Natural Hazards Detection System – Phase 2 Pilot

Program Guidelines

September 2025

https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds

Grant Program Details	
Opening date	Wednesday 3 September 2025 16:00 AEDT
Closing date and time	Wednesday 8 October 2025 17:00 AEST
Estimated application outcome date	November – December 2025
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applications)	The NHDS Pilot phase will run for a maximum of 12 months from 1 December 2025.
Decision-maker	NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer.
NSW Government Agency	Premier's Department
Type of grant opportunity	Targeted, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	In Phase 2, successful applicants will be awarded up to $350,000 per challenge in funding from an available pool of $1,750,000 (excluding GST). Recommended funding levels will be at the discretion of the Assessment Panel.
Enquiries	nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

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Overview of grant program

1 Overview of grant program

The Natural Hazards Detection System (NHDS) Program is a $3.3 million, multi-phased competitive challenge grant designed to test and advance innovative detection technologies. The goal of the NHDS is to enhance early identification and warning systems for natural hazards such as floods and bushfires — giving residents more time to evacuate and enabling emergency services to prioritise areas of highest risk.

The NHDS Program has three phases:

- **Phase 1 – Proof of Concept:** Organisations submitted proposals to address specific challenge statements (see NHDS Challenge Statement document) developed by NSW Government agencies, with a focus on fire and flood detection. Funding was awarded through a competitive process to support proof-of-concept trials, which ran from April to August 2025.

- **Phase 2 – Pilot (by invitation):** Successful Phase 1 recipients are invited to pilot their technologies in real-world conditions.

- **Phase 3 – Post-NHDS:** NSW Government will assess solutions for potential procurement; however, participation in the program does not guarantee procurement.

Administered by the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) in collaboration with the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) within the Premier's Department, the program supports the development and deployment of solutions that improve NSW's natural disaster preparedness.

Phase 2 of the NHDS Program will deliver large-scale pilot trials to validate the performance, scalability, and operational viability of the most promising Phase 1 technologies in real-world conditions. Pilots will be conducted across two designated local government areas (LGAs): Shoalhaven and Clarence Valley (see Challenge LGA Information Section 1.3).

The Phase 2 NHDS Pilot targeted competitive grant will provide up to $350,000 per applicant from a total funding pool of $1.75 million. This grant supports 12-month deployments of solutions that demonstrate capability in detecting and monitoring natural hazards, while also delivering critical data to government agencies to inform disaster mitigation and emergency response planning in NSW.

The Program Guidelines (the Guidelines) contain information about the NHDS Program, including whether you are eligible to apply and how you can make an application. You must read these Guidelines, and the NSW Challenge Statement document published on https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds before applying for the grant.

These Guidelines set out:

- The purpose of the grant opportunity
- The eligibility criteria
- The assessment criteria
- How applications are assessed
- How recipients will be monitored and evaluated
- Responsibilities and expectations in relation to the Program.

The Guidelines and the Challenge Statements may be updated by the OCSE at any time. If this occurs, the revised documents will be published on https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds .

The Program will be administered in accordance with the NSW Grants Administration Guide and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs).

1.2   Purpose and objectives

The NHDS Program aims to improve natural hazard detection and strengthen NSW's preparedness and response capabilities by:

- **Testing and trialling innovative detection technologies**: The program aims to evaluate new technologies in high-risk or frequently impacted areas, ensuring they meet the specific needs of stakeholders before potential procurement.

- **Enhancing early identification and warning of natural hazards**: By improving flood and bushfire detection, the program seeks to provide residents with more time to evacuate and enable emergency services to prioritise high-risk areas.

- **Evaluating whether technology is fit for purpose and offers value for money**: The program allows suppliers to demonstrate the suitability and cost-effectiveness of their solutions for emergency management agencies.

- **Collaborating to develop solutions**: The program encourages innovative proposals for solving specific fire and flood detection challenges, fostering innovation and adaptation of technology to meet real-world needs.

- **Facilitating procurement considerations**: While participation in the program does not guarantee procurement, the ultimate goal is to help NSW Government agencies evaluate and potentially acquire effective solutions for large-scale deployment.

 Phase 2 of the NHDS Program aims to support:

- **Collaboration between stakeholders to refine problem understanding**: Engage with key government stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the natural hazard detection challenges.

- **Deployment of technical solutions**: Install technical solutions in targeted LGA locations to understand site specific challenges and installation and maintenance costs

- **Real world testing of technology**: Test the adapted technology in a field deployment for a year to validate the solutions ability to detect and monitor natural hazards

- **Adaption of technology to address identified challenges**: Modify and enhance proposed technologies to ensure they meet the effectively target the challenges posed by floods and bushfires.

