

NSW Health

# Community Living Supports Program 2026

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22 August 2025

Grant Program Details											
Opening date and time	22/08/2025 12:00 PM										
Closing date and time	17/10/2025 12:00 PM										
Application outcome date	31/03/2026										
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applications)	<p>Initial Term: 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2031</p> <p>Options: 2 options for extensions of 5 years each to be exercised at the sole discretion of NSW Ministry of Health (the Ministry) depending on performance and Ministry priorities.</p>										
Evaluation timeframe (for successful applications)	Within initial term										
Decision-maker	Minister for Mental Health										
NSW Government Agency	NSW Ministry of Health – Mental Health Branch										
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive										
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	<p>The CLS pricing model is based on a block funding model.</p> <p>In 2025-26 the total funding for HASI/CLS is <b>\$86.5 million (excl. GST)</b> and this is the funding amount that will be used for the CLS year 1 2026-27 (plus FY 2026-27 indexation, if approved). The indexation rate is announced annually following Treasury's review and provided by the Ministry's Finance Branch once the final indexation rate is confirmed. Over the initial five-year term, the estimated total funding (excluding indexation) is \$432.7 million (excl GST).</p> <p>Individual grant amounts: variable by district and/or region.</p>										
Enquiries	<p>Kevin Lawless Procurement Advisor Procure Group E: CLS2026@procuregroup.com.au</p> <p>Enquiries may be submitted via Email or Smarty Grants.</p>										
Structure of these Grant Guidelines	<p>This Grant Guideline is made up of the following documents:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Attachment</th><th>Name</th><th>Purpose</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>This document</td><td>Grant Guidelines</td><td>Instructions and information relating to this Grant Opportunity.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Attachment A</td><td>CLS Service Model</td><td>Applicants must carefully review the CLS Service Model as it forms the core specification against which responses will be assessed</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Attachment	Name	Purpose	This document	Grant Guidelines	Instructions and information relating to this Grant Opportunity.	Attachment A	CLS Service Model	Applicants must carefully review the CLS Service Model as it forms the core specification against which responses will be assessed
Attachment	Name	Purpose									
This document	Grant Guidelines	Instructions and information relating to this Grant Opportunity.									
Attachment A	CLS Service Model	Applicants must carefully review the CLS Service Model as it forms the core specification against which responses will be assessed									

## Grant Program Details

		and services delivered under the contracts.
Attachment B	District Profiles	Each district has its own profile with local considerations, budgets and benchmarking requirements.
Attachment C1	Application Form	Applicants must complete all criteria in this form.
Attachment C2	Application Form – Per District	This form must be completed for each district being applied for. For applicants <b>applying for more than one district</b> , this will involve completing and submitting multiple versions of this form (one for each district). This form includes questions that are specific to the local context for each district.
Attachment D	Budget Template	Applicants must complete the budget template.
Attachment E	Long Form Grant Agreement Template	This is the proforma contract that applicants will enter into if selected as a preferred provider in a location. Generally, the Ministry will not consider changes to the standard terms to ensure consistency between all providers.
Attachment F	Standard Terms and Conditions	This Standard Terms and Conditions form part of the proforma contract.

Applicants should read all sections of these Guidelines, including all attachments and addenda, before applying.

# Contents

<b>Overview of grants program .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Overview of grants program.....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Overview .....	2
1.2 Purpose and objectives.....	5
1.3 Grant value.....	5
<b>Selection criteria .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2 Selection criteria.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Mandatory Requirements .....	8
Budget Requirement.....	8
2.2 Assessment criteria.....	9
2.3 Due Diligence.....	10
<b>Application process.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3 Application process.....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 How to apply .....	13
3.2 Support available to applicants .....	13
Applicant Briefing.....	13
3.3 Conditions of Application .....	14
Acknowledgement and Agreement.....	14
Acceptance of Terms.....	14
Rights of the Ministry of Health.....	15
No Legal Relationship .....	15
Confidentiality and Privacy.....	16
Costs and Liability .....	16
Probity 16	
<b>Assessment process.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4 Assessment process .....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Assessment of grant applications .....	18
4.2 Notification of application outcome.....	18
Feedback on applications [and appeal process] .....	18
4.3 Publication of grants information.....	19
<b>Successful grant applications.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5 Successful grant applications.....</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 Grant agreement.....	21
5.2 Grant payment.....	21
5.3 Unspent funds .....	21

