

Fact Sheet – Growing Regions Program

* The Government has **committed $600 million** towards the **Growing Regions Program**.
* The Growing Regions Program **is an open and competitive** program with grants awarded on a **merit basis**.
* Funding will be provided though **two $300 million rounds – Round 1 opened for expressions of interest on 5 July 2023 and closes on 1 August 2023.** Round 2 expected to open later this year.
* A **two-stage application process: stage one - expressions of interest** and **stage two - full applications**.
* Grants between **$500,000** **and** **$15 million** will be awarded to **eligible local governments and not-for-profit incorporated organisations** to deliver **priority** community and economic infrastructure projects.
* **Joint (consortia) applications** areaccepted under the program guidelines.
* **Eligible locations** must be **outside the Greater Capital City Statistical Areas** (GCCSA) as defined by ABS.
* The Government also announced a **$200 million** **Thriving Suburbs Program** as part of the 2023-24 Budget and this program will cover all communities within the GCCSAs. We expect **all local government areas in Australia to be eligible for grant opportunities under one of these two** **programs**.
* The Government has redesigned regional investments to ensure best **practice transparency and consistency** of process, as well as **fairer distribution of funds** to ensure people can have confidence in the new programs.
* **Fairness and transparency** in grants administration will be demonstrated in the **Growing Regions Program** through the introduction of a **multi-party Parliamentary panel**. The panel will recommend only projects that represent regional priorities.
* An **external probity advisor** will also provide advice to a **multi-party Parliamentary panel**.
* Community **stakeholders were consulted** on the **design principles** of the **Growing Regions Program** to ensure the guidelines were robust and best positioned to achieve program intent and outcomes.
* The **guidelines** for the Growing Regions Program **were released on 6 May 2023** to allow **eligible** applicants time to start preparing applications ahead of the program opening for expressions of interest on 5 July 2023.
* The **guidelines** **are available** on the Department’s **website**, as well as the **Business Grants Hub** and **GrantConnect websites.**

**The objectives of the program**

* Constructing or upgrading community infrastructure that fills an identified need
* Contributing to achieving a wide range of community socio-economic outcomes
* Strategically aligned with regional priorities.

**The intended outcomes of the program**

* Provision of infrastructure which improves equity, supports diverse social inclusion, grows local economies and enhances amenity and liveability
* Investment contributes to the achievement of broader Government priorities such as net zero emissions, gender equity, and/or First Nations priorities.