

2026



Australian
Neighbourhood Houses
and Centres Association



SUPPORTING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

grant program

APPLICANT GUIDELINES



PROGRAM AIM

The Supporting Stronger Communities (SSC) grant program provides Neighbourhood and Community Houses and Centres (NCHC) the opportunity to access funds to **promote equality and inclusion in their local communities.**

TIMELINE

There will be **2 rounds of the grant program in 2026**. These rounds will be delivered within the following timeframes:

ROUND 18

Applications open:
Monday, 2nd February 2026

Applications close:
Monday, 2nd March 2026

Applicants notified of outcomes:
Early April 2026

ROUND 19

Applications open:
Monday, 20th July 2026

Applications close:
Monday, 24th August 2026

Applicants notified of outcomes:
Early October 2026



This grant program will seek to achieve national coverage across the total grant pool. As such, targets are set for the proportion of funding that will be allocated in each state per round.

The Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association (ANHCA), with the support of the **Sidney Myer Fund**, and **Helen Macpherson Smith Trust** are delivering this national program to the NCHC sector.

FUNDING



NCHCs can apply for
\$10,000 (GST Exclusive)
as a once-off payment for a project



All projects undertaken through this grant program will need to be completed within 6 months from the date they commenced.

Applicants are only able to receive funding **once every 2 years**.

WHO CAN'T APPLY

- Community organisations that are **not working in partnership with a NCHC**.
- NCHCs who have received a grant from the **SSC grant program in the last 2 years**.
- NCHCs who **have not completed their acquittal for previous SSC grants**.

WHO CAN APPLY

1

Neighbourhood and Community Houses and Centres need to be a **member of their state peak body** which is a member of the national peak body ANHCA. If you are unsure, contact your state peak body.

Community Centres South Australia (08) 8371 4622
communitycentressa.asn.au

Linkwest Western Australia
(08) 6164 9823
linkwest.asn.au

Local Community Services Association (NSW)
(02) 9660 2044
lcsansw.org.au

Neighbourhood Houses

Tasmania
(03) 6244 1615
nht.org.au

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

(03) 9602 1228
nhvic.org.au

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

info@ncq.org.au
ncq.org.au

2

Only one submission will be considered per Neighbourhood or Community House or Centre in each round.

In the case of organisations that manage multiple NCHCs, one application will be accepted from each separate NCHC.

3

This small grant program is available to allNCHCs located in Metropolitan areas or are located in **towns or cities with a population of more than 15,000 people**.

Small grants for applicants in rural and regional Australia are available through the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Strengthening Rural Communities program. This program prioritises applications from communities with fewer than 15,000 people.

ELIGIBILITY

Projects that are developed **in response to emerging community needs promoting equality and inclusion** can apply for funding through this grant program.

Existing programs can also apply for funding to **adapt or expand their program** providing it is clearly explained how the adaptations are required to meet emerging changing needs in the community.

You can apply for funding to cover costs associated with delivering projects which can include (and is not limited to):

- Wages for the staff required to deliver the project
- Equipment hire or purchase costs
- Hall hire costs for off site facilities
- Community training costs
- cultural workshops
- social engagement activities
- vocational training and skills development
- group workshops
- self-empowerment activities
- opportunities for social and economic participation
- activities that support independence and self-reliance
- work-readiness or educational tailored workshops
- support social and community engagement
- promote wellbeing
- community events
- one-on-one mentoring

WHAT CAN'T BE FUNDED

- **Existing programs** or programs that start before the funding is allocated with no changes
- **Ongoing core operational costs** (e.g. rent, regular wages, utilities)
- Programs that **don't clearly outline how they will promote equality and inclusion.**

While funding will not be given to existing programs with no changes, if you have demonstrated success with your program and wish to adapt or expand your program to meet the changing needs of the community, this would be considered eligible.

ASSESSMENT

Applicants will be **scored and ranked by the assessment panel based on the overall assessment against the following program criteria.** The panel consists of three members, including representatives from the funders.

[DOWNLOAD THE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC](#)

1 Eligibility Check

Once the round closes, there will be a week for eligibility checks and all eligible applications will be referred to an Evaluation panel for assessment.

2 Assessment

There will be **approximately 4 weeks** for the panel to meet, evaluate the applications and finalise the allocations.

3 Notification

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their grant applications once the panel has concluded with their assessments. If successful, applicants will receive a funding agreement to be signed and returned to receive payment.

All applicants will be notified via email as soon as possible following the assessment process.

PARTNERSHIPS

NCHCs can apply for this grant in partnership with other local Community groups, as long as the following criteria is met:

- The **Neighbourhood or Community House or Centre will take the lead role.** This will involve being the main contact for the project/program.
- They will also take on the **financial and legal responsibility** for the duration of the project/program.
- There will need to be evidence provided in the application form outlining the partnership arrangements (such as a letter of support). This will include clearly defining the roles of both partners and their contribution.



REPORTING

All successful applicants will be required to complete an online progress acquittal at the halfway point of their project, and a final acquittal upon completion.

These reports are an important part of ANHCA's grant accountability process, helping us understand how your project is progressing, any challenges you've faced, and the overall outcomes achieved. They should **only take 20 minutes to complete**. Each acquittal will ask questions about your project delivery, how participants were engaged, and any key learnings or reflections.



We'd love to see photos of your incredible community projects!

We strongly encourage every House/Centre to share photos that highlight your project, the people involved, and the wonderful outcomes of the grant.

Your photos can help the ANHCA team showcase the amazing impact of this grant across our national sector. By sharing your projects, you can inspire other Houses/Centres across Australia and possibly see your work featured on ANHCA's national platforms.

[**Preview the PROGRESS REPORT**](#)

[**Preview the FINAL ACQUITTAL**](#)

HOW TO APPLY

- 1** Review the **Guidelines** – confirm your project aligns with the grant purpose and target cohort.
- 2** Attend the **Info Session** – Tuesday, 17th February 1PM AEDT.
- 3** Consult Your **Community** – gather feedback from potential participants; get written support if possible.
- 4** Engage **Partners** (if relevant) – confirm their role and support.
- 5** **Preview the Application Form** – download and review.
- 6** Draft **offline** First – although you can now save online, we recommend preparing answers in Word first.
- 7** Use the **Assessment Rubric** – tailor your responses to score highly.
- 8** Review the **Budget Template**.
- 9** **Proofread** and Seek **Feedback** – have someone else review before submitting.

[**Click here to apply!**](#)

SUPPORT

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, a project idea or an application, Jarrah will be available throughout the year.

Call on 0428 964 817 or email jarrah@anhca.org

[**Info Session | Register Here**](#)