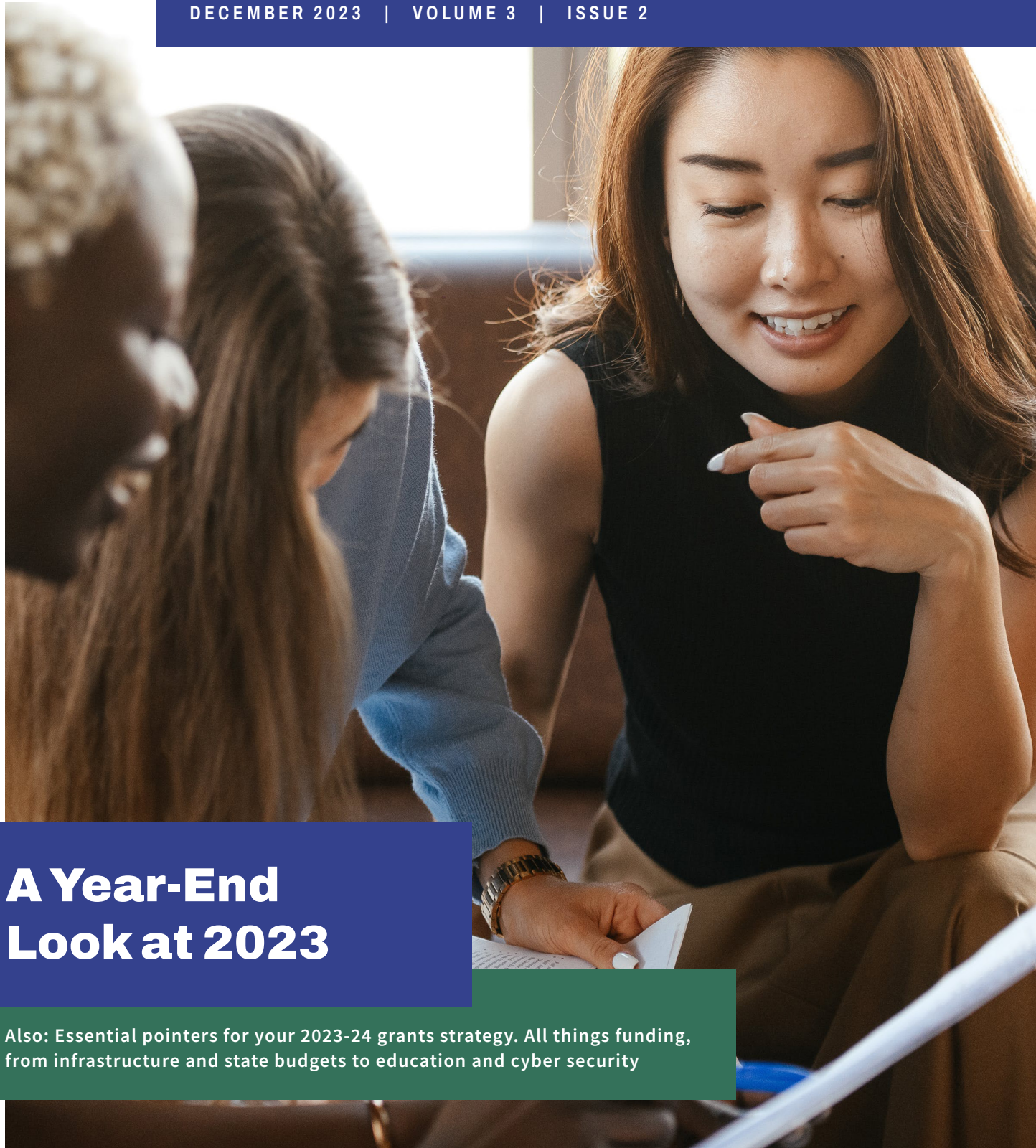


 A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

FUNDED

AUSTRALIA

DECEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 2



A Year-End Look at 2023

Also: Essential pointers for your 2023-24 grants strategy. All things funding, from infrastructure and state budgets to education and cyber security



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G'day Australian Grantseekers!

At Grants Office, we help grant seekers across the world identify funding opportunities, develop project ideas, and produce high-quality applications to maximise grant revenue. Here in Australia, our team on the ground has been busy supporting clients from businesses, education providers, community organisations, and everyone in between.

We're excited to bring you Volume II, Issue III of 'FUNDED Australia' - our biannual grants publication. Since our last issue in June, we have seen the release and closure of grant programs, the cost-of-living, and housing crises continue to soar, with both state and federal governments releasing and/or increasing grant programs and funding initiatives to help first-home buyers enter the real estate market. We also saw the release of the 2023-24 NSW Budget, Labor's first NSW State budget in more than a decade.

Both households and businesses have been largely resilient in the face of inflation and higher interest rates, which have been increasing substantially since late 2021, after a period of historically low rates, although more are becoming vulnerable to further shocks. The threat of cyber-attacks in an ever-increasing digital world sparks the need for new and innovative cyber-security practices, as gaps are addressed in all sectors of the economy.

However, it's not all doom and gloom, Australia's post-pandemic financial environment has recovered faster than other major economies, and gender inequalities are steadily decreasing as focuses are shifted to systemic changes, including improvements in parental leave, increasing the women working in STEM and ICT jobs, and increased support in out-of-pocket childcare costs. Sustainability is also a hot-topic item in funding as Australia pushes toward its Net Zero emissions goal by 2050, with the announcement of new programs, initiatives, and rebates to drive down emissions.

This issue recaps some of the exciting grant news and statistics that have emerged over the last six months, including an overview of the NSW budget and focusing on your grant-seeking endeavours in 2024, with articles about the top grants to look out for, as well as crafting your very own Grant Seeking Calendar!

Our goal for FUNDED Australia is to keep our readers informed of funding opportunities to get your project off the ground, so if there is a specific topic or grant program of interest, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

If you only read one grant-focused publication, we want it to be FUNDED Australia. We would also like to thank our readers for their continued support for our third year of FUNDED. Get thinking about your grant-seeking strategies for 2024 - we will see you there!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, now get FUNDED!

Mitchell Gresham & Tom Bligh,
Editors

Competitive Federal Funding in Australia: July – November 2023

Tom Bligh

In each issue of 'FUNDED Australia,' we drill down into all Federal Government grant funding awarded within the period since our last publication (July 23 – Nov 23) and examine funded programs and projects with a focus on innovation in technology.

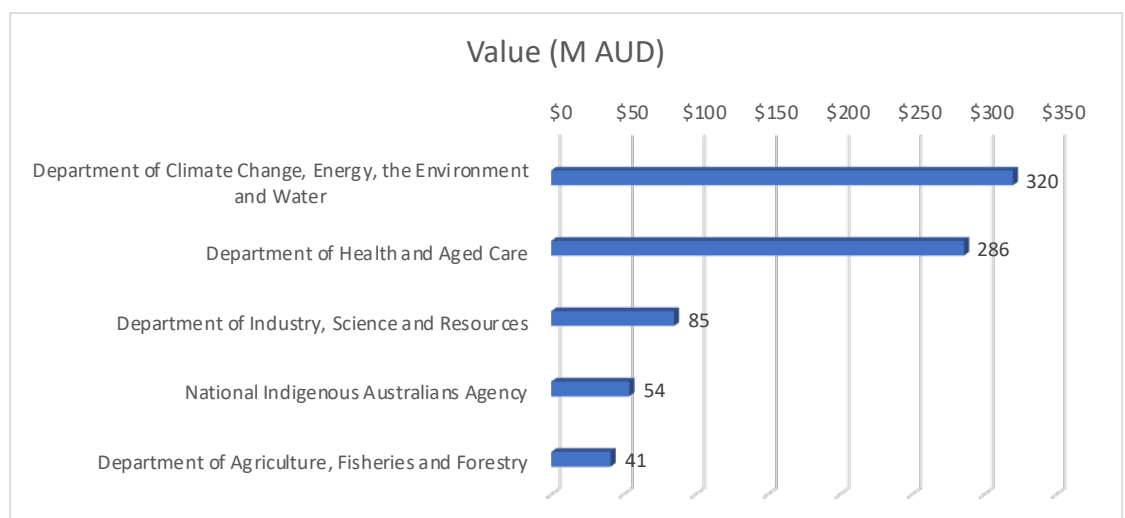
We are looking strictly at **open competitive** Federal grant awards. We make this distinction because competitive grant programs are our speciality here at Grants Office, and larger 'non-competitive' grants can conflate otherwise insightful data with overinflated values. An example of one such award would be from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations who awarded \$211.3 million (to approximately 74,000 recipients) to fund vocational training and apprenticeship incentives for employers across NSW. Interesting, but not particularly useful or insightful for our grant-seeking audience.

