

OFFICIAL



Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Business Grants Hub

Sample application form

News Innovation Fund Grant Program

This document shows the questions included in the online application form for this program. It will help you prepare your responses and the mandatory attachments you need before you apply online.

Instructions

The online form captures the information required by the department to assess and manage your application for services and funding.

The first page of the application page contains the following instructions.

Internet browsers supported by the portal

We recommend that you use the following browsers for optimum functionality:

- On Windows: The latest versions of Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome and Microsoft Edge
- On Mac: The latest versions of Safari and Google Chrome

Selecting a program

On the following page you must enter your details and then select the program you are applying for.

Are you eligible to apply?

Before you start your application, you must answer some questions to self-assess whether you are eligible to apply.

Completing your application

The application consists of separate pages, shown in a navigation menu on the left hand side of the portal page. You can navigate between pages using the menu or the buttons at the bottom of each page.

A warning message may appear if you have not completed all of the mandatory questions or if there is an issue with information you have entered. If a question is not mandatory it will be clearly marked – Optional.

Saving your responses

Once you start your application, you can save your changes at any time by using the Save button.

To prevent you losing your work you should save often. The portal will time out after 30 minutes if you do not save. Typing or moving your mouse does not reset the time out.

You must use the Save and Continue button to validate the information on each page. A tick indicates a validated page.

You can modify saved responses up until you submit your application.

Participants

Once you start your application, you may invite others to assist, via the application summary page. To do this:

- select the Application summary link at the top of the page

- select the Participants button
- enter the details.

An email will be sent to the participant inviting them to access the application.

Saving with multiple participants

If more than one participant is working on your application at the same time you cannot save simultaneously. You should coordinate your entries to prevent losing your work.

Submitting your application

You must complete every page of the application before you can submit.

You must also read and agree to the declaration which advises you of your responsibilities.

Check all your answers before you submit your application. After you submit, it will no longer be editable.

Getting help

If you require further assistance completing your application, [contact us](#) by email or web chat or on 13 28 46.

A. Program selection

Before you start your application, we need to first identify what type of entity is applying.

If you are a trustee applying on behalf of a trust we will need details of both the trust and trustee.

Before you start you should have the following details ready if they are applicable to you:

- Australian Business Number (ABN)
or
- Australian Company Number (ACN)
- Indigenous Corporation Number
- Australian Registered Body Number
- Australian Registered Scheme Number
- Incorporated Association Registration
- Co-operative Registration Number
- Charity status
- Not for profit status.

Where applicable, international organisations will need to provide:

- country of registration
- registration number.

A.1. Program selection

You must select from a drop-down menu the program that you are applying for. If you have been provided with an Invitation code, you will be able to enter it here which will select the program for you.

- Field 1 select - News Innovation Fund
- Field 2 select - News Innovation Fund

When you have selected the program, the following text will appear.

The News Innovation Fund (the program) will run over two financial years from 2026-27 to 2027-28.

The grant opportunity was announced as part of the [News Media Assistance Program \(News MAP\)](#) to support public interest journalism and safeguard media diversity in Australia. Up to \$31.5 million is available for this grant opportunity.

The objectives of the program are:

- encourage innovation in business practices to support and improve the capacity of Australian news producers
- diversify avenues of support for Australian digital news producers, through commercial means
- support Australian news producers to produce core news in the face of disruption.

The maximum grant amount is \$9,000,000 and the minimum is \$10,000.

News Innovation Fund application requirements

The program will have two streams. Eligible applicants can apply for funding for activities under one of the two streams.

You should read the [grant opportunity guidelines](#) and [sample grant agreement](#) before filling out this application. We recommend you keep the guidelines open as you are completing your application so you can refer to them when providing your responses.

You may submit your application at any time up until 5.00pm AEST on the day applications close for submissions. Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.

To prevent you losing your work you should save often. The portal will time out after 30 minutes if you do not save. Typing or moving your mouse does not reset the time out.

If more than one participant is working on your application at the same time you cannot save simultaneously. You should coordinate your entries to prevent losing your work.

Sample

B. Eligibility

We will ask you the following questions to establish your eligibility for the News Innovation Fund grant opportunity.

Select which type of entity you are:

- an entity, incorporated in Australia
- an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth)
- a company limited by guarantee
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an incorporated association
- a co-operative
- a partnership
- an incorporated not for profit organisation or registered charity
- a sole trader
- none of the above.