- **Validation of the NHDS data API**: Testing a centralised database for natural hazards detection, evaluating the ability of sensors to contribute data to the API, and the ability of agencies to draw meaningful information from that data.

1.3   Designated pilot Local Government Areas (LGAs)

NHDS Phase 2 Pilots will be conducted across at the two designated local government areas (LGAs): Shoalhaven and Clarence Valley. It is noted that the number and location of sites for deployment for Phase 2 Pilots are at the discretion of the OCSE and may be subject to change or expansion if required by the program. In such cases, the OCSE will work with successful recipients to support any adjustments to pilot locations or site numbers.

As part of the application, project proposals for the LGAs must be based on the risk information provided through the grant process and other publicly available data. Applications will not be disadvantaged for not using information that is unavailable to the public or held exclusively by participating agencies or organisations. Applicants **must not** seek additional information directly

from organisations involved in the NHDS program, including Local Councils, NSW RFS, and NSW SES.

To support applicants in developing their proposals, and provide information on the LGAs, the OCSE:

- have compiled a list of public resources and suggestions on where to find information on the LGAs (see section 1.3.1 Public Resources below)
- will coordinate LGA webinars with key stakeholders during the application period (see section 1.3.2 LGA Webinars)
- will accept written questions from applicants regarding the LGAs, with responses published in a public Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to ensure consistent information is provided to all applicants. All questions must be submitted via nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

1.3.1 Public Resources

Extensive public information is available across NSW on the impacts of natural hazards, much of which can be accessed online. For example, the following resources may assist applicants in understanding natural hazard impacts within each LGA:

- Emergency Management Plans – Outline of hazards and responsibilities within the LGA.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics – Population and demographic information.
- Council Websites – Information on the LGA, local emergency procedures, disaster impacts, frequently affected areas, and local hazard notifications.
- Flood Risk Studies / Management Plans – Overview of flood risks within LGAs.
- Bushfire Risk Management Plans – Overview of bushfire risks, response arrangements, and mitigation strategies.
- NSW Flood Data Portal – Access to flood-related datasets.
- Manly Hydraulics Laboratory – Gauge and sensor network data.
- WaterNSW Real-Time Data – Gauge and sensor network data.
- BOM Water Data Online – Water monitoring locations and data.
- Digital Atlas of Australia – Fire history, weather and water site locations (BOM).
- SEED Portal – Environmental data, state-owned assets, natural hazard impacts, and environmental conditions in NSW.
- NSW Flood and Bushfire Inquiries – Findings on the impacts of past events.

Note: This list is not exhaustive and not all resources will be relevant to every challenge.

1.3.2 LGA Webinars

Webinars will be held for each LGA during the application period. These sessions are optional and will provide participants with a summary of the key challenges in each LGA and an opportunity to ask questions of the stakeholders presenting. Recordings will be made available to all participants who are unable to attend.

1.4 Grant value

Up to $1,750,000 of funding is available for grants in Phase 2 with a maximum grant amount of $350,000 per challenge. Final funding details, requirements and processes for Phase 2 cover eligible expenses over a 12-month pilot test period.

The NSW Government reserves the right to increase or decrease the available funding pools and grant amounts at any time.

Applications may be partially funded at the absolute discretion of the NSW Government, for example if there is insufficient funding available for the whole application or where only a component of the application is considered suitable and/or eligible.

2

Selection criteria

2 Selection criteria

Your application must satisfy all the Eligibility Criteria.

The Eligibility Criteria describes eligible applicants, activities, project locations, and expenses.

Once your application has been deemed eligible, it will then be assessed by the Assessment Panel according to the assessment criteria below.

2.1 Eligibility

2.1.1 Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the NHDS Phase 2 Pilot grant an applicant **must**:

- Have received a NHDS Phase 1 Proof-of-Concept grant.

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

- Be non-tax exempt.

- Have an account with an Australian financial institution.

- Confirm the technology can be trialled in NSW during the testing periods.

- Hold the intellectual property (IP) rights or possess the rights to commercialise the technology.

- Demonstrate that any funding received from other NSW, state, or federal government grant programs does not duplicate activities proposed under this Program: NHDS Phases 1 and 2.

- Be one of the following entity types:

    o A company incorporated under the Corporations Act (including a company limited by guarantee)

    o An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006

- Agree to the following:

    o All data generated throughout the Program will be owned by the NSW Government and may be used for future projects or data analysis

    o Data must be provided in the format specified in the Challenge Statement document.

