



Department of Planning,  
Lands and Heritage



# **Regional Housing Support Fund Guidelines for Applicants**

## Acknowledgment of country

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps. DPLH gratefully acknowledges the support and assistance of consultants Urbaqua Land and Urban Water Solutions in the development of this document.

Readers should familiarise themselves with all other documents which are a part of the Regional Housing Support Fund Program.

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE AT 5pm AWST Friday 19 December 2025**

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This document is available in alternative formats on application to Communication Services.

# 1. How to use the guidelines

These guidelines cover:

- amount of funding available
- who is eligible to apply
- what types of projects and costs are eligible
- eligible locations
- what you will need to apply
- how applications are assessed
- what to expect if you are successful

Before making an application to the Regional Housing Support Fund (RHSF) (the Fund) you should read these guidelines and the frequently asked questions (FAQs) available on the website in full to ensure you and your project meet the eligibility requirements.

Applications for the Regional Housing Support Fund must be lodged via SmartyGrants, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage's online grant application platform.

Detailed application instructions including a help guide are available at <https://dplh.smartygrants.com.au>.

For any questions about the guidelines or to discuss your project, email [rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au) or call 6551 8002.

## 2. About the Regional Housing Support Fund

The Regional Housing Support Fund is a \$25 million commitment from the Western Australian Government to provide grants to support new housing and residential lot supply projects across regional Western Australia.

Delivering new housing in regional Western Australia can be challenging due to additional costs often associated in bringing land and housing to market. These costs include site preparation, provision of enabling infrastructure, construction and civil works – all of which impact the feasibility and affordability of projects. The extent of feasibility gaps vary across regions, depending on factors such as location, availability of local expertise, materials and labour.

The Fund is open to local governments, community housing providers and landowners/developers to support key worker, community housing and residential subdivision projects in regional Western Australia.

Grants from this Fund are to assist with addressing identified and quantified feasibility gaps, subject to eligibility requirements, and bring projects sooner to fruition. A competitive assessment process applies to applications.

The Fund is administered by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (the Department).

### 3. Objectives

The Regional Housing Support Fund seeks to:

- 1) Provide funding assistance to help close existing feasibility gaps being experienced by key worker and community housing projects (including supported and specialist accommodation), and residential subdivision projects in regional Western Australia.
- 2) Assist with the provision of new housing, including repurposed dwellings, in regional towns to help build and maintain sustainable regional communities.
- 3) Support delivery of housing for key workers, community housing organisations and low to moderate income households in non-mining industries.

For the purpose of this Fund:

- Key workers include, but are not limited to, skilled and semi-skilled workers employed in the following industries:
  - Childcare
  - Education
  - Emergency Services
  - Government employees
  - Healthcare
  - Hospitality
  - Retail
  - Tourism
  - Trades and Manufacturing
  - Transport and Logistics
- Workers employed in the above industries do not include those in the mining/resources industries.
- Community housing can consist of a range of housing types provided for people on a very low, low or moderate income, or for people with additional needs. This may include crisis, transitional and long-term rental housing and congregate living facilities, like hostels or lodges.
- A community housing provider means a body corporate or organisation, including not-for-profit, that has one of its objectives being the provision of community housing.

### 4. Eligibility

For a project to be eligible for consideration of funding from the Regional Housing Support Fund, it will need to meet location, applicant, project and cost eligibility requirements, including timeframes for the delivery of projects.

Meeting eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding will be provided. A competitive assessment process applies to applications.

## 4.1 Applicant eligibility

The Fund is open to applications from developers/landowners, community housing providers and local governments. State Government agencies may also identify projects for consideration, which meet Government priorities, objectives and complement existing projects or initiatives.

## 4.2 Eligible locations

For a project to be eligible for consideration of funding, it must be located within, or in the vicinity of, an existing regional centre, townsite or community within regional Western Australia excluding the Perth and Peel metropolitan region. Genuine regional proposals in the outer Peel region (i.e. Boddington and Waroona) may be considered where justified.

## 4.3 Project eligibility

**The project must propose the delivery of three or more dwellings and/or the delivery of three or more residential lots.** For dwellings, this can be across multiple lots if the delivery is being undertaken as a single package. For subdivision, the proposed lots must be on a single contiguous site.

