**Grant Opportunity Guidelines now out for consultation**

Remote Jobs and Economic Development program

To help design the new [Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program](https://www.niaa.gov.au/our-work/employment-and-economic-development/remote-jobs-and-economic-development-program), the Australian Government is seeking feedback on how the program should work.

A common way to provide funding for a program is through a grant. All grant opportunities need to have Grant Opportunity Guidelines (GOGs) developed. GOGs are the documents which provide potential applicants with all the information required to understand the purpose of a grant opportunity and how to make an application.

We want your feedback on the draft RJED program GOGs which have now been released for public consultation. This is the next step in working in partnership to design the program.

Feedback from the [First Nations Reference Group](https://www.niaa.gov.au/our-work/employment-and-economic-development/remote-jobs-and-economic-development-program#first-nations-reference-group), community consultations, and findings from existing evidence on remote employment have informed elements of the draft GOGs. Tell us where you think the draft GOGs may limit opportunities or wouldn’t meet the needs of community.

The design of the RJED program and GOGs is not yet final. The feedback we receive from you, together with what we’ve already heard, will feed into designing a successful program that helps income support recipients in remote Australia move into paid employment.

This will be done by funding organisations to create new jobs that pay wages and entitlements, and deliver programs and services that are a priority for local communities. These jobs will provide employees with relevant work experience and skills to create a sustainable local workforce.

Let us know what you think

We want to hear from potential eligible employers and communities that may want to apply for RJED program funding to create jobs for people living in remote Australia.

Your feedback will be critical to the success of this program.

We’d like your feedback on these specific elements of the GOGs:

* Section 3: Grants amount and grant period, including indicative regional allocations
* Section 4: Eligibility criteria (excluding 4.4 Incorporation requirements, a mandatory condition for all Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) grants agreements)
* Section 5: Eligible grant activities
* Section 6: The assessment criteria
* Section 7: How to apply
* Section 8: The grant selection process (excluding 8.2 Indigenous Preferencing Policy, as applying this policy is mandatory for all IAS grants agreements)
* Section 10: Successful grant applications
* Section 12: How we monitor your grant activity
* Section 15: Glossary

As part of this process, we want to understand what barriers there may be for employers to apply for a grant. We are especially keen to know:

* How do we ensure local community organisations are able to access this grant opportunity to create local jobs to meet community needs?
* How can community advice be considered in the assessment process? Are there existing models that work?
* How can we ensure successful grant applicants are only employing eligible Community Development Program (CDP) participants?
* How can we fairly allocate the funding across all current CDP regions?
* What would be helpful for applicants as part of the grants application process?
* How can smaller organisations be supported to apply?
* What can we do to streamline an assessment process?

Please provide your feedback by sending an email to remote.jobs@niaa.gov.au before 31 July 2024.

How will the grants process work?

It is expected there will be multiple grant rounds throughout the three year period for potential employers to apply for funding to create a job. The first round is expected to open in September 2024 on [GrantConnect](http://www.grants.gov.au/).

The draft GOGs propose that the RJED program will be an open competitive process. This means that the NIAA will assess applications against the eligibility criteria, it will then compare eligible applications against other applications from the same region.

The NIAA will advise the decision maker on each application’s ranking and merits.

What is the proposed eligibility criteria?

The draft GOGs propose that eligible applicants are employers who can:

* demonstrate that the job can be created
* employ a Community Development Program (CDP) participant who resides in a CDP region
* demonstrate community support for the grant activity where it will be delivered
* demonstrate they can cover any costs associated with creating the new job that is outside of the RJED program.

Applicants must also have an Australian Business Number (ABN), be registered for the purposes of GST, have an account with an Australian financial institution and be an eligible entity, as proposed in the draft GOGs (Section 4).

Has the program design already been decided?

The design of the RJED program incorporates feedback from community and stakeholder consultations, and input from the FNRG. Community consultations, which began in April 2024, have asked key questions around the proposed eligibility criteria and questions related to the GOGs through the [discussion paper](https://www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/remote-jobs-and-economic-development-program-discussion-paper), including who should be eligible and what jobs the program should fund.

The FNRG have provided feedback that a competitive grant process for the RJED program could enable more equitable outcomes for all regions. This is because open competitive processes enable the Government to test the market and provide a greater opportunity to choose the best applicants, which increases the chance of delivering better outcomes for job seekers. You can [read a summary](https://www.niaa.gov.au/resource-centre/options-and-issues-considered-first-nations-reference-group-remote-jobs-and-economic-development) of the options and issues FNRG considered in the program design to inform the draft GOGs.

Next steps

We will publish a report summarising what we heard from community consultations on our website later this year.

The public feedback we are currently seeking on the draft GOGs will help us finalise their design in partnership before the first grant round is expected to open in September 2024.

Further information will be made available on the RJED program and grants process.

More information

For questions on the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for the RJED program or to provide feedback, email remote.jobs@niaa.gov.au

For more information on RJED program consultations, please visit [niaa.gov.au/rjed-consultations](http://www.niaa.gov.au/rjed-consultations)

You can also speak to an NIAA office in your local area, find the nearest office to you at [niaa.gov.au/about-niaa/contact-us/regional-offices-around-australia](http://www.niaa.gov.au/about-niaa/contact-us/regional-offices-around-australia)