2025-26 Supporting Regional and Remote Volunteers Funding Guidelines

Grants up to $30,000.

Open date: 23 September 2025
Close date: 3pm, 30 October 2025

OFFICIAL

The Department of Human Services

At the Department of Human Services our mission is to develop and implement modern, innovative, and relevant services across our entire community so all South Australians can be connected and included. Our programs and services aim to ensure South Australians are safe, empowered and connected in their communities.

The Department has three strategic priorities:

1. Increasing inclusion, independence, and shared decision-making for all.
2. Supporting our communities when it matters most.
3. Delivering modern services for our communities.

About this grant

Volunteering keeps our communities and organisations working together. It maintains the quality of life in our communities by meeting critical local needs. Countless South Australians owe their lives to the selfless commitment of our volunteers, and many of the charities that support our communities are 100% volunteer run.

Declining regional populations and an increase in extreme weather events is putting even more pressure on already struggling rural and remote communities. Location matters - the greater the distance from a major urban centre, the more reliance on local volunteers to provide social, wellbeing and emergency supports and services. Now more than ever, we need to support volunteering at the grass roots level in those regions to grow and maintain healthy, resilient and thriving communities.

The **Supporting Regional and Remote Volunteers round** seeks to fund projects which align to the core purpose of **The Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021–2027 (SA Strategy)** which is to support, engage, grow and celebrate volunteering in all its forms across South Australia.

Grants of up to $30,000 are available to enable volunteer involving organisations, based or active in regional and remote South Australia, to strengthen their volunteering programs through capability and capacity building of volunteer involving organisations.

This grant funding aligns to:

The Department of Human Services' Social Impact Framework[1] objectives:

- Belonging - to communities that are inclusive, equitable and resilient
- Connecting - with opportunities to engage and participate
- Building - resources and skills for self-direction and a fulfilling life
- Aspiring - toward economic social and civic empowerment
- Creating - safe environments and wellbeing

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[1] DHS Social Impact Framework - https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/community-services/social-impact-framework

- The SA Government's commitments under Closing the Gap[2] - Priority Reform Two: To increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Sector.

Funding Objectives

This round is focused on supporting and increasing participation in volunteering in regional and remote SA, <u>applicants from metropolitan areas will only be considered if the activity and outcomes directly benefit volunteers in regional or remote South Australia.</u>

Funded projects are expected to support one or more of the following focus areas:

- Developing resources to support volunteering for local CALD and Aboriginal communities. This could include updating internal policies and processes, providing volunteer training or creating resources in community languages.
- Helping Volunteer Involving Organisations to identify roles that suit different cultures, age groups and life stages. Projects may involve using volunteer matching apps, platforms or local networks to promote opportunities, and could include software solutions or updates to existing volunteer programs.
- Training for Volunteer Involving Organisations in co-design principles, community-led approaches, place-based strategies.
- Supporting Aboriginal community-led projects that engage volunteers and contribute to Closing the Gap. This could include Cultural Safety and Respect Training or consultancy services.
- Encouraging youth participation in volunteering. Projects should focus on engagement outside the formal education system and exclude initiatives like the Student Volunteer Army.
- Documenting or measuring the personal and social benefits of volunteering.
- Mapping current and future volunteer needs to inform whole-of-community planning and solution-building.

Priority focus groups

Funding is prioritised for projects that support people and/or communities experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and other vulnerabilities and who may face additional barriers to accessing volunteering opportunities such as:

- Aboriginal peoples.

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[2] Closing the Gap - https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-affairs-and-reconciliation/closing-the-gap

- People from new and emerging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

- People with disability, with a focus on those not currently supported through the NDIS.

- LGBTIQA+ community.

- People who are financially disadvantaged (for example unemployed, in receipt of government support payments, health care card).

- People residing in communities identified as places where persistent and/or relative location-based disadvantage exists, and areas of disadvantage as identified by the Socio- Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA Index[3]).

Key dates

This round is open between **23 September 2025 – 30 October2025.**

Notification of outcome will be after **1 January 2026**.

Grant agreement period, of up to 18 months, will start **1 March 2026** and **end 30 August 2027**.

Enquiries and feedback

If you have any questions about applying for a grant through this round or to discuss a potential project for an application, please contact:

Grants Team

Phone: 1300 650 985

Email: grantssa@sa.gov.au

Website: www.dhs.sa.gov.au/grantsSA

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[3] Areas of disadvantage as identified by the Socio- Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA Index)
https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2033.0.55.001~2016~Main%20Features~IRSAD%20Interactive%20Map~16

Eligibility Requirements

Who can Apply?

The following organisation types eligible to apply for this funding:

- Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCO), or
- Not-for-profit organisations[4], or
- Social Enterprises[5]

ACCOs and Not for Profit organisations must be incorporated under the South Australian Associations Incorporation Act, the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, or have evidence of a comparable legal status, such as an Australian Public Company limited by guarantee,

Social Enterprises must hold a current certification from Social Traders.

