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AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

INFORMATION TO ASSIST 2019 APPLICANTS FOR 2020 ROUND v1.0

PLEASE SUBMIT COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM ONLINE

**To obtain a login to the online application form,
or if you require assistance, please contact our office on**

02 6285 1808 or admin@actbga.org.au

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE
12pm Wednesday 3 April 2019**

Australian Government capital grants supplement funds provided by government and non-government authorities. State and territory governments and non-government school authorities have the primary responsibility for providing, maintaining and upgrading school facilities.

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Timeline for 2020 round

Feb -- Mar 2019	Prospective applicants are expected to discuss their applications with the ACTBGA office. ACTBGA staff are available to make on-site visits, provide advice and comment on drafts.
3 April 2019	Applications close 12pm Wednesday 3 April 2019 . This is the time by which a complete and accurate application may be lodged for the 2020 round. ACTBGA staff are available to provide advice and comment on prospective applications.
15 May 2019	Finance Sub-Committee meets to review the financial/budgetary aspects of applications for project affordability and financial viability.
22 May 2019	Priorities Committee meets to review applications, consider report from Finance Sub-Committee, and identify issues to be raised at school visits.
3-14 June 2019	Priorities Committee members and ACTBGA staff visit schools to discuss applications with project proponents.
26 June 2019	Priorities Committee meets to review school visits and identify any final needs for clarification and further information.
19 July 2019, 12pm	Final time by which project proponents may provide responses to requests for clarification and further information.
24 July 2019	Priorities Committee meets to review responses to requests for clarification and further information and begin project prioritisation and funding recommendations.
7 August 2019	Finance Sub-Committee meets to consider project affordability aspects of draft funding recommendations.
14 August 2019	Priorities Committee meets to finalise project prioritisation and funding recommendations to be put to ACTBGA Board.
21 August 2019	ACTBGA Board meets to review recommendations from Priorities Committee and finalise project prioritisation and funding recommendations to be put to Australian Government.
30 September 2019	Grant recommendations are submitted to Australian Government by 28 Sep; project proponents are notified if applications are not being recommended; 14-day appeal period starts when project proponents are notified.
Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	Estimated timing of announcement of grants by Australian Government. Once announced, the ACTBGA office initiates exchange of documentation with successful project proponents to formalise grant acceptance, determine procurement method and select who will carry out project.

(Meeting dates for ACTBGA Board, Priorities Committee and Finance Sub-Committee above are subject to change.)

The ACT Block Grant Authority

INTRODUCTION

The ACT Block Grant Authority Incorporated (ACTBGA) is an incorporated, non-profit association set up by non-government school organisations in the ACT. Its core purpose is to administer funding from the Australian and ACT Governments for non-government Schools in the ACT.

The ACTBGA has a formal agreement with the Australian Government to administer the Capital Grants Program for ACT non-government Schools.

STRUCTURE OF THE ACT BLOCK GRANT AUTHORITY

The ACT Block Grant Authority Inc Constitution sets out the structure of the ACTBGA. The structure is as follows:

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors manages the business of the ACT Block Grant Authority and consists of four Directors.

1. Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn (CECG) appoints one Director
2. The Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (AIS) appoints one Director
3. The CECG & AIS jointly appoint a parent representative
4. The CECG & AIS jointly appoint the Chair of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors submits the final recommendations on the allocation of grant funds to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

Priorities Committee

The Priorities Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Board of Directors and also includes four nominees from the AIS and four nominees from the CECG. The Priorities Committee undertakes the assessment of applications for grant funding and makes recommendations to the Board on the allocation of grant funds.

Finance Sub-Committee

The Finance Sub-Committee consists of one CECG nominee and one AIS nominee. The Finance Sub-Committee reviews the financial/budgetary aspects of applications (viability and affordability).

The ACTBGA Executive Officer provides a secretariat function to the Board of Directors, Priorities Committee and Finance Sub-Committee.

