



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

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

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT**

**FUNDING FOR**

# **CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

## **PROGRAM PROCEDURES**

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.

## Contents

The Capital Grants Program	3
• Introduction	3
• Objectives	3
• Eligibility for Funding	3
• Assessment of Applications	4
• Master Plan	4
• Financial Need and Local Contribution	5
• Maximum Funding	5
• School Visits	5
• Cost Estimates	5
Approved Projects	6
• Awarding of Grants	6
• Appeals	6
• Payment of Grants	6
• Project Variations	6
• Accountability	6
• Timing of Funding	6
• Australian Government Equity	6
• Reporting	6
• Recognition of Australian Government Assistance	6

## The Capital Grants Program

### INTRODUCTION

The *Capital Grants Program Guidelines* outline the scope, objectives and priorities of the Capital Grants Program (CGP). 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 CGP 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, i.e. 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**

CGP funds are limited and not all applications will be successful. The ACTBGA is required by the Australian Government to assess the eligibility of all applications received against legislated guidelines.

The CGP Guidelines outline the following factors for consideration in project prioritisation at sections 9, and 55-57:

- 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.

Eligible projects will therefore 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 or 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 CGP Guidelines are met, and allow fair assessment of all project applications in the annual combined program application round.

## **MASTER PLAN**

Schools applying for capital grant funding under CGP are required to have an acceptable 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.

The master plan represents the sound educational planning which is required to ensure that requests for grants are focused on development of educational facilities at the right time, in the right place for a school.

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

The ACTBGA Finance Subcommittee will review a school's financial viability and 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% under the CGP.

### **MAXIMUM FUNDING**

The maximum limit for a grant/grants under this program 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.

### **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 and will be provided with a Letter of Offer and a Grant Acceptance Form by the ACTBGA.

### **APPEALS**

Where applications are not recommended for approval, the ACTBGA will provide reasons for denial to the applicant schools and these schools have the right to request their application decisions be 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 *Procedure for Claiming and Payment of Grant Funds to Schools*, available [here](#).

### **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:

- Project Dates (Commencement and Completion)
- Total Project Cost
- Scope of Works

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

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Australian Government requires that recipients of grant funding be accountable both financially and educationally. For financial accountability, the *Capital Grants Program Guidelines* require 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 ACTBGA 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 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.