



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

# Mobile Network Hardening Program— Round 3 Grant Opportunity Guidelines

October 2024

Opening date:	Friday, 25 October 2024
Closing date and time:	17:00 AEDT on 20 December 2024 (8 weeks after opening)
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
Administering entity	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, please contact <a href="mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au">MNHP@communications.gov.au</a> . Questions should be sent no later than Friday, 13 December 2024
Date Guidelines released:	Friday, 25 October 2024
Type of grant opportunity:	Targeted Competitive

## Table of Contents

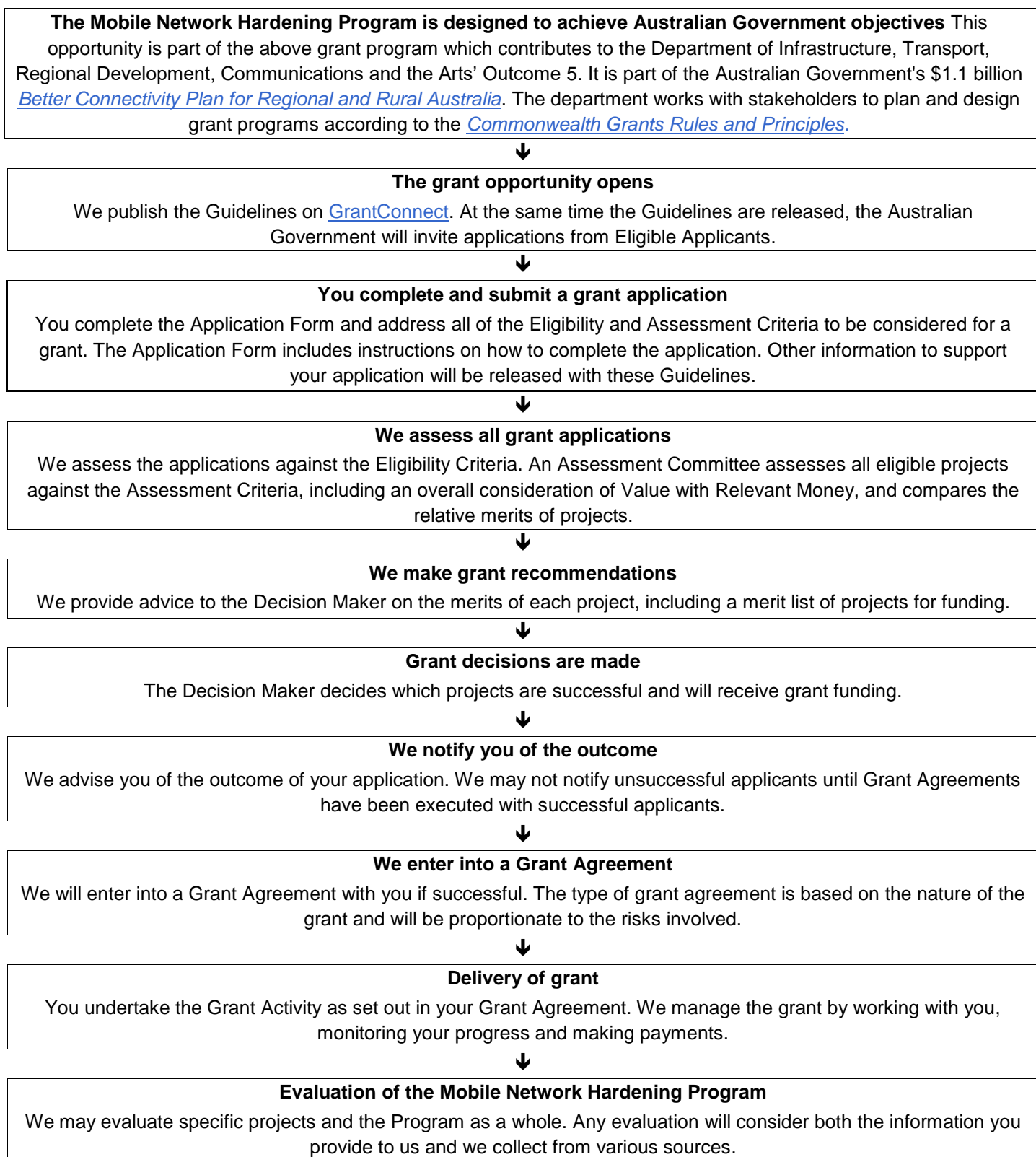
Mobile Network Hardening Program—Round 3 Grant Opportunity Guidelines .....	1
1 Introduction.....	5
2 About the grant program .....	5
<b>2.1 Mobile Network Hardening Program Round 3 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2 Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3 Grant amount and grant period .....	7
<b>3.1 Grants available .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.2 Grant period .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.3 Third party funding co-contributions .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4 Eligibility criteria .....	8
<b>4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant? .....</b>	<b>8</b>
5 What the grant money can be used for.....	8
<b>5.1 Eligible grant activities.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5.2 Eligible Sites and Eligible Locations .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5.3 Eligible expenditure.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for.....</b>	<b>10</b>
6 The Assessment Criteria.....	11
7 How to apply .....	12
<b>7.1 Attachments to the application .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.2 Timing of grant opportunity processes.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.3 Questions during the application process.....</b>	<b>14</b>
8 The grant selection process .....	14
<b>8.1 Assessment of grant applications .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8.2 Value with relevant money.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8.3 Who will assess applications? .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>8.4 Who will approve grants? .....</b>	<b>15</b>
9 Notification of application outcomes .....	16
<b>9.1 Feedback on your application .....</b>	<b>16</b>
10 Successful grant applications.....	16
<b>10.1 The grant agreement .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>10.3 How we pay the grant .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>10.4 Grants Payments and GST .....</b>	<b>17</b>
11 Announcement of grants .....	17
12 How we monitor your grant activity .....	17
<b>12.1 Keeping us informed .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>12.2 Reporting .....</b>	<b>18</b>

12.3	Grant agreement variations .....	18
12.4	Compliance visits .....	18
12.5	Program evaluation .....	18
12.6	Acknowledgement .....	19
13	Probity .....	19
13.1	Enquiries and feedback .....	19
13.2	Conflicts of interest .....	19
13.3	Privacy .....	20
13.4	Confidential Information .....	20
13.5	Intellectual Property Rights .....	21
13.6	Freedom of Information.....	21
14	Consultation .....	21
15	Glossary .....	21
	<b>Appendix A.....</b>	<b>26</b>
	<b>Assessment Matrix.....</b>	<b>26</b>

## Tables

Table 1: Expected timing for this Grant Opportunity .....	12
---	----

## Mobile Network Hardening Program – Round 3 Process



# 1 Introduction

These Guidelines contain information for Round 3 of the Mobile Network Hardening Program (the Program). You must read these Guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of Round 3 of the Program;
- the Eligibility and Assessment Criteria;
- how grant applications and projects are considered and selected;
- how Grantees are notified and receive grant payments;
- how Grantees will be monitored and evaluated; and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

This grant opportunity will be administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the department).