It is noted that Ineligible applicants are permitted to be a partner to an application provided the lead applicant satisfies the above eligibility criteria.

For the avoidance of doubt, you are not eligible if you are:

- Insolvent

- An individual

- An unincorporated association, or

- A Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agency or body excluding government corporate entities.

The OCSE, at its absolute discretion, may decide that an applicant is ineligible for funding. For example, where an applicant could cause reputational and/or other risks to the NSW Government.

2.1.2 Eligible Grant Activities

For an activity to be eligible it **must** directly relate to the project. Eligible activities can include:

- Building and testing units of the technology
- Deployment and operation of the technology to designated locations within NSW
- Facilitating NSW Government requirements and input into the technology
- Specific professional expertise (for example, a drone pilot, technical specialists)
- Training of NSW Government personnel as part of the trial/pilot
- Costs to integrate technology with NSW Government ICT platforms
- Data analysis and/or management costs.

Activities already funded through another grant are not eligible under this program. NHDS Phase 2 grants must be directed toward new activities and cannot be used to retrospectively claim costs for work already delivered, such as the purchase and installation of units funded through Phase 1 grants.

However, units already deployed in the field may be included in an applicant's Phase 2 project plan, with grant funding allocated to new activities on pre-installed units (e.g. maintenance or upgrades).

The Assessment Panel will not give preference to applications with pre-existing Phase 1 units in the designated LGAs.

2.1.3 Eligible Grant Activities

All grant activities must be undertaken in NSW, and deployment must occur within the designated NSW LGA's or at locations approved by the OCSE.

2.1.4 Eligible Costs

Program funding can only be incurred on eligible activities.

To be eligible, costs must:

- Be directly related to the eligible grant activities
- Be incurred within the project period
- Reflect competitive market rates
- Be a true and accurate reflection of costs required to deliver the activity.

Eligible costs include, but not be limited to:

- Capital costs
- Labour expenditure for temporary employment for the project
- Licence fees incurred as part of the project
- Data analysis and/or management costs

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project cost and request evidence of actual costs incurred such as supplier contracts, quotes, and invoices.

You must demonstrate value for money by ensuring project costs are reasonable and reflective of

market rates. We may use industry cost benchmarks to assess whether costs are reasonable.

The OCSE may, at its absolute discretion, determine whether a cost that falls within the category of eligible expenditure is in fact ineligible where it is unreasonable or excessive.

2.1.5 Ineligible Costs

The grant cannot be used for the following activities:

- The purchase of land or property
- Costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- Overseas travel
- The covering of retrospective costs
- Wage costs incurred prior to the activity period of the project or outside of approved project activities
- Projects requiring ongoing funding from the NSW Government
- Projects that are ongoing or constitute the normal course of business
- Activities that have commenced or been completed prior to an offer of funding made to successful applicants
- Activities that will not be delivered prior to the end of the grant funding period

2.2 Assessment Process

2.2.1 Applications

Eligible applicants must complete a two applications to be considered for NHDS Phase 2 funding. Applications can be completed in parallel.

Application Part 1 - https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/NHDSPhase2 this application covers:

1. **Phase 1 Proof of Concept (PoC) Report** – demonstrating how contractual obligations and challenge requirements from Phase 1 were met, provided as an attachment to your SmartyGrants
2. **Project Proposal** – a plan for deploying the technology in the designated LGAs, answered via questions in the SmartyGrants application
3. **Project Budget and Competitive Advantage** – outlining requested funding, income dedicated to the project, costs and the commercial and competitive advantage of the solution in comparison to the broader market. Answered via questions and tables in the SmartyGrants application

Application Part 2 - https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/NHDSP2Financials this application covers:

1. **Company Financials** - complete the company financial application in SmartyGrants this is a short application made available only to the NHDS Phase 2 independent financial advisor to support their assessment of applicant's financial capacity and viability.

Applications part 1 and 2 provide the Assessment Panel with the required information to make funding recommendations for NHDS Phase2.