With that established...

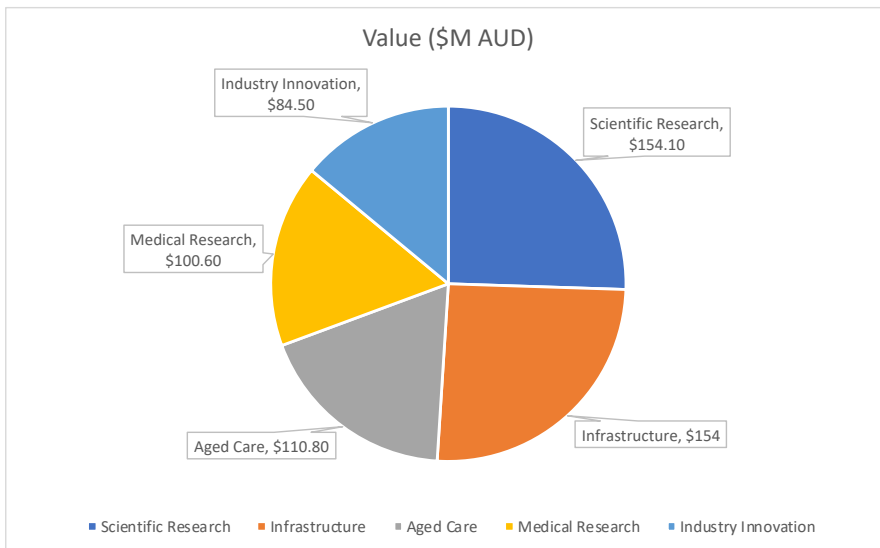
Quick Stats:

- In this period, approximately \$875 million in open competitive grant funding was awarded
- This funding was distributed across 1,266 individual projects
- The average grant size was \$691,000

TOP 5 FEDERAL DEPARTMENT GRANT GIVERS (AWARD AMOUNTS [\$MILLION AUD]): JUL – NOV 2023:



TOP 5 AWARD CATEGORIES (BY \$ VALUE OF AGGREGATE AWARDS)



TOP 5 LARGEST AWARDS

1. Origin Energy Future Fuels Pty Ltd

- **Grant Name:** Activating a Regional Hydrogen Industry
- **Award Amount:** \$77,000,000
- **Award Category:** Infrastructure
- **Funder:** Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

2. B P Australia Pty Ltd

- **Grant Name:** Activating a Regional Hydrogen Industry
- **Award Amount:** \$77,000,000
- **Award Category:** Infrastructure
- **Funder:** Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

3. STANWELL CORPORATION LIMITED

- **Grant Name:** Activating a Regional Hydrogen Industry
- **Award Amount:** \$76,120,000
- **Award Category:** Scientific Research
- **Funder:** Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

4. DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

- **Grant Name:** Activating a Regional Hydrogen Industry
- **Award Amount:** \$70,000,000
- **Award Category:** Scientific Research
- **Funder:** Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

5. University of New South Wales

- **Grant Name:** National COE Intellectual Disability
- **Award Amount:** \$22,064,000
- **Award Category:** Public Health Services
- **Funder:** Department of Health and Aged Care



FEDERAL FUNDING: TECHNOLOGY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Let's take a closer look at some technology-focused projects that received significant federal funding over the last six months:

Laser Technology for the Mass Change mission

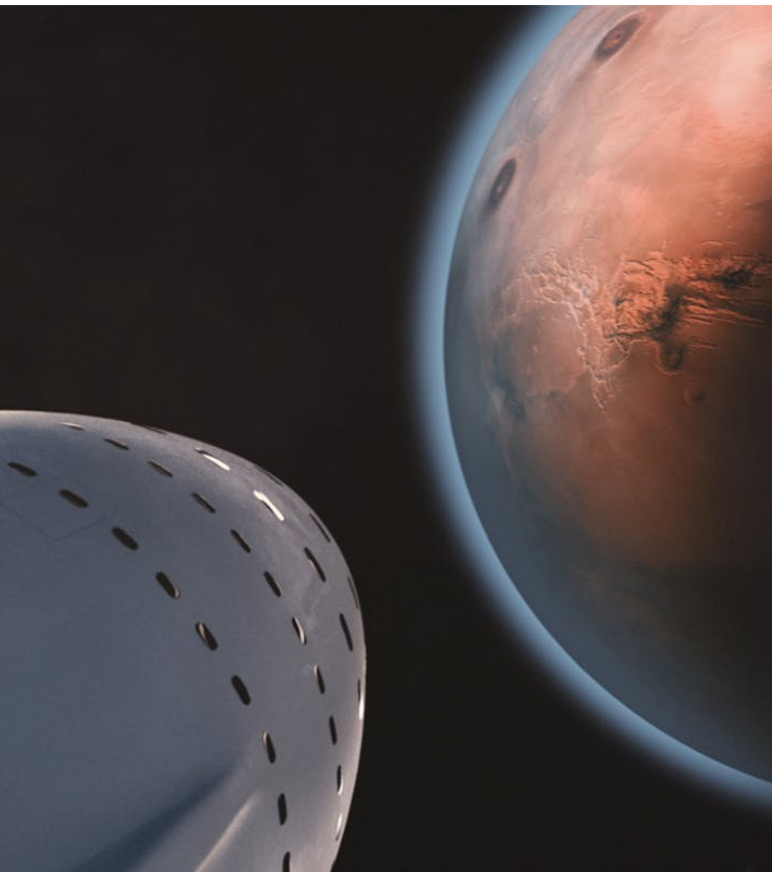
- **Funder:** Department of Industry, Science and Resources
- **Grant:** Moon to Mars Initiative Demonstrator Mission Grants
- **Recipient:** Australian National University
- **Funding Amount:** \$6,205,670
- **Project Period:** Jun 2023 – Aug 2026
- **Project Details:** This project will produce laser stabilization flight technology for next generation gravity sensing missions. It extends the successful collaboration on the GRACE Follow-On mission to develop space flight technology for new missions. This industry/academia collaboration, working closely with international partners, leverages Australia's world leading defence and technology capabilities of CEA to benefit its space sector and will unlock access to global markets in satellite and communications for Australian companies.

Quantum computing controllers based on cryo-CMOS

- **Funder:** Department of Industry, Science and Resources
- **Grant:** Cooperative Research Centres Projects Round 14
- **Recipient:** Diraq PTY LTD
- **Funding Amount:** \$3,300,000
- **Project Period:** Aug 2023 – Dec 2026
- **Project Details:** This project solves a critical bottleneck to the development of full-scale quantum computers, and in doing so puts Diraq, along with project partners, University of NSW and Perceptia, in a position to deliver world-changing impact. Diraq uses CMOS technology to make qubits. As part of the project, Diraq will leverage CMOS' inherent integration potential to create a Quantum Control Unit (QCU) which can be directly integrated with Diraq's Quantum Logic Unit (QLU), at scale. The technology delivered will grant Diraq, along with its partners, a clear roadmap into the quantum computer market, predicted to eventually be worth hundreds of billions of dollars annually. The project will also augment local expertise in cryogenic electronics, which is in high demand in the emerging quantum computing market.