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#)<sup>1</sup>. This grant opportunity is categorised as a targeted competitive funding round as it is open to a small number of potential grantees based on the specialised requirements of the grant activity.

We have defined key terms used in these Guidelines in the Glossary at section 15.

## 2 About the grant program

### 2.1 Mobile Network Hardening Program Round 3

The Australian Government is providing \$20 million for Round 3 of the Program for Resilience Upgrade projects in areas impacted by, or at risk of, Natural Disasters in regional and remote Australia, and the peri-urban fringe of capital and major regional cities. The focus reflects the increasing exposure of many regions to Natural Disasters and the need for affected communities to access resilient mobile communications services during and after these events.

Round 3 funding will be delivered in two streams:

- a \$10 million (GST exclusive) **‘Regional and Remote Australia’** stream for projects that deliver Resilience Upgrades in Eligible Locations (defined in section 5.2) in regional, remote and very remote Australia; and
- a \$10 million (GST exclusive) **‘Peri-Urban Fringe’** stream for projects that deliver Resilience Upgrades in Eligible Locations (defined in section 5.2) in the peri-urban fringe of capital and major regional cities.

The objective of Round 3 of the Program is to co-fund Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), Mobile Network Infrastructure Providers (MNIPs), or Network Management Providers (NMPs)<sup>2</sup> to upgrade mobile network telecommunications infrastructure which

- is located in regional and remote Australia or the peri-urban fringe of capital and major regional cities, and
- has been impacted by, or is at risk of, Natural Disasters

to strengthen the resilience of telecommunications facilities to allow them to operate for longer during a Natural Disaster, and enable the rapid restoration of services during and after an outage due to a Natural Disaster.

The intended outcome of the Program is to help prevent, mitigate and manage mobile network outages during and/or after Natural Disasters to:

---

<sup>1</sup> Available via: [www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text](http://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text)

<sup>2</sup> Contracted by an MNO to assist with the management and maintenance of its network.

- improve the reliability of mobile telecommunications services;
- support critical public safety communications; and
- provide access to essential mobile telecommunications services for communities, businesses and emergency organisations.

The Program contributes to the department's Outcome 5: *Promote an innovative and competitive communications sector, through policy development, advice and program delivery, so all Australians can realise the full potential of digital technologies and communications services.*

A Natural Disaster is defined in the Glossary. For the purposes of this Round, a Natural Disaster arises from a Natural Hazard event which can cause both significant damage to property or loss of life, and prolonged outages in mobile telecommunications to an Eligible Location (defined at section 5.2.2).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with state and territory governments to:

- identify areas impacted by, or at risk of, a Natural Disaster and confirm whether the proposed Resilience Upgrade project is located in these areas;
- determine whether a proposed Resilience Upgrade project is located in an area determined by the jurisdiction to be at risk, given the history of, and potential for damage caused by, a Natural Disaster; and
- discuss the jurisdiction's willingness to provide a financial contribution and/or written endorsement of the project.

A list of contacts to assist applicants to engage with state and territory governments is available on request via email to [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au).

A Project Noticeboard has been established to help local governments, and state, territory and federal parliamentarians identify potential projects or locations that are impacted by, or are at risk of, a Natural Disaster and would benefit from Resilience Upgrade project. Applicants are encouraged to consult the Noticeboard when identifying potential projects and to demonstrate local support. The Noticeboard is available via [www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnhp](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnhp).

The Commonwealth has the power to make, vary or administer the Program under Item 420 of Part 4 of Schedule 1AB to the [Financial Framework \(Supplementary Powers\) Regulations 1997](#) (Cth)<sup>3</sup>.

We administer the Program according to the [CGRPs](#).

## 2.2 Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia

The Government is committed to increasing connectivity, bridging the digital divide, improving mobile coverage and protecting communities against Natural Disasters. This opportunity is part of the *Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia* (Better Connectivity Plan), which is providing more than \$1.1 billion to rural and regional communities.

The Better Connectivity Plan includes \$656 million provided in the October 2022 Budget to improve mobile and broadband connectivity, resilience and digital inclusion in regional, remote and peri-urban Australia. \$480 million has been delivered by the Government to support NBN Co to upgrade the NBN Fixed Wireless network, with associated benefits to NBN satellite services.

Outcomes of Round 2 of the Program were announced on 28 May 2024, with \$14.2 million (GST exclusive) provided for 386 Resilience Upgrade projects in regional and remote Australia, and in First Nations communities. Round 1 (Stages 1 and 2) provided \$21.4 million (GST exclusive) for 999 Resilience Upgrade projects. A list of projects funded from the Program are available at the department's website via [www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnhp](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnhp).

---

<sup>3</sup> Available at: [www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2015C00191](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2015C00191)

## 3 Grant amount and grant period

### 3.1 Grants available

Up to \$20 million (GST exclusive, \$22 million (GST inclusive)) is available between 2024-25 and 2026-27 for Round 3 of the Program.

Grants will be available for projects from either the **'Regional and Remote Australia'** stream or the **'Peri-Urban Fringe'** stream. Applicants should identify the stream from which they are seeking funding, based on the location of the project. The decision-maker may choose to redirect funding from one stream to the other, where there may be too few meritorious projects in one stream and the number of meritorious projects in the other stream exceeds available funding.

Grant funding of no more than 50% of the total capital costs of each eligible Resilience Upgrade project is available. You may request grant funding of less than 50% where you and/or a third-party make a larger contribution to the project.

Given the operational arrangements for Australia's External Territories, any funding contributions from other Commonwealth bodies towards a proposed resilience upgrade project will be considered as a third party co-contribution.

There is no minimum or maximum funding amount (up to the limit of available funds) for each Resilience Upgrade project under the Program, however funding cannot exceed the reasonable capital expenditure costs of delivering each Resilience Upgrade project.

