Community Grants

Bushfire Recovery

Supporting Communities in Recovery

Application Guidance Document

Round 2:   Applications open: 31 August 2020
Applications close: 5 October 2020

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Introduction

COORDINARE – South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network (SENSW PHN) invites not-for-profit community-based organisations in bushfire affected communities to apply for grant funding under Round 2 of our *Bushfire Recovery – Supporting Communities in Recovery* community grants program.

This grants program provides funding for grassroots community activities that strengthen social connectedness, emotional wellbeing and resilience, and assist communities to recover and heal.

Background

Community spirit is vital to the recovery and ongoing resilience of communities impacted by the extensive 2019-20 bushfires and to the emotional healing of individuals and families. People in affected communities often need the support of those around them to recover and rebuild.

As the 2020-21 bushfire season draws nearer, some people may start to experience heightened anxiety and rekindled memories of the previous summer. We know from other natural disasters, including Victoria's "Black Saturday" bushfires, that psychological impacts can continue long after the initial event, with mental health issues, substance use and suicide risk occurring around 12-18 months and even up to five years later.

Further, the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 have the potential to intensify bushfire-related anxieties, as a result of financial pressures, increased substance use, social isolation, loss and grief, and disrupted access to mental health and other recovery support services.

Round 1 of the *Bushfire Recovery – Supporting Communities in Recovery* grants program resulted in more than $367,000 in community grants funded across South-Eastern NSW in early 2020. The experiences from Round 1 and our recent *Community Wellbeing and Participation* consultation into local needs following the bushfires and COVID-19 have informed the priorities for Round 2 of the bushfire recovery grants (details below). This community consultation has created a baseline for further local services to be delivered under the *Community and Wellbeing Participation Framework*. Further community consultations on the development of the *Framework* will also occur from September 2020, which will inform future funding decisions to provide critical, localised emotional and mental health support for bushfire affected individuals.

Round 2 Bushfire Recovery community grants of up to $10,000 (GST exclusive) are now available, with priority to be given to community-led activities that focus on building social connections in COVID-safe ways, and particularly with vulnerable high needs groups and hard-to-reach people. We welcome applications for activities that:

- Seek to engage with under-serviced bushfire-impacted communities and higher needs population groups, including isolated people and communities;
- Equip community members with skills to look out for each other and support distressed friends, family and peers to seek professional assistance to address trauma, where indicated; and
- Where appropriate, promote referral links or collaboration with local councils, other community organisations, bushfire recovery groups, and health care and social services.

Applications for Round 2 Bushfire Recovery community grants should propose activities that can comply with government COVID-19 requirements and restrictions relating to public gatherings, and be ready to start from late 2020. It may therefore be advisable to avoid activities that involve, for example, large numbers of participants at one-off community events. To help with ideas, examples of COVID-safe grant activities that were funded in Round 1 are highlighted through this document.

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of these grants is to support grassroots community activities that aim to strengthen social connectedness, emotional wellbeing, and resilience and assist communities to recover and heal. Funding is available to local organisations in bushfire affected communities for COVID-safe activities that promote:

- social cohesion, connectedness and supportive friendship and relationships;
- community wellbeing, resilience, mental health healing and post-trauma recovery;
- skills to identify and support struggling or distressed friends, peers and/or family members; and
- information about services and where to seek assistance when needed.

> ***Towamba Public School's 'Fireflies'*** *project*
> *involved a local artist working with primary school students to explore the regrowth and renewal of the surrounding forests after the summer bushfires. Undeterred by COVID restrictions,*
> *the children continued to be supported during their period of home schooling,*
> *and their artworks were able to be exhibited to the community at the local bakery and other venues,*
> *and also through a virtual exhibition hosted by the* [Bega Valley Shire Library](#)

Who can apply?