Regional Local Government Agencies are eligible to apply for projects to increase or enhance opportunities and resources for regional volunteers.

Unless you are Social Enterprise, you **can not apply** if you are an individual, sole trader, a for-profit organisation, a private company, or a trust (except fixed trusts).

Organisations must:

- Be currently registered with a valid and eligible Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Have an Australian bank account in the name of the legal entity.
- Have been operating or established as a legal entity for more than 12 months
- Be currently operating within South Australia and delivering programs, services, or initiatives to residents of South Australia.
- Agree to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

Organisations must not:

- Have any outstanding contractual or financial obligations (acquittals, unpaid invoices) for any funded Department of Human Services projects/programs.
- Have licensed gaming machines in their facilities or hold a gaming machine license
- Be educational institutions or related representative bodies (e.g., schools and/or their parent or student associations, universities, colleges).
- Be Government agencies (Commonwealth or State Departments)

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[4] SA.gov.au   www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/community-organisations/types/not-for-profit-organisations.

[5] Social Traders certification - https://www.socialtraders.com.au

Sponsoring an organisation to apply (Auspicing)

Not for profit community organisations that are not incorporated and/or do not have an ABN can be sponsored by an eligible organisation or a local Council.

A sponsorship agreement form is to be completed and signed by both organisations to confirm their sponsoring relationship and is to be uploaded in the application form.

The sponsoring organisation is responsible for:

- submitting the grant application online.

- entering into the grant agreement and accepts legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

- all aspects of the management of the grant including acquittal of the funding.

Any eligible organisation or sponsored organisation can be funded for a maximum of two Grants SA grants per financial year.

Organisations can submit more than one application in the Volunteer Support Funding Round but can only be successful for one application in this round.

Funding Opportunities for this Grant Round

The intent of the grant round is to engage, support and retain volunteers in regional and remote South Australia by building the capacity of volunteer involving organisations.

Grants up to **$30,000.** Examples of items that could be funded are:

- **Project Officer** to develop or update Volunteer programs, policies, procedures, or conduct small research projects related to volunteering.

- **IT solutions:** software, Apps to support volunteer management

- **Equipment purchases and resources:** equipment to support volunteer activities, volunteer uniforms (excluding sports uniforms)

- **Marketing and Promotion materials**: resources in different languages, plain English or other accessible formats. Note marketing and promotion is capped at 10% of grant value.

- **Training:** Cultural Awareness and Competency, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health Fist Aid, Governance, Digital Skills or Financial Training.

- **Transport** for volunteers to access and engage in volunteering activities or volunteer training opportunities. Capped at 15% of grant value.

Ineligible Items and Projects

Funding cannot be used for the following items. If these items are included in the budget for your application, they will be removed from your funding request:

- Core business costs i.e. operational staff wages, rent, insurances, utilities, internet, websites, phones, Point of Sales systems, purchase or lease of buildings, land, or lease of IT equipment.
- Payments (including honorariums) to Boards or committee members.
- Marketing, administration costs and contingency above 10% of the total project value.
- Retrospective funding for items, services, or resources already paid for or purchased.
- Items to be purchased and distributed to individuals as prizes, awards, gifts, trophies, sponsorships, or donations.
- Emergency and food relief (e.g., food hampers, food vouchers, pre-paid store cards, individual debt, or bill payments).
- First Aid Kits, defibrillators, emergency services equipment
- Grants writer, auspice, audit fees, research projects, feasibility studies, Council and/or building approvals.
- Projects that have previously been funded by Department of Human Services are not eligible for top-up funding for project shortfalls.
- In-school volunteering programs.

Applying for this Grant round

Applications are to be submitted using the online application form via the SmartyGrants online portal. This link is available via www.dhs.sa.gov.au/grantsSA.

The application must be endorsed by two authorised signatories for the organisation (that is, Chief Executive, President, Chairperson, Treasurer, or Secretary).

When completing your application, it is recommended you consider:

- The assessment criteria that will be used to evaluate the need and merit of your proposal against other applications.
- Allowing enough time to complete and upload required documents, including obtaining quotes for goods and services.
- That your Budget clearly identifies the items the funds will support if the application is successful. Budget allocated for the project must be realistic and quotes are to be uploaded.
- Including other sources of income for the project in your budget: other grants, government or organisational contribution or in-kind support.
- Providing letters of support or confirmation from any partner organisations of their commitment to the project.
- Uploading photos, particularly to support projects for infrastructure upgrades.

Required Documentation

Applications will be assessed on the documentation provided at the time of submission. For this Grant round, required documents are:

- Role Description for Project Officer – if applying for fundng for Project Officer

Applications must be submitted before 3pm 30 October 2025.