### 3.2 Grant period

All Funded Resilience Upgrade projects must be completed by 30 June 2027, or an earlier date as specified in your Grant Agreement. Projects will commence from the date on which the Grant Agreement is executed. Any expenditure incurred on the project before your Grant Agreement is executed is not eligible for funding.

Each Resilience Upgrade should be maintained and operated by you (as the funding recipient) for at least 10 years following the date on which the department confirms with you that we accept the upgrade works have been completed (the Operational Period), in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

The Decision Maker has the discretion to consider shortening the minimum 10-year Operational Period. Applications for Resilience Upgrades that seek a shorter Operational Period must outline the proposed Operational Period, and explain why a shorter period is proposed. The Operational Period will be specified in the Grant Agreement.

While the Government encourages the Grantee to continue to provide the Resilience Upgrade into the future, asset ownership and operation beyond the Operational Period is a matter for the Grantee.

### 3.3 Third party funding co-contributions

To increase the reach of the Program, you are encouraged (but not required) to seek cash and in-kind co-contributions from state, territory or local governments, local communities and/or other third parties. Interested third parties are also encouraged to contact applicants directly in relation to potential co-contributions.

If a Resilience Upgrade project includes a co-contribution from a third party, the Commonwealth will not be liable for any costs that may arise in relation to that co-contribution. Third party in-kind co-contributions are your responsibility. The amount of these contributions must be clearly identified in your application to reduce the risk of both third parties and the Commonwealth funding the same activity. These amounts can be reflected in a reduction in the amount of funding you seek for a proposed Resilience Upgrade project.

You are responsible for forming relationships and negotiating contributions with any relevant parties, and for testing and/or verifying any advice received from these parties.

## 4 Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all of the Eligibility Criteria.

### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply for funding under Round 3 of the Program, you must have an Australian Business Number (ABN), and be an MNO, MNIP or NMP. For the purposes of the Program:

- an MNO means a company that supplies a public mobile telecommunications service within the meaning of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) and holds an apparatus or a spectrum licence (or both) for the supply of public mobile telecommunications services under the *Radiocommunications Act 1992* (Cth);
- an MNIP means a company that provides communications infrastructure in Australia that supports the provision of public mobile telecommunications services in regional and remote Australia or the peri-urban fringe of capital and major regional cities and is used by one or more MNOs; and
- an NMP means a company that is contracted by an MNO to assist with the management and maintenance of its network. Applications from NMPs must be accompanied by written support from the MNO for the proposed Resilience Upgrade.

## 5 What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible for the Program, each proposed Resilience Upgrade project must:

- increase the resilience of
  - a mobile telecommunication service, which does not provide solely an internet-based telecommunication service<sup>4</sup>
  - multiple mobile telecommunication services, or
  - mobile telecommunications infrastructure that delivers a mobile telecommunications service located at an Eligible Site that directly provides mobile coverage to an Eligible Location during outages caused by, or resulting from, a Natural Disaster; and
- not have commenced construction or be part of participating telecommunications providers' forward build network or upgrade plans for the period commencing from the date the grant opportunity opens (25 October 2024) to 30 June 2027.

The following are examples of potential Resilience Upgrade projects at an Eligible Site. Applicants are encouraged to consider other potential upgrades and not restrict their proposed projects to these examples.

- Upgrading back-up power capacity to a minimum of 12 hours, including upgrades to existing or the installation of new batteries, solar panels, generators, Automatic Transmitter Units or hybrid power cubes.
- Providing redundant Backhaul at, or to a cluster of sites supported by, an Eligible Site.
- Upgrading network resiliency to better protect the network from single points of failure.
- Hardening or expanding supporting infrastructure, including the Hut, to better accommodate resilience upgrades.
- Providing emergency power solutions, including generators, to rapidly restore services during or after a Natural Disaster.

---

<sup>4</sup> A mobile telecommunications service must be consistent with the definition in the *Telecommunications Act 1997*. This definition does not provide for app or internet-based calling.



- Elevating, or otherwise improving, infrastructure to protect it from Natural Hazards, including expanding or enhancing a protection zone around a site.

## 5.2 Eligible Sites and Eligible Locations

### 5.2.1 Eligible Site

A Resilience Upgrade project must be located at an Eligible Site, which is:

- a site on which an existing mobile base station that directly provides mobile coverage to an Eligible Location is located; or
- an existing site that directly supports one or more mobile base stations that provide mobile coverage to an Eligible Location, for example a tower, an exchange or a mobile Backhaul link.

### 5.2.2 Eligible Location

A Resilience Upgrade project must also be located at an Eligible Location:

- **‘Regional and Remote Australia’** stream: eligible locations in regional, remote and very remote Australia, and First Nations communities located in these parts of Australia (and its territories). These are areas not classified in the Urban Centres and Localities geographical units by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021 as ‘Major Urban’, that is with a population of 100,000 or more<sup>5</sup>, and are located outside the peri-urban fringe of the ‘Major Urban’ cities (see Peri-Urban Fringe Stream).
- **‘Peri-Urban Fringe’** stream: areas in the peri-urban fringe area, which is the corridor located either side of the ‘Major Urban’ boundary of the Major Cities, as defined for the purposes of Round 3 of the Program:
  - the corridor extends to a distance of two kilometres (2 km) inside the Major Urban boundary, and 15 kilometres (15 km) outside the Major Urban boundary;
  - Major Urban areas are the Urban Centres and Localities geographical units classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021 with a population of 100,000 or more<sup>6</sup>;
  - Major Cities are Adelaide, Ballarat, Bendigo, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra/Queanbeyan, Central Coast, Darwin, Geelong, Gold Coast/Tweed Heads, Hobart, Melbourne, Newcastle, Perth, Sunshine Coast, Sydney, Toowoomba, Townsville and Wollongong; and
  - a Major Transport Passage is the corridor located either side of a road that is included in the National Land Transport Network (NLTN)<sup>7</sup>, and that exits the Urban Fringe Area, to a distance of 15 kilometres (15 km) from the Urban Fringe Area boundary, extending to a distance of five kilometres (5 km) either side of the road.

The eligible area for the Peri-Urban Fringe stream uses the definition and mapping as for the [Peri-Urban Mobile Program Round 2 Guidelines](#)<sup>8</sup>, for consistency and ease of understanding. The eligible area for this stream includes adjustments, where necessary, to ensure consistency across the eligible areas and account for local terrain.

