

10.3.2. LATE REPORT - IS - 26/09/2022 - Resources for Regions Round 9

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Department Infrastructure & Services

Authorised by Director of Infrastructure & Services

Summary

This report outlines the process for canvassing and determining eligible applications for funding under the Resources for Regions Program – Round 9. A recommendation is made as to the projects most eligible, on balance, for funding.

The report also explains that an application has been submitted in relation to funds allocated under the Stronger Country Communities Fund. Council’s endorsement of that application is sought.

Commentary

1. Resources for Regions

The Resources for Regions program aims to support ongoing prosperity in regional NSW by providing economic opportunities, improved amenity and positive social outcomes in communities impacted by mining and gas exploration.

As Councillors are aware, advice has been received on the current round of Resources for Regions Round 9, with a dedicated \$5 million available for projects in Lithgow Local Government Area. This is made up of a base amount of \$1 million, with further weighted funding based on a calculation known as the mining employment location quotient.

As is always the case, Council is guided by its set of IP&R plans (strategic, delivery, operational and asset plans) when determining where to direct available funding. These plans have been developed through extensive community engagement and consultation. Under the funding guidelines for Resources for Regions, Councils are encouraged to consult with community groups to identify those organisations’ projects which might also be worthy of consideration for funding.

An information package was distributed to groups and organisations across the local government area and a web portal opened to facilitate responses and provision of the required information. Recipients were given until 16 September to submit their response.

Resources for Regions funding categories are broken up into infrastructure projects, programs and business cases with minimum and maximum funding set out below.

Project Type	Minimum grant funding	Maximum grant funding
Infrastructure	\$250,000	The individual local government area’s funding allocation
Community programs	\$100,000	\$500,000 per program
Business plans / feasibility studies and masterplans	\$50,000	\$500,000 for all business cases.

All applications need to demonstrate that the project can commence within six months of the announcement of funding and can be completed within three years.

The applications received from community groups have been assessed by Council's administration based upon the assessment criteria outlined in the Guidelines. This will be the same assessment process conducted by the Department of Regional NSW across the four assessment criteria:

- delivery of outcomes aligned to Resources for Regions objectives,
- local need,
- affordability, and
- deliverability.

Community Group Submissions

Submissions received by the following groups were assessed in respect to each proposal. Officer's comments are provided.

Group	Proposal	Amount Sought	Status	Comments
Combined Districts Kart Racing Club	Fencing replacement, CCTV security system and resealing of pit area.	\$270,069.94	Compliant	Deemed compliant with program criteria.
Association of Bell Clarence Dargan	Community Hall to Lock-up stage	\$411,961	Compliant	Deemed compliant with program criteria. External funding co-contribution.
Lithgow State Mine Museum	Construction of Exhibition and Conservation Centre Building	\$262,312	Compliant	Deemed compliant. Full plans and quotes submitted. Contingencies within the maximum eligible amount.
Portland Golf Club	Portland Information / Evacuation Centre	\$629,610	Compliant	Deemed compliant with all essential criteria. Private asset or on private land with public benefit.
Portland Central School	Portland Central Park Project	\$672,375	Compliant	Deemed compliant with program criteria. External funding co-contribution.
Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre	Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre upgrade	\$259,719	Compliant	Deemed compliant with program criteria.
Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc	Gardens of Stone Visitor Centre & Community Precinct	\$250,850	Compliant	External funding co-contribution through NSW / Australian Government grant programs.
Glen Davis Community Association Inc	Glen Davis Tourism Precinct Accessibility and Facility Upgrade	\$396,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Applicants are encouraged to submit projects that are well defined, planned and take into consideration project management and any approvals required, as deliverability is a key consideration for assessing projects. No quotes were sought for this application.

Lithgow Golf Club Limited	Restoration of the upstairs Heritage listed Lithgow Golf Club House	\$205,000	Not compliant	This project does not meet the minimum funding criteria for infrastructure projects.
Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association Incorporated	River Lett Catchment Improvement Program	\$191,650	Not compliant	This project does not meet the minimum funding criteria for infrastructure projects.
Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation	Maiyingu Murragu - Cultural Access Project	\$750,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence uploaded to the application for assessment against program criteria. No quotes or project plans submitted to substantiate request.
Lithgow Croquet Club	Lithgow Croquet Clubhouse Replacement	\$750,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Applicants are encouraged to submit projects that are well defined, planned and take into consideration project management and any approvals required. Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence uploaded to the application for assessment against program criteria. No quotes were sought for this application.
Portland Tidy Towns NSW Incorporated	Portland Wallerawang Lifestyle Walking/Cycling Path	\$500,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence included in the application for assessment against program criteria. Not all questions answered satisfactorily in submission. No quotes sought, and no project planning completed to support application.
Portland Tidy Towns NSW Incorporated	Portland Wallerawang Lifestyle Walking/Cycling Path	\$2,500,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence included in the application for assessment against program criteria. Furthermore, the estimated cost for this project would be a considerable proportion of