For a project to be eligible for consideration of funding, it must result in the timely delivery of either (or a combination):

- **New self-contained housing for affordable purchase or lease by key workers, located within a reasonable vicinity to employment locations and amenity and services**

This can include a range of housing types to meet the anticipated housing needs. At a minimum, each dwelling should provide a bedroom, living space, kitchen and bathroom facilities (i.e. not relying on shared facilities) and be capable of being used for permanent occupancy, not short-stay accommodation purposes. Projects involving repurposed dwellings will be considered.

The application must demonstrate that housing construction can commence within two years and can be completed within four years.

- **Community housing accommodation located within regional centres or townsites.**

A range of housing types can be considered, responding to the housing needs in the region. The application must demonstrate housing construction can commence within two years and can be completed within four years.

- **New serviced lots for residential dwellings.**

The application must demonstrate the subdivision can be delivered (lots titled) within two years. Lots must be located on land with a residential zoning and all required structure planning or other planning in place. If the site is not appropriately zoned at the time of application, applicants must demonstrate that zoning can be achieved within sufficient time to enable delivery of lots within the required timeframe.

**Applications should demonstrate that the project is capable, if funded, of timely delivery (i.e. at the stage where contractors can be engaged and construction begins).** This may include a valid subdivision or development approval (or evidence of an existing application) with sufficient time remaining to enable delivery of works. Consideration can be given to a longer time period, for reasons such as project complexity, resource/material availability, the need to wait for completion of related infrastructure works or design.

Applications which would be reliant on further detailed design work, resolution of tenure constraints and/or regulatory approvals (such as rezonings) are less likely to be competitive.

## 4.4 Eligible costs

The Regional Housing Support Fund may contribute funding for the following :

- Site preparation, including earthworks, drainage infrastructure and decontamination (if relevant).
- Contribution and connection costs relating to the supply of water, wastewater, electricity or telecommunications connections to lots or dwellings, including site preparation and earthworks required as part of the delivery of these connections.
  - On-site standalone systems may be considered where they represent the most appropriate option for the provision of essential services.
  - Gas connection costs may be considered where the development includes a commercial component. Gas connections for residential uses are excluded.
- Construction of roads and/or upgrades.
- Construction of dwellings for key workers or community housing.

*Note: Projects which are under assessment or which have received funding through the Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF) or Housing Enabling Infrastructure Fund (HEIF) are eligible to apply for funding, however if a component of infrastructure has received committed funding from the IDF or HEIF, that particular infrastructure component will not be eligible for funding.*

## 4.5 Ineligible projects or costs

- The creation of special residential or rural-residential lots, generally considered to be lots equal to or greater than 2000m<sup>2</sup>.
- Costs associated with technical studies undertaken to support applications. However, applications may include requests for funding towards detailed engineering design and as-constructed surveys, which will be considered where justified.
- Mining/resource worker accommodation and on-site worker accommodation proposals, including tourism operations.
- Recovery of costs that are already funded through alternative sources or retrospective recovery of costs already incurred for infrastructure works already substantially commenced or completed.

- Projects seeking funding for ongoing operational or recurrent costs.
- Ongoing salaries/employment of new or existing staff.
- Purchase of land.
- Activities that would be undertaken in the normal course of business, such as routine replacement or upgrades of plant and equipment.
- Costs associated with safety upgrades for gas pipeline infrastructure.
- Projects being delivered directly by the Department of Housing and Works or DevelopmentWA.

*Note: This does not include the proposed delivery of dwellings by a third party for lease by the Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH) or WA Country Health Service housing program (or similar), which may form part of an application to the Fund*

## 5. Application requirements

Applications close at **5pm AWST Friday 19 December 2025**.

Applications must be submitted using SmartyGrants, the online grants management tool used by the Department. You will be required to include a business case and Budget Workplan with the SmartyGrants application. All applications, together with the supporting documentation, must be submitted by the closing date.

Should applicants experience technical difficulties submitting the application via SmartyGrants by the closing date, email [rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au) or call 6551 8002.

Applicants are advised to leave sufficient time to submit their application through SmartyGrants. Late applications will not be accepted, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will be considered on merit, in accordance with probity principles to ensure fairness to all applicants.

A request for a late application must be emailed to [rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au) within three business days of the closing date and must include:

- Reasons and supporting evidence of the exceptional circumstances.
- The documents that would have been submitted through SmartyGrants including the business case.
- Application reference number provided through SmartyGrants.

Requests received outside of the three business days will not be considered.

