

Key Dates



Note: Projects funded in this round must be undertaken between July 2024 and June 2025.

All applications close 5pm Victorian time (AEDT).

About FRRR

FRRR is the only national foundation specifically focused on ensuring the social and economic strength of remote, rural and regional communities.

Our unique model connects common purposes and funding with locally prioritised needs. We believe targeted, well-informed investment in local organisations will stimulate ideas that create vibrant communities.

That is why our programs focus on building resilience and strengthening communities.

Program Information

Program Purpose

Telstra's Connected Communities Grant Program will boost support for communities across remote, rural and regional Australia to enhance liveability with digital solutions that harness the power of connection.

The program will support community-led efforts **that embrace new technology and improve digital literacy or digital capability** that enhances social connection, supports equitable access to technology, increases cyber security, enables sustainable environmental practices or supports disaster preparedness. This can be with new or existing projects, where funds will help to scale their impact, and may include initiatives that can build digital capability by providing access to equipment, information and education and/or enable constructive social networks.

Not-for-profit organisations that are providing access to information, technology, education and facilities in order to build connected communities that are resilient, sustainable and liveable should consider applying.

Funds Available & Priorities

A total of \$200,000 is available in this round to fund **grant applications up to the value of \$10,000** to support remote, rural and regional communities to **embrace new technologies and digital solutions** to build social capital and digital capability via a grant opportunity fostering:

- **Liveable** communities that have the digital capability to help individuals with the skills to live, learn & work in a digital society.
- **Sustainable** communities that are diverse and inclusive, planning for the health, wellbeing, and prosperity of their people and the planet.
- **Resilient** communities that are well prepared and socially connected when disaster strikes with the ability to renew and recover together.

Important Note: Organisations that received grants through the Telstra Connected Communities Program in Round 1 2023 **are not eligible** to apply in this grant round - Round 2, 2024.

What Can be Funded

The program will support a wide range of charitable projects that are aligned to the program purpose and embrace technology to provide digital solutions including:

- Equipment or training to build digital and connectivity literacy for broad community benefit;
- Enabling digital equity by providing access to digital equipment for students in need;
- Building community organisations operational capacity with new technology and digital solutions;
- Programs that increase communities' digital literacy for better social and economic outcomes;
- Programs supporting remote, rural and regional communities' adaptation to extreme weather events and changing climate conditions using digital tools to increase access and reach;
- Programs to help communities recycle their e-waste;
- Delivery of cyber safety / online awareness workshops to vulnerable cohorts (e.g. seniors, students, First Nations people and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities);
- Cyber security support for community groups to implement or upgrade electronic information security;
- Upgrading emergency meeting places to support connectivity and emergency power in and out of times of disaster;
- Providing essential digital equipment for emergency preparedness.

**What Can't
be Funded**

There are several areas that we **can't fund** through this program. If in doubt, please contact us.

- Projects that support core business and areas of responsibility of Federal, State and Local Governments;
- Overseas travel and overseas projects;
- Prizes, gifts, trophies or awards;
- Political lobbying;
- Projects that primarily benefit private business, a sole trader, or private interests;
- Projects solely focused on animal welfare;
- Purchase of land;
- Ongoing costs such as rent and utilities (unless it directly relates to the project);
- Non-project related staff training and development costs;
- The encouragement or advancement of sport, recreation and social activities are not considered charitable activities under Australian law.

Applications from sporting organisations need to clearly demonstrate charitable outcomes and benefit to the wider community that are above and beyond the sporting activities of the club. Please contact FRRR to discuss if you are unsure.

Eligibility

This grant program seeks to support not-for-profit organisations in remote, rural and regional Australia who have greater challenges in accessing services and/or funding to enable initiatives that can leverage technology and build digital capability to enhance liveability, improve sustainability and strengthen community resilience.

To apply, you must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant organisations must be a **not-for-profit organisation** with either an **Incorporation Certificate and/or an ABN**. If you are unsure if your organisation is a registered not-for-profit (e.g. if you are a Co-operative, Other Unincorporated Entity, Public Company or Trust), please contact FRRR;
- Projects must be for charitable purposes and offer clear public benefit;
- Not-for-profit organisations with or without DGR-1 endorsement are eligible;
- Organisations can submit one application per grant round.

Please note, you will be considered ineligible if the:

- Applicant organisations must not have received a grant through Round 1 of the Telstra's Connected Communities Grant Program in 2023;
- Application is submitted by individuals, sole traders, private or commercial businesses (as per the submitted ABN);
- Application is submitted by an organisation that is not a legal entity (i.e., a registered not-for-profit), without the written consent of the governing / partnering body who holds the ABN / Incorporation Certificate;
- Application is submitted without required financial information (see below);

2024 Program Guidelines (Rd 2)

- ▶ Final report/s from any FRRR grants awarded in the previous seven years have not been acquitted (delivery organisations should check with legal organisation to see if there are any outstanding final reports);
- ▶ Application is for a project or activity that has already occurred / is occurring prior to the announcement of funding;
- ▶ Application is incomplete. **NOTE:** Due to the volume of applications received, applications are assessed based on the documentation received at the time of application. **FRRR is unlikely to follow up missing documentation after applications have been submitted.**

How to Apply

Before beginning your application, please read the information on the following pages. It sets out critical, additional information that we require and explains why it is important.