The Capital Grants Program

INTRODUCTION

The *Capital Grants Program Guidelines* outlines the scope, objectives and priorities of the Capital Grants Program. It should particularly be noted that Australian Government capital grants are intended only to supplement funds provided by the owners of the schools. State and territory governments and non-government authorities have the primary responsibility for providing, maintaining and upgrading school facilities.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the Capital Grants Program are to:

- Provide and improve school capital infrastructure, particularly for the most educationally disadvantaged students
- Ensure attention to refurbishment and upgrading of capital infrastructure for existing students, while making provision for needs arising from new demographic and enrolment trends
- Pursue the Commonwealth's other priorities and objectives for schooling:
 - Providing better learning environments
 - Responding to new demographic or enrolment trends
 - Supporting quality teaching
 - Supporting parental and community engagement
 - Supporting safety for the school community
 - Supporting the curriculum
 - Supporting educational opportunities for Indigenous students
 - Supporting educational opportunities for students with a disability
 - Addressing another area of particular educational disadvantage

ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

To be eligible to apply for grants for Australian Government capital funding, a non-government school must:

- be a member, or prospective member, of a BGA;
- be in receipt of Recurrent Funding under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (Recurrent Funding);
- demonstrate to the BGA a financial need for the grant (that is, show that it and its supporting community do not have the capacity to meet the total cost of the project);
- demonstrate to the BGA that the project will contribute to the objectives of the CGP;
- demonstrate to the BGA that the school has an appropriate maintenance plan in place and is able to meet the ongoing running costs of its facilities (or, for new schools, a proposed maintenance plan);
- demonstrate to the BGA that adequate insurance is held over its school buildings (only if relevant, for new schools);
- be proposing a project that is consistent with sound educational planning, within both the school and the environment within which it is operating, especially in relation to the cost, size and use of facilities to be funded;
- be proposing a project that will not adversely affect the condition of a place in relation to the Commonwealth, state, territory or local government heritage legislation;
- demonstrate to the BGA that it is financially viable; and
- own the land or have a lease for the land and/or buildings that has a period to run commensurate with the period in which the capital grant may be required to be repaid if the school no longer provides school education

Funds are not available for:

- facilities which have religious worship as a principal purpose;

- facilities in a co-educational school where those facilities will not, as far as practicable, be equally available to male and female students at the school;
- where retrospective approval is sought (generally after a contractual arrangement to commence the project has been entered into);
- projects proposed to be undertaken solely by parents and friends;
- facilities where the majority of the use will be by full fee paying overseas, or other unfunded students attending a 'for profit' section of the school;
- facilities that are principally for pre-primary education, ie for students below the prescribed state/territory school starting age or where the facility is not in a formal school setting (for example, a school's attached Early Learning Centre would not be eligible for CGP funding)

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Capital Grants Program funds are limited and not all applications will be successful. The BGA is required by the Department of Education and Training to assess the eligibility of all applications received against legislated guidelines.

Eligible projects will then be placed in order of priority for funding on the basis of:

- primarily, the relative educational disadvantage of the student population of the school; and
- secondarily, the appropriateness of the cost, size and use of the facilities to be funded, in relation to sound educational planning; the relative contributions of the projects to the Program's objectives; the condition and suitability of existing facilities in relation to the level of facilities needed; where relevant, the extent to which the projects effect economies through the shared provision of services; and the extent to which schools are making adequate and regular provision for the upkeep of their facilities.

School Visits

Members of the ACTBGA Priorities Committee will visit applicant schools in order to help gain adequate knowledge of the circumstances and needs of the school.

Financial Need and Local Contribution

The ACTBGA will assess a school's financial need for the grant. School communities are expected to contribute to the cost of approved projects to their maximum capacity, taking into account their responsibilities to provide recurrent resources of an appropriate standard. If the school and its supporting community are assessed as being able to meet the total cost of the project (including through borrowings), no grant will be recommended. Should a grant be recommended, then the school must contribute at least 30%.

Maximum Funding

The maximum limit for a grant/grants is \$1,000,000 per school. However, for projects that are for the establishment of new schools, for new campuses, or (either wholly or primarily) for new education levels, grant/s of up to \$1,500,000 per school will be considered.

Cost Estimates

To ensure the accuracy of all cost estimates, schools must obtain detailed cost estimates from a registered Quantity Surveyor prior to completing the application forms. Schools must also ensure a registered Quantity Surveyor completes the ACTBGA Quantity Surveyor Project Cost Template prior to completing the application forms. This template is available at <https://actbga.org.au>. The ACTBGA does not fund increases in costs incurred whilst projects are pending or under construction.