				<p>the total Resources for Regions allocation.</p> <p>Council can work with the Tidy Towns group to further consider the merits of this project including accurate costs, design and project scope as well as issues such as ongoing maintenance costs and depreciation which are ineligible under the funding.</p>
Wallerawang branch of the Central Acclimatisati on Society	Wallerawang Lake Wallace water body Aeration system	\$320,000.20	Not compliant	Not progressed - Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence included in the application for assessment against program criteria. Only one quote submitted, no other costings provided for determination.
Wallerawang Bowling Club	Cycleway Construction	\$100,000 - \$500,000	Not compliant	Not progressed - Budgets should be based on substantiated quotes or assumptions with evidence included in the application for assessment against program criteria. No quotes sought, and no project planning completed to support application.

Ranked Projects

The following projects were identified as meeting the criteria of the grant fund. These were then ranked having regard to the strength of the application with respect to the program’s assessment criteria, maximum social and economic benefit to a broad LGA, and project location.

Rank	Proposed by	Project/Program/Business Case	Estimated Cost*
1	Council	Main / Cupro Street Stormwater Drainage Improvements. Triplification of the subsurface drainage from the Main Street / Cupro Street intersection, including the installation of new box culverts.	\$1,800,000
2	Council	Replacement of Geordie Street Causeway with Bridge. Commission a feasibility analysis and detailed design of a concrete, single span bridge to replace the existing concrete causeway on Geordie Street, Lithgow.	\$200,000
3	Council	Regional Roads Safety Improvements. Reconstruct / upgrade \$1,000,000 of regional, high-priority road assets over a period of two financial years.	\$2,000,000

4	Council	Sewer Mains Relining Works Relining of mains to prevent influx of groundwater which is overloading the sewer system and causing surcharges.	\$500,000
5	Association of Bell Clarence Dargan	Community Hall to Lock-up stage	\$411,961
6	Portland Central School	Portland Central Park Project	\$672,375
	Combined Districts Kart Racing Club	Fencing replacement, CCTV security system and resealing of pit area.	\$270,069.94
	Lithgow State Mine Museum	Construction of Exhibition and Conservation Centre Building	\$262,312
	Portland Golf Club	Portland Information / Evacuation Centre	\$629,610
	Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre	Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre upgrade	\$259,719
	Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc	Gardens of Stone Visitor Centre & Community Precinct	\$250,850
		Total value (all projects)	\$7,256,896.94

Should Council concur with the top 6 priorities, the total funding request would be \$5,584,336, which exceeds the allocation of \$5,010,483 available. However, an application is recommended to be made for this amount with these projects determined for their priority and strategic outcomes aligned to Resources for Regions objectives, local and regional need, affordability, and deliverability.

This will see Council apply for an additional \$573,853 above its standard allocation, which is encouraged within the program guidelines. However, noting other grant programs also exist, this is the limit of the Administration's capacity to deliver. It is suggested that the Council limit the application to the top 6 priorities above.

This application will be made by the due date of 30 September. It is anticipated that work on each project will be phased for commencement no earlier than 01 July 2023, to coincide with the 2023/24 financial year.

Council can continue to work with each applicable group on unsuccessful projects to further investigate the merits of their proposals and develop these for application to later funding programs.

The identified projects support several Council strategies as identified in the Community Strategic Plan 2035 – Our place, our future (CSP2035) including the effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure. If successful in receiving the full amount of grant funding for these projects, the goal of an effective and efficient organisation is also supported.

2. Stronger Country Communities Fund

The local government area has also been allocated \$1,559,130 under the Stronger Country Communities Fund. Council's component is \$1,071,902 and there are no community applications

required for this. However, there is a separate allocation of \$487,228 for community submissions, which is managed by the Department of Regional NSW.

