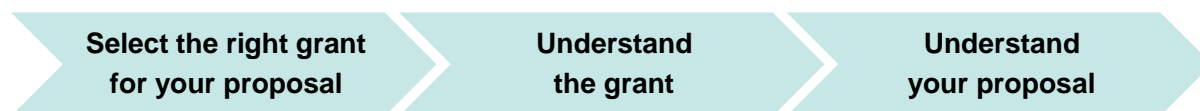


Preparing your application

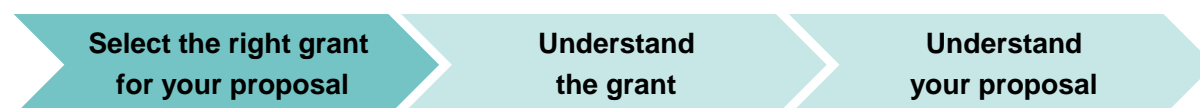
Before you begin writing your grant application, there are a few essential steps to take to set yourself up for success. The groundwork you lay before you start writing your application will help you craft a compelling, well-aligned proposal that resonates with your chosen funding body.



These key points guide you through selecting the right grant for your proposal, understanding the grant's goals and criteria, and thoroughly knowing your own proposal and its potential impact. Investing time in these preparatory stages will strengthen your application and ensure it aligns with the goals and priorities of the grant.

Once you have clarity about these points, you will be able to clearly explain how your proposal aligns with the grants.

Select the right grant for your proposal



Embarking on the journey of applying for a grant can be both exciting and daunting. It is natural to feel an urgency to secure funding, but before you invest time into crafting an application, first, confirm that you are pursuing the right grant for your proposal, as misalignment can lead to wasted effort and missed opportunities.

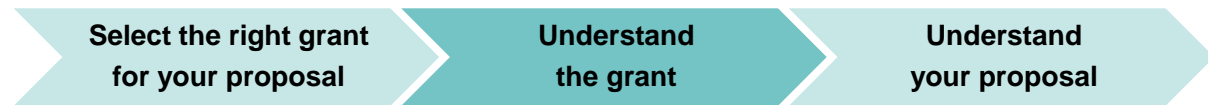
Your first step is to confirm you are applying for the right grant in the first place. This requires a thorough review of available guidelines and information to gain a clear understanding of the grant's:

- Aims
- Objectives
- Priorities
- Cohorts
- Outcomes
- Limitations
- Criteria

While it can be tempting to mould your existing program or concept to fit a grant opportunity, resist the urge to force a square peg into a round hole by either leaving your proposal unchanged despite misalignment or adjusting it unnaturally. Instead, ensure your proposal is a genuine fit for the funding criteria, or, you can create a new proposal that fits the grant.

It is not uncommon to see compelling applications for great programs that simply (and sadly) do not fit the grant's specific focus. Taking the time to find the right match will ensure your first step is in the right direction.

Understand the grant



Grants may become available at any given time and grant rounds may close quickly. It is essential that you are fully prepared and organised so you can apply for opportunities as soon as they become available.

Successful grant applications rely on several important elements. You must:

- familiarise yourself with the grant funding guidelines, process requirements and application form
- read any accompanying documents (e.g., Program Information and Guidelines, FAQs, resource page, and factsheets)
- check the eligibility criteria
- meet the grant eligibility criteria
- have a thorough understanding of the grant requirements, terms and conditions, project approval timelines, and the supporting documents required
- allow enough time to prepare, write and review your grant application well ahead of the closing date.

How will your application be assessed?

Knowing how your application will be assessed is crucial in crafting a strong, targeted proposal that resonates with assessors. By understanding the assessment process, you can structure your application to directly address each stage of the review, from establishing eligibility to demonstrating alignment with local priorities and needs. This approach allows you to effectively communicate how your project meets the grant criteria and delivers value for money, improving the strength of your application.

The Department of Youth Justice applications go through a 4-stage assessment process:

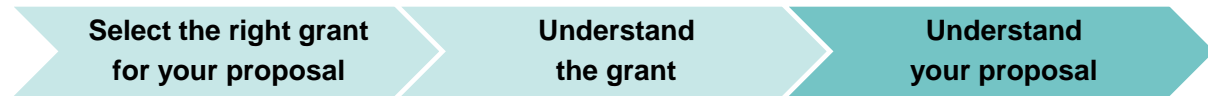
1. **Eligibility:** Has the applicant provided all the legal documentation needed to verify they are an eligible organisation?
2. **Shortlisting:** Has the application demonstrated an alignment to the funding criteria? Are there any risks the panels need to consider?
3. **Regional assessment:** Does the application address local priorities and needs?
4. **Central moderation:** Do all the prioritised applications fit within the budget available? Are there any statewide priorities that need to be considered?

Eligible applications that progress to an assessment panel will go through a merit-based assessment process and review of each application against the below criteria:

- **Addressing the identified areas of community concern in response to youth crime**
 - How strongly the proposed project meets an identified area of concern, demonstrates local partnerships, and shows consultation with relevant stakeholders including First Nations stakeholders.
- **Benefits and delivery of the project**
 - The application is inclusive, based on sound evidence, clearly outlines how the project is to be delivered and has tangible link to outcomes intended to be achieved.
- **Value for money/cost effectiveness**

- The extent to which the project has been costed realistically (including justification of budget items), provides value for money (as demonstrated in the project budget) and any in-kind contributions of project partners.

Understand your proposal



Before you start your grant application, consider how your proposal will translate into action and ensure you understand the fundamentals of what it is you are delivering.

Take the time to plan your response and determine a clear understanding of what it is, what it is trying to achieve and how that aligns with the funding criteria, and exactly how you will do that. This clarity is needed to so you can clearly communicate that alignment as part of your application.

Our [Program Design 101 resources](#) offer information and guides to help you not only design an appropriate programmatic response, but also to review and refine your existing programs. This includes using a [Program Logic Model](#) to help you identify gaps and opportunities for strengthening your program and enhancing its impact.

Grant assessment panels should be able to read your application and get a very clear understanding of the basic headlines of what, why, how, who and where.

You can ensure these points are covered by:

- **Thorough planning:** Take the time to plan and define your idea's objectives, strategies, and unique features.
 - How your idea aligns with the objectives of the grant program
 - How does it address community need?
- **Providing clarity:** You need to be able to answer key questions clearly and succinctly in your application.
 - What is your program about?
 - Where will it be delivered?
 - Who are your participants and how will you be receiving referrals?
 - Can you provide relevant and current evidence of community support of the program through Letters of Support, survey results, community meeting minutes etc?
 - If you have established partnerships, give specific, relevant names of organisations/services/businesses
 - How have you explicitly considered cultural safety?
 - How are you appropriate to deliver your intended program?
 - How is your organisation positioned to appropriately deliver your intended program?
 - How are you competitive in your sector?
- **Considering additional factors:** Think about budgeting, evaluation, sustainability, necessary certification and training, and risk management.

By incorporating these tips and understanding the basics of your program, you will be better equipped to create a compelling grant application.