3D Printing Houses in Extreme and Remote Locations Using Local Materials

- **Funder:** Department of Industry, Science and Resources
- **Grant:** Cooperative Research Centres Programme
- **Recipient:** Luyten 3D PTY LTD
- **Funding Amount:** \$3,292,988.60
- **Project Period:** July 2023 – Jan 2027
- **Project Details:** This collaborative project between Luyten, Hanson, and University of NSW aims to revolutionise housing in Australia's remote areas by developing a 3D printing system. This innovative project focuses on using local, zero-carbon materials to build homes faster and more affordably, addressing the challenges of logistics and quality in remote housing. It aligns with the national commitment to expand housing availability and leverages technology already gaining attention in the construction sector, promising a sustainable and efficient solution for housing demand in remote communities.



Digital Health for Optimising Translation and Impact in Women's Health

- **Funder:** Department of Health and Aged Care
- **Grant:** Medical Research Future Fund
- **Recipient:** Monash University
- **Funding Amount:** \$2,918,586
- **Project Period:** Jun 2023 – Dec 2028
- **Project Details:** This project focuses on enhancing the use of the Monash Centre for Health Research and Implementation's AskPCOS app in routine clinical care. The AskPCOS app, designed for managing Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), provides a self-diagnostic quiz, clear information on PCOS, a question prompt list for healthcare discussions, and a symptom tracker. This initiative aims to improve screening, symptom tracking, and management for women with PCOS, early menopause, and infertility, thereby fostering better consumer and health professional relationships.

IEA/MI2.0 Grid Integrated Control of Buildings

- **Funder:** Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
- **Grant:** International Clean Innovation Researcher Networks
- **Recipient:** Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- **Funding Amount:** \$1,970,876
- **Project Period:** Nov 2023 – Sep 2027
- **Project Details:** Funding will support the commencement of the 'Grid Integrated Control of Buildings' project, a collaboration between CSIRO, Danish Technical University, among other partners. The goal is to create new digital technology and business plans that make it easy and safe to exchange data at a low cost. This technology will allow commercial buildings to adjust their energy use to better support the transition to green electricity. At the conclusion of the project, technology will be developed that allows buildings to become more adaptable in how they use and provide energy, aiding in the shift to more sustainable power sources.



NSW Budget – One of NSW’s Biggest Infrastructure Budgets – But what does that mean for its residents?

Mitch Gresham

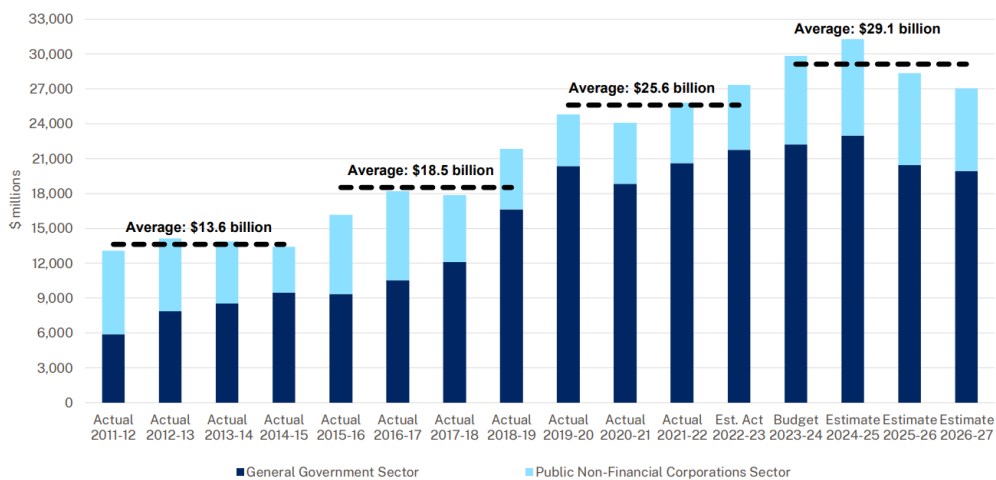


Figure 1: NSW's Infrastructure Budget from 2011-23 to 2026-27

The recently announced New South Wales budget has set a new standard for infrastructure investment, with the largest infrastructure budget since 2011 (see Fig. 1). The pressure was on for Treasurer Daniel Mahooney to deliver the first NSW state budget by the Labor government in more than a decade. Health, education, and world-class infrastructure are a focus of the budget, delivering a range of initiatives, from regional and rural NSW infrastructure to addressing the housing crisis.

With the budget providing a \$116.5 billion investment (a \$3.8 billion increase from last year) in public infrastructure over 4 years to deliver new schools, hospitals, transport projects, and address housing supply, it's the largest investment we've seen in infrastructure compared to the previous three budgets from the NSW Government (see Fig. 2), and an exciting investment for NSW residents, especially in regional and rural NSW, who will see a \$3.8 billion investment in regional health facilities and a \$1.4 billion investment into regional schools.

TRANSPORT

Starting with the biggest allocation of investment is the transport sector, with \$72.3 billion allocated for transport and infrastructure. Integrated transport networks including road, train, metro, bus, walking, and light rail are critical for driving economic growth and wellbeing.

A rapid increase in technology means transport planning and delivery needs to be flexible and sustainable, with an ever-increasing population and commuter needs, the NSW Government certainly has their work cut out for them.

The Transport capital program includes major investment in Sydney's Transformational Metro projects, as well as significant investments into Regional and Rural NSW developments, including:

- \$13.7 billion over four years for Sydney Metro West
- \$7.9 billion over four years for Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport
- \$1.5 billion over four years to connect the M1 Pacific Motorway and the Pacific Highway
- \$1.3 billion over four years for the Coffs Harbour Bypass

This continued commitment to the development and long-term security of Sydney Metro projects was encouraged and welcomed by the Australasian Railway Association, stating that "these city-shaping transport infrastructure projects in NSW not only create tens of thousands of jobs during construction but once completed, provide a vital connection for communities and reduce congestion on our busy roads".

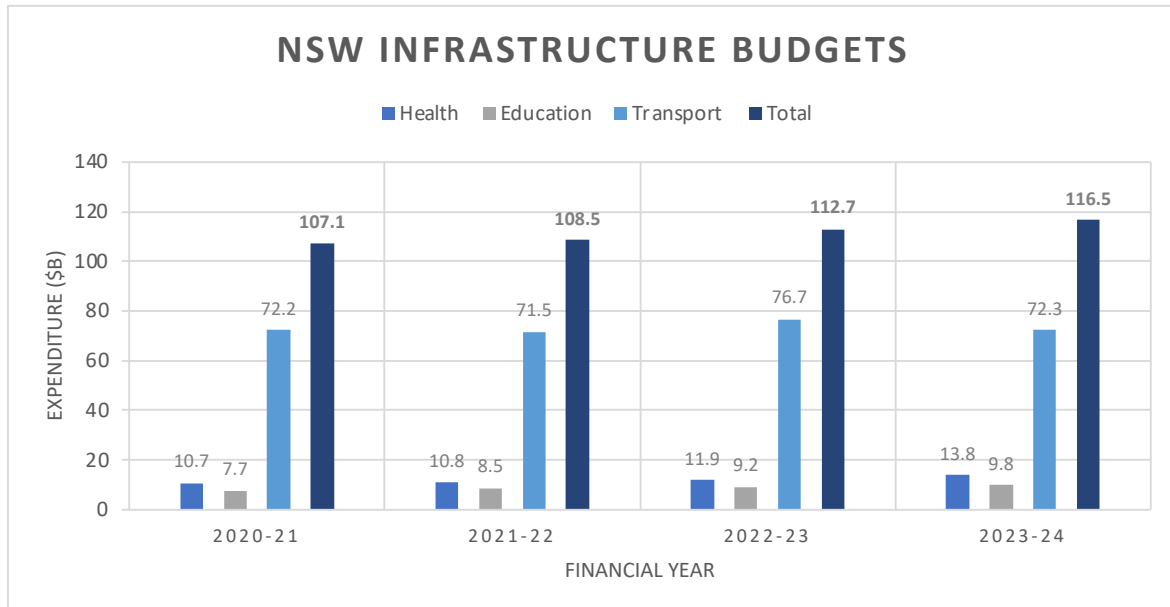


Figure 2: Infrastructure Budget Sectors for the last 4 financial years

HEALTH

Hospitals and health facilities had the second largest allocation under the infrastructure investment allocations, with \$13.8 billion for Hospitals and health facilities, an increase of 15.6% compared to the 2022-23 NSW Budget. Significant investments are focused on the planning and delivery of new and upgraded hospital builds, including:

- \$1.3 billion for the new Bankstown Hospital
- \$1.0 billion for the Nepean Hospital and Integrated Ambulatory Services Stage 1 and 2
- \$740.0 million for the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct

EDUCATION

The Educational sector was also a prime focus of the NSW Government, allocating \$9.8 billion over the next 4 years. This allocation will support the delivery of 100 new and upgraded preschools, the biggest investment in public preschools in NSW history.

