



ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY  
CONTROLLED ORGANISATION  
SERVICE TRANSITION FUND

# Guidelines

APRIL 2026



Government of South Australia  
Department of Treasury  
and Finance

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Treasury and Finance acknowledges Aboriginal people as the state's first peoples, nations and Traditional Owners of South Australian land and waters.

We recognise that their unique cultural heritage, customs, spiritual beliefs and relationship with the land are of ongoing importance today. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging leaders of the future.



Artwork by Brooke Rigney (Rigney-Lively), a proud Ngarrindjeri and Kurna woman.

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## Overview

Under Priority Reform Two of the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#) (Building the Community-Controlled Sector), parties to the agreement acknowledge that Aboriginal community-controlled services are better for Aboriginal people, achieve better results, employ more Aboriginal people and are often preferred over mainstream services.

Governments are committed to building strong and sustainable Aboriginal community-controlled sectors to deliver Aboriginal services and programs, including by:

- ensuring there is sustained capacity building and investment in Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs); and
- implementing measures to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal organisations, particularly ACCOs, as committed under Clause 55 of the National Agreement.

In response, the South Australian Government (the government) has provided \$5 million over three years to establish the ACCO Service Transition Fund (the Fund).

The objective of the Fund is to increase the proportion of services delivered by ACCOs – by providing grants to South Australian ACCOs that have, in partnership with government agencies, identified government service delivery opportunities, but require initial, upfront investment before being ready to deliver the service.

Applications for the Fund are to be led by ACCOs with government agencies providing necessary support and input (together “applicants”).

The Fund is administered by the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF), on behalf of the Treasurer of South Australia (the Treasurer). The Treasurer and/or any delegate (if appointed) has full discretion to vary eligibility for the Fund and any other terms and conditions of the Fund.

Applications under the Fund will be assessed against the key decision-making criteria contained within these Guidelines (page 9).

The figure on the next page provides a process overview of the Fund.

Figure 1: Fund overview

### Before applying for the Fund

South Australian government agencies are required to identify the partnering ACCO(s) as preferred to deliver an identified service delivery opportunity and requiring initial upfront investment before delivering the service delivery opportunity - that can be supported by the Fund. Agencies should give consideration to the [South Australian Government Procurement Framework](#) when undertaking this process.



### ACCO Service Transition Fund

#### Application Submission

ACCOs submit a grant application in partnership with agencies.



#### Grant Evaluation and Approval

Applications are evaluated and recommendations are made to the Treasurer who approves successful recipients.



#### Grant Implementation

Funding is provided to ACCOs and ACCOs undertake the investment activities.

#### Please note:

DTF will, where possible, work collaboratively with applicants on applications which meet the purpose of the Fund but require further information or work to be successful.



### Service Delivery Ready

ACCO(s) are ready to commence delivery of the identified service opportunity and formal contracting is progressed.

The Fund represents a new approach to grant funding for the purposes of achieving Priority Reform 2 under Closing the Gap. With this in mind, these guidelines may be subject to change over the duration of the Fund subject to lessons learned.

## Available assistance

A total of \$5 million is available from the Fund over three years from 2025-26 to 2027-28, in the form of one-off grants.

To ensure the Fund can support a range of ACCOs across South Australia, applicants requesting funds above \$250,000 may be subject to more detailed consideration against the key decision-making criteria and may be required to provide additional supporting information.

Agencies and ACCOs are encouraged to co-contribute to the cost of undertaking the investment activity/ies, but this is not a requirement. This co-contribution could include investment from Commonwealth sources where relevant.

Applications will not be considered to the extent retrospective funding is sought for expenditure incurred or committed (i.e. deposit paid or order placed) prior to the application being approved and the grant offer accepted.

While there are no formal funding rounds and applications for funding can be made at any time, applications will be assessed periodically. Assessment dates will be published on the Fund's landing page.

Grants will be available until the Fund has been fully allocated, or by 30 June 2028, whichever occurs sooner.

## Eligibility

### Who can apply

Assistance from the Fund is available to South Australian ACCOs and/or Aboriginal entities that are seeking to become an ACCO.

Applications for the Fund can only be made by an ACCO(s)<sup>1</sup> in partnership with a government agency/ies.

To be eligible, applications must demonstrate that:

- the agency/ies has undertaken a commissioning and procurement process in accordance with government procurement rules and identified the partnering ACCO(s) as:
  - preferred to deliver an identified service opportunity; and
  - requiring initial upfront investment to deliver the identified service (with the nature of this investment identified and costed).