A request for a late application will be considered by the Department and applicants will be advised of the decision. The decision is final and not subject to review or an appeal process. A request for a late application is not shared with the Evaluation Panel.

The business case must include sufficient information to demonstrate the suitability and feasibility of a proposal against the objectives, eligibility and assessment criteria outlined in these guidelines and include:

## Project description

- Detailed project description including copies of plans prepared, project aims, overall cost, location and proposed timing of project activities.
- A schedule which demonstrates a pathway to delivery of the project.
- Demonstrate how dwellings will be maintained and managed for key workers or community housing for at least five to 10 years.

## Costing and funding information

- Detailed project budget of the works required to deliver the project, including sources of funding and planned expenditure. Identify clearly which components funding is being sought and the amount. A Budget Workplan will be required (see Appendix 1).
  - A high degree of certainty of the costs is required. This could be supported by quotes from an infrastructure provider, report from a quantity surveyor or supporting evidence in the form of quotes.
  - Details regarding the financial viability of the project will be required, including demonstration that the project is not financially viable without public support.
- The degree of co-contribution to the project, including details of funding sources, considering the benefit the applicant will derive from the project, sharing of risk appropriately between private parties and Government.

Include details of funding arrangements for works required to deliver the lots or dwellings proposed, separate to any funding that may be requested/granted through this Fund.

*Applicants are required to disclose whether any aspect of the proposal has received funding or whether it is intended that funding will be applied for (or has) from other grant or funding sources including local government, State Government or Australian Government funding. If a component of infrastructure for the project is eligible for funding from the Housing Enabling Infrastructure Fund or has received committed funding from the Infrastructure Development Fund, that particular infrastructure component will not be eligible for funding.*

## Approvals and technical studies

- Proof of 'shovel ready' status, a valid subdivision or development approval (or existing application) with sufficient time remaining to enable delivery of works following the funding assessment process.
- Where appropriate, technical studies and/or evidence of discussions with relevant agencies and authorities, which may include but not be limited to planning and servicing bodies. Collaboration with relevant infrastructure providers and authorities is encouraged.
- Whether the project requires any planning, environmental approval or any other related licenses, permits or approvals to allow the project to proceed, and whether they have been obtained or estimated timeframes for obtaining.

## Demonstration of capability and need

- Degree of experience of the applicant in developing key worker housing, community housing sites and residential subdivision in regional locations.

- Where the applicant is a developer/landowner or community housing provider, they must demonstrate:
  - A sound financial track record, compliance with relevant regulations and capacity to deliver on the proposed project.
  - Measures are in place to minimise the potential risks associated with providing funding to the applicant and the risk of non-performance.

To assist, additional information, as suggested in Appendix 2, should be included in the business case and associated questions answered in the SmartyGrants application.

- Demonstration of an undersupply of housing and/or residential lots in the location and sufficient demand to absorb the lots or dwellings proposed to be supported by the investment within a five to 10-year period.
- Discussion on how the project represents value for money and will deliver benefit to the community.
- Demonstration that the project faces a feasibility gap and is not viable without public funding. This requires a combination of information sources as outlined in Appendix 3.

Visit the SmartyGrants application portal for a full list of required information, including documents to be uploaded.

Once completed, a PDF version of the application form can be downloaded by going to the 'Review and Submit' page in Form Navigation. This can be done at any time before submitting the application. Remember to save your progress as you go. You may re-enter the application using My Submissions at the top of the landing page once you have logged in.

You should pay close attention to attachments and evidence that support the application.

Email [rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au) or call 6551 8002 or for assistance with submitting an application.

## 6. Assessing applicants

Once received, the Department will review the information submitted in the application to confirm it meets the eligibility criteria and all information requirements have been met. During the review process applicants may be asked to provide clarification to assist this process.

The Department may engage with other State Government agencies, service authorities or independent quantity surveyors or similar, for assistance in verifying applicant costs. Where this is required, information submitted with the application will be shared.

Only eligible and complete applications will move to the next stage, which is a competitive application assessment by an Evaluation Panel.

The Evaluation Panel will assess applications using the assessment criteria below. The outcome of the panel assessment will be provided to Government, through the Residential Lands and Housing Delivery (RLHD) Ministerial Oversight Committee (MOC) for its consideration.

The RDLH MOC will make the final determination regarding funding being granted for the project.

Meeting eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding will be provided. Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with a notice of the outcome and reasons for the decision.