For the purposes of the Program, the [Eligible Locations for each stream](#)<sup>9</sup> are shown on a map of Australia that is available on the department’s website via [www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnnp](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/mnnp).

<sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021, [online] Significant Urban Areas, Urban Centres and Localities, Section of State, *Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Edition 3, July 2021 – June 2026*. Available at: [www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/significant-urban-areas-urban-centres-and-localities-section-state](http://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/significant-urban-areas-urban-centres-and-localities-section-state) [Accessed 16 October 2024]

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> See PDF maps of the NLTN by State/Territory for both road and rail. Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA), 2022 [online] *The National Land Transport Network*. Available at: [www.investment.infrastructure.gov.au/about/the-national-land-transport-network.aspx](http://www.investment.infrastructure.gov.au/about/the-national-land-transport-network.aspx) [Accessed 16 October 2024].

<sup>8</sup> See [www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/peri-urban-mobile-program-round-2-grant-opportunity-guidelines-december2023.pdf](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/peri-urban-mobile-program-round-2-grant-opportunity-guidelines-december2023.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> See <https://spatial.infrastructure.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7f4ff7ca2beb4c66aecdc061b780c9e9>

You may only seek funding from one stream for each Resilience Upgrade project, based on the location of the project and identified in the application form.

### 5.2.3 Ineligible Locations

Ineligible Locations are areas in Australia (and its territories) that are classified as 'Major Urban' in the Urban Centres and Localities geographical units by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021, that is with a population of 100,000 or more<sup>10</sup>, except those that fall within the two kilometre (2km) boundary of Peri-Urban Fringe areas, as described in Section 5.2.2.

## 5.3 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you incur on eligible grant activities related to the approved Resilience Upgrade project. This may include purchasing equipment and supplies, project management, and payments to employees or contractors to carry out the capital works.

You must incur the expenditure on your Resilience Upgrade project between the start and end date of your project, defined in the Grant Agreement.

We may exclude a proposed Resilience Upgrade project where funding is for a regular business activity, or an activity that is reasonably expected to be carried out through supply or ongoing management of a mobile telecommunications service.

You will be responsible for any actual capital costs that exceed estimated costs. All operating and maintenance costs related to Resilience Upgrades will be your responsibility.

For Funded Resilience Upgrade projects which involve satellite Backhaul, the capitalised net present value (using a discount rate equivalent to the 10-year Treasury Bond Rate applied at the date of the application) of the indefeasible right of use for this Backhaul may be included in the capital costs.

## 5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant funding for:

- work that is not primarily related to increasing the resilience of the mobile telecommunications service or infrastructure against a Natural Disaster in an Eligible Location;
- operation and/or maintenance costs incurred as a result of a Resilience Upgrade project funded through this grant opportunity;
- any work that is a requirement of or under any federal, state or local government laws (for example, the establishment, maintenance, certification or registration of asset protection zones, fire trails or access roads) or hazard reduction works (for example, mandatory work required to comply with changes to planning requirements);
- business as usual operation and maintenance or remedial work. This includes maintaining existing clearings or controlling vegetation around a site, replacing existing batteries without significantly increasing the level of back-up power, and general repair or maintenance work to structures;
- relocation or reconstruction of mobile infrastructure which was damaged as part of a Natural Disaster; and
- any cost for which an Eligible Applicant is already receiving funding from the Commonwealth, has an application for grant funding from another Australian Government program under consideration or which is to be covered by its own contributions or other third-party contributions under a Commonwealth Grant Agreement.

The department will not meet any costs or expenses incurred by you in connection with your application. You must meet your costs and expenses associated with the application and assessment process, and the preparation, negotiation and execution of the Grant Agreement and other documentation.

---

<sup>10</sup> ABS 2021, op. cit.

## 6 The Assessment Criteria

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in your application for each proposed Resilience Upgrade project. We will assess each proposed Resilience Upgrade project based on the weighting given to each criterion. Each proposed Resilience Upgrade project will be assessed using the information and supporting documents provided in your application.

There is no word limit on your application. An assessment scoring matrix is at **Appendix A**.

### **Criterion 1 – Merit of the proposed Resilience Upgrade (40 points)**

The merits of each proposed Resilience Upgrade project will be assessed according to the following two factors, with up to 40 points awarded for this criterion:

#### 1.a Level of resilience provided (20 points)

- The extent to which the proposed Resilience Upgrade project will improve the resilience of a mobile telecommunications service (or multiple mobile telecommunications services) or infrastructure at an Eligible Site in an Eligible Location, for example:
  - increased back-up power capacity;
  - increased redundancy of Backhaul links;
  - delivery of emergency power solutions or technology to support the operation and installation of generators; and
  - hardening structures to improve protection against fire damage or elevating a site to improve protection from floods.

#### 1.b Benefits to the community (20 points)

- The demonstrated benefits of the proposed Resilience Upgrade project to the community in an Eligible Location, for example:
  - to local or regional Emergency Service Organisations, including resilience of the mobile services to coordination zones, emergency services premises, and evacuation and assembly points;
  - downstream sites benefitting from the upgrade (for example, where the upgrade is at an exchange or feeder site that supports mobile coverage in Eligible Locations); and
  - economic or social benefits.
- Evidence of support for the Resilience Upgrade project from:
  - state, territory and local governments;
  - third-parties providing financial or in-kind contributions;
  - proposals to the Project Noticeboard from local governments and state, territory and federal parliamentarians;
  - local community organisations; and/or
  - First Nations communities.

### **Criterion 2 - Risk of Natural Disaster (40 points)**

The impact, or risk, of a Natural Disaster to an Eligible Location should be supported by evidence or data, with up to 40 points awarded for this criterion. Evidence and data may include:

- reports from the Australian Climate Service, Geoscience Australia's Hazard Assessment products, Natural hazards risk profile from the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, and the Bureau of Meteorology's Climate Driver Update, Australian Tropical Season Outlook or long-range forecasts;
- data demonstrating increased fuel load contributing to the potential for bushfires, and state or territory government bushfire mapping data;
- a local or regional disaster or emergency management plan, which outlines the Natural Disasters which have previously, or have the potential to, impact the region;
- trend data demonstrating the history and intensity of Natural Disasters in the region; or

- previous Natural Disasters which have resulted in eligibility for recovery support from the Australian Government's Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, disaster or recovery support from a state or territory government or declaration of a disaster-affected Local Government Area.