The due date for applications under the Stronger Country Communities Fund was 23 September 2022. This necessitated an application being made prior to this Council meeting. The Council were briefed about this at the September Information Session.

Detail of the application that has been submitted is included below. Nominated projects were drawn from the IP&R plans (strategic, delivery, operational and asset plans). These plans have been developed through extensive community engagement and consultation and represent the local government area's priority projects relative to this funding program's guidelines.

Council's application under Stronger Country Communities was as follows:

1. Lake Pillans Upgrade - \$656,000

Scope:

Fund the construction of a new carpark, footpaths and additional site security.

Comments:

With connections to the Farmers Creek Shared Pathway, this project achieves increased tourism outcomes, improves local liveability and promotes an active and healthy community.

2. Blast Furnace Stage 3 - \$415,902

Scope:

Fund the construction of new boardwalks, viewing platforms, disability access improvements and boardwalk lighting.

Comments:

With connections to the Farmers Creek Shared Pathway, this project achieves increased tourism outcomes, improves local liveability and promotes an active and healthy community. This project will also improve the viability of established events such as LithGlow.

Should the Council resolve an alternative submission be made, the administration will need to request a variation of its application. As is the case with Resources for Regions, it is anticipated that work on each project will be phased for commencement no earlier than 01 July 2023, to coincide with the 2023/24 financial year.

Policy Implications

No specific policy implications arise.

Financial Implications

- Budget approved -
 - \$5,010,483 will be available through Resources for Regions, project phasing would need to be determined upon project approval .
 - \$1,071,902 will be available through Stronger Country Communities Fund, project phasing would need to be determined upon project approval.
- Cost centre - TBA
- Expended to date - TBA
- Future potential impact – approved projects would need to be added to the Operational Plan in the year in which works are undertaken.

Legal and Risk Management Implications

Depending on its nature and scale, each specific project may be subject to a development approval and risk assessment processes. All project costings for infrastructure will be reviewed by Public Works in the assessment process.

Attachments

1. Resources for Regions Round 9 Guidelines [10.3.2.1 - 27 pages]

Recommendation

THAT Council

1. Apply for the following six projects and requested amounts under Resources for Regions, Round 9, in prioritised order.
 - a. Main / Cupro Street Stormwater Drainage Improvements - \$1,800,000
 - b. Replacement of Geordie Street Causeway with Bridge - \$200,000
 - c. Regional Roads Safety Improvements - \$2,000,000
 - d. Sewer Mains Relining Works - \$500,000
 - e. Association of Bell Clarence Dargan - Community Hall to Lock-up stage - \$411,961
 - f. Portland Central School Portland Central Park Project - \$672,375
2. Endorse the two applications made under Stronger Country Communities Fund, being:
 - a. Lake Pillans Upgrade - \$656,000
 - b. Blast Furnace Stage 3 - \$415,902, and,
3. Authorise the General Manager to execute the related funding agreements.

Department of Regional NSW

nsw.gov.au/R4Rr9

Resources for Regions

Round 9

Program Guidelines



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Cover photo: A couple drops their children at a local school, in Parkes.

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Scenic views over Polkolbin, Hunter Valley.
Photo credit: Cessnock City Council,
Destination NSW.

Message from the Deputy Premier



Our mining and resources sector continues to play an important role in supporting a strong NSW economy and will continue to do so for many years.

From Singleton to Parkes, mining is the backbone for many of our regional communities, providing around 40,000 jobs across the state. It is an industry that continues to support not only those employed directly, but also thousands of people who work in mining-related jobs.

This is why the NSW Government continues to invest in these communities particularly through our Resources for Regions program which boasts eight successful rounds since 2012, providing \$420 million in funding to more than 242 projects.

This year I am excited to announce Round 9 of the Fund that will provide \$140 million to further support our mining communities and, for the first time, our communities where gas exploration occurs too.

We hope this Round will build on the success of last year in which we saw a variety of applications put forward, from PCYC upgrades, to new sports courts and skills programs. In fact, last year was the most successful round to date, supporting the highest number of projects and delivering the largest investment into our mining communities in the fund's history, with 93 projects sharing \$75 million.

This funding is part of a \$1.3 billion top up of the Regional Growth Fund, taking the total investment to \$3.3 billion since 2017. This unprecedented amount of funding reaffirms the NSW Government's commitment to the wellbeing and longevity of our regions.

I hope to see a great range of project applications submitted again this year and strongly encourage you to apply for Round 9.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Toole". The signature is fluid and cursive.