Not-for-profit community-based organisations and community-led groups that are based within bushfire-affected regions in the following local government areas are invited to apply:

- Bega Valley
- Eurobodalla
- Goulburn-Mulwaree

- Shoalhaven
- Snowy-Monaro
- Queanbeyan-Palerang
- Upper Lachlan

Community groups may represent geographic areas, towns, cultural groups, age groups, church or school affiliations, special interest groups, and others whose frontline staff and volunteers were impacted by bushfires (e.g. rural fire services, veterinary workers, wildlife carers, etc.)

All applicants must have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) in the organisation's name. Please ensure that your organisation has an appropriate ABN before submitting your grant application. Organisations without an ABN can [apply online here](#) and receive their ABN straight away.

Important note: This grant program supports not-for-profit community organisations. All grant activities are expected to be community led and driven. Activities cannot be driven by healthcare and other service providers, sole traders, small businesses, companies or other agencies without clear evidence of co-design and partnership with communities and not-for-profit community-based organisations. Applications received by health care providers, sole traders and other such companies will be ineligible, and will not be considered without evidence of substantial community engagement in the design and delivery of the grant activity. For more information on co-design, see [NSW Council of Social Service's Principles of Co-design](#).

Grant funding available

Grants of up to $10,000 (GST excl) are available under Round 2, and applications for funding may be submitted at any time between 31 August and 5 October 2020.

Community connections in the time of COVID-19

All applicants must ensure that their activities comply with government COVID-19 restrictions relating to public gatherings, including limits that may apply on participant numbers at events and venues.

Depending on the type of community activity, some applicants may also need to develop their own COVID-19 safety plan (e.g. some sport and recreation activities, church-based activities or those involving specific businesses). If needed, a range of industry-specific resources and templates are available to help you develop your own COVID-19 safety plans, e.g. from NSW Government or Safe Work Australia.

Please note that applications that propose activities that are unable to proceed due to COVID-19 restrictions are not likely to be successful.

Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about how they might engage safely with their communities. This does not necessarily mean relying on technological solutions such as video conferencing, webinars, telehealth or social media. While these technologies have a valuable place in connecting with friends, family and workplaces, they are often out of reach for many vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups. It is important to remember that some sections of the community have no access to computers or smartphones, or live in areas where stable access to the internet is limited or non-existent.

> *Many vulnerable and hard-to-reach people have no access to 'virtual' communications technology*

We are also keen to avoid the experiences of some of our Round 1 grant recipients who remain unable to proceed due to current restrictions, such as where activities involve large numbers of participants attending a single community event. As government limits on large participant numbers may not be lifted in the foreseeable future, it may be advisable to avoid proposing large scale community gatherings, so that Round 2 activities can commence as soon as possible.

Activities to engage communities, build resilience and connect with one another don't have to be elaborate, as demonstrated by the examples in these pages, community based activities like Walk 'n' Talk, or even the 2020 ANZAC Day commemorations from driveways and streets all over Australia.

Bomaderry Community Inc's 'Community Acts of (not-so-random) Kindness' project delivers free fun-filled activities each month to promote community wellbeing and connectedness and support local businesses.

Their COVID-friendly activities started with a community Easter egg hunt in the middle of the April 2020 lockdown, where volunteer Easter Bunnies delivered 2,500 eggs during the early hours of Easter Sunday morning to hundreds of Bomaderry front yards for a safe, personalised Easter egg hunt. And the response from the community was overwhelmingly supportive.

Other monthly community initiatives have included a ukulele-inspired event in the streets of Bomaderry and a 'Bang on Bomo' event where residents were invited to bring their "drum/Tambourine/cow bell/triangle/bell/cymbals/gong or other percussion instrument and come and make some noise".

Round 2 priorities

Priority will be given in Round 2 for activities that focus on engaging with vulnerable high needs groups, isolated people and under-serviced communities, including those that were not well represented in Round 1 grants. Where appropriate, we also want to encourage collaboration and integration with bushfire recovery services and mental health support, including promotion of clear referral pathways to support services.