The department will seek advice from state and territory governments on the risk, nature and potential impact of the Natural Disaster associated with Local Government Areas in their jurisdictions.

### **Criterion 3 – Capacity, Capability and Resources (20 points)**

The capacity, capability and resources of the applicant to deliver each proposed Resilience Upgrade project will be assessed according to the following three factors, with up to 20 points awarded for this criterion:

- how the applicant will maintain the infrastructure being upgraded;
- the applicant's ability to deliver the project, including:
  - availability of key personnel with appropriate skills and experience, equipment and finance;
  - evidence of sound project planning to manage and monitor the project;
  - implementation methodology, timeframes, budget and risk; and
  - track record delivering similar solutions; and
- the cost to the Commonwealth, taking into account:
  - the value of the grant being requested; and
  - additional funding provided by the applicant or a third-party co-contribution.

The department will consider the applicant's record in delivering projects under both this Program and other regional communications programs.

## **7 How to apply**

Before applying, you must read and understand these Guidelines, the Application Form, the list of mandatory and supporting documents to be submitted with your application, and the sample Grant Agreement. These documents can be found on [GrantConnect](#).

Any alterations and addenda<sup>11</sup> will be published on [GrantConnect](#). By registering on GrantConnect, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

To apply you must:

- complete the Application Form in full, including providing all required information for each proposed Resilience Upgrade project and addressing all Eligibility Criteria and Assessment Criteria;
- provide all mandatory documents and any supporting documents (such as those required to demonstrate your claims in the Assessment Criteria);
- ensure all electronic files, regardless of transmission method, are provided in an appropriate Microsoft compatible format (Microsoft Office 2007 or later or PDF files are preferred). Geo-spatial information, such as maps, are to be provided in either Mapinfo TAB or MID/MIF, ESRI Shape, GML, or KML format; and
- submit your application by the closing date in Table 1 in Section 7.2.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#). We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should immediately advise us of the error and provide the correct information, via [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au). We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application, after the closing date.

---

<sup>11</sup> Alterations and addenda include corrections to currently published documents, changes to closing times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

If we find an error or missing information in your application, we may ask for clarification or additional information. This will only be accepted where the clarification or additional information does not provide you with a material advantage over other applicants in the assessment of eligibility of your application and the assessment of the merit of proposed projects. For example, if you apply for funding for a Resilience Upgrade project from the 'Regional and Remote Australia' stream, and the proposed project appears to be located in the eligible area for the 'Peri-urban Fringe' stream, we may seek clarification on the location of the project or stream of funding.

We recommend you answer all questions and address all criteria in the Application Form.

Applications can be lodged by email to [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au). Application files included in each email must not exceed a combined size of 10 megabytes. A number of emails can be provided, where needed. The number of emails being provided should be included in the header to assist in verifying receipt of all information (for example, email 1 of 3, email 2 of 3, email 3 of 3).

We will acknowledge that we have received your application by email to the nominated contact person within five business days of receipt. Applicants who lodge an application and do not receive acknowledgement of their application should contact the department. If you need further guidance about the application process or if you are unable to submit an application online or via email, contact us at [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au).

You should keep a copy of your application, including all mandatory and any supporting documents.

## 7.1 Attachments to the application

You must attach all mandatory and any supporting documentation to the Application Form in line with the instructions provided in the Guidelines. We will not consider information included in attachments that we do not request.

## 7.2 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We will only accept a late application in exceptional circumstances, and may not consider any application submitted after the closing date. Without limiting the department's discretion, exceptional circumstances may include natural disasters or unforeseen and significant technical issues with the Application Form or lodgement systems. You should note any differences in time zones when submitting your application.

If you believe there are circumstances which will affect the timely submission of your application, you must contact us via email at [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au) before the closing date to request an alternative deadline for your application.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity<sup>12</sup>

Activity	Timeframe
Guidelines released and applications open	Friday, 25 October 2024
Applications close	17:00 AEDT Friday, 20 December 2024
Assessment of applications	Approximately 8 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	Expected from Quarter 2 of 2025
Earliest start date of Grant Activity	On Execution of the Grant Agreement
End date of Grant Activity	As included in the Grant Agreement and by 30 June 2027

<sup>12</sup> Timing may be subject to the Caretaker Conventions

### 7.3 Questions during the application process

All requests for clarification to these Guidelines should be referred to the department by email at [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au). We will respond to emailed questions within three business days. Answers to questions will be posted on [GrantConnect](#).

## 8 The grant selection process

### 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

We will undertake an initial check to ensure each application is complete and that all mandatory documents have been submitted as part of the application.

We will then review your application against the Eligibility Criteria and remove ineligible applications from further consideration.

We will consider each eligible project through a targeted competitive process.

The Assessment Committee (defined in section 8.3 and the Glossary) will assess each Resilience Upgrade project against the Assessment Criteria (Section 6) and against other projects. The Assessment Committee considers your Resilience Upgrade project on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the Assessment Criteria;
- how it compares to other proposed Resilience Upgrade projects in the application and other applications; and
- whether it provides value with relevant money (Section 8.2 and defined in the Glossary).

### 8.2 Value with relevant money

The assessment of value with relevant money ensures the grant will add value by achieving Program outcomes that would not occur without the grant. When assessing the extent to which the proposed Resilience Upgrade project represents value with relevant money, the Assessment Committee will have regard to:

- the Government's objectives for Round 3 of the Program;
- the potential contribution of each eligible Resilience Upgrade project to the intended outcomes and objectives of the Program;
- the relative value of the grant being requested, in comparison with other grants being requested;
- the risk of Natural Disaster in the area serviced by the mobile telecommunications infrastructure or service, including the frequency and intensity of Natural Disasters;
- feedback from other Australian Government agencies, particularly the National Emergency Management Authority, on the impact on or risk to an area of a Natural Disaster;
- feedback on the Program Noticeboard (publicly available on the department's website);
- the degree to which the proposed Resilience Upgrade project will improve the resilience of other MNO's services provided from the site (multi-MNO outcomes);
- any risks associated with delivery of the project;
- the number of other mobile base stations/facilities, if any, that are reliant on the infrastructure proposed for upgrade; and
- the distribution of funding between jurisdictions and streams.

Any other value with relevant money considerations taken into account by the Assessment Committee will be documented and form part of the advice to the Decision Maker.