Regional schools aren't left out of the equation. More than \$1.4 billion over four years was dedicated to delivering new and upgraded schools for regional NSW, including a new permanent high school for Googong and an expansion of Jerrabomberra High School in the State's southwest, together with a new high school in Medowie in the Hunter and an upgrade to Vincentia High School.

Projects being delivered in the educational sector include:

- \$767.1 million invested into four new primary schools and 10 new high schools,
- upgrades to Northmead Public School, The Ponds High School, Kingswood Public School, Katoomba High School, Jerrabomberra High School, and Eagle Vale High School.

CURRENT PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW

In April 2023, the NSW Government commissioned an independent expert to undertake a review of the State's infrastructure program. The review was commissioned in response to significant challenges facing the NSW infrastructure program.

Projects experience delays more often, and the construction industry's capacity to deliver is challenged globally, while supply chain issues and skills shortages continue to be an issue.

In response to this, the Government will delay or descope projects worth more than \$2.5 billion, including:

- The Great Western Highway Duplication
- Ultimo Powerhouse Museum, and
- The Fast Rail Program

CONCLUSION

So overall, the latest NSW budget will see significant investments into infrastructure programs and initiatives, not just in the metropolitan area, but also in rural and regional NSW. Education, Health, and Transport were the main focus areas of the budget, as the government aims to create a stronger, more future-proof infrastructure industry for NSW and its residents.

Developing Grants ‘Handy’ Practices

By Susannah Mayhall, 2013
(Updated by Tom Bligh 2023)

While each grant proposal will have its own set of specific guidelines and required supporting documents, grant writers can save a lot of time (and spare some headaches) by maintaining a ‘Frequently Used’ file of the most requested supporting documents and materials.

Depending on the type of programs your organisation typically applies for funding, your list may vary from the one below. However, determining which documents to file and keeping the files up to date can smooth out the proposal development process for several different grants and, if you find yourself pinched for time, can mean the difference between a high-quality, successful submission and an unsatisfactory or incomplete proposal.

The following documents are either frequently requested by funders or will help you to flesh out proposals for a variety of grants. Make sure that you check these documents periodically so that the most up-to-date versions are on file, ensuring that they will be as helpful as possible when it comes time to write a grant.

CURRENT RESUMES OF KEY PERSONNEL

Tracking down the resumes of people who are busy and may not be directly involved in the proposal development process can easily turn into a nightmare. Although the list of ‘key personnel’ will vary depending on the project at hand, it’s a good idea to collect, at a minimum, the resumes of directors or executives who manage the operational aspects of the organisation (Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Executive Director, General Manager, etc.) and those of key management staff who frequently oversee large projects.

You may also want to collect the resumes of your organisation’s board members. While you may not necessarily need to provide resumes for members of the board, these documents will come in handy when you are asked to list contact information, titles, resumes, and/or roles of board members.

Depending on your organisation’s structure, the resumes of other key personnel may also be useful to file for easy access.



In a similar vein, an up-to-date organisational chart listing personnel names and titles could prove useful for a variety of proposals, if only to serve as a template for developing a project-specific organisational structure or determining who to contact for information.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

It is highly likely you will be asked to provide some number of organisational budgets and/or financial statements— usually only for the current and previous fiscal years, but possibly for more. If available, keep the last three fiscal years’ financial statements in your file, as well as your organisation’s current budget, and make sure to acquire new copies when they are released. For ease of access, these are usually attached to the end of Annual Reports.

DGR STATUS, BUSINESS REGISTRATION & CERTIFICATION OF INSURANCE

For nonprofit organisations, proof of [Deductible Gift Recipient](#) status is frequently required. For-profit entities and Businesses will usually be required to supply their ABN and/or a copy of their certificates of incorporation. It is also common for proposals that involve the public to request your certificate of currency for public liability/worker’s compensation insurance. Keep these handy as you will be reaching for them when applying for most grants.



ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITY

If your organisation publishes an annual report, attach the most recent copy if you are prompted for ‘any additional attachments.’ This document will be helpful not only if it is requested by the funder, but also for general background information and discussion of what your organisation is currently doing in the community.

Also, keep a document containing a ‘library of standard words and definitions’ with information about your organisation’s history (founding year, core business, development, etc.) Don’t rely on your memory alone or you are liable to make inaccurate statements or omit information that could strengthen your proposal.

PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES

If your organisation has worked with partners or affiliates in the past or is developing new relationships, keep a file for each partner and include contacts, meeting agendas, timelines, memoranda of understanding, letters of commitment, or any other documents demonstrating the partnership and detailing the work that was performed jointly between your organisations.

PAST GRANT PROPOSALS

While it is not recommended to submit carbon-copy grant applications, past narratives, and documents can be extremely useful when drafting a new grant proposal. Never throw out any documents related to a past grant submission—this information will be vital for analysing past projects, reporting on a project’s success, writing new proposals, and many other uses.

After each submission, make sure to organise all the documents used to prepare the proposal and keep a full copy of exactly what was submitted to the funder. Should you have to demonstrate your proposal’s compliance with the grant guidelines, having accurate documentation is paramount. In addition, thorough grant records will make successive proposal writing processes easier.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REGISTRATION AND LOGIN INFORMATION

Almost all proposals are submitted online, so best practice dictates that your electronic registration information is up-to-date and secure. While login information must be kept secure and private, it should be safely recorded so that it can be accessed by appropriate personnel if necessary. If your organisation has or is planning to submit grant proposals to government agencies (Federal, State, and Local), double-check your SmartyGrants registration and login information. Running into registration or login problems too close to the deadline can jeopardise your ability to submit a proposal on time. In addition, you will want to make sure that appropriate authorization steps are taken should any key personnel (e.g., your CEO or CFO) leave the organisation.

This list is by no means exhaustive. However, it is a good start to organising your grant information and will hopefully make your life a little easier as you prepare future proposals and administer current awards. Revisit your ‘Handy Files’ and ‘standard words’ often to ensure that they are current and keep in mind that they should be thoroughly organised so that new personnel, replacements, project managers, and other key personnel will be able to use them.

Schools Upgrade Fund Deep Dive – Get Your Applications in Before the Christmas Break!

Tom Bligh

The Department of Education (Aus Gov) has opened Round 2 of the \$275.2 million [Schools Upgrade Fund](#). Just like last year, this fund opened late in the year and is closing in February next year, so eligible educational institutions must gear up for the application process before the Christmas break.

If you are a public school in Australia and you have not heard of this funding, don't panic! Read on to understand everything you need to know to ensure you can hit the ground running with your application in 2024.

WHAT IS THE SCHOOLS UPGRADE FUND?

The Australian Government's \$275.2 million [Schools Upgrade Fund](#) is a pivotal initiative aimed at transforming educational facilities across the country. The fund is dedicated to enhancing school infrastructure, and providing improved, safe learning environments for students. Of this, \$53.6 million [has already been allocated in Round 1](#) for essential improvements like air purifiers, ventilation systems, outdoor learning spaces, ICT equipment upgrades, and urgent repairs.

Round 2 (open now) has a total pool of \$215.8 million earmarked for public schools with significant infrastructure projects, such as new classrooms and major refurbishments, in collaboration with state and territory governments.

The primary objective is to improve learning environments through capital projects. This includes constructing new facilities, refurbishing existing ones, and addressing other critical infrastructure needs. The fund is focused on creating educational spaces that meet contemporary standards and needs.



It is important to note that this fund requires collaboration/endorsement with/from your relevant state or territory Department of Education for application processing and project implementation. If you have not reached out to enquire about this fund and your school's/project's eligibility, now is an excellent time to do so.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: WHO CAN APPLY?