The Hon. Paul Toole MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional NSW, and Minister for Police

Overview

The Resources for Regions program has run since 2012, providing support to communities across regional NSW impacted by mining. Round 9 of the program will be expanded to support communities where gas exploration or mining may occur

Round 9 provides up to \$140 million to NSW's highly valued mining communities for infrastructure and community projects that support economic and social prosperity. The program will fund infrastructure projects and community programs that help address these unique and diverse needs.

The Resources for Regions program is administered by the Department of Regional NSW.

\$140m

Round 9

\$3.3b

Regional Growth Fund total

Program objective

The objective of the Resources for Regions program is to support the ongoing prosperity of mining communities in regional NSW by providing economic opportunities, improved amenity and positive social outcomes.



Cringila Pump Park, Wollongong.
Photo credit: Wollongong City Council.

A family meets 'Jaffa'.
The large 3m astronaut
sculpture in Parkes.





Opened in 1904, Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery is the oldest regional gallery in NSW. Friends enjoy a shopping day in Parkes. Photo credit: Destination NSW.

Key dates

Applications open:

12 August 2022

Applications close:

30 September 2022 at 5pm AEST

Notification/Project announcement:

Successful Applicants will be notified confidentially from November 2022 or as soon as possible after a grant is approved, at the NSW Government's discretion.

Public announcement by the NSW Government may occur at any time after an Applicant has been notified of a successful outcome.

Contracting:

From November 2022

Contracting will commence once an Applicant has signed and returned their letter of offer and confidentiality agreement

Project completion:

Projects must commence within 6 months of a funding announcement and be completed within 3 years from executing a funding deed.

In extenuating circumstances, late applications may be accepted at the sole discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.



Program funding



A total of \$140 million is available under Round 9 of the Resources for Regions program to be allocated across the identified Eligible Local Government Areas.

Prescribed allocations of funding are assigned to Eligible Local Government Areas to ensure the Resources for Regions program is weighted towards supporting the most mining-affected communities in NSW.

The funding allocations to Eligible Local Government Areas consist of:



a base allocation of \$2 million plus an allocation of weighted funding to the most mining-affected Local Government Areas using the mining employment location quotient, and/or



a weighted funding allocation to Local Government Areas that may be impacted by gas exploration and mining, based on the prevalence of tenements.

Further information about the location quotient and the criteria used to determine the weighted allocation for Local Government Areas impacted by gas exploration is available in the Frequently Asked Questions on the program webpage.

The eligible Local Government Areas are outlined at Appendix A of the Program Guidelines.

Each eligible council will be informed in writing of the funding allocation available for their Local Government Area. Councils are eligible to submit 10 projects up to the maximum funding allocation for their Local Government Area.

If a council submits applications seeking funding above the nominated funding allocation for their Local Government Area, council is asked to rank projects, including joint projects (if applicable), in their order of local priority.

Where a Local Government Area's funding allocation is not fully exhausted, the ability to use these funds in future rounds or for other projects will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.



From top: Broken Hill Civic Centre.
Cobar Miners Heritage Park.
Photo credit: Destination NSW

Grant amounts



Project type	Minimum grant funding	Maximum funding
Infrastructure	\$250,000	The Local Government Area's funding allocation
Community program	\$100,000	\$500,000 per program
Business cases and future project planning	\$50,000	\$500,000 in total for all business cases

Where infrastructure and community programs are packaged together to meet minimum funding requirements, the projects must be comprised of projects that are clearly interdependent and have the same objective and outcomes.

Co-contributions



1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make a financial co-contribution to their projects however, this is not a mandatory eligibility requirement. Co-contributions could include leveraging Applicant funds as well as funding from other sources including other NSW or Australian Government programs.



2. Project delivery or viability should not be dependent on co-contributions that have not been secured.

Eligibility Criteria



Projects submitted under Resources for Regions Round 9 will need to meet the program's Eligibility and Assessment Criteria to receive funding.

The Eligibility Criteria includes:

1. being an Eligible Applicant
2. ensuring the project is located within one or more Eligible Local Government Area/s
3. the project/s being an Eligible Project Type
4. demonstrating accessibility and inclusion measures.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be local councils located in one of the eligible Local Government Areas identified in Appendix A. These Local Government Areas are eligible because they have been identified as being mining-affected or gas exploration communities.