Based on the overall value with relevant money assessment, the Assessment Committee may recommend funding one or more Resilience Upgrade projects which were lower ranked against the Assessment Criteria than other eligible projects. The Assessment Committee may also recommend Resilience Upgrade projects which were lower ranked against the Assessment Criteria to ensure projects are funded in all states and territories.



The Assessment Committee may also recommend not funding one or more Resilience Upgrade projects which were highly ranked against the Assessment Criteria, based on the overall value with relevant money.

For example:

- a lower ranked Resilience Upgrade project that targets a community located in a higher risk location may offer better value with relevant money compared to higher ranked project that predominantly targets areas at lower risk of Natural Disasters and with alternative sources of connectivity and access to information;
- a lower ranked Resilience Upgrade project, due to higher costs, that provides significantly longer power back-up, such as 24 to 48 hours, to areas with a higher risk of, or potential for significant impact from, Natural Disasters may offer better value with relevant money; or
- a Resilience Upgrade project which is lower ranked and in a state or territory which has not received funding from either, or only one, of the two streams may offer higher value with relative money to ensure a distribution of funding across jurisdictions.

We may also recommend increasing the quantum of grant funding for one or more Resilience Upgrade projects above the cap of 50 per cent, should it be considered to deliver higher value with relevant money.

### 8.3 Who will assess applications?

A project team with appropriate skills and experience from the department will review each application against the Eligibility Criteria.

We will establish and chair an Assessment Committee comprising appropriately skilled officials from the department. Committee members may also be drawn from other relevant Commonwealth agencies, such as the National Emergency Management Agency.

We may ask external experts from the private sector<sup>13</sup> to provide advice on specific questions or issues to inform the assessment process. An expert who is not a Commonwealth Official will be expected to perform their duties in accordance with the [CGRPs](#).

The Assessment Committee may seek additional information or advice about you, your application and/or proposed Resilience Upgrade project to inform the assessment of merit and value with relevant money, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees. It may:

- seek this information or advice from state and territory governments, other Australian Government agencies and industry experts; and
- consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

Based on the recommendations of the Assessment Committee, the department will provide advice to the Decision Maker on recommended eligible Resilience Upgrade projects to be funded from each stream and details of the assessment of each eligible Resilience Upgrade project.

Recommendations to the Decision Maker will be ranked according to the outcomes of the assessment, from highest to lowest ranked in each stream, and annotated to identify when available funding has been exhausted. The Decision Maker may choose to reallocate funding from one stream which is undersubscribed or may not have enough meritorious projects, to the other stream to allow for some or all of the remaining meritorious projects to be funded.

### 8.4 Who will approve grants?

The Decision Maker is the Minister for Communications.

The Decision Maker decides which grants to approve, taking into account the recommendations of the Assessment Committee and the availability of grant funds in each stream and for Round 3 of the Program overall.

---

<sup>13</sup> Experts will be selected based on the nature of the question or issue on which advice is being sought, such as organisations with technical or probity expertise.

In making their decision, the Decision Maker may seek further information from the Assessment Committee.

The Decision Maker's decision is final in all matters, including:

- approval of proposed Resilience Upgrade projects for funding within each stream;
- reallocation of funding between streams; and
- the grant funding amount to be awarded.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant. An applicant who is dissatisfied with the outcome may contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman as set out in section 13.1.

## 9 Notification of application outcomes

Following a decision by the Decision Maker, we will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

You can submit a new application for the same Resilience Upgrade project (or a similar project) in any future grant opportunities under the Program. You should include new or more information in any new application to address any weaknesses that may have prevented your previous application from being successful.

### 9.1 Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful in obtaining a grant, you may ask for feedback within 28 days of being advised of the outcome. We will provide you with an opportunity to discuss your application or give you written feedback within one month of your request.

Please email [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au) to request feedback on your application.

## 10 Successful grant applications

### 10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding Grant Agreement with the Commonwealth. Each Grant Agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed.

Each Grant Agreement will set out your obligations and service terms for each Funded Resilience Upgrade project. A sample Grant Agreement will be available from GrantConnect.

If you enter into an agreement under the Program, you cannot receive other grant funding for the agreed Resilience Upgrade project from another Commonwealth grants program or other funding source.

You must confirm your compliance with the sample Grant Agreement at the time of submitting your application. You may request changes to the Grant Agreement. The proposed changes and reasons for the changes should be provided with your application.

If you have executed a Grant Agreement with the Commonwealth in Round 1 or Round 2 of the Program (Previous Grant Agreement), you may request the Previous Grant Agreement be used as the basis for the Grant Agreement for Round 3 of the Program. This request, must be received by the department by Friday, 6 December 2024.

The department may agree to a request to use the Previous Grant Agreement as the basis for the Grant Agreement, at its discretion.

Where we agree to use a Previous Grant Agreement as the basis for the Round 3 Grant Agreement, we will provide you with details of the clauses from the Previous Grant Agreement that we consider need to be amended to reflect the requirements of Round 3 prior to the commencement of negotiations. These requirements may be drawn from the sample Grant Agreement provided on GrantConnect. You may also identify any terms in the previous Grant Agreement which you consider should be adapted for Round 3, for the department to consider at its discretion.



We must execute a Grant Agreement with you before we can make any payments. You should not start any activities relating to the Funded Resilience Upgrade project until a Grant Agreement has been executed. If you chose to start your project before you have an executed Grant Agreement, you do so at your own risk.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the Grant Agreement.

## 10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

While you are required to comply with all relevant laws and regulations, you may be requested to demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation, policies or industry standards. For example, applicants may be requested to demonstrate compliance with health, safety or security related legislation, policies or industry standards that are applicable to the Funded Resilience Upgrade project.

## 10.3 How we pay the grant

Payments will be made as set out in the Grant Agreement. The Grant Agreement will state:

- the maximum grant amount to be paid;
- the payment milestones and timeframes for the grant funding;
- the proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage);
- the process for reconciling actual costs against estimated costs, including in relation to balancing cost overspends and underspends;
- any financial contributions you must make;
- any in-kind contributions; and
- any financial contribution provided by a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur any additional costs, you must meet them.

We will make a mobilisation payment equal to 60% of the approved grant funding amount on execution of the Grant Agreement, and payment of the remaining 40% of the approved grant funding amount on completion of all of Resilience Upgrade projects funded from Round 3. We will pay this amount when you submit a satisfactory final report demonstrating you have completed all required contractual obligations.

