



TSRA Governance and Leadership Programme

Indigenous Broadcasting Programme Grant Guidelines

SECOND COMMON FUNDING ROUND FOR 2019 (CFR 2019-2)

Funding for Activities to be undertaken between
1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020

Part A — Initiative Information Background

The Indigenous broadcasting sector plays a key role in the Torres Strait in information sharing and promotion of indigenous culture and language. The remote location and geographical challenges of the region means Indigenous broadcasters have an important role in keeping our communities informed about local, regional, state, national and international issues. Indigenous Broadcasting is a key resource for our region for the promotion and sharing of the unique cultures, languages and traditions of Indigenous people.

A review of the TSRA's media and communications programme in 2010 identified the need for the continued support and development of a regional Indigenous broadcasting network inclusive of the Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Service (RIBS) connecting all communities in the Torres Strait. The TSRA's Indigenous broadcasting programme aims to address this need.

These grant guidelines provide information about funding to support the operation of Indigenous broadcasters based in the Torres Strait. Funding available through this programme is limited and therefore there is a need to consider applications equitably. Consequently, all applicants seeking financial support for Indigenous broadcasting may not be funded to the level sought. Applicants are therefore encouraged to explore other means of financial support rather than be wholly dependent upon grant funding.

Initiative Aims

The aim of the Indigenous broadcasting programme is to support the provision of Indigenous broadcasting in the Torres Strait and develop an effective Indigenous broadcasting network throughout the region.

The TSRA recognises the importance of Indigenous broadcasting and its role in the realisation of Programme Outcomes and Regional Objectives under *Torres Strait Development Plan (2014 – 2018)* and the *Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Plan (2009 – 2029)*.

Planned Benefits

The TSRA Indigenous broadcasting programme addresses the benefits stated in the *Torres Strait Development Plan (2014 – 2018)*. Applicants are required to demonstrate how the activities proposed in their grant application will contribute towards the realisation of these benefits.

Who can apply (eligibility?)

Eligibility for Indigenous broadcasting grant funding is limited to organisations located within the Torres Strait region who meet the following criteria:

- Hold a valid Community Broadcasting Licence or a Temporary Community Broadcasting Licence issued by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA);

AND

- Are recognised by the TSRA as a Regional Indigenous Media Organisations (RIMO); or
- Are recognised by the TSRA as being responsible for the delivery of one or more RIBS stations in the Torres Strait.

For clarity:

- Broadcasters who are not located in the Torres Strait region must apply for funding through the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. They are not eligible to apply for funding through the TSRA, regardless of whether their programming is broadcast into the Torres Strait. This exclusion also applies to services operating on the Northern Peninsula Area.
- Community organisations who do not hold the required broadcasting licences from ACMA are not eligible to apply for funding to support individual community RIBS operations.

Board Members and employees of the Torres Strait Regional Authority are not eligible to apply for grant funding either in their own right or on behalf of another person or organisation. Organisations who wish to apply for grant funding, and who have TSRA Members or employees who hold Director positions within their organisation, must ensure that other Directors are used to sign the grant application forms.

What will be considered for funding?

The focus of the TSRA's Indigenous Broadcasting Programme is to support the operational costs of Indigenous broadcasters in the Torres Strait region. In determining priorities for the allocation of Indigenous Broadcasting Funding the key consideration will be the extent to which the funding is critical to the effective delivery of Indigenous broadcasting services.

Funds available through the TSRA's appropriations are limited and applications often exceed the level of funds available. The TSRA will attempt to manage a fair distribution of grant funds to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria.

Items that may be considered for grant funding are shown below. This list is non-exhaustive and a grant application may be submitted for additional items specific to the provision of Indigenous broadcasting, however, the TSRA will determine the eligibility of those items.

- Operational costs (including salaries) for the administration and delivery of Indigenous broadcasting services in the Torres Strait;
- Operational costs (including salaries) for the administration and delivery of remote indigenous broadcasting services (RIBS);
- Operational costs (including salaries) for Remote Indigenous Media Organisations (RIMOs);
- Training for Indigenous broadcasters through accredited training providers;
- Broadcasting infrastructure and equipment specific to the delivery of Indigenous broadcasting services in the Torres Strait.

What is not funded?

The following activities are not eligible for Indigenous broadcasting funding:

- Activities that are the responsibility of other TSRA programmes or Government departments;
- Music, Video or TV Production;
- Purchase of motor vehicles or other capital items that are not specific to the provision of Indigenous broadcasting services;
- Commercial Film production;
- Development of business plans or other strategic plans;
- Public internet services; and
- Repayment of existing debt.

Timing for submissions

Submissions are to be received in accordance with the due dates specified in the first TSRA Common Funding Round for each calendar year. The dates are advertised on the TSRA website, the Torres News and other local media outlets.

Please refer to Part B – Administrative Information, for advice on late applications.

Assessment criteria and process

Applications for funding will be considered on their merit against the assessment criteria shown below. Applications will be compared to other applications received in the funding round in order to determine the best value for grant funding.

- Whether the organisation seeking assistance is eligible.
- Whether the organisation has the necessary governance structures and financial controls to receive and manage Commonwealth funding.
- Whether funding has been sought, obtained or should be available from other sources.
- Whether the funding is required solely to meet critical Indigenous broadcasting needs.
- Whether administrative costs have been minimised.