Eligibility for this fund is limited to government schools that received Commonwealth recurrent funding in 2023. To apply, schools must be operational in the 2024 academic year and have at least one enrolled student. Importantly, eligibility extends to schools that have previously received funding under Round 1, so if you were successful in that round, you can apply for funding under Round 2 as well.

Round 2 emphasizes a needs-based approach, with a focus on supporting schools experiencing the most significant disadvantage. Funding priorities include:

- Schools with a low Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA).
- Schools that have not received significant capital funding (\$250,000 or greater) in the past two years.
- Schools catering to disadvantaged students, including special schools and schools with a majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

FUNDING SPECIFICATIONS

Schools can only submit one application each. Each project must seek a minimum of \$250,000 (excluding GST). There is no maximum funding limit specified. The guidelines state that the total cost of the project may include funding contributions from the school or the relevant state or territory government.

Given there is no upper limit specified, emphasis must once again be placed on contacting your relevant Department of Education administrators to discuss your project eligibility/funding arrangements early to determine the size/scope of your proposal.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IN EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

The School's Upgrade Fund Round 2 allows for technology expenses in eligible infrastructure projects. Schools can leverage this opportunity to modernise learning environments with innovative technology. This might include integrating interactive smartboards in classrooms, setting up advanced computer labs for enhanced STEM learning, or incorporating digital media resources in libraries.

Again, it is crucial to discuss eligibility with your relevant Department of Education before beginning your application to determine exactly what your project will incorporate.

APPLICATION PROCESS: NAVIGATING THE STEPS

The application window opened on 31 October 2023 and closes at 11:59 pm AEDT on 29 February 2024. Applications are to be submitted online and must be endorsed by the respective state or territory's department of education. A detailed project plan, including cost estimates and the projected impact on the school community, is a requisite part of the application.

PROJECT PLANNING: A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Schools considering applying for the fund should undertake thorough project planning. This involves identifying the most pressing infrastructural needs, assessing how these needs align with the educational objectives of the school, and determining

how the proposed project would enhance the overall learning environment. The planning phase should also include a budget analysis, ensuring that the project costs align with the funding limits and requirements.

Given the timing of the release of Round 2 and the tight application timeline, schools already planning upgrades for 2024-25 are well-positioned to utilise this funding to supplement and expand the scope of projects already in the pipeline.

THE ROLE OF COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Successful implementation of funded projects often hinges on effective collaboration and community engagement. Schools should consider involving teachers, students, and the broader community in the planning process. This inclusive approach can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the needs and aspirations of the school community, which can be instrumental in shaping a successful application.

You might consider needs analyses or school community consultation/reports as supporting evidence in your submission.

Schools must balance their aspirations with practical considerations. This includes aligning project goals with available resources, understanding the long-term maintenance requirements of new infrastructure, and ensuring that the proposed improvements are sustainable and beneficial overall.

IN SUMMARY

It is essential to approach your application to the Schools Upgrade Fund Round 2 with careful thought and strategic planning, particularly given the timeline of this funding. Success hinges on a school's ability to align its project with the fund's objectives, manage the complexities of large-scale infrastructural development, and enhance the learning experiences of its students.

This fund represents a significant component of the Federal Government's commitment to improving educational infrastructure. For schools, it represents a chance to upgrade their facilities in a manner that aligns with current and future educational needs.

Grant Bites: 2023 Year End Checklist

Tom Bligh



As the year draws to a close and the festive season approaches, it is a great time to take stock of your grants portfolio, your achievements in 2023 and prepare for the upcoming year. Not just patting yourself on the back; critically evaluating the year that was and getting all your ducks in a row to ensure that you are ready to hit the ground running in 2024. Run through the 12 Days of Grants-mas below to put a bow on your grants for 2023 start fresh next year!

1: REFLECTING ON THE YEAR'S SUCCESSES AND LEARNINGS

Before diving into the preparations for 2024, take a moment to reflect on the past year. What were your major successes? Which areas need improvement? Write out a list of five for each. Maybe your big success wasn't a million-dollar grant, but just getting a few applications in on time, or contacting a funder to discuss a project. Your areas of improvement could be refining your grant-seeking strategy to be more proactive and less reactive in 2024, so you have ample time to prepare quality applications (we have a great article in this issue that can support this – check out 'Getting on the Nice List – Creating a Grants Calendar')

2: THANK YOUR DONORS AND SPONSORS

The end of the year is an ideal time to thank your funders, particularly any Foundations or individuals who have supported you throughout the year. Personalised thank-you messages, impact reports, and thoughtful gestures can go a long way in maintaining and nurturing these crucial relationships.

3: ORGANISE ACQUITTAL MATERIAL

Ensure that all your acquittal reports and documentation are up-to-date and in order. This includes financial reports, project updates, and any other requirements that your grant providers specify (like photos or acknowledgements on social media). Being organised in this area demonstrates your accountability and increases the likelihood of future funding.

4: KEEP PROJECTS ON TRACK

While the festive season is filled with distractions, it is important to keep your projects on track. This might involve setting clear goals for the holiday period, scheduling work in advance, or delegating tasks effectively. Leave as few hangovers for 2024 as possible.

5. REVIEW AND UPDATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Ensure that all your grant-related policies and procedures and filing conventions are up to date. This can include reviewing your organisation's grant management and your record-keeping systems. Clean up folders, emails, documents, etc; a good, old-fashioned house clean!

6: PLANNING FOR THE NEW YEAR

Use this time to plan your grant-seeking activities for the next year. This includes identifying potential grant opportunities, setting goals, and creating a calendar of grant application deadlines.

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING:

Plan for any grants-related training or professional development opportunities for you and your team in the upcoming year. Staying updated with the latest trends and best practices in grant seeking and administration can enhance your team's effectiveness.

8: SELF-CARE AND TEAM APPRECIATION

Do not forget the importance of self-care and team appreciation. The end of the year is a perfect time to acknowledge your hard work and the hard work of your team!

The end of the year is a bustling time, but with proper planning and organisation, you can ensure that your grant-seeking activities are well-prepared to withstand festive distractions. By following these steps and utilising this practical checklist, you can wrap up your year on a positive note and set the stage for a prosperous 2024.

Creating your Grants Calendar for 2024 - Getting on The Nice List

Mitch Gresham

Developing a calendar for your grant-seeking activities over the upcoming year is important for several reasons, including grant and program awareness, strategic planning, and even resource allocation when it comes time to apply.

SO, WHAT IS A GRANT CALENDAR?

- A grant calendar can take many forms, structures, or designs, but in essence, is a planning tool that organisations of any size or type used to keep track of upcoming grant opportunities, deadlines, and key milestones that relate to grants of interest.
- The calendar will typically cover a specific period, such as a fiscal year, a calendar year, or even a multi-year period, depending on the organisation and its grant-seeking efforts.

HOW GRANT CALENDARS CAN BE BENEFICIAL?

1. Strategic planning - A grants calendar will allow an organisation to plan out its funding activities and highlight grants of interest, and their opening rounds. Being aware of grant application deadlines is extremely important in creating a strong, robust submission that gives you the best chance of capturing funding.
2. Resource Allocation - Knowing the deadlines for grants can help organisations identify upcoming grant opportunities, while also allowing them to plan their staff's time and effort effectively and efficiently, ensuring they can prepare high-quality grant applications.
 - TIP: Make sure when preparing a grant application to allow ample time to collect extra/additional information and documents. Extra information such as Letters of Board/CEO Approval, or specific budgets can take time to craft and acquire, so do not leave these until the day before!
3. Enhanced collaboration - Large organisations, or those with multiple departments or teams involved in grant-seeking activities all benefit from grant calendars. It can ensure that everyone is on the same page, provides a centralised resource, and allows different departments to collaborate on upcoming programs and funding initiatives.



4. Diversification of funding sources - relying on a single source of funding either for a project or as an organisation, can be risky and leaves you vulnerable to changes in funding and budgets. A grants calendar enables organisations to diversify their funding sources, by highlighting and pursuing grants from various funders, including Federal, State, and Local governments, charitable/philanthropic foundations, and even corporations. This diversification builds financial stability and resilience.