To facilitate fair assessment of applications and equitable funding of projects, the ACTBGA draws on construction industry data on average actual costs for particular types of school functional areas for the ACT, as determined by a quantity surveying firm engaged specifically for this purpose. Information on average costs is available on <https://actbga.org.au>. This information is taken into account, along with other factors, to help assess whether proposed project costs are reasonable.

Area Standards

To encourage protection from sunlight for children, the area of unenclosed, external covered areas (including travel areas) may be totally discounted for the purpose of calculating a school's total area. Facilities funded under the Commonwealth Local Schools Working Together initiative, the Trade Training Centres in Schools program, Trades Skills Centres program and/or the Building the Education Revolution program are no longer assessed as discounted areas. Any proposed discounted areas should be discussed with ACTBGA staff prior to an application being submitted.

When completing an application form, schools must list all school spaces by their functional use. A list of functional spaces for primary and secondary schools is set out on page 10.

Please note that:

- all spaces must be listed including corridors, covered ways, undercrofts, shelters, stairs and toilets;
- measurements should show the floor areas of each space inside the walls;
- the condition of the facility should be indicated; and
- demountable buildings which will continue to be used after the funded facilities are completed must be included in a school's area.

The percentage of the former Commonwealth area standards that a school's area will be after the project is completed must be calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{[\text{Total area of school after project completed less discounted area (m}^2\text{)]} \times 100}{\text{Standard area for the school (m}^2\text{)}}$$

The standard area (m²) for the school is primary enrolments in the appropriate year multiplied by 6.13m² plus secondary enrolments in the appropriate year multiplied by 9.75m². The appropriate year for enrolments is the first full school year after completion (normally 2021 for the 2020 round) in all cases other than that of new, rapidly growing schools, in which case enrolments for the second full school year after completion may be used (normally 2022 for the 2020 round). Internal wall measurements should be used in calculating areas.

The proportion of a project that takes it to more than the former Commonwealth area standards may not be considered for ACTBGA funding unless there are special circumstances – specifically, facilities needed for people with disabilities or schools that are able to demonstrate they have taken over non-purpose-designed facilities, or unless otherwise determined by the Committee.

Master Plan

It is important that the proposed project be seen in the context of a broader strategy and planning for the school. Therefore, applicants are to include a copy of a master plan that covers at least 3 years beyond the year of construction for the proposed project. The provision of relevant extracts from a strategic plan is also encouraged.

Online Application Form

The online application form is designed to provide all the information needed to fairly and adequately assess the eligibility and priority of applications for capital assistance. Where possible, please put information in the places indicated on the application form.

It is important that applicants pay close attention to the need for preparing an application that is complete and accurate, particularly in relation to project description and estimated costs.

The online application form must be submitted by **12pm on Wednesday 3 April 2019**. This is the final time by which a complete and accurate application may be lodged for the 2020 round. ACTBGA staff are available to provide advice and comment on prospective applications. Applicants are encouraged to discuss prospective applications with the ACTBGA prior to application submission.

Prior to submitting an application, schools should read the *Capital Grants Program Guidelines*. See www.education.gov.au.

In deciding whether to apply, three of the key factors that prospective applicants should take into account are the school's SES score, the extent to which the school has the capacity to pay for the project without assistance from the Capital Grants Program, and floor area relative to standards.

Where two or more distinct projects for a school are being proposed, separate prioritised applications must be submitted.

Applications for retrospective assistance cannot and will not be considered. An application is considered to be retrospective if a school or system enters a commitment (eg signs a contract) prior to receiving a formal grant offer and approval of means of procurement details from the ACTBGA.

For a **new school, a new campus or a school seeking a new level of education**, the applicant must provide the following documentation at the time of the grant application:

- A copy of the certificate of incorporation and a copy of the memorandum and articles of association (if not yet approved for Grants for Recurrent Expenditure funding) or document stating the statutory body that operates the school
- A statement of registration or a letter from the ACT Non-Government Schools Office, Education Directorate regarding progress towards registration
- A detailed budget setting out the financial position of the new school, including, in the case of a CECG school, the financial contribution of the CECG towards the establishment of the new school.
- Evidence that it has a lease in place with a residual of at least 20 years or good prospects of securing at least a 20 year lease. This could take the form of either a copy of the lease agreement showing that the land necessary for the facilities has been secured for the intended purpose, or a copy of a 'letter of comfort' demonstrating clearly that the applicant has good prospects of securing a suitable lease.