Government service delivery opportunities may include:

- an existing service currently contracted to a non-Aboriginal provider;
- an existing service delivered by government, suitable for transition to an ACCO;
- a new funded service; or
- an existing service currently contracted to an ACCO that could be scaled up (either by an existing ACCO or a new ACCO).

<sup>1</sup> ACCOs may apply for the Fund via a consortium arrangement.

- the agency/ies has received all relevant and necessary approvals;
- the ACCO(s) is able to enter into a contract with the South Australian Government, including holding a valid and active Australian Business Number (ABN) and is registered for GST;
- the ACCO(s) is, or is undertaking steps to become:
  - incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit;
  - controlled and operated by Aboriginal people;
  - connected to the community, or communities, in which it delivers (or plans to deliver) services; and
  - governed by a majority Aboriginal governing body.
- the ACCO(s) is based/headquartered in South Australia. ACCOs that are based/headquartered in other Australian jurisdictions and deliver a significant proportion of their services within South Australia (i.e. operate in cross-border communities) may also be eligible for the Fund. Applications from these organisations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## How funding may be used

Eligible investment activities include:

- workforce training and skills development;
- accreditation;
- expert business planning and growth advice to enable the services to be delivered in a sustainable manner;
- time-limited salaries and wages directly related to undertaking the required investment activity/ies;
- development and implementation of governance arrangements and/or reporting functions;
- development and implementation of ICT infrastructure;
- development and implementation of data processes and infrastructure;
- capital works such as fit outs and upgrades of existing service delivery or administration infrastructure; and/or
- other activities that meet the objective of the Fund.

## Ineligible expenditure

Assistance will not be provided for:

- salaries and wages not directly related to undertaking the required investment activity/ies;
- the purpose of subsidising the cost of the identified government service. The service must be fully and adequately funded by the relevant government agency/ies;
- retrospective funding, where activities have been completed or commenced prior to the application being approved and grant offer accepted;
- purchases/costs that aren't directly incurred by an ACCO (i.e. costs incurred by a related entity);
- purchases/costs that are not directly related to the required investment activity/ies;
- ongoing operating costs – including, but not limited to, ongoing salaries and wages, rent, interest, insurance and utilities; and
- where the state government is already providing funding for the activity/ies via another initiative.

## Application submission

Applications are to be submitted via the online application form and will require the attachment of supporting documentation.

DTF may contact applicants' nominated contact officers for clarification on aspects of their submission. Applicants will be expected to provide a response in writing, or a copy of any additional documentation requested by DTF within reasonable timeframes specified in DTF's correspondence.

DTF may also work with applicants who have identified a high impact opportunity, but who require assistance to further develop their application for funding. DTF encourages prospective applicants to get in touch prior to making an application.

Potential applicants should note that information received in connection with an application may be used and communicated outside the South Australian Government for due diligence purposes and may also be provided to the Australian Government and third parties engaged by DTF to assist with the assessment of applications received, together with program monitoring, reporting and evaluation purposes.

### Before applying for the Fund

Agencies are required to identify the partnering ACCO(s) as:

- preferred to deliver an identified service delivery opportunity; and
- requiring initial upfront investment before delivering the service delivery opportunity - that can be supported by the Fund.

Agencies should give consideration to the [South Australian Government Procurement Framework](#) when undertaking this process.

If you have further queries regarding the Fund's procurement and commissioning requirements, please contact the Fund Secretariat at [ACCOServiceTransitionFund@sa.gov.au](mailto:ACCOServiceTransitionFund@sa.gov.au).

## Key decision-making criteria

Applications for funding will be assessed on a case-by-case basis according to the extent they demonstrate (via the provision of relevant supporting documentation):

- satisfaction of the eligibility criteria;
- the cost of the required investment activity/ies and the timeline for completion;
- that the ACCO(s) would not be in a position to deliver the service opportunity, or undertake the investment activity/ies, without assistance from the Fund;
- that, once completed, the investment activity/ies will lead to the ACCO(s) being able to successfully and sustainably deliver the identified service opportunity;
- that the ACCO and/or agency does not face known barriers to the commencement of the investment activity/ies or service delivery should assistance be approved; and
- value for money – the grant requested is proportionate to the size and impact of the service delivery opportunity/contract and the ACCO's sustainability and growth.

Consideration will also be given to:

- the extent to which the grant and/or associated service delivery opportunity will support Aboriginal employment;
- the extent to which the grant and/or service delivery opportunity supports the strength and sustainability of the South Australian ACCO sector; and
- the distribution of the Fund across priority organisations, sectors, regions, and agency portfolios.

