



Australian Government
National Indigenous
Australians Agency



NIAA

Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Indigenous Local Employment Fund (ILEF)

This is a new grant opportunity under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. The ILEF aims to respond to short term, one-off funding proposals that help overcome obstacles for Indigenous job seekers in accessing local employment opportunities and provide pathways into short term labour markets, particularly where COVID-19 has had a significant impact on job opportunities. ILEF funding may be used to complement but not duplicate existing government funding.

Eligibility for ILEF funding

To be eligible to apply for grant funding under the ILEF opportunity you must:

- contact and discuss your initial proposal with the local NIAA Regional Office and then if the proposal is considered to be appropriate, be invited by the NIAA to apply for funding to address an identified need under the ILEF;
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) (exemptions may apply in special cases);
- where relevant, be registered for the purposes of GST;
- if an individual, be a permanent resident of Australia; and
- have an account with an Australian financial institution.

AND

- be one of the following entity types:
- an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act);
- a company incorporated in Australia under the *Corporations Act 2001*;
- Incorporated Associations (incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc' in their legal name);
- Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under state/territory legislation, commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name);
- Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or state/territory legislation including public benevolent institutions, churches and universities;
- an Australian local government body;

- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust¹;
- a partnership;
- a joint (consortia) application with a lead organisation that satisfies the entity type; or
- an individual with an ABN.

Costs supported by the ILEF

Costs should be tailored to help address the barriers facing Indigenous job seekers and meet their particular needs. We encourage innovative solutions to help overcome obstacles facing job seekers and employers in COVID-19 affected labour markets, therefore other costs may be considered and are not limited to these examples, which include payments for:

- service providers to source and match job seekers into employment placements
- qualified mentors to motivate and support Indigenous participants
- qualified Indigenous or non-Indigenous facilitators/ coordinators to provide guidance to Indigenous work teams and cross cultural communication between stakeholders
- provision of training and upskilling for job seekers (including qualifications for a specific job, drivers' licence acquisition; personal and career development; life skills and money management)
- health and safety support for Indigenous job seekers, which may include mental well-being, nutrition awareness and costs associated with COVID-19 workplace plans
- transport, accommodation, catering or other practical support for Indigenous job seekers
- cultural competency training for your workplace; and
- small scale capital works and purchase of equipment, if the need is well demonstrated (for example, if the hire cost exceeds the purchase price).

Participants must identify as and Aboriginal or as a Torres Strait Islander or both. Those under the age of 18 are eligible if their parent/guardian provides consent.

Tailored Support

Support must be tailored for the needs of each job seeker (ILEF participant). Support should assist in determining the suitability of each ILEF participant for the specified job and industry sector, motivating and supporting each participant to take up job opportunities, arranging delivery of relevant training and supporting each participant to remain in employment for the duration of their contract. This will include appropriate mentoring, coaching and imparting work and life skills. Providers will work with Indigenous communities, facilitators and employers to ensure that job seekers are engaged in culturally safe workplaces, and have full understanding of their employment rights and obligations. Providers are encouraged to provide post-employment support to ILEF participants to assist them to take-up future job opportunities.

¹ A trust itself is not a legal entity and cannot enter into a grant agreement.

ILEF providers and locations

An ILEF provider will work with Indigenous communities, individuals, employers, local and government agencies to deliver support services to help get Indigenous job seekers into short term or ongoing employment. The support services to job seekers/ILEF participants and employers will be tailored to local circumstances and needs.

VTEC and TAEG providers or labour hire companies may be eligible to apply for the ILEF, if invited by the relevant NIAA Regional Office to submit a proposal.

Providers and activities can be located in remote, regional or urban metropolitan areas. We recognise that the services provided may have to be limited, suspended or delivered in a different way during this time. Our aim is to support organisations to continue to deliver services to Indigenous communities where feasible.

Above all, we want to ensure that services are delivered **safely** (both for service recipients and staff). In delivering services, it is important to ensure you follow the advice from Governments and health authorities and comply with any advice or direction given to ensure the health and safety of your staff, clients and community. The latest information on COVID-19, including measures to reduce the spread, are available at www.australia.gov.au.

If you are concerned about your ability to safely and effectively deliver services, please discuss with your Agreement Manager.

