

Frequently Asked Questions

ESSENTIAL GRANTS PROGRAM

1. Am I eligible to apply for the Essential Grants Program?

The Essential Grants Program is open to not-for-profit organisations delivering benefits to local communities where Essential Energy has a presence. This includes community groups and service providers, registered charities, and other not-for-profit organisations.

Eligible organisations must be able to answer 'yes' to the questions below:

- a. Are you a not-for-profit organisation?
- b. Will your initiative provide a lasting and tangible benefit to the community in which you operate?
- c. Is your organisation located, or does your organisation deliver services, within the Essential Energy [network area](#)?
- d. Do you hold an ABN for the applicable organisation? Or will your grant be supported by an incorporated not-for-profit organisation?

2. How much money can my organisation apply for?

Grants of up to \$15,000 (including GST) are available through the Essential Grants Program.

If your initiative costs more than that, you are still able to apply – you will simply need to demonstrate in your application how you plan to raise the remainder of the funds needed to ensure you can successfully deliver your initiative.

3. What is SmartyGrants?

Essential Energy is utilising SmartyGrants program, the most-used grant making system in Australia, to help facilitate all applications. SmartyGrants is run by a not-for-profit organisation in Australia and provides an online platform where applicants can apply and upload all necessary documents, plus follow the progress of their application. You can find out more about SmartyGrants by visiting their website www.smartygrants.com.au.

4. Can my organisation apply for a smaller amount?

Organisations are encouraged to apply for any amount between \$2,000 and \$15,000 through the program.

5. If I'm successful, will I receive the full amount that I've requested?

Essential Energy reserves the right to partially fund your initiative and specify where funds must be directed. If the program is heavily subscribed, we may choose to offer successful applicants less than the full amount requested to support a broad set of community initiatives.

6. Do I need to provide quotes to support my application?

We require evidence of costs (at least two quotes or other proof of the cost of works) as part of each grant application.

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7. My application includes operational costs such as printing. Does Essential Grants cover these costs?

No. Operational expenses are not considered eligible for Essential Grants Program funding. If you believe operational costs form an important part of your initiative, include these costs as part of your application with an explanation of why they should be considered.

Essential Energy reserves the right to partially fund your initiative and specify where funds must be directed.

8. My organisation has more than one initiative that needs funding – can we lodge more than one application in a round?

Yes. Eligible organisations can apply for the Essential Grants Program funding for multiple eligible initiatives within the same grant round. Each initiative must be addressed in its own application, and each application will be assessed individually.

9. Can an initiative receive funding more than once?

No. If an application is successful and receives Essential Grants Program funding, it will not be eligible for funding in future grant rounds.

10. Does our location alter our application eligibility?

Yes. As part of the Essential Grants Program eligibility criteria, initiatives that receive funding must directly benefit communities located in the Essential Energy [network area](#).

11. Which groups are eligible to apply?

Groups are eligible for the program if they meet the eligibility criteria set out in clause 3 of the terms and conditions, summarised below:

- a. are located in Essential Energy's [network area](#) and provide support to communities within our network area; and
- b. are a charity, not-for-profit/non-profit organisation, Non-Governmental Organisation or community group/event.

Groups are not eligible for the Program if they:

- a. are the sole responsibility of Local, State or Federal Government, however events or community projects run by committees on behalf of councils are welcome to apply;
- b. are funded year on year by State or Federal government;
- c. solely support political and/or religious organisations. For the avoidance of doubt, groups linked to religious or political groups but involved in philanthropic causes (e.g. Church soup kitchens) are permitted to apply as long as any funds secured are used solely for philanthropic initiatives
- d. are involved in any type of unlawful activity;
- e. are involved in gambling, betting or gaming;
- f. only support or benefit an individual or employee; or
- g. provide personal bank account details.

Groups are not eligible for the program if, in the sole opinion of Essential Energy, they:

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- a. do not reflect Essential Energy's values;
- b. pose a reputational risk to Essential Energy;
- c. feature alcohol as being intrinsic to the running of their activities;
- d. are controversial or divisive;
- e. present a safety risk to the community;
- f. denigrate, exclude or offend minority community groups;
- g. create environmental hazards; or
- h. do not reflect community standards.

Essential Energy has absolute discretion to accept or reject any application or to offer to partially fund an initiative.

12. My application for Essential Grants has been completed – do I need to do anything further at this stage?

You must be contactable and available during the period after the closing date. As part of the screening process for all applications, an Essential Energy representative may contact your organisation by phone or email.

To ensure your application can progress smoothly, please ensure all contact details supplied to Essential Energy are correct.

If Essential Energy is not able to contact your organisation for more information or answers to questions, your application may not progress through the screening process.

13. When will Essential Energy contact me about whether my application has been approved?

All applicants will be notified via email of the outcome of their application approximately six weeks after the funding round's closing date.

Sometimes applications can take longer to process. If you have critical dates for securing funding, please tell us this in your application and we will do our best to assist you, but we cannot provide any assurances or guarantees.

14. How will my application be assessed?

Applications are assessed as eligible if they meet the criteria set out by Essential Energy and if they comply with our program [Terms and Conditions](#). Following the close of applications, all applications will be validated to confirm they meet our criteria and program [Terms and Conditions](#). During the validation phase, Essential Energy may be required to contact groups to obtain additional information to support validations.

15. If my application is approved, when will my organisation receive its funding?

After receiving notification that their grant application was successful, applicants should receive grant funds within 30 business days of funding acceptance and providing an invoice or payment details (any missing information will delay payment).

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16. Does the Essential Grants funding have to be spent in a specific timeframe?

Expenditure of funds received through the Essential Grants Program must be completed within six (6) months of the date of the grant, unless otherwise agreed in writing with Essential Energy.

If grant funding is not expected to be spent in full within the timeframe specified by Essential Energy, you may request an extension to the timeframe in writing. If an extension to the timeframe is not granted, you must spend the funds within this time, or you will be asked to refund any amount not used.

17. Can I submit a paper-based application?

This is an online program. Applications for the program must be submitted at essentialenergy.com.au/choices. Paper-based applications will not be accepted. Contact Essential Energy at sustainability@essentialenergy.com.au if you are having issues submitting an application.

18. How does Essential Energy and SmartyGrants handle my personal information?

Essential Energy is using a third-party supplier (SmartyGrants) to process grant applications. Please ensure you take the time to read the Privacy Policy available on the SmartyGrants page to understand how your personal information will be managed.