

# Public Benefit Program

## 2024 Community Grant Guidelines

August 2024





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# 1. Introduction

## Background

.au Domain Administration Limited (auDA) is the trusted administrator of the .au domain name system (DNS), a part of Australia's critical infrastructure, supporting more than four million .au domain names.

auDA has a proud history of community funding. Through the auDA Foundation, which is a registered charity, auDA has distributed grant contributions of more than \$4.5 million, supporting over 170 projects since 2006.

Access to online goods, services and information has become increasingly vital to the everyday lives of Australians. Through our work, auDA aims to unlock positive social and economic value for Australians via an open, free, secure and global internet. One of auDA's strategic objectives is investing to enable innovation and research by others.

## Community Grant Program

auDA's Community Grant Program provides an annual grant round that delivers responsive, short term funding designed to enable grassroots community and research and education projects. The aim of the Program is to improve the utility of the internet to benefit key groups in the Australian community.

The 2024 grant round will be delivered by auDA and funded by the auDA Foundation.

# 2. Priority groups

The Community Grant program provides funding for education, research activities and community-based projects that enhance the utility of the internet.

The 2024 grant round will focus on **digital inclusion** and **digital innovation** with an emphasis on the following five priority groups:

1. Rural, regional and remote Australians
2. Australians living with disability
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
4. Older Australians (65 years +)
5. Young Australians (12-24 years).



## Definitions

auDA uses the following working definitions:

### **Rural, regional and remote Australians**

The term 'rural, regional and remote' encompasses all areas outside Australia's major cities.<sup>1</sup>

### **Australians living with disability**

Disability is any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months.<sup>2</sup>

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

People who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, and are accepted as such in the communities in which they live or have lived.<sup>3</sup>

### **Older Australians**

Older Australians means people aged 65 years and over.<sup>4</sup>

### **Young Australians**

Young Australians means youth aged 12-24 years.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2022). Rural & remote Australians. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/population-groups/rural-remote-australians/glossary>

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2019). Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release#disability>.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021). Profile of Indigenous Australians. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/profile-of-indigenous-australians>.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023). Older Australians. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australians/contents/summary>.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2021). Australia's Youth. Retrieved from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/australias-youth/contents/introduction>.



### 3. Available funds and expenditure of money

Total funds available for the 2024 grant round are \$600,000 AUD.

15 successful applicants will receive \$40,000 each.

All grant funding awarded must be expended for the approved purposes of the project within the agreed calendar year period.

The grant activity period for the 2024 grant round is 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Once auDA has received a signed grant agreement, the funds will be released to the grantee, in full.

### 4. Eligibility

Please read these Guidelines before filling out an application. Eligibility criteria cannot be waived.

#### **Eligible applicants:**

- Not-for-profit organisations and research institutions, including universities, that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) are eligible to apply
- All entities/organisations must be registered in Australia under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law, such as a company, partnership or association
- Each organisation may submit one application except universities which may submit up to three applications – each application from a university must be from a different faculty or department and must be signed off by the Advancement team
- Past grantees are welcome to apply, however, organisations that auDA has not funded in the past 12 months will be preferred. A past grantee must have successfully acquitted their previous grant.

#### **Project:**

- The project must comply with relevant Australian laws, standards and guidelines
- The project must benefit one or more of the five priority groups detailed in section 2 and meet the eligibility criteria of these Guidelines.



### **Additional requirements:**

- As the grantee you must use the whole of the grant exclusively for the project as described in the application for the grant and not for any other purpose
- The auDA grant must not account for 100 per cent of the cost of the project
- To be successful as an applicant, you must make an in-kind or financial contribution to the project budget of at least 10 per cent of the total project cost
- Your intended contribution must be specified in the application using the budget template provided
- All of the auDA grant money must be spent within Australia for the benefit of the Australian community
- The grant must be acquitted within two months of completion. The acquittal will provide evidence of the expenditure, and a report detailing outcomes and impact compared to your application
- If you have not successfully acquitted a previous auDA project grant, you and your organisation may not be eligible for future funding.

## **5. Selection criteria**

auDA is committed to maintaining the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality and fairness of auDA processes.

A panel will assess the applications and make grant recommendations to be endorsed by the Public Benefit Program Committee and approved by the auDA Board.

The panel will comprise external subject matter experts and auDA's Chief People and Culture Officer and may also include some auDA staff.