CREATING YOUR GRANT CALENDAR

Building your grants calendar involves a step-by-step systematic and strategic planning process, but don't let that put you off building one. A strong grants calendar can be highly beneficial for pursuing funding in the future. Although every organisation will have differing funding priorities and projects that need funding, the premise for crafting your grant calendar is much the same across the board.

1. Define and determine your organisation's goals and priorities - Identify the types of projects or initiatives that require funding.
2. Conduct Research - Highlight potential funding sources, including government agencies, private foundations, and corporate entities. Use online databases, grant registries, and funding opportunity announcements to research available and upcoming grants.
 - Some useful FREE grant resources include:
 - Business.gov.au's [Grant Finder](#) - Free Resource, option to filter by state/industry/type of funding/grant status.
 - State Specific Grant Registries - Each Australian State has a free grants database, with current, closed, and upcoming grants specific to the state or region where the project is being undertaken.
3. Gather information on relevant grants - Collect detailed information about each opportunity - including eligibility criteria, funding amounts, application opening dates/deadlines, as well as a brief program overview.
4. Create a Spreadsheet or calendar - Be Creative! Design a resource that encapsulates all of the relevant grant programs and information, an easy-to-read resource accessible to anyone interested in grant-seeking in your company.
 - You can even categorise grants based on the type of funding, focus areas, or even geographic implementation.
5. Regularly update and share the calendar - Regularly review your calendar and update any current grants, or new grants relevant to your priorities.
 - Be sure to share this with your organisation and collaborate with others. Other grant seekers may be aware of programs you were not aware of or may have ideas beneficial to the calendar.
 - Don't forget to update the stage and status of specific programs, whether an application has been submitted, or still needs to be.



Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive grants calendar is a pivotal and essential step for organisations seeking funding to support their projects. A well-organised grants calendar can serve as an effective tool to streamline the grant-seeking process and can maximise resource allocation.

By diligently tracking deadlines, requirements, and potential funding sources, organisations can position themselves for success in the competitive landscape of grant funding and applications. Now that you're armed with the tools to create a strong grants calendar, go get funded!

From Rejection to Resilience: A Guide to Bouncing Back After a Grant Denial

Mitch Gresham

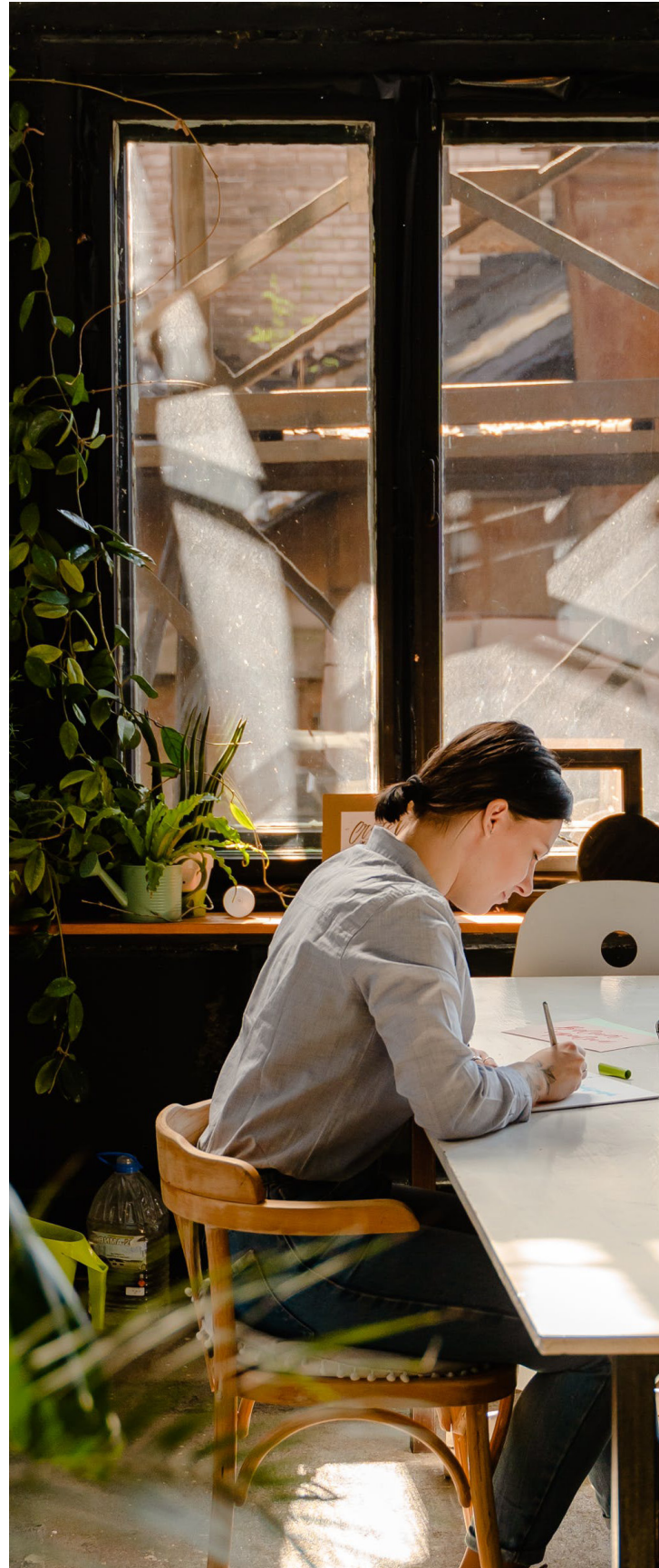
Receiving the news of a rejected grant application that you spent so much time crafting, can be disheartening, leaving you with a sense of disappointment and uncertainty about the future of your project without this funding. Unfortunately, many who are denied funding simply accept the fate of their application as the end of the road.

If there's one thing to remember, it is that competitive grant programs are well, competitive! Your submission may tick all of the boxes that the funder requires, and have a highly developed proposal, but still get rejected.

However, it is crucial to remember that a grant rejection is certainly not the end, but more an opportunity for growth, reflection, and redirection. In this article, we'll explore constructive ways to navigate the aftermath of a grant denial and how to turn it into a stepping stone toward future success.

1. GRANT AWARDS AREN'T SECURED THROUGH PITY PARTIES — EMBRACE THE RIGHT MINDSET FOR SUCCESS!

Subsequent success starts with adopting the appropriate mindset. It's normal to feel some level of disappointment with a negative funding decision on an application for which you have devoted countless hours of time and energy! However, once you are over the initial disappointment, your future success hinges on taking a more optimistic perspective. There are many valuable lessons to take away from the process, but the decision-makers must have the appropriate mindset to move forward. Start with the assumption that there are lessons to be learned and begin analysing the process and outcome to collect feedback. At this point, it is critical to take the perspective of an outsider and view your original proposal through an analytical lens. Once you identify the 'weak points' of your original submission and where the proposal could be further developed, you can begin to consider the next steps and move forward with your grant-seeking efforts.



2. ANALYSING AND DECODING FEEDBACK

How do you figure out where the original proposal went wrong? Where are your areas of improvement? Your greatest asset at this stage, if available, is feedback directly from the team/funder that reviewed your funding application. Many grantmaking organisations provide reviewer feedback, commentary, and scoring to applicants.

Commentary directly from the reviewer removes a lot of the guesswork that you may encounter when trying to assess your proposal on your own. Further, it gives insight into how a reviewer approaches a scoring process, and how they mark against the criteria, which can be extremely valuable information for any future proposals you will develop.

Make a list of the gaps and weaknesses that the reviewer identified and begin creating strategies around addressing these areas. Some of the gaps in your application could be simply missing/unclear information such as a forgotten budget attachment or an incomplete board/CEO letter of approval. Sometimes what is clear to the reviewers and those marking submissions, may not make sense to an outsider, the applicant. In other cases, the reviewer may be pointing to deeper-rooted, broader issues that require you to go back and develop your project in greater detail.

- Perhaps they identified a potential challenge that would require you to build a mitigation strategy into the project plan.

In any case, analysing the reviewer feedback and incorporating it into your future project plans and proposals will put you in a good position to secure funding for your project down the road!

