



Australian Government

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

Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program Frequently Asked Questions

August 2022

This document was updated on 11 August 2022 to add the following questions:

- 3.4 Which staff are considered employees that are directly connected to the printing of core news content?
- 3.5 How do I prove that my organisation produces core news content?
- 4.4 Am I required to provide two Statutory Declarations in my application form?

1. Overview of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program

1.1. What is the aim of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

The Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program aims to support eligible regional, independent suburban, First Nations and multicultural print publishers to alleviate the increasing costs of print publishing, enabling them to continue to provide core news content to local communities across Australia.

1.2. Where can I obtain further information about the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

Further information can be found in the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program Guidelines which are available on [GrantConnect](#).

2. Grant funding

2.1. How much funding is available for the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

A total of \$15 million (GST exclusive) is available for the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program. A total of \$10 million is available for eligible regional newspaper publishers and \$5 million is available for eligible independent suburban, First Nations and multicultural newspaper publishers.

2.2. What grants can I apply for under the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

Under the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program, you can apply for a grant under two streams:

- **Stream 1:** \$10 million will support eligible Regional Print Publishers, which produce core news content in regional markets, to be apportioned using a grant funding allocation formula based on their proportion of certified print costs compared to the total combined certified print costs of eligible Stream 1 applicants; and
- **Stream 2:** \$5 million will support eligible independent suburban, First Nations and multicultural print publishers producing core news content.

2.3. Is there a maximum grant amount I can apply for?

No. There is no maximum grant amount per grantee, however grants cannot exceed the amount of available funds.

2.4. How much funding can I receive?

Under this program, the funding amount for applicants to both streams will be determined by a needs based formula.

Individual grants will be apportioned on the basis of a grantee's share of the total print costs reported by applicants to the program. The total stream funding pool (\$10 million for stream 1, \$5 million for stream 2) will then be divided by the proportions calculated above.

The number of eligible applications received will determine funding amounts.

2.5. What can I use the grant for?

Successful grant recipients can only spend the grant funding on eligible activities and expenses. These include:

- Printing costs during the Grant period
- Purchase or lease of assets and equipment, including paper, and equipment directly related to printing
- The costs of acquiring technology to assist with printing
- Salaries for employees that are directly connected to the printing of core news content
- Other costs that directly support the printing of core news content

Further information can also be found in sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program Grant Guidelines.

2.6. What is the duration of the grant?

Grants will have a duration not exceeding six (6) months (commencing from the execution of each applicable grant agreement).

3. Eligibility

3.1. Am I eligible to apply for a grant under the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

You are eligible to apply for a grant under the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program if you can demonstrate you meet all of the criteria in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines.

3.2. Am I eligible to apply for a grant under the Regional and Local Newspaper Publisher Program if I am receiving funding from another government source for the same purpose?

No, you cannot use funding from other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government sources to fund your share of eligible expenditure.

3.3. What is considered an eligible Printing cost?

Eligible printing costs include:

- Salaries for employees that are directly connected to the printing of core news content
- Newsprint
- Ink, plates, film
- Fees charged by external printers to print products (excluding inserts, distribution and delivery)
- Print site overheads

3.4. Which staff are considered employees that are directly connected to the printing of core news content?

The department defines staff that are directly connected to the printing of core news content as staff who are directly involved in the printing process itself. For many organisations, this process may be outsourced and occur externally to the business.

Employees who are directly involved in the design and layout of a publication would also fall within the definition of employees that are directly connected to the printing of core news content.

While the department does not consider journalist staff to fall within the above definition, it is understood that in some small organisations, journalists may undertake some of the above functions. If this is the case, evidence should be provided at the time of application. This should include the extent to which the above functions form part of a journalist employee's role (as a percentage).

3.5. [How do I prove that my organisation produces core news content?](#)

Core news content is defined under section 4.1 Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines. When assessing applications, the following will be considered: the amount of core news content produced by each publication; the frequency with which each publication produces core news content and the degree of prominence given to core news content in each publication. These issues should be considered when providing evidence of core news content in the application form.