You must select one of the eligible options from a drop down menu to proceed to next question.

Which stream of the News Innovation Fund grant opportunity are you applying under?

- *Journalism Production Stream*
- *Organisational Support Stream*

Select from the drop-down list to proceed to the next question.

Are you registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)?

You must answer yes to proceed to next question.

Do you have an account with an Australian financial institution?

You must answer yes to proceed to next question.

Will your project be undertaken in Australia?

You must answer yes to proceed to next question.

Are you a foreign controlled Australian entity (section 820-780 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997)?

You must answer no to proceed to next question.

Are you affiliated with a foreign government, political party, union, financial institution, non-government organisation, or policy lobby group where that affiliation would influence or might be seen to influence, the content produced by the applicant?

You must answer no to proceed to next question.

Is your organisation wholly or in part controlled by another applicant organisation?

You must answer no to proceed to next question.

Will your project only include **new** activity that expands or transforms the production and provision of core news content distributed digitally including new reporting in under-

News Innovation Fund application requirements

represented areas, or the commercial sustainability of Australian digital core news producers, or the internal capacity, capability and resources of an Australian digital core news business?

You must answer yes to proceed to next section.

Type of organisation applying for the grant:

- *Applying as a news organisation*
- *Applying as an enabling organisation*

Select one option from the drop-down list to proceed to the next question.

If applying as a news organisation, can you provide evidence that your *primary purpose is the creation and distribution of digital core news content or you have been a successful grantee under the News Media Relief Program or Journalism Assistance Fund?*

- *Yes*
- *No*

You must answer 'Yes' to proceed to next question.

If applying as an enabling organisation, can you confirm that you have previously provided enabling support services to Australian news organisations within the last 5 years, or that your organisation has capacity to provide these services?

- *Yes*
- *No*

You must answer 'Yes' to proceed to next question.

C. Applicant address

C.1. Applicant street address

You must provide your street address.

When you start typing the address in the field you can select the correct one from the drop down list that appears. If it is not there you can enter manually.

C.2. Applicant postal address

You must provide your postal address.

When you start typing the address in the field you can select the correct one from the drop down list that appears. If it is not there you can enter manually.

Sample

D. Key contacts

You must provide the details of a primary contact for your application.

The primary contact is the person authorised to act on behalf of the applicant and we send all email correspondence to this person. If you are not the primary contact, we will send an email to this person to invite them to register as a participant in the application. It is important that they register, or our emails will not be received. We recommend you let them know this.

If these details change, inform us as soon as possible so emails can be redirected.

If this application is successful, the primary contact will also need to nominate an authorised signatory to accept an agreement with the Commonwealth. The primary contact will not be able to accept an agreement unless they invite themselves to be the authorised signatory as well.

Primary contact

- Title (optional)
- Given name
- Family name
- Job title
- Phone number
- Email address
- Relationship to applicant

Authorised signatory

- Title (optional)
- Given name
- Family name
- Phone number
- Email address

E. About your organisation

We collect the following data from all applicants. We use this data to better understand your organisation and to help us develop better policies and programs.

E.1. Latest financial year figures

Values must be that of the entity applying (the 'applicant'), regardless of whether the entity belongs to a consolidated group for tax purposes.

These fields are mandatory and entering \$0 is acceptable if applicable for your organisation.

All values must be whole numbers. For example:

6.5 months should be presented as 7 months

\$2 million should be presented as \$2,000,000.

- Has your organisation existed for a complete financial year?
- If yes, what was the latest financial year completed?
- If no, enter the number of months completed in the financial year to date.

Provide the following figures for the financial year you have entered above.

- Sales revenue (turnover)

Total revenue from the sale of goods and services, as reported in your organisation's Business Activity Statement (BAS).

- Export revenue

Total revenue from export sales, as reported in your organisation's Business Activity Statement (BAS).

- R&D expenditure

Expenditure on research and development, i.e. creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humankind, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.

- Taxable income

Taxable income or loss as per your organisation's income tax return form.

- Number of employees including working proprietors and salaried directors (headcount)

Number of individuals who are entitled to paid leave (sick and holiday), or generate income from managing your organisation. This should include working proprietors and salaried directors.