5.4	Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements.....	22
5.5	Evaluation .....	22
<b>Additional information and resources .....</b>		<b>23</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Additional information and resources.....</b>	<b>24</b>
6.1	Complaint handling.....	24
6.2	Access to information.....	24
6.3	Ethical conduct .....	24
6.3.1	Conflict of interest management .....	24
6.3.2	Confidentiality .....	25

# 1

## Overview of grants program

# 1 Overview of grants program

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## 1.1 Overview

### Program Overview

The Community Living Supports (CLS) program provides community-based, psychosocial support to people with severe mental health conditions so that they can live independently in their communities. It is a holistic and culturally responsive service that builds on the strengths and aspirations of people with severe mental health conditions, working together to create and achieve meaningful goals and personal change for a fulfilling life within their communities.

The NSW Ministry of Health's (the Ministry) Mental Health Branch funds and administers the CLS program. CLS will be delivered by community managed organisations (CMOs) or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) in partnership with local health districts (districts).

The 2026 Open Grant Opportunity for the CLS program follows a comprehensive review of the service model and pricing structures which merged the existing Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) and CLS into a single program known as 'Community Living Supports' from 1 July 2026. The following sections provide further detail regarding the program's history, refreshed service model, operational context, program period, and how value for money will be assessed.

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### History of HASI and CLS

The CLS program has evolved over two decades to reflect contemporary service needs. An overview of the evolution of the program can be found at Page 29 of the CLS Service Model (**Attachment A**).

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### The Refreshed CLS Service Model

The 2026 CLS grant round introduces a reviewed and refreshed CLS Service Model that reflects the contemporary needs of people living with severe mental health conditions in NSW. The refreshed CLS Service Model will take effect from **1 July 2026**.

Key outcomes from the service model review are that:

- The HASI and CLS programs are merged into a single program known as 'Community Living Supports'.
- The model is tailored to target consumers with severe and complex mental health needs.
- The consumer journey remains evidence based and reflects a contemporary service that will build on the strengths and aspirations of eligible individuals.

The full CLS Service Model, including service stages, operational framework, expected deliverables, and partnership expectations, is provided in **Attachment A** to these Grant Guidelines.

Applicants must carefully review the CLS Service Model as it forms the core specification against which responses will be assessed.

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## Alignment with existing NSW Health priorities and strategies

CLS has strong links with existing NSW Health policies and strategies. A list of these can be found at Page 4 of the CLS Service Model (**Attachment A**).

Notably, providers of CLS must have clear strategies to ensure supports are appropriate for Aboriginal people and are consistent with the NSW Government's commitment to *the NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 and the NSW Implementation Plan for Closing the Gap*.

CLS service delivery will also need to align with broader NSW Health and Government strategies, including:

- NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027
- Joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plans specific to the local area.

Other recommended resources include:

- The Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia - Towards culturally inclusive service delivery.
- Trauma Informed Care Resources developed by the Agency for Clinical Innovation.

## Delivery across local health districts

The CLS program will be delivered by CMOs or ACCHOs in partnership with districts across NSW. Each district plays a key role in referral pathways, coordination of care and clinical interface. Integration with district services is a key component of the CLS Service Model. Mental health services are integrated when they provide coordinated care and support across clinical and community settings, which makes the service stronger and more sustainable.

Applicants should demonstrate their capacity to operate effectively within district boundaries and maintain cooperative relationships with district mental health services in their funded districts.

If applicants are only applying to provide services in **one district** in NSW, they will only complete the 'Application Form' (Attachment C1) and one copy of 'Application Form – Multiple Districts' (Attachment C2).

If applicants are applying for **more than one district** across NSW they will complete the Application form (Attachment C1) once **and** one copy of the 'Application Form – Multiple Districts' (Attachment C2) for each district they are applying for. Attachment C2 includes district specific questions that need to be completed to suit the local context.

