific need.
- described activities provided benefits to the community within the grant period in a short lead time, as well as provided resources, assets and other materials able to be used freely by the Department to further support nutrition activities following the grant period.
- provided information on sustainability of grant activities, including reassurance that future funding would not be relied upon following the grant period.