If reviewer commentary and feedback are not automatically supplied to you with the funding decision, you should explicitly request it from the grantmaker. Asking in either an email or even calling them directly will help you obtain critical feedback that is essential in boosting future applications.

3. REVISITING YOUR PROPOSAL WITH REVIEWER FEEDBACK

After reflecting on your grant proposal and analysing feedback and where your submission could be improved, it is a good idea to re-read your proposal. Incorporating reviewer feedback into your submission is a strategic approach to refine and enhance future proposals.

Take a proactive stance in addressing the identified weaknesses, whether they pertain to project clarity, budget details, or overall impact. Use this feedback to construct your narrative to better

align with the expectations of the grantmaker.

Another way to improve future submissions is by collaborating with colleagues or industry experts to gain additional insights.

By acknowledging and addressing the feedback, you not only demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement, but also position yourself for future success by presenting a stronger, more polished, and refined proposal. Remember, the integration of reviewer feedback is not just about rectifying past errors but also evolving and refining your approach, turning setbacks into stepping stones toward achieving your grant-seeking goals.

4. REEVALUATING YOUR TIMELINE AND FUNDING GOALS

Grant applications often come with lengthy timelines and specific project/submission deadlines. If your proposal was contingent on the receipt of a grant, it may be time to reevaluate and adjust your project timeline. Consider breaking down your project into smaller phases that are more manageable with existing resources.

This adaptive approach not only allows you to progress with your narrative despite the initial setback but can better position your project for future funding opportunities.

Further, relying solely on grant funding from a single source for your project and/or organisational needs can be quite risky. Exploring and diversifying your funding opportunities is a good way to stay flexible in times of setbacks. Consider looking at not only grants, but also tax incentives, loans, and even grant-loan combos as other streams of funding. This not only enhances your financial stability but also reduces the impact and increases resilience in the face of a grant rejection.

5. EMBRACING THE NEXT CHAPTER

While a grant rejection may feel like a roadblock and can be even more disappointing if you are new in your grant-seeking journey, it's essential to view this as a pivoting point - a moment that can propel your project toward the next chapter. By embracing the emotions, seeking feedback, and diversifying your funding strategy, you better position yourself and your organisation for future success.

Remember, the most successful individuals and organisations have encountered setbacks along the way. What sets them apart from the rest is their ability to adapt, learn, and persevere. So, if you were unsuccessful in your grant submission, it is far from over. It is just the beginning of a new and potentially even more exciting chapter in your organisation's story!

Tech the halls – Top 10 Tech & Innovation Programs Upcoming/ Recurring in 2024

Mitch Gresham

In the dynamic and ever-changing landscape of funding and support in Australia, grants serve as catalysts for innovation, community development, and sustainability initiatives.

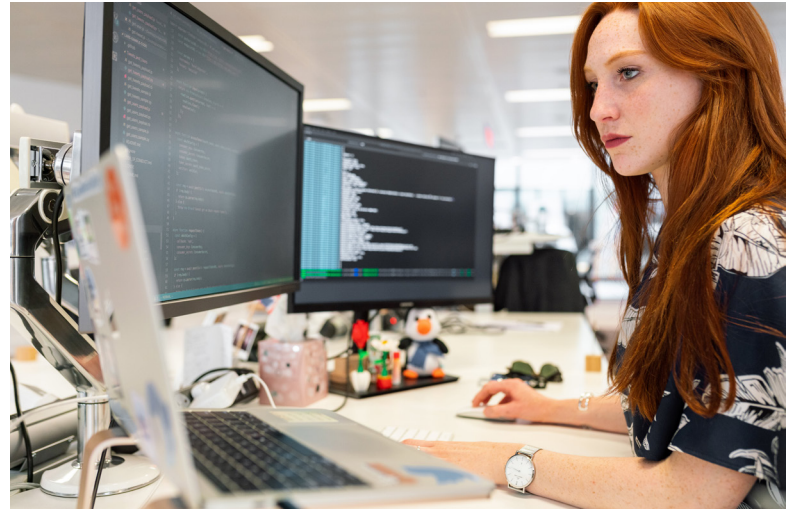
As we step into 2024, the anticipation for new and upcoming funding opportunities for grant-seekers is palpable. As we uncover the top ten funding programs that are either ongoing or upcoming this year, we encourage you to harness the potential of these programs and watch this space for exciting opportunities! Starting with some upcoming grant programs, these initiatives are yet to be released, but are exciting in the world of grants, and certainly are not to be missed if you're a grant-seeker or creating your 2024 grants calendar.

1. NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION FUND (NRF)

- \$15 Billion total allocation; Grant Awards TBD
- Starting strong with the NRF, this program will provide finance for projects that diversify and transform Australia's industry and economy. Investments will be made under the seven key priority areas of the fund, including renewables and low emission technologies, medical science, and transport. Current programs released under the fund include the Industry Growth Program, and the Powering the Regions Fund. A total of \$15 billion worth of investment over seven years from 2023-24 will be made, so watch this space for upcoming programs.

2. CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES CHALLENGE PROGRAM

- \$40 million total allocation, Grant Awards TBD
- This program will drive greater awareness and uptake of quantum technologies in Australia by creating stronger ties between quantum researchers, companies, industry, and



other parts of society. Consultations recently closed for this program, with further information about funding to be released in 2024.

3. DRIVING THE NATION

- \$500 million total allocation; Grant Awards for 2024 TBD
- This program provides funding to enable the demonstration and deployment of new zero-emissions vehicle technologies. The 2023 round was centred round Innovations in EV charging and management of public charging. Details for the 2024 round are yet to be released.

4. RESEARCH DATA INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVE

- \$100 million total allocation; Grants Awards up to \$2.5 million.
- This program, running from 2021-22 to 2031-32, will fund the creation or extension of national research data infrastructure, with a focus on data registries, biobanks, and data linkage platforms to support Australian medical research.

5. INTELLIGENCE CHALLENGES GRANT PROGRAM – ROUND 4

- Grant Awards \$400,000 - \$800,000
- The Intelligence Challenges grant program falls under the National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants program. Round 4 of the program will commence sometime in 2024, with priority areas including covert collection challenges, space-based challenges, and cyber security and offensive cyber challenges. Program opening and closing dates, as well as specific grant amounts, are yet to be realised.

These following programs have a multi-year or ongoing deadline, meaning applications are open anytime, with no set deadline. These programs are beneficial to keep in mind when starting your grant-seeking efforts. With no set deadline, you will be able to craft a compelling application with the required attachments, creating a strong submission in the eyes of the funders. So, keep these on your radar!

1. AUSTRALIAN CARBON CREDIT UNIT SCHEME

- \$1.55 billion total allocation; Grant Awards Vary
- Formerly known as the Emissions Reduction Fund, the ACCU scheme offers landholders, communities, and businesses the opportunity to run projects in Australia that avoid the release of greenhouse gas emissions or remove and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. A wide range of activities are eligible under the scheme through 2 streams, Opportunities for Industry, and Opportunities for the land sector.

2. POWERING THE REGIONS FUND – SAFEGUARD TRANSFORMATION STREAM

- \$600 million total allocation; Grant Awards - \$500,000 - \$50,000,000
- This program offers grants to trade-exposed facilities to reduce their emissions and contribute to meeting Australia's emissions reduction targets. The Powering the Regions Fund is part of the Australian Government's Powering Australia Plan for Australia to become a renewable energy superpower and reduce our emissions to net zero by 2050.

3. COMMUNITY CHILD CARE FUND

- \$84 million total allocation; Grant Awards to be released first-half of 2024.
- The Community Child Care Fund provides a range of grants for childcare services. The objective of the CCCF is to support childcare services to address barriers to childcare participation, particularly targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable families and communities. Round 4 of the program is forecasted to be released in the first half of 2024. So, make sure to keep your eyes peeled.

