



Shop 9, 7 O'Hanlon Place  
Nicholls ACT 2913  
ABN | 21 292 628 376

Email | [admin@actbga.org.au](mailto:admin@actbga.org.au)  
Phone | (02) 6285 1808

**ACT EDUCATION DIRECTORATE**

**FUNDING FOR**

**BETTER SCHOOLS FOR OUR KIDS:  
NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL  
INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM PROCEDURES**

## Contents

Better Schools for Our Kids Program	3
• Objectives	3
• Eligibility	3
• Assessment of Applications	3
• Financial Need and Local Contribution	4
• Maximum Funding	4
• School Visits	4
• Cost Estimates	4
Approved Projects	5
• Awarding of Grants	5
• Appeals	5
• Payment of Grants	5
• Reporting	5
• Project Variations	6
• Accountability	6
• Timing of Funding	6
• Recognition of ACT Government Assistance	6
• Repayment Periods and Recoverable Amounts	6

## **Better Schools for Our Kids: Non-Government School Infrastructure Upgrades Program**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The ACT Government's Better Schools for Our Kids: Non-Government School Infrastructure Upgrades (BSK) program provides funding to assist non-government preschool, primary and secondary school communities to improve capital infrastructure, where they otherwise may not have access to sufficient capital resources. Schools have the primary responsibility for providing, maintaining and upgrading school facilities.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The primary objective of the BSK program is to improve the overall non-government schools' infrastructure for Preschool to Year 12 students in the Australian Capital Territory.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING**

To be eligible to apply for funding, a non-government school must:

- be a participant, or prospective participant, in the ACTBGA;
- be registered as a non-government school (registered under the Education Act 2004 (ACT)) or be eligible to be licensed to operate as a non-government preschool in the ACT (where a preschool program is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, in accordance with a national early years learning framework (<https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/national-quality-framework>) for 15 hours a week and 40 weeks a year (or equivalent), to preschool aged children (4-5 year-olds);
- be able to demonstrate to the ACTBGA that the school is financially viable;
- demonstrate to the ACTBGA that the project will contribute to the objectives of the program;
- demonstrate to the ACTBGA that the school has an appropriate maintenance plan in place;
- demonstrate to the ACTBGA that adequate insurance is held over its buildings and contents;
- demonstrate to the ACTBGA that a minimum \$10m public liability insurance is held;
- provide all information requested by the ACTBGA to fairly and adequately assess the eligibility and priority of grant applications; and
- be proposing a project that will not adversely affect the condition of a place in the Register of the National Estate in terms of the provisions of the *Australian Heritage Council Act 2003*.

### **Funds are not available for facilities:**

- which have religious worship as a principal purpose;
- where a co-educational non-government school's facilities will not, as far as practicable, be equally available to male and female students; or
- where retrospective approval is sought.

### **ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS**

BSK program funds are limited and not all applications will be successful. The ACTBGA is required by the ACT Education Directorate to assess the eligibility of all applications received against the program agreement.

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

- the relative educational disadvantage of the student population of the school;
- projects that increase capacity;
- projects that provide value for money and maximise outcomes from available funding;
- the readiness of the school to commence construction;
- projects that improve the amenity of non-government schools in respect of compliance of facilities with government requirements and supporting advances in school pedagogy.

The above assessment criteria adopted by the ACTBGA will assist the ACTBGA Priorities Assessment Committee to ensure the prioritisation requirements indicated in the ACT Government Services Agreement are met, and allow fair assessment of all project applications in the annual combined program application round.

### ***FINANCIAL NEED AND LOCAL CONTRIBUTION***

The ACTBGA Finance Subcommittee will review a school's financial viability and need for the grant. 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.

### ***MAXIMUM FUNDING***

Grant applications are not guaranteed and a maximum grant of \$1,000,000 is available to any one school. However, for projects that are for the establishment of new schools, new campuses, or new education levels, a maximum grant of up to \$1,500,000 will be considered in any grant round.