- Number of independent contractors (headcount)

Number of individuals engaged by your organisation under a commercial contract (rather than an employment contract) to provide employee-like services on site.

E.2. ANZSIC code

Provide the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification ([ANZSIC](#)) details for your organisation from a drop-down menu:

- your organisation's main revenue earning ANZSIC division.
- your organisation's main revenue earning ANZSIC class.

E.3. Indigenous organisations

Is your organisation Indigenous owned?

An organisation is considered Indigenous owned where at least 51% of the organisation's members or proprietors are Indigenous.

Is your organisation Indigenous controlled?

An organisation is considered Indigenous controlled where at least 51% of the organisation's board or management committee is Indigenous.

Sample

F. Project information

On this page you must provide the detailed information about your proposed project.

If your application is successful, we will publish some grant details on [GrantConnect](#) and other government publications. Published details may include:

- *name of your organisation*
- *title of the project*
- *description of the project and its aims*
- *amount of grant funding awarded*
- *Australian Business Number*
- *business location*
- *your organisation's industry sector.*

F.1. Project title and description

Provide a project title.

Your response is limited to 75 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Provide a brief project description for publication.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Ensure your project description focuses on your project's key activities and outcomes. Outline what it is you are going to do and how these activities will develop innovative business practices, increase commercial sustainability and improve the resilience of the sector.

F.2. Detailed project description and key activities

This information will be included in your grant agreement if your application is successful.

Provide a detailed description of your project and key activities.

Your response is limited to 5000 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Describe in detail what your project involves. What are you proposing to do? What activities are involved and how are you going to implement them?

You must also provide a project plan which you should attach later in your application. Refer to the grant opportunity guidelines for the requirements of the project plan.

F.3. Project outcomes

This information will be included in your grant agreement if your application is successful.

Provide a summary of the expected project outcomes.

Your response is limited to 5000 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

What result do you anticipate in undertaking this project? Explain how this will help your organisation, referencing the objectives of the grant opportunity.

News Innovation Fund application requirements

F.4. Project duration

Your project must be completed by 31 March 2028.

The start and end dates you enter here will determine the financial years in the project budget.

The estimated project duration will be calculated by the start and end dates you enter.

- Estimated project start date
- Estimated project end date

F.5. Project milestones

Provide measurable milestones you will reach while undertaking your project. You may add up to 10 milestones.

The milestone start and end dates must be within the project start and end dates.

- Milestone title

Your response is limited to 100 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

- Milestone description

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Explain what you plan to achieve at this point in your project. Include details of key activities occurring by this stage.

If your project is successful, we will assess your progress according to agreed measurable milestones.

- Estimated start date
- Estimated end date
- Expenditure estimate for each milestone

F.6. Project location

You must provide the address where your project will be undertaken and the estimated percentage of project value expected to be undertaken at that site.

A project location must be a street address. Do not provide a postal address, institution or building name.

- Project site address
- Estimated percentage of project value expected to be undertaken at site

F.7. Project details

Publications

Provide a complete list of all applicable publications. For each publication, include:

- Publication name
- Digital address (URL)

- Information about the audience of your publication such as the geographic audience coverage (local, regional, state, national) and the sector audience coverage.

F.8. Disclosure of financial penalties

Have any of your board members, management or persons of authority been subject to any pecuniary penalty?

A pecuniary penalty is a monetary penalty that can be civil, criminal or administrative, imposed by a Commonwealth, state, or territory court or entity.

If yes, provide details of the penalty.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

G. Project partners

Provide details about all project partners.

For details about project partners and their contributions refer to the grant opportunity guidelines. Project partners are an option in this grant opportunity. If you do not have any project partners, click 'Save and continue'.

If a project partner is a trustee applying on behalf of a trust we will need details of both the trust and trustee.

You must provide:

- Australian Business Number (ABN) where applicable
- Other registration number where applicable
- Business address
- Postal address
- Contact details
- Project partner letter of support attached.

Details required in the letter of support are outlined in the grant opportunity guidelines.

H. Project budget

H.1. Eligible expenditure

Enter grant amount sought below. We will add GST to this where applicable.

Provide a summary of your eligible project expenditure over the life of the project.

- Registered for GST - enter amounts exclusive of GST.
- Not registered for GST – enter amounts inclusive of GST.

We only provide grant funding based on eligible expenditure. Refer to the guidelines for guidance on eligible expenditure.