Applying for ILEF funding

There are two separate steps. Interested organisations should:

1. Contact and discuss their initial proposal with the NIAA Regional office in the locality where the project will take place. Some adjustments to the proposal may need to be agreed through this discussion.
2. If the proposal is eligible and funds are available, an organisation will be invited by the NIAA Regional Office to submit an application. The organisation will be provided with an application form.

Assessment of ILEF applications

Applications will be assessed by the NIAA according to the assessment process and criteria outlined in the Guidelines (refer Section 7, p21). The process is non-competitive, which means an application will be considered on its merits and priorities for the Agency and will not be compared to other applications.

Funding available and timeframes

The minimum amount per grant is \$5,000 (GST exclusive) and the maximum amount is \$250,000 (GST exclusive). Funding is available for activities from 24 May 2021 until 30 June 2022. You must complete your project by 31 December 2022.

Key contact for funding agreements

If your application is approved, your local NIAA Regional Office will notify you by a letter (a PDF sent by email), which will provide contact information to an Agreement Manager.

Payment schedule and advance payments

A suitable payment schedule will be negotiated with NIAA if your application is successful.

Advance payments may be allowed for items or services that require up front funding and where the need has been sufficiently demonstrated. Advance payments will be considered on a case by case basis.

Reporting and administrative obligations

Regular progress reporting will be part of your funding agreement with NIAA if your application is successful. The type of reporting required will depend on the nature of your project. Other administrative obligations may also be in place, particularly regarding retaining suitable evidence of expenditure.

Retrospective funding

Activities which have already commenced may not be funded retrospectively, however an organisation can apply for funding to provide additional supports to help to keep existing employees in the job, locality and or industry.

Insurance for employers

Employers (in each state and territory) must take out workers compensation insurance to cover themselves and their employees. For general information about workers compensation arrangements across Australia, visit the Safe Work Australia website:

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au>.

Information about insurance to protect a business is available at the Commonwealth Government's Business website at: <https://business.gov.au>.

Refer to clauses 98-101 on Insurance in the NIAA Head Agreement.

Wage subsidies

The ILEF does not fund wage subsidies for employees, but provides support funding to help provide incentives and overcome barriers for Indigenous job seekers to become employed and receive training. There is no set limit to the number of Indigenous participants that you can support, however you are encouraged to consult with employment service providers, Indigenous organisations and facilitators in planning and providing support and assistance to motivate and keep individual Indigenous participants and work teams engaged.

COVID-19

Employers must have a COVID-safe workplace plan in place.

Should employees become ill or show symptoms of COVID-19, they should follow all directions of their relevant state or territory health department. More information on managing COVID-19 directly is available on the Federal Department of Health's website.

All individual employee leave entitlements are a matter for the employer, under their relevant employment agreements.

If staff have exhausted their leave entitlements, they may be able to access other Government support available. For information, visit the Commonwealth Government's Services Australia website: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/jobseeker-payment.

Facilitating remote service delivery

To support providers to work and provide services remotely at this time, electronic signatures are

permitted for the Participant forms that are relevant for each activity. This will remain until providers are informed otherwise by NIAA.

Electronic signatures may include:

- Participants typing their name, pasting a digitised image of their physical signature, or signing a soft copy of the form with a stylus or finger on a touchscreen.
- The person specified as the contact person of a Provider typing their name, pasting a digitised image of their physical signature, or signing a soft copy of the form with a stylus or finger on a touchscreen.

Providers are not required to obtain and record the Participant's agreement to using an electronic signature.

Scans or photographs of physically signed documents would also be permissible. In the event that a provider cannot obtain a signature by these means, they should contact your NIAA Agreement Manager setting out the specific details of their request so we can seek legal advice.

Participation

If an organisation receives funding through ILEF but experiences decreased participation and/or referrals they should contact their NIAA Agreement Manager to discuss potential solutions and how the services or the scope of the ILEF Funding Agreement may be adjusted. We encourage organisations to be proactive and engage with us in exploring issues as they arise.

Feedback

ILEF participants will be invited to do a short survey about the activity they participated in and the support they received. This feedback will be useful for the NIAA in planning future employment activities. Participants are also encouraged to provide feedback to their supervisor/employer during and at the end of the employment and/or training activity.