The panel will assess all eligible proposals against the following criteria:

- Delivers digital inclusion and/or digital innovation
- Addresses a demonstrated need in the Australian community in at least one of the five priority groups (outlined in section 2)
- Demonstrated support from stakeholders impacted by the project
- Expected positive outcomes/impact for one or more of the defined priority groups
- The applicant has capability to successfully implement the project.

In addition, reviewers will rate all eligible proposals on the following attributes:



- Identified need and expected outputs, outcomes and impact
- Innovation
- Merit
- Accessibility
- Potential for sustainability.

## 6. Funding exclusions

auDA will not support the following types of projects or budgetary items:

- Projects for a religious, political or sectarian purpose
- For-profit organisations
- Ongoing service delivery (but will consider applications for strategic expansions of existing programs or new/innovative additions to an existing program)
- Retrospective funding
- Requests for sponsorship
- Endowments, memorials or named academic chairs
- Conferences
- Projects where the primary focus is outside of Australia
- Overseas travel
- General fundraising appeals
- General digital capability for your organisation
- Generic IT training (such as introduction into social networking or trading websites)
- Website design (such as development of a new website or redesign of existing website) rather than focusing specifically on delivery of the project using the website
- Requests for IT equipment or the provision of IT equipment
- Marketing or market research activities, even where that research is about website/internet usage.



## 7. Application requirements

All applications must be submitted online using the auDA Grant Management Platform.

<https://auda.givingdata.com/portal/campaign/2024CommunityGrantProgram>

By applying, applicants agree to any grant application terms and conditions as notified by auDA, and any relevant terms and conditions of the third party supplying the Grant Management Platform.

auDA will use the ACNC Charity Register to confirm an organisation's documentation. Please ensure that your reporting is up to date on the [Charity Register](#).

Please provide the following elements:

### **Project:**

- Executive summary and project description
- Project plan and timeline
- Expected project outputs, outcomes and impact
- Project budget
- Letters of Support.

### **Organisation documentation:**

- ACNC link for your organisation where we will find:
  - Most recent audited financials – these should be signed by the auditors and Board Chair
  - List of current Board members and/or responsible persons
- Most recent annual report.

## 8. Grant conditions and reporting

- You as the grantee will sign a grant agreement provided by auDA
- The grant funding will be used exclusively for the project described in the application
- The grant funding does not constitute a taxable supply of goods or services and will therefore not be subject to GST
- The grants are gifts, and no material benefit will arise to auDA from the acquittal of the grants provided





- The funded projects are expected to be completed within the grant activity period which is 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025
- In consultation with auDA, you as the grantee will acknowledge the assistance of auDA in any published or displayed material as specified in the grant agreement. Please ask us about the planned acknowledgement. Where the auDA logo is being used, a digital copy will be provided
- Similarly, as the grantee you will acknowledge that you received auDA funding in any project materials you publish, and you will make those project materials available to the public under a creative commons licence
- As the grantee, you will otherwise retain all intellectual property rights in all works produced from the grant funds
- You will provide a progress report on your project by 31 July 2025. The acquittal of the funds and final report is due by 31 December 2025
- Reports will be submitted via auDA's Grant Management Platform. It is your responsibility to submit reports on time
- If you do not acquit your grant on time, you may not be eligible for future funding.

## 9. Timeline

Below is a list of key dates for the 2024 grant round:

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Applications open	Monday 19 August 2024 at 9:00am AEST
Applications close	Thursday 12 September 2024 at 5:00pm AEST
Grant recipient notified and agreements finalised	December 2024 – January 2025
Interim project report due	Before 31 July 2025
Final project report due	Tuesday 31 December 2025

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## 10. Support

If technical support is required with your application, please contact us via email at [PublicBenefit@auda.org.au](mailto:PublicBenefit@auda.org.au) and we will respond during business hours.

## 11. Legal

auDA reserves the right to amend these Guidelines at any time and solely at its discretion.

Successful applicants of the 2024 grant round will be required to execute a grant agreement with auDA.

auDA will collect, hold, use and disclose the personal information of applicants in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](#) and in accordance with Australia's privacy laws and procedures.

**.au Domain Administration Ltd**  
**[www.auda.org.au](http://www.auda.org.au)**

**PO Box 18315**  
**Melbourne VIC 3001**  
**[info@auda.org.au](mailto:info@auda.org.au)**

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