Eligible Applicants are encouraged to submit joint applications with other Eligible Applicants, particularly for larger scale infrastructure projects across one or more Eligible Local Government Area.

NSW regional joint organisations of councils are eligible to apply as a Lead Applicant providing the project is located in one or more Eligible Local Government Areas and the regional joint organisation of councils has the support of each Eligible Council to allocate a portion of the Eligible Council's allocated funds towards to the project. This support can be demonstrated through a letter of support from each eligible council/s.

Eligible Council Applicants are expected to work with community groups to identify priority projects and submit applications on behalf of these organisations. Eligible Council Applicants are encouraged to consider project partnerships, however only the Eligible Council Applicant can submit an application on behalf of a community group.

Project locations

Projects must be in an Eligible Local Government Area or must deliver its primary benefits to one or more Eligible Local Government Area. This applies to all applications including joint applications.



Port Kembla Harbour
and Coal Terminal,
Wollongong.

Eligible Project types

Projects must be for infrastructure or community programs that support the ongoing prosperity of mining and gas exploration communities by providing economic opportunities, improved amenity and positive social outcomes. The specific scope of works and key milestones of the project must be defined in the application.

Business cases and future project planning are also an Eligible Project Type (see page 16 for more details).

All projects need to demonstrate they can commence within 6 months of the funding announcement of funding and can be completed within 3 years from executing a funding deed.

All projects must deliver public benefit by showing how the project will benefit the public generally, or a sufficient section of the public.

Examples of eligible project types include:

Project type	Key objectives	Examples
Infrastructure	Mitigate the impact of gas exploration or mining on local infrastructure in the Local Government Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service infrastructure such as road or bridge upgrades and waste infrastructure.
	Delivery of new economic opportunities to help strengthen and/or diversify the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade, new or improved tourism projects that align with the region's Destination Management Plan. Infrastructure projects aligned to the Local Government Area's local endowments as articulated in the relevant Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) or a relevant NSW Government strategy (e.g. State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038, Future Transport 2056, Regional Growth Plans).
	Improved community amenity through new or upgraded community infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New or enhanced public spaces, recreational facility upgrades, walking and cycling tracks, community centres and halls. Sports facilities, local pool or other publicly owned health and fitness facility upgrades. Main street or town centre beautification projects. Civic centre or art gallery upgrades, libraries or community or cultural spaces. Upgrades to community infrastructure that improves accessibility and inclusion. Common infrastructure, such as amenities or other improvements to public spaces. Environmental improvement projects.



Bridges Hill Park Playground, Cessnock.

Project type	Key objectives	Examples
<p>Community programs</p>	<p>Economic diversification initiatives to support the long-term resilience and prosperity of mining and/or gas exploration communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted skills development programs. • Industry development or business innovation workshops. • Projects related to the development of tourism products that align with the region's Destination Management Plan including the development of new or enhanced tourism experiences and digital product development.
	<p>Deliver positive community outcomes by enhancing the overall well-being of mining and/or gas exploration communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger scale sporting festivals, arts, culture or cultural heritage projects that are accessible and inclusive and support community involvement. • Promotion of local culture or history or land care projects. • Community programs that support or encourage mining workers or their families to relocate to the region or support wellbeing outcomes for residents of mining and/or gas exploration communities. • Aboriginal tourism or cultural heritage projects. • Disability awareness training for front-line staff to support increased community participation for all. • Community events to enable community networking and relationship building.

Funding to support future project planning

Each Eligible Applicant can apply for up to \$500,000 from their total funding allocation for the completion of business cases and other work to support the planning of future projects that are of strategic importance to the Eligible Local Government Area and are aligned with the council's Community Strategic Plan. These business cases must result in the planning of an infrastructure project to ensure they are shovel ready for future funding opportunities. The number of business cases that are sought is unlimited but can not exceed \$500,000 in total.

Eligible Costs include the engagement of an external consultant to undertake:

- business case development for specific infrastructure
- feasibility and other studies to inform future infrastructure project
- master planning to inform future investments.

Plans that are deemed core business of council are Ineligible including traffic studies, community consultation, and economic development plans. Associated costs with engaging a consultant such as catering, room hire, and administration costs are not eligible.



From top: Aerial view of Helensburgh, Maitland. Westbound view of Broken Hill's Argent Street. Photo credit: Destination NSW.



