

July 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

Central-West Orana REZ - First Nations Fund

What is the First Nations Fund (FNF)?

The First Nations Fund (FNF) is a new, \$10 million grant fund available under the NSW Government's Community and Employment Benefit Program (the Program).

The FNF aims to support capacity building within Aboriginal organisations through the delivery of programs, services, infrastructure or future planning activities.

The FNF will be delivered through two streams:

- **Stream One** aims to support Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) to build capability and better protect and further the aspirations of their members and the broader Aboriginal community; and
- **Stream Two** aims to support Aboriginal organisations to drive local initiatives through future planning, project and program delivery that result in economic, social or environmental outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

Who can apply?

Stream One: Eligible Applicants are limited to LALCs (up to \$4 million available).

Stream Two: Eligible Applicants are limited to not-for-profit, incorporated Aboriginal community organisations (i.e. initiated by, controlled and operated by Aboriginal people and/or governed by a board or committee of Aboriginal people with up to \$6 million available).

Please see the "Eligible Applicants" section of the Grant Guidelines for further information.

What types of projects are eligible?

Eligible project types include infrastructure, programs and services, employment and skills and future planning for Aboriginal people within the Central-West Orana REZ that meet the FNF Objectives, as outlined in the Grant Guidelines (section 7.2).

Is there a minimum or maximum grant funding amount?

Applications in both streams must range from a minimum of \$20,000 to a maximum amount of \$1,000,000.

When do applications open and close?

The fund opens on Monday 15 July 2024 at 9:00am and closes on Tuesday 14 July 2026 at 4:00pm. Applications may close sooner if funding committed exceeds 80% and/or applications under assessment reach the total funding available.

Applicants will be notified should this occur.

When will applications be assessed?

Applications will be assessed on an ongoing basis until Tuesday 14 July 2026 or until funding committed reaches the total funding available.

How long do we have to deliver the project?

Projects must commence within 3 months of executing the funding deed and must be completed by December 2028.

“Commencement of a project” refers to any project development activities (including planning works, Development Application preparation or submission, procurement planning or contractor engagement).

Can my project be delivered outside the Central-West Orana REZ?

Projects must be located within the Central-West Orana REZ geographic area (a map is available [here](#)) and deliver their primary benefits to communities impacted by the Central-West Orana REZ.

Applicants are *strongly encouraged* to submit applications that deliver projects and activities into villages and smaller communities most impacted by REZ activities.

How do I apply?

The FNF Application Form (for both **Stream One** and **Stream Two**) has been split into two parts:

- Part A will require Applicants to answer a series of questions in relation to eligibility; and
- Part B covers the more detailed, merit-based aspects of the project. Local, independent grant writing assistance is available should Applicants require assistance to develop Part B.

Visit <https://energyco.smartygrants.com.au/FNF-CWO> to submit Part A of the Application Form.

Once eligibility is confirmed, Applicants will be offered local, independent grant writing assistance to develop

Part B, the detailed merit-based component of the Application Form.

Further information is available in “How to Apply” of the Grant Guidelines (section 6).

Can an organisation apply for more than one project?

Yes - Applicants can submit multiple applications, but must submit only one project per application.

What if I need support to complete the application?

The following applicant support will be available to Applicants of the FNF:

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development will assist with Applicant queries. Email all application-related questions to energyco@regional.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 679 673 for further information;
 - Applicants can be referred to their local Aboriginal Partnerships Manager or Economic Development Manager from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development who can provide applicant support; and
 - Local, independent grant writing assistance will be available to all Applicants completing Part B of the Application Form. Details will be provided after completing Part A of the Applicant Form.
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Can I fund a staff member position?

A position can be funded if it is linked to delivery of a project, program or activity outlined in the application.

Financing a position that is business as usual and not linked to a project, program or activity outlined in the application is ineligible for funding.

How will I know if funding has been committed?

Once FNF committed funding exceeds 80% and/or Part B applications under assessment reach the total funding available, applications will close until assessments are completed and remaining available funding determined.

Notifications will be made to Applicants via SmartyGrants if they have an open application, or via the fund [webpage](#). Applicants should regularly check the webpage for notifications in relation to the fund status.

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that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of EnergyCo or the user's independent adviser.