High needs groups and under-serviced communities: Priority will be given to applications from communities representing the following high needs population groups and under-serviced bushfire-impacted areas:

- Hard to reach and isolated people and communities
- Older people
- Aboriginal communities
- Farmers
- Men
- Areas that were heavily bushfire impacted, are isolated and/or under-serviced, including (but not limited to):
  – *Bega Valley*: Cobargo, Kiah, Pericoe, Quaama, Towamba, Wyndham
  – *Eurobodalla*: Bodalla area, Malua Bay, Mogo, Nelligen
  – *Snowy-Monaro*: Adaminaby, Bombala area, Bredbo, Delegate, Michelago, Numeralla, Rockton
  – *Queanbeyan-Palerang*: Araluen, Braidwood area (e.g. Majors Creek, Charleys Forest), Nerriga
  – *Shoalhaven*: Conjola, Sassafras

Priority will be given to communities that received no grant funding in Round 1. We may also directly approach community groups in under-serviced and heavily impacted communities to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of grant funds across bushfire-affected communities and identified high needs groups.

Builds skills and community capacity: We want to encourage more focus in Round 2 on building community capacity, developing skills and knowledge, and promoting access to services that support bushfire-affected communities. Priority will be given to applications that:

- Promote the development of personal skills and knowledge amongst community members to support or identify distressed people, e.g. Community Suicide Prevention training (e.g. QPR, ASIST), Accidental Counsellor, Mental Health First Aid or a range of courses through Lifeline or Red Cross); and
- Promote the availability of local bushfire-specific support services, including how to access services and clear referral pathways – e.g. to bushfire counselling services, bushfire recovery services; drought support counsellors, and other supports operational throughout SE NSW.

> ***Murramarang Spinners and Weavers created and distributed 50 'Love Boxes'***
> *to people in the Milton-Ulladulla region who were affected by bushfires.*
>
> *Volunteers purchased and made all the materials for the "Love Boxes", which included hand dyed scarves, knitted beanies, natural local soaps and chocolates, 'green harvest' bird-attracting flower seeds, handmade utensils, and handwritten cards painted by local artists.*
>
> *The boxes were distributed to bushfire-impacted people, and became a morale booster for those rebuilding their lives, and provides a lasting reminder that they are not forgotten by their community. Above all, the boxes were built on community collaboration and generosity, and lifted the spirits of the many small businesses involved, all of which culminated in the actual delivery … which sometimes took up to two hours just for one delivery, as people really wanted to talk and connect.*

What the grant funds can be used for

This funding supports COVID-safe grassroots community-focused health and wellbeing initiatives that address program objectives and the Round 2 priorities identified above. Appropriate activities might include:

- Bringing the community together in COVID-safe ways to actively support social connections and build networks and friendships;
- Projects that are recovery focused and aim to build on the community's and members' resilience, healing, capacity building and skills and knowledge development;
- Sharing information about available community resources and services and how to access them, including bushfire recovery, mental health support, alcohol and other drugs, family violence services, homelessness and housing services, etc;
- Assisting community members to identify friends, co-workers or family members who may need support or referral to professional and other services to address trauma or distress;
- Engaging proactively with bushfire affected people in remote or isolated areas;
- Activities for community members that involve guest speakers, professional expertise and mental health recovery resources;
- Communications and marketing to engage with communities and promote funded activities; 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.

Unspent funds at the end of the project must be used for activities that are consistent with the program objectives or be returned to COORDINARE – SENSW PHN.