- Whether the funding would meet the grant purpose outlined in the guidelines.
- Whether the organisation has the capacity to deliver the outcomes specified in the application.

Guidance on Meeting the Assessment Criteria

1. The applicant should provide proof of its eligibility. This should include:
 - A copy of a Community Broadcasting Licence or a Temporary Community Broadcasting Licence obtained from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)
2. The applicant should explain whether funding has been sought under alternative Commonwealth or State funding sources.

The TSRA when assessing the application will consider whether:

- there are alternative sources of funding available for the activity proposed;
 - the applicant has attempted to obtain or has obtained such funding, and the amount involved; and
 - there is a further need for funding through the TSRA indigenous broadcasting programme.
3. The prime consideration in determining priorities for the allocation of Indigenous broadcasting funding will be on:
 - the organisation's ability to deliver satisfactory activity outcomes;
 - the extent to which the proposed project meets the objectives in the Programme Guidelines and the current Torres Strait Development Plan;
 - The involvement and ability of the organisation in achieving community priorities; and
 - The value for money that the proposed activity represents.
 4. TSRA will assess applications to determine funding levels and conditions for funding against the above criteria however, applicants should also note the following:
 - Consideration will include an assessment of risk affecting the protection of public monies and the achievement of funded activities against the benefits derived from the proposed activity.
 - In assessing funding applications the TSRA will take into account other possible funding sources.
 - The TSRA will take into account any supporting documentation provided with funding applications and may seek additional information from other parties involved with Indigenous broadcasting.

The TSRA has established a Grants Assessment Panel to manage the assessment process in a transparent manner. The mechanism by which grant funding decisions can be appealed and reviewed is explained in Part B – Administrative Information.

Part B — Administrative Information

Late applications

Late applications will not be considered by the TSRA unless an extension to the submission date was granted. Approval for submission of a late application (maximum of 24 hours) must be sought through the TSRA Contracts Officer before the close of applications at **4pm on 8 October 2019**, by phone on 07 40690700 or via email grantapplications@tsra.gov.au

You should confirm your request for a consideration of a late application in writing.

Funding Allocation

The TSRA may approve less funding than requested in an application, or approve an application in part. If this occurs, the TSRA will contact the applicant to revise the project objectives, agreed activities and budget.

Funding Agreements

The TSRA will issue the Funding Agreement (FA) which is a legally enforceable contractual arrangement between the applicant and the Australian Government to deliver the agreed grant outcomes in return for the grant funding.

Payments

All funding is subject to the Terms and Conditions in relation to Grant Funding and any additional terms and conditions as set out in the FA. Requirements relating to the deposit of funds, auditing and the recovery of unspent monies are specified in the FA.

Conflict of Interest

Successful applicants need to undertake their activities in a way that avoids conflicts of interest, whether perceived or actual. This applies particularly to the selection of any suppliers, who must as far as is practicable to the circumstances of the grant application, be chosen and engaged in an open and competitive process and in a way that promotes the principle of value for money.

Legal Advice

As may be necessary, applicants are required to obtain independent legal advice in relation to activities proposed under the grant. The TSRA does not provide legal services or legal advice to funding recipients.

Tax and Government Funding

Applicants should make their own enquiries about any possible taxation consequences (including income tax and Goods and Services Tax) that may be incurred as a consequence of the grant. Applicants should seek taxation advice from a financial adviser or the Australian Taxation Office Business Call Centre on 13 28 66. The TSRA does not provide financial or taxation advice to applicants or grant recipients.

Background Checks

The TSRA may at any time as part of the grant application evaluation, or at any time during the period of operation of the grant, examine the financial records of the applicant and undertake background checks, including criminal records, to determine the good character and business reputation of the applicant and/or funding recipient.

Privacy

The TSRA is accountable to Parliament and to the public in respect of all aspects of its Programmes. The treatment of grant applications is subject to special obligations placed on Australian Public Service

employees by the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Public Service Act 1999*, which govern the TSRA's use of the information provided. In this context, the TSRA is generally unable to accept grant applications which contain material which has been provided on a confidential or commercial-in-confidence basis. Applicants are advised that any material provided in connection with the grant application or subsequently provided in connection with the management or administration of the grant is considered to be public information which would be disclosed to Parliament or to other parties as required under the Freedom of Information Act.

Decision

The TSRA will endeavour to consider applications for funding and advise the applicant of the decision within 42 days from the closing date of the funding round or from the receipt of any additional information requested under these Guidelines.

Period of Funding

TSRA Indigenous broadcasting funding will be provided on an annual basis during the first Common Funding Round in each Calendar year. Applicants seeking funding beyond the end of the financial year for which funding is approved will need to reapply for funding for subsequent financial year(s). A decision to provide funding for Indigenous broadcasting services in any given year does not imply any commitment for the TSRA to provide funding in response to further applications. Each application is assessed each year on its merits against all other applications.

Review Procedure

Applicants have the right to the review and appeal of any decision made. For grant funding, an appeal of decision together with any supporting evidence must be lodged in writing with the TSRA Chief Executive Officer within 60 days of the date on which the applicant was notified of the decision. The appeal must demonstrate that the evidence available to the delegate at the time of making the decision has substantially changed, as demonstrated by evidence that was either:

- Not in existence at the time the application was made; or
- In existence but not discovered until after the application was made.