The financial years displayed are determined by your project start and end dates. You should confirm the project duration before providing your eligible expenditure.

You will also be required to attach a detailed project budget later in the application form. Refer to the grant opportunity guidelines for the requirements of the budget.

Head of expenditure	Financial Year	Total
Labour, training and upskilling		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Capital expenditure		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Advertising		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Equipment		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Contracting of external support		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$

Head of expenditure	Financial Year	Total
Travel (up to 10 per cent of eligible expenditure)		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Development of content and marketing models		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Core function expenditure (up to 10 per cent of eligible expenditure)		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Other		\$
	2026/27	\$
	2027/28	\$
Total project expenditure		\$

Details of 'Other' eligible expenditure.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

H.2. Grant amount sought

Enter grant amount sought \$

\$AUD and GST exclusive. We will add GST to this where applicable.

I. Assessment criteria

We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion. We will only consider funding applications that have a final score of at least 50 per cent against the assessment criterion.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide should be commensurate with the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers.

I.1. Assessment criterion 1 (40 points)

Your response is limited to 5000 characters including spaces and does not support formatting. You must identify what sub-points you are responding to as a part of your response.

How your project aligns with the program purpose, objectives and outcomes.

You should address this through identifying:

All applicants:

- a. how your project will deliver innovation in business practices or diversify commercial support for Australian digital news producers, while retaining or expanding capacity to deliver core news content, maintaining editorial independence, increasing commercial revenue and/or engaging new audiences.
- b. how your project supports one or more of the intended objectives under the News MAP Policy Framework: Access, Diversity, Freedom, Quality, Engagement and Representation.

Stream 1 applicants (Journalism Production):

- c. how your project will improve or expand core news content produced and distributed digitally, build organisational capability, and/or support new journalism in under-represented areas.

Stream 2 applicants (Organisational Support):

- d. how your project will strengthen organisational and business capacity and/or diversify revenue and support avenues for digital news publishers.

In addition, joint applicants or enabling service organisations:

- e. how your project will support the improvement or expansion of core news content produced and distributed digitally across multiple organisations, build shared capability, increase commercial sustainability, or deliver economies of scale

I.2. Assessment criterion 2 (30 points)

Your response is limited to 5000 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- a. your track record managing similar projects and access to partners with the right skills and experience. What project planning experience do you have to manage and monitor your project? This should address scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, budget, risk management and reporting.
- b. in your detailed project plan and budget (provided as an attachment), all income sources and eligible expenditure relating to the costs of delivering the project. This should also include how you will manage the project including your readiness to commence the project, approvals, administrative costs, community support and completed engagement/consultation.

I.3. Assessment criterion 3 (30 points)

Your response is limited to 5000 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Benefits of your project.

You must demonstrate this through identifying:

- a. the scale of the project and the size and characteristics of the audience impacted by the project
- b. how your project will achieve the nominated outcomes of the project
- c. how you will measure and monitor your project's performance and outcomes of success (for example, circulation data, audience surveys, or other research that can be used to assess performance).

J. Bank account details

J.1. Bank account details

If your application is successful, we will need to set up a payment process to pay your grant. We need your bank account details to do this. If your application is not successful, we will not process these details.

We can only pay grant funding to the applicant organisation, who if successful will be party to a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. You must provide bank account details for this organisation.

All payments are in A\$ and must be made into an Australian bank account.

J.2. Account details

Account name

BSB

Account number

J.3. Payment contact

We will send the payment remittance advice to this person. All other notifications are sent to the primary contact.

Title (optional)

Given name

Family name

Email address

Phone number

K. Application finalisation

You must answer the following questions and add any supporting documentation required.

K.1. Conflict of interest

Do you have any perceived or existing conflicts of interest to declare?

Refer to the grant opportunity guidelines for further information on your conflict of interest responsibilities.

If yes, describe the perceived or existing conflicts of interest.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

If yes, describe how you anticipate managing this conflict.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

K.2. Additional information

Attach any additional supporting documentation here. You should only attach documents that we have requested.

Please refer to section 7.1 of the guidelines for further information.

The total of all attachments cannot exceed 50 MB.

Individual files must be smaller than 25 MB, and be one of the following types: docx, rtf, pdf, xlsx, csv, jpg, jpeg, png, gif.