2.2.2 Assessment Criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed against the below Assessment Criteria.

1. **Proof-of-Concept (PoC) Report – 30%**

The PoC Final Report must demonstrate the project's outcomes, scalability, and relevance to the NHDS Challenge(s). Assessment will focus on:

- **Description of PoC** – clarity of the PoC trial design, data collected, and outcomes achieved.
- **Challenge Alignment** – how effectively the solution addressed the mandatory and optional requirements of the nominated Challenge(s).
- **Data Connectivity** – ability of the solution to connect to and transmit data (including limitations, dependencies, or workarounds).
- **Outcomes & Metrics** – validity, reliability, and robustness of the metrics used to assess results, including detection performance and hazard management benefits.
- **Feasibility** – evidence that the solution could be scaled to LGA-level deployment, considering technical, commercial, regulatory, and financial aspects.
- **Lessons Learned & Scalability** – insights gained during the PoC and the potential for successful implementation in a Phase 2 Pilot.

2. **Project Proposal – 50%**

Applicants must present a clear, deliverable proposal for Phase 2 Pilots. Assessment will focus on:

- **Challenges to be Addressed** – clarity and relevance of the challenges targeted, including the type and quality of data attributes proposed.
- **Technology Proposal (30%)** – detail and suitability of the proposed technology, including:
    - the approach to deployment, installation, and maintenance (with clear timelines and milestones) and the ability to deliver within the pilot period
    - consideration of the designated LGAs in the project plan **note LGA resources and engagement in Section 1.3 of these guidelines**
    - evidence supporting the number of units/locations proposed resilience of connectivity and data delivery during natural hazards
    - expected outcomes in terms of coverage, performance, and alignment with challenge objectives.
- **Outcomes and Impact (20%)** – extent to which the proposal maximises technology deployment within the budget and delivers meaningful coverage and benefits across the designated LGA(s).

3. **Project Budget, Competitive Advantage and Financials – 20%**

Applications must demonstrate value for money and organisational capacity that is consistent with the project proposal responses. Assessment will focus on:

- **Project budget (10%)**
    - **Budget Detail** – completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of the budget, including full costs of supply, installation, operation, and maintenance.

- o **Per-Unit Costing** – transparency and justification of per-unit costs, enabling comparison across proposals and potential scaling of units if budget permits.
- o **Value for Money** – evidence that the proposal maximises impact within available funds and allocates resources responsibly.
- **Company Financial Capacity & Viability (10%)** – adequacy of company financials to demonstrate capacity to deliver the project and sustain operations through the trial.

3

Application process

3 Application process

3.1   How to apply

Before applying, you must read these Guidelines.

These documents are found at https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds. Any alterations and addenda[1] will be published on https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds.

To apply you must:

1. Complete the SmartyGrants online application forms for the NHDS Phase 2 Program at https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/NHDSPhase2

   https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/NHDSP2Financials

   Both applications must be completed to be eligible for Phase 2 funding.

2. Provide all the information requested

3. Address all the eligibility criteria

4. Address all the relevant assessment criteria

5. Include all necessary attachments, and

6. Submit your application by the timelines outlined in Section 3.3 Key dates.

Please note:

- Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- Clearly indicate any information that should be treated confidentially.

- Eligible applicants will be assessed on merit against the Assessment Criteria. However, the NSW Government, at its absolute discretion, may choose not to award a grant to an applicant.

You are responsible for ensuring your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Crimes Act 1900 No 40 (NSW)*. We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

Applicants must not lobby the NSW Government on an issue related or seen to be related to the NHDS Program that may or may be perceived to give an unfair advantage to the applicant. Applicants are required to comply with all applicable laws including the *NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct*.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au. You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may at our discretion ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

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[1] Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to closing times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents.

3.2 Application

3.2.1 NHDS Phase 1 Proof-of-Concept (PoC) Report

Applicants are required to submit their Proof-of-Concept Final Report– requirements for this are set out in the *NHDS Phase 1 Proof-of-Concept Final Report guidance document.* This completed report will be a required attachment to your SmartyGrants application.

3.2.2   Project Proposal

Applicants must submit a clear proposal addressing one or more of the challenges within all or part of the designated LGAs. This will be completed through the application questions in SmartyGrants, where applicants will be asked to detail how the pilot will be delivered, its expected impact, and the potential risks and limitations to be managed.

Proposals should aim to deploy the maximum feasible amount of technology within the available budget, with a focus on delivering impact across the greatest possible area of the LGA's. The ultimate location of technology within LGA's will be decided in consultation with the local agencies once the grant is awarded.

Each project proposal **should** address the following:

- **Challenges to be addressed** – Identify the specific challenges your project will target. This should include the type of data attributes and information that will be collected for each challenge.