What the grant funds cannot be used for

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

- Events and activities that are not new, have been held previously or are existing regular scheduled events;
- Initiatives that duplicate existing activities and services;
- Activities that are more appropriately funded and/or have attracted funding under another grant program or funding source;
- Communities that were not impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires;
- Communities outside the COORDINARE – SENSW PHN region;
- Activities that are difficult to link to bushfire recovery;
- Initiatives that are likely to depend on ongoing funding;
- Alcohol purchases for community or other events;
- Projects that seek to subsidise commercial activities, including usual clinical or service provision costs, usual staff costs and business operational costs (To be eligible, activities must extend beyond "usual business" to support communities in bushfire recovery);
- Capital works or construction, including refurbishment, repair or maintenance of existing community infrastructure, memorials; and/or
- Purchasing of assets (i.e. buildings or vehicles).

Program assessment and mandatory criteria

Applications will be assessed against the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- The activity targets Round 2 priorities (see Page 5);
- The activity's expected benefits to the local community;
- The activity's consistency with the grant program's objectives (see Page 3);
- The budget clearly breaks down the major elements of the planned expenditure;
- The project represents value for money, and can be delivered on time and within budget (including able to start promptly if successful).

Applicants must also meet the following mandatory criteria. Failure to do so may result in automatic disqualification from further assessment. The mandatory criteria requires all applicants to:

- Be a not-for-profit community-based organisation;
- Have an ABN in the organisation's name;
- Be based within (or at least have an active presence in) bushfire-affected regions in one or more of the following local government areas: Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Goulburn-Mulwaree, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Shoalhaven, Snowy-Monaro or Upper Lachlan Shire; and
- Detail how the grant activity will be able to proceed while complying with relevant government COVID-19 requirements in relation to public gatherings.

Anticipated key dates

The following table outlines the anticipated timelines for Round 2 of the Bushfire Recovery grants program.

Milestone	Anticipated Dates
Round 2 applications open	Monday 31 August 2020
Round 2 applications close	Monday 5 October 2020
Assessment and decision	Mid November 2020
Applicants notified and Grant agreements offered	Mid November to early December 2020
Grant activities commence	From late November 2020
All grant activities must be completed	By May 2022 (at latest)

How to apply

To apply for a COORDINARE – SENSW PHN Bushfire Recovery Community Grant, complete the online application form here. The completed application form should be emailed to communitygrants@coordinare.org.au by 5 October 2020. No late applications will be accepted.

Applicants should ensure each question in the application form is completed, including all required details about their organisation and proposed activities, to enable prompt assessment of the application. Applications may be deemed ineligible if they are incomplete, or if mandatory criteria are not addressed.

Applications will be assessed through an evaluation process. Successful applicants will need to enter into a grant agreement with COORDINARE – SENSW PHN. A copy of the draft grant agreement can be viewed here.

If the application is successful, funding will be paid directly into the bank account provided following the return of the signed grant agreement.

Successful applicants will need to complete a short summary report at the completion of their grant that describes the outcomes achieved. An example of the grant reporting template can be viewed here.

> ***cabbi's (Creative Arts Batemans Bay Inc) 'Postcards from the Fire'*** *project*
> *publicly sourced photographic images of people's bushfire experiences, and while the planned public exhibition had to be deferred, a parallel project to collate an oral history of the fires continued.*
> *In the meantime, public sourcing of images continued via the project's website*

Further information

For **further information about the** *Bushfire Recovery* **grants program**, contact:

- COORDINARE:
  - o Email: communitygrants@coordinare.org.au
  - o Phone: *Tue-Thurs*: Jennie Roe on 0407 218 792
    Other days: 1300 069 002

For **information and assistance on developing your proposal**:

- Got a basic idea for your project but not sure how to develop it further?
- Do you need information or assistance to link into bushfire recovery support services in your area?
- Are you looking to collaborate with other like-minded organisations or services?