Ineligible Projects Types and Costs

Ineligible Project Types include those that:

- are not in an Eligible Local Government Area or do not provide direct benefit to an Eligible Local Government Area
- are for the day-to-day delivery of essential or core council services
- are for a privately-owned asset or are on private land unless there is a clear public benefit, and the landowner has provided documented consent
- have exclusive private benefits or provide direct commercial and/or exclusive private benefit to an individual or business
- are for marketing, advertising or product promotion
- are plans that are deemed core business of council such as traffic studies, community consultation, and economic development plans
- are the recipient of duplicate grant funding from another NSW or Australian Government grant program for the same project, including the Regional NSW - Business Case and Strategy Development Fund.

Ineligible Project Costs include:

- costs related to buying or upgrading non-fixed equipment or supplies, unless considered essential to program delivery and are incidental costs to the overall project budget
- financing, including debt financing, insurance or rental costs
- purchase of land, buildings and vehicles such as cars, trucks, vans, motorhomes and boats
- costs relating to depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- non-project related staff training and development costs
- operational expenditure, including but not limited to regular repairs and maintenance
- ongoing or recurrent funding that is required beyond the stated timeframe of the project
- for infrastructure projects, funding for any ongoing staff or operational costs
- for community programs, funding for ongoing staff or operational costs beyond the scope and timeframe of the funded project
- retrospective funding to cover any project component that is already complete before funding is announced
- costs related to accommodation services, such as tourist parks unless for a common infrastructure such as amenities or improvements to public spaces
- associated costs with engaging a consultant such as catering, room hire, and administration costs
- project management and administration costs that exceed 10 per cent of the total project cost
- project contingency costs that exceed 25 per cent of the total project cost.

All costs will be assessed by the Department of Regional NSW against program criteria with a focus on how the project delivers benefits linked to the key objectives of the Resources for Regions program.

Inclusion and accessibility

The NSW Government is seeking to support regional communities to future-proof infrastructure and programs by funding universally designed projects. These projects should move beyond current day compliance standards and provide dignified and equitable inclusion to social and community programs for people with disability.

Funding will support projects that improve community participation, livable communities and accessibility and inclusion outcomes. These will assist people with disability and accessibility requirements to participate independently with equity and dignity.

Applicants must demonstrate consideration of accessibility and inclusion measures in their application. Projects which demonstrate the provision of fit-for-purpose, accessible and safe facilities, and increased participation opportunities by increasing accessibility and inclusion/universal design are encouraged.

This applies to both infrastructure projects and community or social programs aiming to improve existing accessibility and inclusion to encourage greater participation.



From top: Sunrise over Broken Hill. The entrance to Muswellbrook Hospital. The historic Orange Town Hall built in 1887. Photo credit: Destination NSW.

Assessment Criteria



All applications that meet the Eligibility Criteria must also meet the relevant Assessment Criteria to receive funding.

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following:

1. Delivery of outcomes aligned with the program objectives
2. Local need
3. Affordability
4. Deliverability

Projects will be assessed as a 'Yes/No' against the Assessment Criteria. Projects will not be competitively assessed across Eligible Local Government Areas.

Criteria 1:

Delivery of outcomes aligned with the program objectives

All projects within an application must demonstrate they will deliver on one of the 5 key strategic objectives of the program.

Infrastructure projects must show capacity to:

- mitigate the impact of mining or gas exploration on local infrastructure in the Local Government Area, or
- deliver new economic opportunities to help strengthen and/or diversify the local economy, or
- improve community amenity through new or upgraded community infrastructure.

Community programs must show the capacity to either:

- support economic diversification initiatives to support the long-term resilience and prosperity of mining communities, and/or gas exploration communities
- deliver positive community outcomes by improving the overall well-being of mining and/or gas exploration communities.

Applications will need to show measurable outcomes that can be delivered by each project and how the Applicant will monitor these outcomes. Projects that are not able to articulate clear outcomes and monitoring and reporting processes will not be approved for funding.

The outcomes to be delivered and measured for each project should be proportionate to the amount of funding requested.

Applicants may be asked to clarify outcomes and reporting measures during the assessment process. The reporting methodology for each project must be agreed prior to entering a funding deed.

Applicants can refer to a sample funding deed available at nsw.gov.au/R4Rr9

Criteria 2:

Local need

Applications must demonstrate the project aligns with one or more outcomes in one of the following plans:

- the Local Government Area’s Community Strategic Plan or Delivery Program
- the broader regional plan of which the Local Government Area or regional joint organisation of councils is a part
- the broader Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) for the region or relevant NSW Government Strategy (e.g. State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038, Future Transport 2056, Regional Growth Plans).