## 10.4 Grants Payments and GST

Payments will be GST inclusive, as set out in the Grant Agreement. If you are registered for the [Goods and Services Tax](#) (GST), we will add GST to your grant payment.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. The department recommends that Grantees seek independent professional advice on their taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The department does not provide advice on an applicant's particular taxation circumstances.

# 11 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect, as required by Section 5.4 of the [CGRPs](#).

# 12 How we monitor your grant activity

## 12.1 Keeping us informed

You must notify us of any key changes to your organisation or business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform the department of any changes to your:

- name;
- addresses;
- nominated contact details; or
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the Grant Agreement, you must advise us immediately.

## 12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the Grant Agreement. The department may also remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed milestones and outcomes;
- contributions of other parties, where relevant;
- expenditure of the grant; and
- operation of the Funded Resilience Upgrade over the Operational Period.

The amount of detail in your reports should be commensurate with the size, complexity and amount of the grant.

We will monitor progress by assessing the reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of reports. Occasionally, we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments. This may occur, for example, when there are unresolved discrepancies, insufficient documentation to evidence claims, or disagreement between the Grantee and the department about key matters, such as progress or expenditure.

When you complete the grant activity, you must submit a final report. Final reports must:

- identify if, when and how objectives have been achieved;
- include the agreed evidence of expenditure and completion of the activity as specified in the Grant Agreement;
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred; and
- be submitted in the timeframe and format specified in the Grant Agreement.

The department will only make the final grant payment after we have received, and confirmed acceptance of, a satisfactory final report.

## 12.3 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect the rollout of your Funded Resilience Upgrade project. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your Grant Agreement. Applicants can request a variation by emailing [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au) with reasons for the variation and steps that could be taken to deliver the Funded Resilience Upgrade project.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the Grant Agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

## 12.4 Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the Grant Agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

## 12.5 Program evaluation

We will evaluate the Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information, for up to one year after finalisation of your Grant Agreement to help us

understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the Program was in achieving its outcomes.

## 12.6 Acknowledgement

When you make a public statement about the Funded Resilience Upgrade project, we require you to acknowledge the grant by using the following wording:

“This project received funding from the Australian Government”.

## 13 Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, is conducted according to the published Guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud and corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct, and is consistent with the [CGRPs](#).

These Guidelines may be changed from time to time by the department. When this happens, the revised Guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.

You should be aware of your obligations under the [National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022](#), noting that under the Act grantees will generally be considered ‘contracted service providers’ [see <https://www.nacc.gov.au/resource-centre/nacc-fact-sheets>].

### 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

The Department’s Client Service Charter applies to complaints about this grant opportunity, available at <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/about-us/corporate-reporting/client-service-charter>. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this Grant Opportunity should be sent to [MNHP@communications.gov.au](mailto:MNHP@communications.gov.au).

If you do not agree with the way the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the department.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

### 13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, can affect the performance of the Program. There may be an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest if the department’s staff, any member of the Assessment Committee or advisor and/or the eligible applicant or any of your personnel, including sub-contractors, has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the Selection Process, such as an employee of the Australian Government;
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the Program.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the department in writing immediately.

Members of the Assessment Committee and other officials, including the Decision Maker, must declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with the probity requirements of the Program.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled in accordance with the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#) and applicable Australian Government policy and legal requirements.

### 13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (the Act) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (the Principles). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect;
- why we collect your personal information; and
- who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this Grant Opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research, or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the Act and Principles, and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and sub-contractors you engage to assist with the Funded Resilience Upgrade, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the Funded Resilience Upgrade. Accordingly, you must not do anything which, if done by the department, would breach a Principle as defined in the Act.

For further information about our privacy obligations (including how to access or correct personal information or make a complaint) and our contact details for privacy matters, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

### 13.4 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you, or your employees, agents or subcontractors, to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the Grant Agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential;
2. the information is commercially sensitive; and
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the Assessment Committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively;
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities;

- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;
- other Commonwealth agencies, and state or territory governments for any purpose, including where needed to assist with the assessment of merit of a proposed Resilience Upgrade project;
- local governments in program reports and consultations;
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner;
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The Grant Agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the Grant Agreement.

## 13.5 Intellectual Property Rights

By submitting an application under the Program, to the extent your application contains its Intellectual Property or a third party's Intellectual Property, you hereby grant (or will procure for) the Commonwealth a permanent, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully paid up, worldwide, non-exclusive licence (including a right of sublicense) to use, reproduce, adapt, and electronically communicate your (or third party's) Intellectual Property contained in your application, provided the use, reproduction, adaptation, or communication is in connection with the Program.

## 13.6 Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

Freedom of Information Coordinator

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

GPO Box 594

CANBERRA ACT 2601

[FOI@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:FOI@infrastructure.gov.au)

# 14 Consultation

Public consultation was conducted prior to these Guidelines being finalised.

# 15 Glossary

Term	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AEDT	Australian Eastern Daylight Time
AEST	Australian Eastern Standard Time
Application Form	The Application Form mentioned in section 7 of these Guidelines.

Term	Definition
Assessment Committee	A committee established by the Department to assess applications, comprising appropriately skilled officials from the department and, potentially, other relevant Commonwealth agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency.
Assessment Criteria	The specified principles or standards against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive Grant Opportunity, to determine application rankings.
Asset Capital Costs (CAPEX)	The costs to purchase, build or upgrade physical assets under the Program.
Backhaul	A link between the core or backbone of a network and sub-networks, transporting data from a series of disparate locations to a more centralised location.
Commonwealth Entity	A Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. Defined in subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act.
<a href="#"><u>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs)</u></a>	Establishes the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulates the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
Decision Maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant, as set out in section 8.4. For Round 3 of the Program, this is the Minister for Communications.
Department	The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.
Eligible Applicant	The meaning given in section 4.1 of these Guidelines.
Eligibility Criteria	The mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant as set out at section 4.1 of these Guidelines.
Eligible Location	The meaning given in section 5.2.1 of these Guidelines.
Eligible Site	The meaning given in section 5.2.2 of these Guidelines.
Emergency Service Organisation	A local Rural Fire Service or other state or territory agency with appropriate expertise to provide confirmation that a location is impacted by, or at risk of, Natural Disasters.
FOI	Freedom of Information, as set out in the <a href="#"><u>Freedom of Information Act 1982</u></a> .
Funded Resilience Upgrade Funded Resilience Upgrade project	A proposed Resilience Upgrade project selected for funding under Round 3 of the Program