## Assessment Criteria

### 1. Capacity and Capability (30%)

Confidence in the delivery of the project through proven track record of success, sound methodology and project planning.

- Personnel, skills and experience, including:
  - Skills and experience of employees working on the project.
  - Skills and experience of consultants/contractors.
  - Experience in delivering housing and/or infrastructure projects.
- Resourcing the project including:
  - Availability of required building and construction contractors, materials and other goods and services required for the project.
- Funding the project:
  - Evidence of detailed project costings.
  - Degree by which a clear plan is provided of other funding sources and the level of certainty attached to these sources.
  - Evidence of co-contributions.
  - Demonstration of responsible and sound financial management.
- Project Planning:
  - Evidence of planning and/or approvals in place.
  - Project methodology and timeframes to achieve completion of the project or development within required timeframes.
  - Relevant service authority advice.
  - If the applicant has received previous grants (State or Commonwealth), demonstrated experience of complying with transparent reporting and meeting funding conditions attached to the grant/s.

### 2. Value for Money (25%)

- How the project provides value to the State and is appropriate for public funding.
- Consideration of levels of co-contribution and leveraging of other funding sources, including private investment.
- Total project budget and the proportion of project costs requested of the Fund.
- Degree of confidence that the funding will close the feasibility gap for the project.

### 3. Expected outcomes and alignment with Government Planning and Goals (20%)

- Level of consistency with the WA Government’s strategic priorities and objectives including the relevant planning framework.
- The degree by which works will facilitate the timely delivery of housing or land located within a reasonable vicinity to employment locations amenities and services.
- How the project will delivery housing for key workers and/or community housing.

### 4. Location and Need (25%)

- A demonstrated undersupply of residential lots or dwellings in the project location and sufficient demand to absorb the lots or dwellings proposed to be supported by the investment within a five-to-10-year period.
- Whether the project is located in a priority location aligned with Government goals, including above the 26th parallel or in another area identified.
- The location of the proposed subdivision or development represents a logical and planned expansion of an existing townsite.

Government’s Residential Lands and Housing Delivery Ministerial Oversight Committee reserves the right to offer a lower amount of funding. Note that proposals where funding requested exceeds \$5 million additional Government consideration beyond the Residential Lands and Housing Delivery Ministerial Oversight will be required.

## 7. Funding agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement. The Funding Agreement sets out the applicable terms and conditions and defines the roles and responsibilities.

There may be a provision in the funding agreement of a minimum period for retention to ensure the dwellings are available for existing key workers in the town or community housing providers.

It is generally expected that funded dwelling projects will be maintained for key workers or community housing purposes for a period of five to 10 years.

Reimbursement will occur against identified project delivery milestones as set out in the Funding Agreement. In general, applicants are able to seek reimbursement of infrastructure costs following their installation (and verification by appropriate service authorities) and remaining project costs at the time the subdivision or development project is delivered to market. Depending on the project, and as agreed with the recipient, the percentage and timing of reimbursements may differ. If this applies, this will be set out in the Funding Agreement. Where costs exceed the funding contribution the recipient is responsible for paying the balance.

Where power, water or sewer are proposed, it will be the preference of the Fund to provide approved funding direct to infrastructure providers (for example Water Corporation, Western Power or Horizon Power). This will be outlined in the Funding Agreement.

When the funded works are completed, the following documentation will be required:

- Itemised receipts demonstrating the proponent has incurred charges related to eligible costs. Note, where charges exceed the funding committed, the applicant will be responsible for meeting those costs.
- Sufficient information to demonstrate the applicant is the appropriate recipient of the funding.
- Evidence that a responsible authority has approved or certified works undertaken, and, where appropriate, has agreed to take ownership of the relevant infrastructure or works.

Or

- Certification of works by a suitably qualified independent person or superintendent under the works contract.
- When the subdivision or development is completed a Certificate of Title for lots created, proof of completion of construction, or Certificate of Occupancy for a dwelling (where required).

## 8. Project timing, reporting and acquittal

The project must be completed as set out in the Funding Agreement.

Successful applicants will be required to report on project progress and related measures. Reporting dates will be agreed at sign-off of the Funding Agreement. At the end of the project, successful applicants are required to submit a final report to demonstrate the project has been completed in line with the approved application, or as amended with agreement, and funding has been spent accountably.