## Assessment and approval

An Evaluation Panel (the Panel) will provide advice to the Treasurer on Fund applications.

The Panel will be chaired by a representative of DTF.

At least 50% of members must identify as Aboriginal.

The Panel will be supported by a secretariat from DTF.

DTF may seek additional advice, expertise and/or temporary membership where required to support the evaluation of applications.

Applications for funding can be made at any time, however, will be assessed periodically. Assessment dates will be published on the Fund's landing page.

Final decisions as to which applications will be supported through the Fund will be made by the Treasurer. The Treasurer is not obliged to approve any application. The Treasurer has the discretion to accept a proposal that doesn't meet these guidelines.

Grants will be available until the Fund has been fully allocated, or by 30 June 2028, whichever occurs sooner.

## Accessing approved funding

DTF will provide the funding directly to successful ACCOs, and be responsible for ensuring appropriate contract execution, administration and monitoring in consultation with the applicants.

To access approved funding, successful applicants will be required to sign a grant agreement stipulating obligations of the applicants and the conditions under which any assistance is given. This could include, but is not limited to, payment milestones and repayment provisions.

## Reporting requirements

Successful applicants will be required to report on the achievement of key milestones.

Key milestones and associated indicators are summarised in the table below. There may be a need for certain successful applicants to report on additional milestones, depending on the size and nature of their grant.

Final milestones and indicators to be reported on will be specified within the grant agreement.

**Table 1:** Key milestones and indicators

Milestone	Indicator
Commencement of funded investment activities	Date funded investment activities commenced
Completion of funded investment activities	Date funded investment activities complete and final cost
Commencement of service delivery	Signed contract (including duration and value)
Ongoing Service delivery – 12 and 24 months	Status of service delivery contract at agreed follow up points

## Additional information

### Freedom of Information

Applicants should be aware that all documents in the possession of the government, including those about this Fund, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1991 (SA)* (FOI Act). Information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the FOI Act.

The FOI Act gives members of the public a legally enforceable right to apply to access documents – subject to certain exemptions – held by government agencies, local government authorities, statutory and regulatory bodies and South Australian universities.

### Privacy and information policy

DTF complies with the government's [Information Privacy Principles Instruction](#). DTF collects information (including personal information) as reasonably necessary for the purposes and functions of:

- administering grants and funding programs;
- keeping you informed about the Fund, relevant upcoming events, grant funding initiatives and outcomes, our services, special events or client feedback surveys, as well as our activities in general; and/or
- improving our websites and other services.

The collection and use of information extends to use of such information by the Treasurer or DTF for the purposes as outlined above. By participating in the Fund, you acknowledge and agree to the collection and use of information for the purposes outlined below and that the provision of such information (particularly within the government or relevant third parties) is essential to the proper administration of the Fund.

Any information contained in or relating to an application, including information identified by an applicant as confidential information for the purposes of applying for funding under this Fund, may be disclosed by DTF, or used by DTF:

- to its employees, advisers or third parties in order to manage the Fund, including but not limited to, for the purposes of verifying information in, evaluating and assessing the application;
- for the purpose of verifying applications, income or approved purchases – DTF may provide information to other agencies nominated in your application, including (but not limited to) Revenue SA or the Office of the Technical Regulator or any third parties engaged on their behalf;
- for due diligence, monitoring, reporting and audit purposes;
- for industry or other economic analysis;
- within the government where this serves the legitimate interests of DTF;

- in response to a request by a House or Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia or South Australia;
- for training, systems testing and process improvement, including compiling statistics and reports;
- if an application is successful, for promotion of project activities and outcomes;
- where information is authorised or required by law to be disclosed; and
- where the information is already in the public domain.

It is the intent of the government to be transparent with regards to financial assistance provided to industry. The government intends to publicly disclose details of all financial assistance provided by the government for this Fund (which will include, but is not limited to, the name of the successful applicant, details of the Project activity, and amount of grant funding).

## Disclaimer

No responsibility for any loss or damage caused by reliance on any of the information or advice provided by or on behalf of the government, or for any loss or damage arising from acts or omissions made, is accepted by the government, its officers, servants or agents.

The Treasurer may vary these guidelines at any time and without notice.

## Variation

The Treasurer reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms as required.

## Further information

If you require further information regarding the Fund, please refer to the FAQs or contact [ACCOServiceTransitionFund@sa.gov.au](mailto:ACCOServiceTransitionFund@sa.gov.au)