Where individual projects are not specifically identified in the above plans, applications will need to demonstrate how the project will deliver one or more objectives identified in the relevant plan/s. Projects can demonstrate public benefit by showing how the project will benefit the public generally, or a sufficient section of the public. Similarly, while projects can be located on private land they must not be solely for private benefit. The Applicant will need to show how the facility will be open to the community.

It is advisable that tourism product development projects are developed in collaboration with the local Destination Network and, where the project relates to Aboriginal tourism, the relevant Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Criteria 3:

Affordability

Applicants will need to demonstrate projects can be delivered within the identified budget and can be managed independent of further government funding. Quotes or detailed estimates should be provided.

Projects should support local procurement, where possible, and articulate how they will do this.

Project costs eligible for funding include those associated with capital costs to build local economic and community infrastructure.

Detailed costings should be provided for each project and be only for the period required to deliver stated outcomes of the projects.

Projects will need to be delivered within a 3 year timeframe. Extensions may be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Department of Regional NSW.

Project management and administration costs are eligible to a maximum of 10 per cent of the total project cost.

Project contingency costs are eligible to a maximum of 25 per cent of the total project cost.

Project value for money will be assessed by determining that the outcomes to be delivered by a project are proportionate to the amount of funding requested by that project.

Criteria 4:

Deliverability

Project deliverability refers to the Applicant’s capacity, capability and resources to carry out the project.

Applicants must demonstrate the project is investment ready by providing:

- a detailed and realistic project management plan (including risk assessment and management plans) and show that works can be staged
- evidence the project can commence within 6 months of funding announcement and can be delivered within 3 years as outlined in the project plan or business case
- confirmation there is no serious planning, construction, zoning, environmental and/or Native Title impediments to delivering the project
- evidence the Applicant has the required expertise to deliver the project or program and/or can access experienced and qualified personnel to support the delivery of the project
- for infrastructure, evidence that the Applicant has the financial capacity to manage the infrastructure, including its operation and/or maintenance when the project is completed.



From top: Local sports fields in Maitland. Tree lined streetscape in Mudgee’s town centre. Photo credit: Destination NSW. Singleton Rugby League Club.

Application process



Resources for Regions Round 9 will be a single stage application process.

Applicants will be required to submit all their projects (up to a maximum of 10 projects) in the one application form.

To facilitate assessment of applications, Applicants are required to submit the application documents into the program's online portal.

Applications cannot be reopened or amended once the closing date has passed.

How to apply

Visit r4r.smartygrants.com.au/R4R9 to make an application to round 9 of the Resources for Regions program.

Project category	Application documents required
Category 1 \$50,000 to \$5 million funding requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application form Completed project plan Completed budget (with evidence of estimated costs) Landowner's consent (if applicable) Evidence of \$20 million Public Liability Insurance.
Category 2 over \$5 million funding requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application form Business case in the template provided Landowner's consent (if applicable) Evidence of \$20 million Public Liability Insurance.

Landowner's consent and business case templates are available at nsw.gov.au/R4Rr9.

Assessment process



Following receipt of applications, the Department of Regional NSW will review projects against the Eligibility Criteria and then arrange for the assessment of projects against the Assessment Criteria.

Through the assessment process, the Department of Regional NSW may request additional information from the Applicant and may also seek advice from other NSW Government agencies or other third parties (such as probity advisors) to assist with the assessment of projects. The Resources for Regions assessment panel will review project eligibility and assessment outcomes and form a list of projects that are deemed suitable/not suitable for government consideration.

The assessment panel may recommend part-funding projects where there is insufficient funding available for the whole project or where only a component of the project is considered suitable for funding. Eligible Applicants may be requested to submit alternative projects if the projects they submit are deemed unsuitable or ineligible.

Probity advice

Independent probity advisors will provide guidance to the Department of Regional NSW 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.

Decision making

The assessment panel's advice and recommendations will be provided to the Deputy Premier for consideration and final approval.

Other factors may be taken into consideration when determining final projects to receive funding.

The Department of Regional NSW can take other factors into account that may make an application ineligible for funding, such as any person, business or organisation that could cause reputational or other risk to the NSW Government.