A school may only submit one BSK application for a grant in any round.

### ***SCHOOL VISITS***

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

### ***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 in the [ACTBGA Combined Grant Assessment \(2025 Funding\)](#) folder.

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 from the ACTBGA on request. This information is taken into account, along with other factors, to help assess whether proposed project costs are reasonable.

Where accurate cost estimates are not provided, the school may be excluded from further consideration in that round of grants.

## Approved Projects

### **AWARDING OF GRANTS**

Successful grant recipients will be notified in writing by the ACTBGA and will be provided with a Deed of Grant for signing, which is an agreement between the school and the ACT Education Directorate. The ACTBGA may part fund a grant where it is considered beneficial to the overall objectives of the program.

### **APPEALS**

Where applications are not recommended for approval, the ACTBGA will afford schools the opportunity to have their applications reviewed by a process independent of the original assessment process. The ACTBGA Appeals Policy and Procedures are available [here](#).

### **PAYMENT OF GRANTS**

No grant payments will be made until a school has entered into a Deed of Grant agreement with the ACT Education Directorate that binds the school to the conditions upon which the grant was approved. Unless otherwise agreed by the ACTBGA, grant payments will be made on the basis of the following milestone requirements being met:

Payment	Milestone	Grant Payment	Documentation to be provided with your claim form
1	Execution of Deed of Grant	10%	- Signed Deed of Grant
2	Commencement of Capital Works	20%	- Milestone Claim Form 2 - Progress Report - Details of architect - Details of builder - Copy of builder's insurance - Copies of any changes to building plans
3	Midpoint Construction/Upgrade	40%	- Milestone Claim Form 3 - Progress Report - Letter from architect confirming project has reached midpoint - Income and Expenditure Report - Copies of invoices reconciling to I&E Report
4	Practical Completion	15%	- Milestone Claim Form 4 - Progress Report - Occupancy Certificate - Income and Expenditure Report - Copies of invoices reconciling to I&E Report
5	Final Acquittal	15%	- Milestone Claim Form 5 - Accountant's Certificate - Income and Expenditure Report that reconciles with Accountant's Certificate - Copies of invoices reconciling to I&E Report

### **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. Designated Use reports will also at times be requested by the ACTBGA. The ACTBGA will email templates required for completion of all reports.

## **PROJECT VARIATIONS**

When a grant has been approved in accordance with the school's submitted application forms, a school must seek the ACTBGA's approval prior to any changes to the project in respect of:

- Milestone Dates (Commencement, Midpoint, Completion, Final Acquittal)
- Total Project Cost
- Scope of Works

Approval must be sought through the submission of a Variation Request Form available [here](#).

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The ACT Government requires that recipients of grant funding be accountable both financially and educationally. For financial accountability, schools must, within 3 months after a project has been completed, submit to the ACTBGA documents prepared by architects and an independent accountant 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 paid 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.

## **RECOGNITION OF ACT GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

Schools must acknowledge ACT Government funding in all announcements and other publicity of all projects to which the ACT Government is contributing funds and install building plaques on all completed projects which acknowledge ACT Government funding.

## **REPAYMENT PERIODS AND RECOVERABLE AMOUNTS**

Under the Deed of Grant agreement with the school, a calculated portion of the grant will become repayable where, at any time during the Designated Use Period, the facilities cease to be used principally for preschool, primary or secondary education purposes, or the facilities are sold or otherwise disposed of.

The Designated Use Period commences on the Date for Commencement of the Completed Project and ends on the day which is 10 years from the Date for Commencement of the Completed Project.

Where the Preschool/School has failed to comply with its Designated Use obligations, the formula to calculate the recoverable portion of the grant is :

$$\text{Recoverable amount} = G - [G/10 \times Y]$$

where G is the total amount of the Grant paid to the Preschool/School (excluding any such amounts that have already been recovered by BGA or the Territory); and

Y is the number of completed years since the commencement of the Designated Use Period, as at the time the Preschool/School first failed to comply with its obligations.