Term	Definition
Grant	For the purposes of the <a href="#">CGRPs</a> , a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>14</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>15</sup> is to be paid to a Grantee other than the Commonwealth; and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the Grantee to achieve its objectives.</li> </ul>
Grant Activity/Activities	Refers to the project for which the Grantee is receiving funding and required to undertake.
Grant Agreement	The agreement which sets out the relationship between the Commonwealth and the Grantee, and sets out the details of the grant and responsibilities in relation to the grant.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the <a href="#">CGRPs</a> .
Grant Opportunity	The specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential Grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
Grantee	The individual or organisation which has been selected to receive a grant for a Funded Resilience Upgrade project.
GST	Goods and Service Tax
Guidelines	These Guidelines for Round 3 of the Mobile Network Hardening Program.
MNO	Mobile Network Operator as described in section 4.1.
MNIP	Mobile Network Infrastructure Provider as described in section 4.1.
Mobile Telecommunications Service	A mobile telecommunications service is defined in subsection 32 (1) of the <a href="#">Telecommunications Act 1997</a> . This definition does not include WiFi or internet calling capabilities which may be present on an end-user's handheld device.
Natural Disaster	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts ( <a href="#">National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework</a> ). As predicated by a Natural Hazard.  Per section 2 of these Guidelines, this includes naturally occurring events that can cause prolonged outages to an Eligible Site.

<sup>14</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act.

<sup>15</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act.



Term	Definition
Natural Hazard	A natural process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. For example, geological hazards, such as landslides and earthquakes, and extreme weather, and climate-driven hazards, such as east coast lows, floods, bushfires and cyclones ( <a href="#">National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework</a> ).
National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)	The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent Commonwealth agency. It detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The Commission operates under the <a href="#">National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022</a> .
NMP	Network Management Providers (as described in section 4.1).
Operational Period	The length of time that a Grantee is required to maintain and operated a site that has been funded for a Resilience Upgrade under the Program (section 3.2).
Peri Urban Fringe	For this Program, the Peri-urban fringe is areas in the Peri-urban Fringe Area, which is the corridor located either side of the 'Major Urban' boundary of the Major Cities, as defined for the purposes of Round 3 of the Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the corridor extends to a distance of two kilometres (2 km) inside the Major Urban boundary, and 15 kilometres (15 km) outside the Major Urban boundary;</li> <li>Major Urban areas are the Urban Centres and Localities geographical units classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021 with a population of 100,000 or more<sup>16</sup>;</li> </ul>
Peri Urban Fringe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major Cities are Adelaide, Ballarat, Bendigo, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra/Queanbeyan, Central Coast, Darwin, Geelong, Gold Coast/Tweed Heads, Hobart, Melbourne, Newcastle, Perth, Sunshine Coast, Sydney, Toowoomba, Townsville and Wollongong; and</li> <li>a Major Transport Passage is the corridor located either side of a road that is included in the National Land Transport Network (NLTN)<sup>17</sup>, and that exits the Urban Fringe Area, to a distance of 15 kilometres (15 km) from the Urban Fringe Area boundary, extending to a distance of five kilometres (5 km) either side of the road.</li> </ul>
'Peri-Urban Fringe' Stream	The stream of funding consisting of \$10 million which is available to Resilience Upgrade projects which are located within the Peri-Urban Fringe.
Program	The Mobile Network Hardening Program.

<sup>16</sup> ABS 2021, op. cit

<sup>17</sup> DITRDCA 2022, op. cit.



Term	Definition
Regional and remote areas	For this Program, eligible locations in regional, remote and very remote Australia, and First Nations communities located in these parts of Australia (and its territories). These are areas not classified in the Urban Centres and Localities geographical units by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2021 as 'Major Urban', that is with a population of 100,000 or more <sup>18</sup> , and are located outside the Peri-Urban Fringe of the 'Major Urban' cities (see Peri-Urban Fringe Stream).
'Regional and Remote Australia' Stream	The stream of funding consisting of \$10 million which is available to Resilience Upgrade proposals which are located in regional and remote Australia.
Resilience Upgrade	An upgrade to an Existing Site in an Eligible Location described in section 5.2.1.
Selection Criteria	Comprises the Eligibility Criteria and Assessment Criteria.
Selection Process	The method used to select potential Grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria. Described at section 8 of these Guidelines.
Value with Relevant Money	<p>'Value with relevant money is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of the project proposal and activities;</li> <li>• fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives;</li> <li>• that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved; and</li> <li>• the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>
We/us	The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts and/or Commonwealth Officials administering the Program

---

<sup>18</sup> ABS 2021, op. cit

## Assessment Matrix

Assessment Criteria – Indicators to be used when assessing each criterion	Criterion 1a – Level of Resilience Provided [total of 20 points]	Criterion 1b – Benefits to the Community [total of 20 points]	Criterion 2 – Risk of Natural Disaster [total of 40 points]	Criterion 3 – Capacity, Capability and Resources [total of 20 points]	Assessed As
Strong responses against each criterion, where the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates a strong understanding of the criterion and its requirements;</li> <li>clearly demonstrates how the Project satisfies the criterion;</li> <li>provides detailed evidence that substantiates the majority of claims, and is from a recognised and reliable source, directly relevant to the claim, and up-to-date.</li> </ul>	13 to 20 points	13 to 20 points	26 to 40 points	13 to 20 points	Very Good
Sound responses against each criterion, where the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates an understanding of the criterion and its requirements;</li> <li>adequately or reasonably demonstrates how the Project satisfies the criterion;</li> <li>provides adequate evidence that substantiates a reasonable number of claims, and is from a recognised or reliable source, relevant to the claim, and up-to-date.</li> </ul>	7 to 12 points	7 to 12 points	14 to 25 points	7 to 12 points	Good
Minimal or no responses against each criterion, where the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates a minimal understanding of the</li> </ul>	0 to 6 points	0 to 6 points	0 to 14 points	0 to 6 points	Satisfactory

<p>criterion and its requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• demonstrates how the Project satisfies the criterion to a limited extent;</li><li>• provides limited evidence to substantiate a small number of claims, and is from a reliable source and relevant to the claim.</li></ul>					
---	--	--	--	--	--