The following COORDINARE staff may be able to assist:

Bega Valley:
- Philippa Fetterplace
  - o Phone: 0417 141 282
  - o Email: pfetterplace@coordinare.org.au

Eurobodalla and Milton / Ulladulla:
- Simoene Smith
  - o Phone: 0436 666 194
  - o Email: ssmith@coordinare.org.au

Goulburn-Mulwaree and Upper Lachlan:
- Linda Brown
  - o Phone: 0448 039 999
  - o Email: lbrown@coordinare.org.au

Central Shoalhaven:
- Darren Marcus
  - o Phone: 0428 233 862
  - o Email: dmarcus@coordinare.org.au

Snowy-Monaro and Queanbeyan-Palerang:
- Amanda Jones (Mon, Wed-Friday)
  - o Phone: 0439 240 588
  - o Email: ajones@coordinare.org.au

The Grants Hub also has very useful tips and resources for developing projects and writing grant applications.

> **Important note:**
> Any advice or assistance provided during the application process should not be considered binding in any way on COORDINARE, nor should any assistance received be assumed to be advantageous in any way. All applications will be independently assessed on their merit by an assessment panel after the closing date.

Conditions of this grant process

General	Applicants should familiarise themselves with this document and application form and ensure that their proposal complies with the requirements set out in these documents. Applicants are deemed to have examined statutory requirements and satisfied themselves that they are not participating in any anti-competitive, collusive, deceptive or misleading practices in structuring and submitting the proposal.
Acceptance	Non-complying or incomplete applications may be rejected. COORDINARE may not accept the proposal.
Explanations	Verbal explanations or instructions given prior to acceptance of a proposal shall not bind COORDINARE.
Assessment	COORDINARE reserves the right to engage a third party to carry out assessments of an applicants' financial, technical, planning and other resource capability.
Legal entity	COORDINARE will only enter into a contract with an organisation as specified with established legal status (e.g. under Corporations Law, Health Services Act, Trustee Act), and represented by a natural person at least 18 years of age with mental capacity to understand the agreement.
ABN/Taxation requirements	COORDINARE will only deal with applicants who have an Australian Business Number (ABN).
Expenses	All expenses and costs incurred by an applicant in connection with this grant process including (without limitation) preparing and lodging an application, providing COORDINARE with further information, attending interviews and participating in any subsequent negotiations, are the sole responsibility of the applicant. If the application is successful, any over-expenditure on the approved activity is the responsibility of the grant recipient.
Additional information	If additional information to that requested in this document is required by COORDINARE when proposals are being considered, written information and/or interviews may be requested to obtain such information at no cost to COORDINARE. COORDINARE may also provide additional information or clarification.
Process	COORDINARE reserves the right to withdraw from, or alter, the grant process described in this document for whatever reason, prior to the signing of any agreement/contract with any party.
Negotiation	COORDINARE reserves the right to negotiate with short-listed applicants after the applicant closing time and allow any application to alter its application. Contract negotiations are strictly confidential and not to be disclosed to third parties.
Part applications	COORDINARE reserves the right to accept applications in relation to some and not all of the scope of activity described, or contract with one, more than one or no applicant on the basis of the proposals received.
Conflicts of interest	Applicants must declare to COORDINARE any matter or issue which is or may be perceived to be or may lead to a conflict of interest regarding their proposal or participation in the grant process, or in the event their proposal is successful.
Ownership	All applications become the property of COORDINARE once lodged. COORDINARE may copy, or otherwise deal with all or any part of an application for the purpose of conducting assessment of proposals.
Notification of Probity Breach	Should any supplier feel that it has been unfairly excluded from responding or unfairly disadvantaged by the process, the supplier is invited to write to COORDINARE at commissioning@coordinare.org.au
Lobbying to influence outcome	Any attempt by any applicant to exert influence on the outcome of the assessment process by lobbying COORDINARE staff, directly or indirectly, will be grounds for disqualification of the proposal from further consideration.
No contract	Nothing in this grant process should be construed to give rise to any contractual obligations or rights, express or implied, by the issue of this grant application or the lodgment of a proposal in response to it. No contract will exist unless and until a formal written grant agreement is executed between COORDINARE and the Applicant. Applicants will not be considered approved until a final grant agreement is in place.