

Bushfire Grant Guidelines

Supporting the Mental Health of Australians Affected by Bushfires is a Commonwealth-funded initiative aimed at ensuring people and communities have access to coordinated and tailored support needed to recover from the effects of the 2019-20 bushfires.

We invite local organisations in bushfire affected communities to apply for grant funding for grassroots community activities that aim to strengthen social connectedness, emotional wellbeing, and resilience as well as assist communities to recover and heal.

During COVID-19 related restrictions there may be opportunities to support activities that are achieved via online or virtual platforms. However, applications for events that won't be able to be held until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted are welcome if the events are held by June 2022.

Who can apply?

Organisations and community groups that are located within the Hunter, New England and Central Coast Region are eligible to apply. Examples of organisations or community groups that will be considered include groups that represent particular geographic areas, cultural groups, ages, networks and/or those with frontline staff and volunteers impacted by bushfires. Specific examples include church-affiliated groups, Aboriginal or migrant groups, playgroups and children's groups, groups for older people, men's groups, sporting groups, local community associations, school-affiliated groups, firefighting brigades, charities, animal welfare and wildlife organisations.

Funded organisations will need an ABN in the organisation's name.

Applications will open for round 4 of grants on Monday 11 January 2021 and will close on Friday 19 February, 2021.

Grants of up to \$5,000 are available.

Applicants will be notified of outcomes within three weeks of the grant round closing.

Please note that successful applicants will be required to develop a risk plan to ensure the community's risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised.

A risk plan template will be provided with certain risks, impacts and proposed mitigations addressed for consideration in the risk plan.

What can be funded:

Grants of up to \$5,000 (GST exclusive) are available under the new Bushfire Recovery Community Grants program to fund grassroots activities that help strengthen community connectedness, build peer support, and promote mental wellbeing and healing after the bushfires. Suitable activities could also include assisting community members to identify peers or family members who may need referral to professional and other services to address trauma or distress.

Examples of activities that could be funded:

- Bringing the community together to support social skills, connectedness and build networks and friendships through group activities, e.g. community barbecues, regular coffee mornings, community meetings

- Projects that are recovery focused and aim to build on the community's and members' resilience, healing and capacity building
- Sharing information about available community resources and services and how to access them, including printing and photocopying information sheets and other items for dissemination
- Assisting community members to identify peers or family members who may need referral to professional and other services to address trauma or distress
- Engaging proactively with bushfire affected people in remote or isolated areas
- Initiatives offering comfort, reassurance and assistance to communities and individuals to address practical needs and return to normal routines; and/or
- Practical advice and skills development, e.g. for parents to help provide support for their children, addressing particular needs of isolated older people, or future bushfire planning and preparedness.

Please note these examples are not exhaustive and we welcome your ideas for discussion.

What we cannot fund:

Applications which include any of the below elements will be ineligible for grant funding:

- Initiatives that duplicate existing activities and services
- Activities that are more appropriately funded under another grant program or funding source
- Communities outside the Hunter, New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network region
- Activities that are difficult to link to bushfire recovery
- Initiatives that would require ongoing funding
- Alcohol purchases for community or other events
- Projects that subsidise commercial activities (e.g. ongoing business operational costs)
- Capital works or construction, including refurbishment, repair or maintenance of existing community infrastructure; and/or
- Purchasing of assets (i.e. buildings or vehicles)

How to Apply:

To apply for a Bushfire Recovery Community Grant, complete the online form and upload the budget template.

If you have problems completing this form or would like to discuss your grant application, please contact Grants Manager, Jane Mendelson on 0417 116 208.

Successful applicants will need to complete a short summary report at the completion of their grant that describes the outcomes achieved. The Primary Health Network reserves the right to directly approach communities in relation to grant program support where necessary to ensure a fair and equitable distribution.