FRRR accepts applications via its online application portal, Grants Gateway.

We recommend you download this [sample copy of the application form](#).



Please note: A requirement of this program is that a high resolution photo (between 1MB to 10MB) must be submitted as part of the application process. The photo can be a group shot of staff or volunteers in your community organisation OR an action shot relevant to the project you are applying for including people. If you are successful, FRRR may utilise this photo in grant announcements and/or associated communications.

[Click here to apply.](#)

Need help?

If at any time you need help with your application, don't hesitate to contact the FRRR office on free call 1800 170 020 or email us at info@frrr.org.au.

IMPORTANT NOTES RE: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Please read the information below to support the planning and preparation of your project. It also sets out what you **MUST** include for your project to be considered. Contact FRRR if you have any questions about this information or any aspect of the application form.

Eligible Legal Entities

Every application needs to include an organisation that holds either an **ABN or Incorporation Certificate**. If your organisation doesn't have that, FRRR may still fund the project but you need another organisation's support, which we refer to as the '**legal organisation**' (with your organisation being the **delivery organisation**). This situation often occurs when the organisation **delivering** the activity or project is a branch of an overarching organisation – such as a local CWA or YMCA branch. In this case, the CWA or YMCA would be the legal organisation.

Even though your organisation may complete the application (and will be doing the work), **it's the 'legal organisation's' legal and financial information that needs to be provided**. They also need to provide a letter from the legal entity, confirming they are willing to play this role, with a template available here for your convenience.

Applications from ACNC and/or unincorporated associations are required to submit their organisation's Constitution.

Why is this important?

Telstra's Connected Communities Grant Program is only able to distribute funds to not-for-profit organisations with an ABN or Incorporation Certificate, and FRRR needs to know that the organisation with that ABN / Incorporation Certificate understands and agrees to carry out their responsibilities in relation to your project, if successful.

Financial information

Applications received without the requested financial information are ineligible. Providing incorrect financial information is currently the most common reason why applications are not able to be considered. You must include the organisation's:

- Annual income (total income in your financial year);
- Annual expenditure (total expenses in your financial year);
- Current assets (from your audited financials, or bank balance minus any debts).
- Please note:
- Provide a brief explanation of any large financial surplus or current assets and reasons why FRRR funds are still required;
- If financial information is more than 18 months old, please provide an explanation as to why the organisation does not have more recent documents;
- Please explain any deficits and steps to sustain the organisation financially;

FRRR conducts a broad range of due diligence queries when reviewing applications, such as: reviewing current and past incorporation, DGR and ACNC status. If your organisation has happened to have their incorporation status, DGR status or ACNC status changed or ACNC registration revoked or voluntarily withdrawn, please let us know the reasons for this.

Please contact us if you cannot provide required financials or you are unsure about what to provide.

Why is this important?

FRRR uses this information to understand your organisation's financial viability and ability to manage grant funds.

Project Budget

You must include a project budget that clearly shows the items that FRRR grant funds would be used for and that also shows all income and expenses related to your project.

Budgets should be realistic and must add up – i.e. total expenditure must match total income.

Applicant contributions in cash or in-kind are highly regarded. Quotes or detailed rationale for items over \$1,000 are required, where possible. Note: FRRR suggests costing unskilled volunteer labour at \$45 per hour.

For more info on costing volunteer labour, visit: <https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/valuing-volunteer-labour>.

Why is this important?

A clear budget helps FRRR to understand the size of your project, exactly how funds will be spent and helps demonstrate community support for your project through in-kind contributions either from your organisation or partners / community members.

Supporting Materials

FRRR strongly recommends that you provide supporting materials such as letters of support, community plans, survey results, photographs, media clips and research reports that can show broad community support and/or local partnerships involved in the project.

Large documents should be referenced and explained in the application.

Please note: A requirement of this program is that a high resolution photo (between 1MB to 10MB) must be submitted as part of the application process. The photo can be a group shot of staff or volunteers in your Community Organisation OR an action shot relevant to the project you are applying for including people. If you are successful, FRRR may utilise this photo in grant announcements and/or associated communications.

Why is this important?

FRRR & Telstra seek to fund projects that are well-supported by the broader local community, are locally-led and delivered, show good partnerships and are inclusive - benefitting multiple parts of the community. As we are not always familiar with your community, our staff consider support material as evidence toward understanding level of community need, benefit and support.

Clear Project Information

A clear description of exactly **what** the grant funds will be used for, **when** and **where** the project will happen, **who** will benefit and **who** will be involved in delivering the project, **why** the project and grant funds are needed, **how** funds will be spent and **how** the activities and success of the project will be recorded, evaluated, and shared.

Where possible, we encourage you to make it really clear that your organisation is ready and able to deliver the project and, if required, provide ongoing support for the initiative.

Why is this important?

FRRR needs to clearly understand your project to assess its merits. Applicants should focus on addressing the what, when, where, who, why and how of the project, as this is the best way to clearly communicate the details of the project.

A ready community is best placed to achieve the aims of your project, so during assessment, our staff look for information that tells us that good leadership, skills and awareness exist in your community to support the project now and in the future.