## Number of providers to be funded

The Ministry intends to fund a network of providers across all district areas in NSW. The number of providers to be awarded funding will reflect the size and needs of each region, the capacity of applicants, and the principle of ensuring equitable access to services.

It is anticipated that most districts will require multiple providers to ensure coverage across geographic and population diversity. The Ministry reserves the right to determine the final number and distribution of funded providers based on the assessment process and alignment with strategic priorities. This may include providing successful applicants with, a smaller funding amount or larger or smaller area to be covered than they requested.



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## Program period

New agreements are expected to start on 1 July 2026. A two-month preparation period will occur between April and June 2026 and a 3-month transition period will occur between July and September 2026 to allow for a smooth transition from current providers (if required).

The contract term is five years fixed with an option for two further extensions of five years each to be exercised at the sole discretion of the Ministry depending on performance and Ministry priorities.

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## Value for money

Applicants must propose services that:

- Meet or exceed the minimum service benchmarks and requirements as set out in the supporting grant application documents.
- Stay within the allocated budget for the district(s)/region(s) they submit an application for.
- Comply with the terms of the Proforma Contract.

Applications that exceed the budget will not be considered unless there are no other suitable applicants.

Value for money will be assessed by Evaluation Committees with consideration of the Selection Criteria set out in section 2 of this document.

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## Reporting obligations

Successful CMOs/ACCHOs will be engaged under grant agreements. These agreements will define performance measures, program benchmarks, and deliverables for each district and/or region. A proforma grant agreement and standard terms and conditions can be found at **Attachment E**.

CMOs/ACCHOs will be required to submit:

- Monthly data about people accessing the CLS program and the supports they receive. This is referred to as the Minimum Data Set (MDS).
- Quarterly service data which shows the flow of people into the program.
- Two financial reports per year, including an audited annual acquittal.
- An annual qualitative report.

Additionally, CMOs/ACCHOs **must** report any alleged misconduct, serious incident or notifiable incident about the program within 24 hours of learning about it.

CMOs/ACCHOs must provide data in the format specified by the Ministry and districts, which may change from time to time, for example as new technologies become available. Pages 26-27 of the CLS Service Model (Attachment A) provide further detail on the reporting obligations for CLS service providers.

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## Performance benchmarks (Key Performance Indicators)

CLS performance benchmarks specify the level of service provision required in each district. Benchmarks for each service provider will be defined in grant agreements and specify the minimum service that CMOs/ACCHOs are expected to deliver as a condition of their funding.

For each district, performance benchmarks are specified for:

- number of support hours
- number of consumers in the program at any point in time
- number of Aboriginal consumers
- number of referrals accepted from a district (50% of total benchmark consumers)
- consumers who receive more than five hours of support per day.

**Attachment B** to these Grant Guidelines includes a separate profile for each district. Each District Profile includes budgets and performance benchmarks that applicants need to closely consider as part of their application.

Performance against benchmarks will be discussed at regular meetings between the districts/the Ministry and CMOs/ACCHOs. Reasons for any underperformance are discussed and a plan agreed to lift performance to benchmark levels within a timeframe acceptable to the district and the Ministry.

Additional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) may be incorporated into Grant Agreements at the discretion of districts/the Ministry in collaboration with successful providers.

Further details regarding the reporting requirements of CMOs/ACCHOs is set out in the CLS Service Model at Attachment A.

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## 1.2 Purpose and objectives

### Purpose

The purpose of this grant opportunity is to fund the delivery of community-based psychosocial supports for people with severe mental health conditions in NSW.

### Objectives

Funded CLS services are expected to achieve the following core objectives:

- Deliver individually tailored, and person-led psychosocial supports that help people to create meaningful goals, build independence in daily life and contribute to recovery within their communities.
- Reduce the frequency of hospital admissions and length-of-stay for people with severe mental health conditions.

Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate strong alignment with the CLS Service Model, effective local partnerships, and the capacity to deliver culturally safe and flexible support.