Projects must contribute to the Australian Government's objectives for the Program. Applicants must indicate on the application form the program objectives to which the project is directed.

The following documents must be included with your application:

- **Copies of insurance certificates**
- **A certificate confirming existing area figures**
- **Site plans, a Master Plan, and plans* of the proposed project**
- **Capital Works Costing from a registered Quantity Surveyor**
- **ACTBGA Quantity Surveyor Project Cost Template**
- **Copy of maintenance plan**

- **Photographs of the current site**
- **Audited Financial Statements**
- **Budget for the current financial year**
- **Fee schedule for the school**

* Scale drawings (1:100 minimum) should show:

- floor plans
- major cross-sections identifying structure and materials
- elevations indicating the design features of the project and its relationship to adjacent buildings, and should be accompanied by advice on any reasons for costs being above standard costs (eg special footing requirements or other site conditions)

* Site plan (suggested scale 1:500) should show existing buildings, the location of the proposed building(s) and other works, and the general ground slope. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a clear distinction in drawings between what exists and what is being proposed.

* A master plan that reaches at least 3 years beyond the year of the Capital Grants round. The provision of relevant extracts from a strategic plan is also encouraged.

* Plans/drawings should normally be A3 size.

FUNCTIONAL SPACES - Definitions

Facility Type	<i>Explanation/Example</i>
General Learning Area	Includes: classrooms, breakout spaces and classroom storage
Multipurpose Hall	Includes: hall, performing arts centre, sports court, gymnasium and applicable storage
Library	Includes: resource centre
Science	Includes: science laboratories
Arts, Tech, IT, other	Includes: language, performing arts, Tech IT
Administration	Includes: reception, offices, sick bay, meeting and staff rooms
Vocational	Teaching to Certificate level
COLA	Permanent covered outdoor learning areas
Covered Walkways	Includes unenclosed covered walkways and unenclosed verandas
Special needs	Disability focus, for example: lift, ramp
Grounds	Includes: shade, car park, bus bay, playground
Security	Includes: fencing, lighting
Amenities	Includes staff and student toilets
Asbestos removal	Any additional costs/structural issues due to the presence asbestos
Storage	Includes maintenance and cleaning storage
Enclosed Travel	Includes corridors and enclosed pedestrian walkways

Approved Projects

AWARDING OF GRANTS

Successful grant recipients will be notified in writing and will be provided with a Grant Acceptance Offer by the ACTBGA.

APPEALS

Where applications are not recommended for approval, the BGA will provide reasons for denial to the applicant schools and afford these schools the opportunity to have their applications reviewed. This review process is independent of the original assessment process and a special appeals committee will be set up in each case to consider appeals.

PAYMENT OF GRANTS

Grants will be paid in accordance with the ACTBGA in accordance with the ACTBGA Procedure for Claiming and Payment of Grant Funds to Schools available at <https://actbga.org.au>.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Australian Government requires that recipients of grant funding be accountable both financially and educationally. For financial accountability, the Capital Grants Program Guidelines requires that Non-government schools must, within a specified period after a project has been completed, submit to the ACTBGA documents prepared by architects and an independent registered auditor confirming the final expenditure of the project, that the project was completed as approved and that the grant monies were spent only on the approved project.

TIMING OF FUNDING

Intending applicants should be mindful that funds for an approved project may be allocated over a two to three year period. This may necessitate the raising of bridging finance until the final receipt of all grant funds. Consequently, the cost of bridging finance must be considered when estimating total project cost.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT EQUITY

Grants are offered on the condition that schools will use the facilities only for the approved purpose of providing educational services. Schools must notify the BGA if they cease to use the facilities for this purpose. The *Capital Grants Program Guidelines* gives details of the Australian Government's right to repayment of capital grants.

REPORTING

Schools will be required to submit quarterly reports in February, May, August and November to the ACTBGA providing an update of the project's status and summary of documentation due. The ACTBGA will email templates required for completion of all reports.

RECOGNITION OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

Schools must adhere to the *Capital Grants Program Guidelines* regarding recognition of Australian Government Assistance.