- **Technology proposal** – Provide detailed information on the proposed technology, including:
  - how it will be deployed, installed, and maintained for the duration of the trial (including timelines and milestones)
  - consideration of the designated LGAs
  - the number of units or locations required to address the challenges, and the evidence used to determine this
  - connectivity and data delivery requirements, including resilience during natural hazards and associated impacts
  - expected outcomes, including detection coverage, performance improvements, and alignment with the challenge objectives.

3.2.3   Project Budget and Competitive Advantage

All grants are expected to demonstrate value for money, ensuring public funds are spent responsibly and tied to defined deliverables.

Applicants will be required to provide the following:

- **Project Budget** – A detailed budget is essential to maximise the impact and outcomes of the project. The intent of the program is to deploy the greatest possible amount of technology within the designated LGAs. Accordingly, the budget should include the full costs of supply, installation, operation, and maintenance of the proposed technology to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

- o Applicants will be asked to provide a per-unit cost breakdown of the proposed technology. This will enable the panel to make accurate funding recommendations and consider the deployment of additional units if budgets allow.
- o Allowances for project-related costs and management can also be included within the budget template.
- o Competitive Advantage – this section provides greater insight into the long-term commercial viability of the solution being developed.

3.2.4   Company Financials

Applicants must provide insight into their financial capacity to deliver the obligations of the grant in the timelines of the program.

- **Financials** – Relevant company financial information to support an independent assessment of organisational capacity and financial viability.

3.3   Key Dates

You must submit your application between the published opening and closing dates. Applications that remain in progress within the SmartyGrants platform must be completed and submitted before the deadline indicated in the table below.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to address any technical or connectivity issues prior to the deadline.

The NSW Government reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to extend the application closing date. Any extension will be announced on the NHDS Program website: https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds.

Table 2: Expected timing for the Program

Activity	Timeframe
Applications open	Wednesday 3 September 2025 16:00 AEDT
Applications close	Wednesday 8 October 2025 17:00 AEST
Notification of outcomes	November - December 2025
Earliest start date of grant activity	December 2025
End date of grant activity and reporting	December 2026
Final reporting and advice to agencies	December/January 2026

3.4 Queries during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact us at nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

Applicants must not seek additional information directly from any organisations involved in the NHDS program, including Local Councils, NSW RFS, and NSW SES.

Supporting resources will be made available to applicants, including participation in recorded webinars and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page, which can be accessed on the OCSE website: https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/nhds.

Additional invitations, updates, and information will be shared directly with the main contact listed on the Phase 1 application. If this contact needs to be updated or additional contacts added, please notify us at nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

4

Assessment process

4 Assessment process

4.1 Assessment of grant applications

The OCSE will administer the assessment process. Your application will be considered based on a two-stage process.

- **Stage 1: Eligibility Assessment**
  - The OCSE will assess applications according to the Eligibility Criteria
  - Applications which meet all Eligibility Criteria will proceed to Merit Assessment
- **Stage 2: Merit Assessment**
  - All applications will be assessed by the Assessment Panel members against the Assessment Criteria
  - The Assessment Panel may request additional information from applicants. These requests will be managed by the OCSE, which will communicate with the relevant applicants directly in writing to seek their response
  - The Assessment Panel will meet to discuss the eligible applications and agree on consensus recommendations for applications to receive grant funding
  - The Assessment Panel's recommendations will be provided to the Decision Maker who will approve the grants
  - A Financial Assessment will be conducted by an independent advisor and will be provided confidentially to the Assessment Panel for consideration

4.2 Assessment Panel membership

Members of the Assessment Panel will be appointed by the OCSE in collaboration with the RA and may include representatives from NSW Government agencies (for example, Reconstruction Authority, RFS, SES, Fire & Rescue NSW, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), and the Forestry Corporation) as well as independent experts with business, and technology innovation and commercialisation experience.

The Assessment Panel may seek advice from external experts through the OCSE to inform the assessment process. Any expert and advisor will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct – Premier's Department including maintaining the confidentiality of the application and declaring any conflicts of interest.

For this grant the OCSE has engaged an independent Financial Advisor to undertake a confidential financial assessment on the applicants. This will be for consideration by the Assessment Panel and will be considered confidential, assessments will not be shared outside of the Panel or the NHDS Phase 2 assessment process.

4.3 Grant Decision Maker

The Decision Maker, the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer, will approve the grants and funding amounts after considering the recommendations of the Assessment Panel.

4.4 Notification of application outcome

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications in writing before the contracting process and the announcement of successful grant recipients. Successful applicants will be notified within 30 days of the final determination. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant which could include a request to keep the grant confidential for a specified period due to an announcement being made by the NSW Government in relation to this program and your award.