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## 1.3 Grant value

**Total Grant Pool:** Approximately **\$432.7 million** (2026–2031) across all districts.

- **Grant Structure:** Individual grant values will vary by district and/or region, based on population need and service delivery requirements.
- **Estimated Number of Grants:** To be determined based on the size and needs of each district, the capacity of applicants, and the principle of ensuring equitable access to services.
- **Minimum / Maximum Amount per Grant:** There is no fixed minimum or maximum; funding will be allocated based on the scale and scope of services.

In preparation for this grant opportunity, the CLS pricing model and benchmarks were reviewed by an organisation independent of NSW Health. The CLS pricing model has realigned district budgets to match current population data with unmet need for psychosocial supports.

There is no financial co-contribution requirement for this grant opportunity.

# 2

Selection criteria

## 2 Selection criteria

All applications will be assessed against the mandatory requirements and assessment criteria outlined in this section. Applications that do not meet the mandatory requirements may not proceed to assessment at the discretion of the Evaluation Committees.

This is a complex, high-value grant opportunity, and as such, applicants may be subject to additional due diligence checks as set out below. Information obtained through these checks may be used to inform the assessment process and final funding recommendations.

### 2.1 Mandatory Requirements

Applicants must meet all mandatory requirements outlined in this section to be considered for assessment. Applications that do not comply with these requirements may be deemed ineligible and excluded from further consideration at the Evaluation Committee's absolute discretion.

To be eligible, applicants must meet **all** of the following requirements:

1. Must be a not-for-profit non-government organisation (NGO), specifically:
  - Incorporated Association registered with NSW Fair Trading (Fair Trading)
  - OR
  - A not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (must be registered with ACNC and/or have DGR status) Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
  - OR
  - NSW based Indigenous Corporation (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC))
2. Must hold public liability insurance with a reputable insurer with a value of at least \$10 million.
3. Must have a registered Australian Business Number (ABN).
4. Must have a minimum of three (3) years' experience delivering community-based, recovery-focused psychosocial support for people with complex mental health conditions in Australia.
5. Must be solvent and not under external administration.
6. Must be able to and agree to meet the requirements of the Long Form Grant Agreement Template and Standard Terms and Conditions.
7. Must be able to address all requirements of the Grant Guidelines.

Please note that all mandatory requirements must be met by the 'lead applicant'. Fulfilment of the above requirements by a sub-contractor or any party other than the 'lead applicant' will not be considered as meeting the criterion for the purpose of application assessment. Furthermore, mandatory criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5 apply to both the 'lead applicant' and all proposed sub-contractors.

Any applicant that does not meet one or more of the mandatory requirements may be set aside from further assessment at the Ministry's absolute discretion.

### Budget Requirement

In addition to the above Mandatory Requirements, applicants must ensure that the total funding requested in their application does not exceed the funding allocation available for the relevant region/district. District (and where relevant region) budgets are specified in District Profiles (**Attachment B**).

Each district and region has a defined funding envelope, and applicants are required to submit a budget proposal that fits within the funding parameters applicable to the district/region(s) they are applying for.

In the event that submissions do not ensure sufficient coverage in individual districts, the Ministry may engage in direct negotiations with one or more applicants to deliver supports in areas that have not been the subject of the applicants' submissions.

## 2.2 Assessment criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria by District Evaluation Committees and recommendations on preferred applicants will be assessed by the Ministry Evaluation Committee.

Weightings will be applied to reflect the relative importance of each criterion. These weightings will be agreed by the Ministry prior to gaining access to applications for assessment.

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
<b>Criterion 1:</b> Operationalising the Service Model – Community Living Supports	Demonstrate how the organisation will deliver the CLS service as per the CLS Service Model.
<b>Criterion 2:</b> Operationalising the Service Model - Integration with the district and other service providers	Demonstrate ability to implement and maintain strong partnerships with CLS program stakeholders.
<b>Criterion 3:</b> Operationalising the Service Model – Staffing	<p>Demonstrate that the organisation's existing workforce is well suited to meet the requirements/ needs of the CLS Service Model.</p> <p>Demonstrate that there are established processes for training, career development and supervision for staff.</p> <p>If applicable, demonstrate how sub-contracting arrangements will ensure the successful delivery of the CLS program. Responses to consider how the sub-contractor will meet district demand (e.g. rural area, priority population group).</p>
<b>Criterion 4:</b> Program Governance	Demonstrate that effective governance structures will be put in place to support service provision. Show an adept understanding of the governance requirements in the CLS Service Model.
<b>Criterion 5:</b> Cultural safety for Aboriginal consumers	<p>Demonstrate the organisation's ability to work in partnership with local ACCHOs to provide holistic and culturally safe supports to Aboriginal people and their kinship networks.</p> <p>Evidence of experience in delivering services that are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal people. This includes social and emotional wellbeing supports.</p>