4. INDUSTRY GROWTH PROGRAM

- \$392 million total allocation; Grant Awards \$50,000 - \$5,000,000
- Announced earlier this year in the Australian Government's Federal Budget, the Industry Growth Program will provide advice and matched grant funding for Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and startups, to commercialise their ideas and grow their businesses.
- Applicants under the program will be matched with an Industry Growth Program Adviser, to provide tailored business advice. Once receiving the tailored advice, applicants may be eligible to apply for grants between \$50,000 to \$5,000,000

5. REGIONAL PRECINCTS AND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

- \$600 million total Allocation; Grant Awards \$500,000 - \$50,000,000
- The Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (rPPP) seeks to support transformative investment in regional, rural, and remote Australia based on the principles of unifying regional places, growing economies, and serving communities. The rPPP is an always open grants process that will provide funding to support both precinct development proposals and the delivery of construction-ready precinct projects.

As we conclude our exploration of the top 10 grants for innovation and technology in 2024, it's evident that the landscape for funding opportunities is rich with possibilities. Those looking at grants and funding should be excited to continue, or even start their grant-seeking journeys into the new year, with Initiatives focused on lowering emissions, building communities and the economy, and boosting Australia's innovation sector into the new age. These grants not only provide financial support but also serve as catalysts for advancements, pushing the boundaries of what's possible in the realm of innovation and technology. So, stay inspired, stay innovative, and may your journey in grant-seeking lead to remarkable achievements in the ever-evolving landscape of technology and innovation.

2023 – 2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy: An Overview

Tom Bligh



The Australian Government's \$586.9 million 2023-2030 Cyber Security Strategy (The Strategy) was released on 22 November 2023. The strategy represents the Government's proposed roadmap for a comprehensive, long-term plan to enhance national cyber resilience and security and to position Australia as a world leader in cyber security by 2030.

The Strategy identifies six 'shields' as central elements to enhance cyber security and resilience and achieve the goals above. These shields are:

1. **Strong Businesses and Citizens:** Ensuring businesses and citizens are well-protected from cyber threats and can quickly recover from cyber-attacks.
2. **Safe Technology:** Guaranteeing that digital products and services in Australia are safe, secure, and fit for purpose.
3. **World-Class Threat Sharing and Blocking:** Providing access to real-time threat data and the capability to block threats effectively at scale.

4. **Protected Critical Infrastructure:** Strengthening critical infrastructure and essential government systems to withstand and recover from cyber-attacks.
5. **Sovereign Capabilities:** Developing a robust cyber industry with a diverse and professional cyber workforce, enhancing Australia's cyber capabilities.
6. **Resilient Region and Global Leadership:** Promoting cyber resilience in the region and leading globally, shaping international cyber norms and standards.

Here's a high-level overview of the key components of The Strategy and how investment in key areas will reinforce the six 'shields' to achieve the government's long-term goals for cyber-resilience in Australia.

SUPPORTING SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES

The Strategy highlights the importance of Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs) to Australia's economy, contributing significantly to the GDP and employing a substantial portion of the workforce. Particularly how these businesses often struggle with cyber security due to limited resources and expertise. To address this, the government will introduce a cyber health check program offering free assessments of cyber security maturity, along with educational tools to improve cyber resilience. This initiative aims to enable SMBs to better understand and manage cyber risks, reducing recovery time and costs from cyber incidents.

The new 'Small Business Cyber Security Resilience Service' will serve as a one-stop-shop, providing advice on building cyber security capabilities and helping businesses recover from incidents. This service will be staffed by professionals well-versed in cyber security and mental health, offering assistance tailored to the specific needs of small businesses.

COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM (COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS)

The Strategy also announced an upcoming, new grant program for community organisations aimed at fostering the development of customised cyber awareness campaigns for vulnerable populations. This initiative aims to reach out to a wide array of groups, focusing on the specific needs of remote and regional communities, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, First Nations communities, the youth, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and the neurodiverse.

The program will be designed to support projects and organisations working in close collaboration with local community leaders, who will play a crucial role in crafting strategies and creating materials that resonate with their respective communities. This collaborative effort is not just about spreading awareness but also about ensuring the delivery of clear and consistent advice.

DISRUPTING AND DETERRING CYBER THREATS

The Strategy outlines plans to bolster the capabilities of domestic law enforcement and offensive cyber activities, making Australia a harder target for cybercriminals. This includes expanding the Australian Federal Police's (AFP) role in Operation Aquila (the AFP- and Australian Signals Directorate (ASD)-led joint standing operation aimed at investigating and

What are Offensive Cyber Operations?

From the Australian Signals Directorate Website on Offensive Cyber Operations: "The Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) uses its offensive cyber capability against various adversaries to protect Australians and Australia's national interests within the legal framework and authorisation of the Australian Government. Offensive cyber operations involve a broad range of offshore activities designed to deter, disrupt, degrade and deny adversaries in support of Government national security priorities.

We use our offensive cyber capabilities to prevent and disrupt to malicious cyber intrusions and attacks."

disrupting criminal syndicates) and continuing ASD's Project REDSPICE to enhance offensive cyber capabilities. The Strategy also emphasises the importance of international collaboration to combat cybercrime effectively.

ADDRESSING THE RANSOMWARE BUSINESS MODEL

Ransomware is identified within The Strategy as one of the most significant and disruptive cyber threats facing the country today. The Strategy's approach includes:

- Enhance the Visibility of the Ransomware Threat
 - Develop early warning systems for timely government support against ransomware attacks.
 - Co-design legislative options for mandatory, no-fault ransomware reporting by businesses.
 - Share anonymized ransomware trend data with industry and community for better resilience.
- Provide Clear Guidance on How to Respond to Ransomware
 - Strongly discourage paying ransoms to cybercriminals due to risks and uncertainties.
 - Create a ransomware playbook for guidance on preparing for and responding to ransom demands.
 - Drive Global Counter-Ransomware Operations
- Lead global efforts against ransomware as Chair of the International Counter Ransomware Taskforce.
 - Work with international partners to discourage ransom payments and regulate cryptocurrency use.
 - Reform laws related to anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing for digital transactions.

CLEAR CYBER GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES

The government recognises the need for clearer cyber governance guidance for businesses. Initiatives will include publishing an overview of corporate obligations for critical infrastructure owners and operators and establishing a Cyber Incident Review Board, drawing on international and domestic models, including the United States' Cyber Safety Review Board and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau. This board will conduct post-incident reviews to uplift collective cyber security and share best practices with the business community.

SIMPLIFYING POST-INCIDENT SUPPORT

Post-incident support is crucial for rapid recovery. The government will simplify incident reporting through a single reporting portal and promote trusted support after an incident. This includes developing a code of practice for incident response providers to ensure consistent service quality.

SECURING IDENTITIES AND ASSISTING IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS

This will involve the expansion of the Digital ID program to reduce risks of identity theft and fraud. Additional funding will be provided for victim support services, enhancing the assistance available to individuals affected by identity crime.

TO SUM IT UP...

The Strategy is ambitious in its scope and vision but leaves a handful of critical questions unanswered. There is a distinct lack of clarity on specific funding allocations and detailed timelines for the implementation of its key initiatives. This is unlikely to be an oversight though, and we fully expect more clarity at budget time. One would hope that the \$589 million, seven-year allocation (around \$84 million per year) is an initial announcement and that continued, mature investment strategies surround the implementation of The Strategy in years to come.

Alas, it is hard to be optimistic at this stage given this vagueness with real concerns evident around the practical execution of The Strategy and the measurable impact of its programs. Key risks to success include the potential for underfunding critical areas, the challenge of effectively coordinating efforts across diverse sectors and the risk of not keeping pace with the rapidly evolving nature of cyber threats (particularly given the rapid rise of AI in the consumer market).

Despite these concerns, the strategy marks an encouraging step forward. It thoughtfully addresses the need for strengthening Australia's cyber resilience through the 'six shields' approach, particularly in enhancing protection for businesses and critical infrastructure. The emphasis on global cooperation and leadership in combating cybercrime demonstrates a forward-thinking approach. The focus on developing sovereign cyber capabilities and a professional cyber workforce is a powerful strategic move towards building long-term resilience.

This strategy lays a foundational framework for a more secure digital future for Australia, though its success will depend on tangible, measurable outcomes as well as details and actions that follow in the coming years.



DID YOU KNOW... GRANTS OFFICE IS GLOBAL?

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