The NSW Government will publicly announce funding for individual applications and provide information on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder. It may also use information provided to create case studies.

Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their application. The OCSE will also offer a feedback session on the outcomes of the assessment process.

4.5 Publication of grants information

Grants information will be published on the NSW Grants and Funding https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding and the OCS website www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

5

Successful grant applications

5 Successful grant applications

5.1 Notification

Successful applicants will be notified in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant. You must keep the notice of grant confidential until you are advised by the NSW Government.

A summary of successful grant applicants will be published on the grant finder website, including a summary of the grant activity and the amount awarded to each recipient in line with the _NSW Grants Administration Guide_.

5.2 Grant agreement

To receive the grant and participate in Phase 2, successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the NSW Government. The NSW Government makes no binding funding or other commitment to the applicant unless and until both parties have signed a funding agreement.

The funding agreement will require the successful applicant to provide a copy of all relevant insurances and any other relevant supporting documentation as requested by the OCSE. You should not make financial or legal commitments related to this grant until the funding agreement is signed and executed.

The funding agreement will outline the milestones and targets to meet during the pilot study, successful applicants will also agree to regular progress reports and monthly meetings to update on project progress.

5.3 Grant payment

The grant will be payable in full upon the successful execution of the funding agreement.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations. We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

5.4 Unspent funds

At the end of the funding period any unspent funds must be repaid within 20 days of notification from the OCSE, according to the funding agreement.

5.4.1 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, including the NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

5.6   Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity. For example, we need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- Name
- Addresses
- Nominated contact details
- Bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the funding agreement or these Guidelines, you must contact us immediately.

5.7   Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

You must submit reports in accordance with the reporting requirements in the funding agreement.

5.8   Evaluation

The OCSE will evaluate the NHDS Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the Program impacted you, and to evaluate how effective the Program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you after your project is completed for more information to assist with this evaluation.

The OCSE and the NSW Audit Office reserve the right to undertake an audit of Program funding and support within seven years. Tracking and reporting will be a requirement of the funding agreement.

5.9   Acknowledgement

All recipients of NSW Government funding should acknowledge this financial support in accordance with the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Rebates available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.

You must seek our written consent prior to any significant public announcement, marketing, press announcements, or official launch in relation to the NHDS Program.

The NSW Government and/or the OCSE logo should be used on all materials related to grants provided to the grant activity. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the NSW Government/OCSE.

6

Additional information and resources

6 Additional information and resources

6.1 Enquiries and complaints

Any enquiry you have about the assessment process or the outcome of your application for this Program should be sent to nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

Complaints will, in the first instance, be reviewed by the OCSE team. If we cannot resolve the complaint within 30 business days of receipt, we will provide details of a nominated complaints and review officer from the Complaints Team who will advise the next steps.

If you do not agree with the way the OCSE has handled your enquiry or complaint, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman. The NSW Ombudsman will not consider a complaint unless the matter has been first raised directly with the OCSE.

NSW Ombudsman
Level 24
580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

The applicant must lodge a complaint with the OCSE in writing and submit it to nhds@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

6.2 Probity

The OCSE will make sure that the grant process is fair, according to the published guidelines and incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct.

An independent probity advisor will be engaged as part of this Program to provide guidance to the OCSE on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness, and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

6.3 Access to information

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:

- Requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available
- Encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
- Giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
- Restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

6.4 Ethical conduct

The OCSE will administer the grant in accordance with the published Guidelines and the principles and processes set out in the NSW Grants and Administration Guide.

The OCSE will implement measures and controls to enable a fair and transparent process and incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities, and other inappropriate conduct.

6.4.1 Conflict of interest management

The OCSE will seek to identify any conflicts of interest early in any application, assessment and program management phases of the Program. Where a conflict of interest is identified, the OCSE will be responsible for following the procedures set out in the Program probity, risk and assessment plan and implementing appropriate management actions with assistance from the independent probity advisor.

6.4.2 Confidentiality

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you, your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to non-disclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information supplied in connection with the application and funding agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. The information is commercially sensitive
3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- The Assessment Panel and other NSW Government employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- Employees and contractors of the Department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- The Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- The responsible Minister or Secretary
- A House or a Committee of the NSW Parliament.

The funding agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the funding agreement.

6.5   Disclaimer

The OCSE does not guarantee or warrant and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to, the accuracy, reliability, currency, or completeness of any material contained in this publication. Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.

The OCSE recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

The Guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the OCSE.