Criteria	Specific information and evidence required
<b>Criterion 6:</b> Priority Populations	Demonstrate the organisation's ability to deliver inclusive services that meet the needs of priority groups specific to the local context and the broader NSW context.  In answering this criterion, consider the 'local considerations' section of the district profile for the areas the organisation is applying for.
<b>Criterion 7:</b> Transition Planning	Demonstrate how the organisation will manage the transition of consumer supports from one provider to another. The process should be flexible and person centred.
<b>Criterion 8:</b> Overview of organisation and suitability to deliver CLS program	Demonstrate effective and sustainable operation of at least three years in the delivery of community-based, recovery orientated psychosocial support to people with complex mental health conditions.  This includes having adept governance; workforce and financial systems in place to support the provision of the CLS program.
<b>Criterion 9:</b> Budget	Demonstrate ability to deliver services within the budget required. Outline the proposed funding required and breakdown of what the funding will be used for.

## Notes:

- All criteria must be addressed in full in Attachment C1: Application Form, Attachment C2: Application Form – Multiple Districts and Attachment D: Budget.
- Supporting documentation may be requested to verify claims during assessment.
- In the event of high-quality applications exceeding available funding, applications may be prioritised based on Ministry priorities including, but not limited to, geographic coverage, population need, service gaps and planning data.
- Each District Evaluation Committee will recommend to the Ministry Evaluation Committee which applicants should be provided funding based on the above criteria. The Ministry's Evaluation Committee will apply an overarching lens to the evaluation to recommend funding that best meets the needs of the program.
- The Ministry may request changes to applicant budgets through clarification processes in order to ensure the overall recommendations align with the total district budgets available.

## 2.3 Due Diligence

At any time before final recommendations are made, due diligence checks may be conducted on all or selected applicants. These may include:

- Reference checks
- Financial assessments
- Media and legal history reviews
- Work Health and Safety records
- Checks with regulatory bodies (e.g. ASIC, ACNC, Fair Trading)

- Other due diligence that the Ministry determines appropriate.



# 3

Application process

## 3 Application process

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### 3.1 How to apply

Applications for the CLS program 2026 must be submitted online via the **Smartygrants platform**. The application portal will **open at 12:00 PM 22 August 2025** and close at **12:00 PM AEST on 17 October 2025**. Late applications will not be accepted unless exceptional circumstances apply and are approved at the discretion of the Ministry.

Applicants may be contacted for clarification or to provide further information to verify claims made in their application. However, applicants will not be permitted to make significant changes or submit additional material once the application period has closed, unless explicitly requested by the Ministry.

Upon submission, applicants will receive confirmation of receipt via Smartygrants. It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure their application is complete and submitted on time.

Applications that are considered by the Ministry to contain false or misleading information may be deemed ineligible and excluded from further consideration. The Ministry reserves the right to verify any information contained in an application at any stage of the process.

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### 3.2 Support available to applicants

#### Contact Officer

All enquiries regarding the grant application process and its terms and conditions are to be directed to:

Kevin Lawless  
Procurement Advisor  
Procure Group  
E: CLS2026@procuregroup.com.au

Enquiries may be in writing via the email.

All enquiries should be submitted to the Contact Officer as soon as possible and no later than seven (7) working days before the closing date identified.

Any additional relevant information provided to an applicant in response to any enquires may also be communicated to applicants generally, by means of Addenda to this Grant Guideline.