3.6. [How does the Funding allocation formula work?](#)

Funding will be nominally allocated based on an applicant's certified printing costs for the 2021-22 financial year, as a proportion of the total certified printing costs of all eligible applicants for a particular stream.

For each stream:

$$\text{Nominal Grant Allocation} = \frac{\text{individual 2021 – 22 certified printing costs}}{\text{total 2021 – 22 certified printing costs}} * \text{Funding Pool}$$

3.7. [I don't have a full year printing costs available for 2021-22. Can I still apply?](#)

Yes. Where a full year 2021-22 printing costs are not available, you will be required to provide a reason for this and will be allowed to provide part year printing costs which the department will extrapolate to calculate nominal grant allocations. You must provide at least 3 months printing costs.

3.8. [Do I need to join the National Redress Scheme to be eligible for the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?](#)

If you are named in applications to the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (the Scheme) or in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) and do not join the Scheme, you are ineligible to receive Australian Government grant funding.

4. Application and assessment process

4.1. [Can I apply for a grant under both Stream 1 and 2?](#)

Yes.

4.2. [I'm eligible for funding in both streams. Do I have to provide two separate applications?](#)

No. You will be able to apply for funding in both streams through the one application.

4.3. [What do I need to include in my application form?](#)

Details in relation to the online application process can be accessed via the online application platform. Further information can also be found in section 6.1 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines.

4.4. [Am I required to provide two Statutory Declarations in my application form?](#)

The application form does require the upload of two statutory declarations, one in relation to the solvency of the organisation at the time of application and one which certifies that all financial information provided in the application form is true and correct. One statutory declaration can be used

to satisfy both requirements, but the application form will require that the declaration is uploaded twice (in the required locations).

4.5. [How do I submit my application form?](#)

To submit your application form, register on our online grants administration platform to begin the applications process at www.infrastructure.gov.au/regional-and-local-newspaper-publishers. You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

4.6. [Can I edit my application before applications close?](#)

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, please contact the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on (02) 6271 1142.

4.7. [Can I edit my application after applications close?](#)

No, you cannot change your application after the closing date and time. If the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts finds an error or missing information in your application, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you.

4.8. [When do applications close?](#)

Your application must be submitted by **5.00pm AEST on 19 August 2022**. It is recommended that you submit your application well before the closing date and time.

4.9. [If I am not able to submit my application by the closing date, can I be granted an extension?](#)

No, extensions will not be granted.

4.10. [How will my application be assessed?](#)

Your application will be assessed against criteria listed under section 4 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines. Your application will be considered through a demand driven grant process.

4.11. [Who will approve the grant?](#)

The Minister for Communications has delegated the approval of grants to the department. The department has delegated approval of grants to the First Assistant Secretary, Online Safety, Media and Platforms Division (the decision maker). The decision maker will determine successful grant recipients, taking into account the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

4.12. [When will I know the outcome of my application?](#)

We anticipate you will know the outcome of your application by Late September 2022.

Further information about timing for the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program can also be found in section 6.3 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines.

5. Successful grant applications

5.1. [What happens if my application is successful?](#)

If your application is successful, you must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

Further information can be found in sections 9.1 and 9.2 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines.

6. Successful grant recipients

6.1. How will the grant be paid?

Successful grant recipients will receive the Government's contribution in two payments as follows:

- 90 per cent on commencement of the grant agreement;
- 10 per cent on acceptance of a 6-month report.

The department has the discretion to make 100% payments for smaller grants if appropriate.

6.2. How will the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts monitor my grant activity?

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. Successful grant recipients will be required to submit a 6-month acquittal report.

Further information on how the Government will monitor your grant activity can be found in section 11 of the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Grant Guidelines.

7. Contacts for further information or assistance

7.1. Who should I contact for further information about the Regional and Local Newspaper Publishers Program?

Please email your enquiries to mediaprograms@infrastructure.gov.au.

7.2. Who should I contact for further assistance with my application?

If you have any questions during the application period, contact the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts by calling (02) 6271 1142 or emailing us via mediaprograms@infrastructure.gov.au.

7.3. Who should I contact if I am not satisfied with how the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts has handled my complaint?

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

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au