Filenames should only include letters or numbers and should be fewer than 40 characters.

Project plan

You must attach a detailed project plan, commensurate with the tier of funding requested.

Project budget

You must attach a detailed project budget, commensurate with the tier of funding requested.

Core news evidence (optional)

Where you are applying as a News Organisation, you must submit evidence that your primary purpose, is creating core digital news content, including a link to your internet-based distribution site/s.

ACCO evidence (optional)

Where applicable, you must submit evidence supporting your organisations status as an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO).

Trust or partnership documents (where applicable)

Where you are applying as a trustee applying on behalf of a trust or a partnership, you must attach your trust or partnership deed.

Outline of organisation ownership structure

A chart outlining your organisation's ownership structures (related bodies corporate).

News Innovation Fund application requirements

K.3. Program feedback

Your responses help us improve the design and delivery of programs. They will not affect the assessment or outcome of this application.

How did you hear about this grant opportunity?

You must select from a drop-down menu.

Did you read the grant opportunity guidelines?

You must select from a drop-down menu.

If yes, how useful were the guidelines in completing your application?

We welcome any additional feedback on the guidelines.

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

How satisfied were you with the process of applying for this grant?

You must select from a drop-down menu.

We welcome any additional feedback on the application process

Your response is limited to 750 characters including spaces and does not support formatting.

Sample

L. Declaration

In order to submit your application you will be required to agree to the following declaration.

L.1. Privacy and confidentiality provisions

I acknowledge that this is an Australian Government program and that the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department) will use the information I provide in accordance with the following:

- [Australian Government Data and Digital Strategy](#)
- [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles](#)
- grant opportunity guidelines
- applicable Australian laws.

Accordingly, I understand that the department may collect, use and share my personal information provided in this application within this department and other government agencies:

- a. for purposes directly related to administering the program, including governance, research and the distribution of funds to successful applicants
- b. to facilitate research, assessment, monitoring and analysis of other programs and activities
- c. for the purposes of due diligence, preventing, detecting, investigating or dealing with suspected fraud in grant applications and related processes

unless otherwise prohibited by law

I understand that where I am successful in obtaining a grant, the financial information that I provide for the purposes of payment will be accessible to departmental staff to enable payments to be made through the department's accounts payable software system.

I understand that information that is deemed 'confidential' in accordance with the grant opportunity guidelines may also be shared for a relevant Commonwealth purpose.

The department will publish information on individual grants in the public domain, including on the department's website, unless otherwise prohibited by law.

L.2. Applicant declaration

I declare that I have read and understood the grant opportunity guidelines, including the grant agreement, privacy, confidentiality and disclosure provisions.

I declare that the proposed project outlined in this application and any associated expenditure has been endorsed by the applicant's board/ management committee or person with authority to commit the applicant to this project.

I declare that the applicant will comply with, and require that its subcontractors and independent contractors comply with, all applicable laws.

I declare that the applicant and any project partners are not listed on the [National Redress Scheme](#) list of institutions, where sexual abuse has occurred, that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme.

News Innovation Fund application requirements

I declare that the applicant is not named by the [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) as an organisation that has not complied with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*.

I confirm that the applicant, project partners and associated activities are in compliance with current [Australian Government sanctions](#).

I declare that the information contained in this application together with any statement provided is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate, complete and not misleading and that I understand that giving of false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.

I acknowledge that I may be requested to provide further clarification or documentation to verify the information supplied in this form and that the department may, during the application process, consult with other government agencies, including state and territory government agencies, about the applicant's claims and may also engage external technical or financial advisors to advise on information provided in the application.

I agree to participate in the periodic evaluation of the services undertaken by the department.

I approve the information in this application being communicated to the department in electronic form.

I acknowledge that if the department is satisfied that any statement made in an application is incorrect, incomplete, false or misleading the department may, at its absolute discretion, take appropriate action. I note such action may include excluding an application from further consideration; withdrawing an offer of funding; using the information contained in the application for a fraud investigation that would be consistent with the Australian Government's Investigations Standards and Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework and/or for a grant under management, terminating a grant agreement between the Commonwealth and the grantee including recovering funds already paid.

I declare that I am authorised to submit this form on behalf of the applicant and acknowledge that this is the equivalent of signing this application.

By checking this box I agree to all of the above declarations and confirm all of the above statements to be true