#### Applicant Briefing

An online Applicant Briefing session for organisations interested in applying will be held via MS Teams at the following time:

**1 September 2025 - 10:00AM to 12:00PM**

The briefing session is not mandatory i.e. applicants do not need to attend to apply for grant funding.

Any potential applicant that would like to attend is to email the Contact Officer above with details of attendees at least 24 hours prior to the briefing session. Those attendees will then be provided the MS Teams link to attend.

The briefing session will not be recorded, however the presentation slides will be provided through an addendum following the briefing session.

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## 3.3 Conditions of Application

### Acknowledgement and Agreement

By submitting an application, applicants acknowledge and agree to comply with all terms and conditions outlined in these Guidelines. Applicants confirm that all information provided in the application is true, complete, and accurate to the best of their knowledge. Providing false or misleading information may result in the application being deemed ineligible or any awarded funding being withdrawn.

### Acceptance of Terms

Applicants are deemed to have accepted these Grant Guidelines, including any updates or addenda published prior to the application closing date. It is the responsibility of the applicant to review all documentation and seek clarification where necessary.

### Conformity of Applications

Applications must be substantially complete and submitted in the format required by the Grant Guidelines. Incomplete, non-compliant, or corrupted applications may be deemed ineligible for assessment at the sole discretion of the Ministry. Applicants are responsible for ensuring they have reviewed all grant materials, including any addenda, and that the submitted application conforms to the requirements outlined in these Guidelines.

### Form of Application

Applicants must use the prescribed templates and submit all required documentation via the lodgement method described in these Guidelines. Applications submitted through any other means will not be accepted unless prior written approval has been granted by the Ministry. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure their submission is successfully received by the deadline.

### Word Limits

Applicants must adhere to any specified word limits outlined in the application form for individual questions or sections. The Ministry reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to disregard any part of a response that exceeds the stated word limit.

Applicants are advised to ensure that their responses are clear, concise, and within the prescribed limits. Additional information provided beyond the stated limits may not be considered in the assessment process.

### Applicants to Inform Themselves

Applicants are responsible for ensuring they have obtained all information necessary to prepare a complete, accurate, and competitive application. This includes:

- Reading and understanding the Grant Guidelines, CLS Service Model (Attachment A), and any other supporting materials provided.
- Seeking clarification from the Ministry via the Contact Officer where any part of the documentation is unclear.
- Reviewing any addenda issued by the Ministry during the application period.
- Understanding the operating environment, local conditions, and delivery context relevant to their proposed service area/s.
- Ensuring they are aware of all applicable legislative, regulatory, and contractual obligations associated with the delivery of funded services.

Failure to properly inform themselves may result in the submission of a non-compliant or non-competitive application and could impact eligibility or assessment outcomes. No compensation will be provided to applicants for any costs or losses incurred as a result of misinterpretation or failure to seek clarification.

### **Subcontracting arrangements**

Grant applicants can propose the use of subcontractors, where applicable. This is encouraged in instances where the use of a subcontractor enhances CLS service delivery. For example, offering specialised services to a CLS priority population group. Where an applicant is proposing to use subcontractors, any responses to criteria relating to capability and capacity should refer to the capability and capacity of the entire proposed service inclusive of the proposed subcontractors.

CMOs/ACCHOs who apply for the grant with a subcontracting arrangement hold sole responsibility for CLS service delivery, including the service delivery of the subcontractor(s), and will enter a Grant Agreement with the Ministry (not the subcontractor) if awarded the grant.

### **Addenda and Clarifications**

The Ministry reserves the right to issue addenda to this document at any time, including updates or clarifications to the information contained herein. Any such addenda will be published on the application portal and communicated via the contact details provided by applicants. Applicants are responsible for regularly monitoring the portal for updates and ensuring that any changes are incorporated into their application. Failure to comply with the requirements outlined in an addendum may result in disqualification.

### **Late Applications**

Late Applications will not be considered except when it is clear that the cause of lateness was beyond the applicant's control and the Ministry is satisfied that the integrity and competitiveness of the process will not be compromised.

### **Rights of the Ministry of Health**

The Ministry reserves the right to:

- Vary, suspend or terminate the grant opportunity at any time
- Accept or reject any application at its sole discretion
- Request additional information from applicants at any stage
- Conduct due diligence checks, including financial, risk, and capability assessments
- Negotiate changes to the scope or funding of an application before awarding the grant.