All projects may be referred to other NSW or Australian Government funding programs for consideration. Applications that are referred will be subject to the full Assessment Criteria of the other funding program to which they are referred. Applicants may need to update their application to meet the criteria of the referred program.



The Cobar Miners Heritage Park commemorates the miners who lost their lives in Cobar mines.
Photo credit: Destination NSW

Successful Applicants



Notification

Successful Applicants will be notified by email and/or letter. Applicants must keep the grant confidential for a period if an announcement is likely to be made by the NSW Government.

What happens if the project is successful?

Funding Deed

- Successful Applicants will be required to enter into a funding deed with the NSW Government. A sample funding deed can be viewed at nsw.gov.au/R4Rr9
- Successful Applicants will be required to provide all supporting documentation and approvals before the Department of Regional NSW can enter into a funding deed. This includes \$20 million Public Liability Insurance, Development Approval (if applicable) and approval from the Department of Education (DoE) Asset Management Unit for projects being undertaken on DoE land.
- The NSW Government makes no binding funding commitment to an Applicant unless and until both parties sign a funding deed.
- Successful Applicants must not make financial commitments for funded activities until funding deeds have been executed by both parties.
- Grants will be paid via milestone payments set out in the funding deed. Timing and requirements will vary at NSW Government's discretion.
- Successful Applicants may be required to submit progress reports to the NSW Government as outlined in the funding deed.
- Applicants must hold all relevant insurances, including a minimum \$20 million Public Liability Insurance.
- Requests for variations or changes to the project will only be considered in limited circumstances.
- All awarded grants will be GST exclusive. If you are registered for GST, this will be applied on top of the agreed grant value when payment is made to you. Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by taxation law. It is recommended Applicants seek independent professional advice about taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The NSW Government does not provide advice on individual taxation circumstances.
- Successful Applicants will be required to pay back unspent funds or those funds which have not been spent in accordance with the funding deed.
- Successful Applicants will be required to participate in a program evaluation to determine the extent to which their projects have contributed to the objective of the Fund. The evaluation will require Applicants to provide evidence of how projects have resulted in a measurable change to the lives of local residents that is consistent with the objective of the Fund.
- Any information submitted by an Applicant may be used for promotional material prepared by the NSW Government.
- The NSW Government may choose to publicly announce funding for individual applications. It may also use information provided in the grant to develop case studies.
- All recipients of NSW Government funding should acknowledge this financial support as per the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.
- The Department reserves the right to undertake an audit of grant funding within a period 7 years from the signing of the funding deed.
- Applicants must advise the Department of any changes to their legal status or of changes or delays to their project.

Important terms and conditions

- All projects must demonstrate they can commence within 6 months of the announcement of funding and be completed within 3 years as outlined in the project plan.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of each application and will be offered a feedback information session for any unsuccessful application.

Available support

For help preparing applications, information and resources including relevant application templates are available from nsw.gov.au/R4Rr9.

A webinar will be held during the application open period. Information about the webinar will be available on the Fund's webpage when details are confirmed.

The Department of Regional NSW can assist Applicants to develop strong applications. Please contact regionalsw.business@regional.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 679 673 for a referral.



From top: Locals enjoy bikes trails in Parkes. Cringilla Pump Track. Photo credit: Wollongong City Council. The historic village of Molong. Photo credit: Destination NSW.

Complaints

Any concerns about the Fund or individual applications should be submitted in writing to regionalnsw.business@regional.nsw.gov.au. If you do not agree with the way the Department of Regional NSW handled the issue, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via ombo.nsw.gov.au.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

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.

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The guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department.

Appendix A – Eligible Local Government Areas

- Bland Shire Council
- Blayney Shire Council
- Bogan Shire Council
- Broken Hill City Council
- Cabonne Council
- Cessnock City Council
- Cobar Shire Council
- Gunnedah Shire Council*
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Lithgow City Council
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council*
- Maitland City Council
- Moree Plains Shire Council*
- Mid-Western Regional Council
- Muswellbrook Shire Council
- Narrabri Shire Council*
- Narromine Shire Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Orange City Council
- Parkes Shire Council
- Singleton Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council
- Warrumbungle Shire Council*
- Wentworth Shire Council
- Wollondilly Shire Council
- Wollongong City Council

*Local Government Areas impacted by gas exploration



From top: Visitors to the We Are Singleton exhibition. Photo credit: Singleton Council. Winter sun shining over Robertson Park, Orange. Photo credit: Destination NSW.

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