## 9. Probity

The Department adheres to the Treasurer's Instructions and the Western Australian Grants Administration Guidelines. Accountability and transparency together with sound financial governance, risk management, and internal controls will be applied at all processes in the lifecycle of a grant. A probity advisor is consulted to assess and advise as appropriate including conflict of interest processes and procedures across the Fund grant process.

## 10. Our Charter

The Department's Customer Service Charter is available at [Strategic Engagement Framework](#). The charter sets out our commitment to service standards and our service standard to you.

## 11. Announcements of successful applications

Information regarding successful applications will be published on the Department's website. Information published will include:

- Applicant's name
- Location of project/development
- Project summary
- Funding amount

No commercial-in-confidence information will be published.

## Enquiries and support

For any questions about these guidelines or to discuss your project, email [rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:rhsf@dplh.wa.gov.au) or call 6551 8002.



## Applications open

- Applicant has shovel ready project/development (lots and/or dwellings).
- Applicant submits application through SmartyGrants, including Business Plan and Budget Workplan.



## Assessment & Approval

- Department assesses application against eligibility criteria.
- If eligible, application progresses to competitive evaluation undertaken by the Evaluation Panel, with outcomes provided to Government's Residential Lands and Housing Delivery Ministerial Oversight Committee for determination.
- Successful applicant issued with Funding Agreement outlining the maximum grant for their project/development, funding payments against key milestones and reporting requirements.



## Applicant to enter into works

### Stage 3: Preparation of project/development

- Applicant proceeds according to Funding Agreement including interim reporting requirements.



## Dispersal

### Stage 4: Request for dispersal

- Applicant to claim grant funding by providing the Department with evidence of milestones and relevant invoices.
- Department to assess whether the claim is consistent with the Funding Agreement.
- Department to provide confirmation of the claim and subsequent payment.



## Completion

### Stage 5: Completion

- Lot creation must be completed within two years and construction of dwellings completed within four years of funding approval.
- Applicant to notify the Department of project completion including submission of satisfactory final report.

## Appendix 1 – Budget Workplan

The Budget Workplan contained within the SmartyGrants application must be completed, setting out the detailed project budget with costs that are reasonable and reflective of market rates. Applications will not be considered without the completed workplan on the correct template. Industry cost benchmarks may be used to assess whether costs are reasonable.

The Budget Workplan requires applicants to set out the required works and the associated costs for these works. Works should be appropriately separated by category/work item line to provide meaningful information that allows assessment of the shortfall that funding is being sought for.

Quotations, where available, should be attached to the Budget Workplan. If the project receives other Government funding, set out the purpose of this funding against relevant works/activities.

The Budget Workplan will display the total value of the project and the total grant amount requested and the co-contribution the applicant is offering.

## Appendix 2 – Additional Information for applications from non-government organisations

Where the applicant is a developer/landowner or community housing provider, information should be provided to demonstrate they will continue to operate/remain in business into the foreseeable future. This may include:

- An overview of the applicant’s organisation, including organisational structure, clients/markets/industry sector.
- Disclosure of financial statements (three years), any adverse financial event or finding to the organisation or its directors.
- Where the applicant is a landowner, this information should include the area of land owned, details of other landowners or parties to the application.
- External validation of the organisation as a going concern.
- Letters of support from relevant stakeholders and parties, such as landowners, local governments, the relevant Regional Development Commission and other organisations benefiting from or contributing to the project.

*Note: The Department reserves the right to seek an externally provided financial, credit and business viability assessment of any organisation or project which applies for funding. This may require the applicant to cooperate with that provider.*

## Appendix 3 – Demonstration of Feasibility Gap

Demonstration that a project faces a feasibility gap and is not viable without public funding can be achieved in a number of ways and may require a combination of information sources as set out below:

- Gap analysis, including a clear breakdown of total project costs (a consideration for land purchase can be included in calculations), revenue sources, operating costs versus available sources of funding with or without grant funding. Show the specific dollar amount or percentage that remains unfunded without support from the Regional Housing Support Fund.
- Demonstrate that private investors, lenders or developers are unwilling to fully fund the project due to low or uncertain return, high risk or market conditions. This will require correspondence from lenders or investors stating conditions, letters of intent and limits and evidence of previous attempts to secure funding.
- Market analysis which demonstrates market conditions cannot justify the project. Reference similar projects that only proceeded because of public support.
- Demonstrate that the project faces a cost premium, which may be due to location or site-specific challenges.
- Third-party validation of the feasibility gap or which provides credibility to the figures referenced.