### **No Legal Relationship**

Submission of an application does not create any legal or contractual relationship between the applicant and the Ministry. No legal obligation will arise unless and until a Grant Agreement is executed by both parties.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

Applicants acknowledge that their application and supporting materials may be shared with internal and external parties engaged by the Ministry to assist in the assessment process. All such sharing will be conducted in accordance with relevant privacy laws and confidentiality requirements.

## Costs and Liability

Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and submission of their application. The Ministry accepts no liability for any such costs, or for any loss or damage arising from or in connection with the grant process.

## Probity

The Ministry has appointed an Independent Probity Advisor, O'Connor Marsden and Associates (OCM), to monitor procedural integrity and provide assurance throughout all phases of the grant process. The Probity Advisor is not part of the Evaluation Committees. They are an independent observer of the application and evaluation process.

The Probity Advisor will monitor process adherence with the probity fundamentals:

- Accountability and transparency of the process.
- Fairness, impartiality and honesty in carrying out the process.
- Management of actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest.
- Maintenance of confidentiality and security of documentation and information.
- Obtaining value for money in the prevailing circumstances.

Applicants may contact the Probity Advisor in writing and in circumstances where they have concerns as to probity or the conduct of the grant application process.

The details for the Probity Advisor and contact person are:

Organisation: OCM

Name: James Smart

Ph: 0401 997 177

Email: [jsmart@ocm.net.au](mailto:jsmart@ocm.net.au)

# 4

Assessment process

## 4 Assessment process

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### 4.1 Assessment of grant applications

Applications will undergo a three-stage assessment process:

1. **Mandatory Requirements Review**

Applications will first be assessed against the Mandatory Requirements outlined in Section 2. Applications that meet all mandatory requirements will proceed to the merit-based assessment stage.

2. **Merit-Based Assessment**

2A: Applications passing the Mandatory Requirements Review will be assessed by District Evaluation Committees against the selection criteria outlined in Section 2.2. Assessment will be comparative across all applications for that district, consistent with a competitive grant model.

2B: A Ministry Evaluation Committee will review recommendations made by District Evaluation Committees and apply an overarching program lens to determine the best overall recommendation.

3. **Due Diligence**

The Evaluation Committees may conduct further due diligence as outlined in Section 2.

Evaluation Committees comprising representatives from the Ministry, districts and subject matter experts will review and score the applications and make recommendations on preferred applicants.

A Probity Advisor will oversee the process to ensure procedural fairness, impartiality, and consistency, and may provide written advice to inform decision-making.

The **decision-maker** for this grant program will be the Minister for Mental Health.

All assessments will be documented, and all decisions and recommendations of the Evaluation Committees will be made based on merit and alignment with program objectives.

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### 4.2 Notification of application outcome

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing via the contact details provided in their submission. Notifications will occur after the approval of recommendations by the Minister for Mental Health.

Public announcements of successful grant recipients will be made only after all applicants have been advised of their outcome.

#### **Feedback on applications [and appeal process]**

Unsuccessful applicants may request general feedback on their application via email to the nominated Contact Officer. Feedback will be limited to high-level summary comments and will not include comparative information about other applications. There will be no formal appeal mechanism.

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## 4.3 Publication of grants information

In accordance with the NSW Grants Administration Guide and the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW), information about successful grants will be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder website within 45 working days of the grant agreement taking effect.

All documentation associated with the decision-making process will be retained and managed in accordance with the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).



# 5

Successful grant  
applications

## 5 Successful grant applications

Successful applicants will be engaged as CMOs/ACCHOs to deliver services under the refreshed CLS program across one or more designated district regions. Upon award, applicants must enter into a Grant Agreement with the Ministry. This agreement will formalise the terms of service delivery and funding, set clear reporting expectations, and ensure accountability for delivering high-quality psychosocial support in line with the CLS Service Model.

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### 5.1 Grant agreement

Successful applicants will enter into the NSW Health Standard Grant Agreement (Long Form Template), including the Standard Terms and Conditions. A Proforma copy of the Grant Agreement and Standard Terms and Conditions is included at Attachment E.