We encourage you to complete and submit your application at least **one hour before the round closes** to avoid any unforeseen system issues that may impact your submission.

If you foresee difficulty meeting the deadline due to documents not being received in time or are experiencing technical issues, please contact us before the round closes for assistance. If you do not submit your application by the deadline, your application will not be accepted.

Assessment Panel and Criteria

Assessments will be undertaken through a competitive grant process. The Assessment panel comprises external community members with relevant specialist expertise. The information included in your application is confidential, with staff and assessment panels bound by DHS policies and procedures.

The Assessment Panel assesses each application against the **Assessment Criteria in Table 1**. The matrix questions guide evaluation of each application for the need and merit of the proposal and establish if the community and /or organisation has the leadership capability, skills, and resources to deliver the desired outcomes.

DHS may assist the Assessment Panel by contacting persons listed in your application for assessment purposes, such as referees, partners, supporters, or those nominated as persons of authority.

Assessors may also take into consideration the geographic or demand-driven funding distribution to ensure a range of proposals are supported and an equitable distribution of funding throughout South Australia.

DHS grant funding is very competitive and there will not be enough funds to support all applications submitted

Table 1 Assessment Criteria Matrix

Are the outcomes for Volunteers in regional or remote South Australia?	Mandatory eligibility requirement. Does this proposal focus on volunteer outcomes for regional/remote communities?

Linkage to the published Guidelines 20%	How well does the application align with the principles of the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021-2027 refreshed for 2024? Does the application identify strategies to support inclusion of any of the priority groups?
Volunteer need 30%	What volunteer need is being addressed? How will this project address the volunteer need?
Direct Volunteer Impact and sustainability of proposal 30%	The extent of the impact or benefit of the project for volunteers and DHS priority groups. The immediate and long-term impact and sustainability of the proposal for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.
Value for Money 20%	The value for money given the number of volunteers who will benefit and the potential cost of delivery in the identified region. Applications must contain reasonable and realistic costs as outlined in attached quotes.

Outcome Notification

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email **after 1 January 2026.** Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to contact the Grants team for feedback on their application on 1300 650 985 or grantssa@sa.gov.au.

Successful applications

Successful grant recipients will have their organisation name, Project title and funding allocation published on the [DHS website](#).

You will receive an agreement detailing the terms and conditions of the funding provided. All applicants will be required to sign this agreement and comply with all conditions, which include requirements to:

- submit an online final report accounting for how the funding is spent (financial acquittal).
- measure and report on the outcomes from the funded project (project evaluation)
- have public liability insurance – a minimum of $1 million or as required in your agreement.
- appropriately acknowledge the State Government of South Australia as a funding source for the project

Payment will be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

Reporting Requirements

On project completion, you are required to submit an acquittal report via Smartygrants including a signed declaration confirming the allocated funds were spent in accordance with terms of the agreement. Copies of all receipts of purchases funded through this round must be submitted.

You will be asked to complete a short report covering:

What did you do?	How did funding address an immediate need within your community? What impact (difference) did the project make to the community?
What is the outcome your project achieved?	How did the purchase of resources and/or equipment assist your organisation to support its community? How were individuals and/or the community better off from this project?
What did you learn and what would you do differently?	Describe any learnings from the project or your organisation's experience during the project.
How was your grant funding experience?	Please summarise your experience and if you have any suggestions for improvement.

Communication

If spending of the grant is affected

You must inform the Grants Team on 1300 650 985 or grantssa@sa.gov.au if anything is likely to affect the spending of the grant in accordance with the agreement.

If you want to vary the contract

You must seek approval to vary the original contract from the Grants Team. This includes any:

- Changes to purchases (including change of supplier).
- Timeframes.
- Business activities, particularly if they affect the ability to complete the activities stated in the grant.

If your contact or banking details change

You must also inform us, via email, of any changes to your:

- Organisation name.
- Nominated contact details of key contacts.
- Addresses (including emails).

- Bank account details.

DHS Acknowledgement

The State Government of South Australia may be appropriately acknowledged as a funding source for the project.

You must not make, or permit to be made, a public announcement or media release about any aspect of the grant agreement without first giving reasonable notice, in writing, together with a summary of the proposed public announcement or copy of the media release, to the Minister through the Grants Team.

Links to Policy

This round links to the objectives, principles and recommendations in South Australian Government strategies and policies:

- Department of Human Services Strategic Plan 2022–2024: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/about-us/strategic-plan

- Department of Human Services Social Impact Framework: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/community-services/social-impact-framework

- Closing the Gap: https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-affairs-and-reconciliation/closing-the-gap

- Department of Human Services – Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021-2027 Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021-2027: refreshed for 2024

- Volunteering SA and NT Resource Hub Resources Hub - Volunteering SA&NT

- Volunteering Australia Resource Hub Resources - Volunteering Australia