Each grant agreement will reflect the scope of services to be delivered by the CMO in partnership with the relevant district(s). The agreement will:

- Confirm the service coverage, funding allocation, and duration of the agreement.
- Require delivery of services consistent with the CLS Service Model (Attachment A).
- Establish governance requirements, including tri-partite collaboration between the Ministry, districts, and the CMO/ACCHO.
- Set expectations for trauma-informed, person-centred, flexible, and culturally safe support.
- Define procedures for service variation, program amendments, or withdrawal.
- Include provisions for risk management, quality assurance, and termination of funding in certain circumstances.

Funding will not be released until the agreement is fully executed by all parties.

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### 5.2 Grant payment

Payment will be made in scheduled tranches according to the grant agreement. Payments are subject to:

- Achievement of implementation milestones.
- Submission of required reports.
- Delivery of services in accordance with agreed standards and performance measures.
- Adherence to the budget and use of funds only for approved purposes.

The payment schedule and reporting timeframes will be specified in the Grant Agreement.

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### 5.3 Unspent funds

Any unspent grant funds must be returned to the Ministry, unless written approval is granted for an alternative use. CMOs may propose the use of unspent funds to enhance or extend services if the proposed use aligns with the objectives of the CLS program. Requests must include appropriate

justification and explanation of how funds will deliver services consistent with the outcomes of the CLS Service Model.

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## 5.4 Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

CMOs will be required to:

- Submit monthly MDS data.
- Submit quarterly service data.
- Complete two financial reports per year, including an audited annual acquittal.
- Report on incidents, risks, and any material changes to operations.
- Participate in governance meetings, service reviews and monitoring activities coordinated by the districts and the Ministry.

These reporting obligations support transparency, service quality, and collaborative oversight. Further information regarding these requirements is included in the CLS Service Model.

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## 5.5 Evaluation

CMOs must participate in evaluation activities to assess service impact and inform continuous improvement. This may include:

- Data contribution for outcome measurement.
- Engagement with independent evaluators.
- Supporting the inclusion of consumer voices and lived experience perspectives.

Evaluation findings may be used to guide future program design and funding decisions.

# 6

Additional information and  
resources

## 6 Additional information and resources

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### 6.1 Complaint handling

Applicants are encouraged to raise any concerns or issues related to the grant process with the designated Contact Officer or the appointed Probity Advisor in the first instance and as soon as reasonably possible after the concern arises. Early resolution is encouraged to promote transparency and responsiveness during the application period.

Where this is not possible, applicants may submit a formal complaint in accordance with the NSW Ministry of Health's Complaint Handling Policy. Formal complaints must be made in writing and clearly identify:

- the nature of the complaint, including relevant facts and dates
- the impact on the applicant or the application, and
- any supporting documentation.

Complaints will be reviewed in line with the Ministry's standard procedures and principles of procedural fairness. Please note that general disagreement with the outcome of an application does not, in itself, constitute grounds for a complaint unless there is evidence of a procedural error or a failure to adhere to the principles of probity.

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### 6.2 Access to information

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

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### 6.3 Ethical conduct

The grant program will be conducted with a high standard of integrity, fairness, and transparency. All staff involved in the administration of the grant must comply with public sector ethical obligations and any applicable codes of conduct.

Applicants are also expected to comply with the NSW Supplier Code of Conduct.

#### 6.3.1 Conflict of interest management

Officials must identify, declare, and manage any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest throughout the grant process. All declarations will be recorded in a register of interests and reviewed by a Probity Advisor or independent officer as appropriate. All mitigation measures agreed in response to any declared interest must be followed.

Applicants are to identify and declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as part of their application. Where unsure, applicant should contact the Contact Officer and/or the Probity Advisor to discuss the conflict.

### **6.3.2 Confidentiality**

Successful applicants may be required to maintain confidentiality regarding the outcome of their application until a formal public announcement is made by the NSW Government.

All application materials will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy and confidentiality provisions. Only authorised personnel involved in the grant process will have access to applicant information.