Australian Government invests $140.3 million in community organisations

5 June 2024

The Australian Government is investing $140.3 million in community organisations through the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program to deliver critical projects in the community that benefit all Australians with disability, their carers and families.

This investment includes $90 million for the recently finalised Individual Capacity Building competitive grant round and $50.3 million to offer up to 12-month extensions for existing grants in the National Information Program, Economic and Community Participation, Mainstream Capacity Building, Economic Participation, and Building Employer Confidence and Inclusion in Disability program streams of the ILC program.

The latest Individual Capacity Building grant round will provide $90 million across three years for 45 diverse organisations who will deliver 48 grant activities.

This grant round was highly competitive and prioritised funding to organisations who support autistic people or people with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, as these groups often face disproportionate barriers to accessing appropriate supports.

The assessment process was supported by an Expert Advisory Group set up by the Department of Social Services (DSS) which included state and territory government officials to provide advice on applications that would best address service gaps and meet local priorities.

Feedback DSS received from disability stakeholders and a review of the program by Swinburne University prompted an increased focus on applications that would deliver larger, more systemic projects.

The second set of ILC funding is a total of $50.3 million to provide up to one-year extensions to around 130 organisations to support people with disability, their families and carers to overcome barriers to community participation.

The $50.3 million includes:

- $16 million for one-year extensions to 29 organisations receiving grants under the National Information Program, an initiative that ensures people with disability and their families and carers are equipped to make informed choices and decisions.
- An additional $34.3 million will go toward extending ILC grants to around 100 community organisations for up to 12 months to 30 June 2025. The grant projects under consideration to be extended are from the Economic and Community Participation, Mainstream Capacity Building, Economic Participation, and Building Employer Confidence rounds.

Extending these existing ILC grants to 30 June 2025 will maintain continuity in supports for people with disability, and capacity and capability in the sector, while the Government considers the role of the ILC program as part of broader reforms.

Minister Shorten said he understood disability organisations play an important role in the community and he was pleased funding was on its way for many.

“We’ve awarded funding to these organisations so they can help people with disability and their supporters learn about and confidently advocate for their rights,” Minister Shorten said.

“Many of these organisations also provide a helping hand to those who are struggling to find and navigate disability, health, and community supports in their local area.

“A long list of ILC-funded organisations will benefit from the upcoming grant extensions, with this funding set to support the capacity of the disability support sector and ensure that no person with disability gets left behind.”

“Access to up-to-date and relevant information makes a tangible difference to the lives of people with disability, and the $16 million National Information Program funding extension will have an important impact.”

Minister for Social Services, Amanda Rishworth, said the Government will build on these grants to lead work on a renewed approach to disability supports for people with disability outside the NDIS, including the development of a system of Foundational Supports as agreed by National Cabinet in December 2023.

“Earlier this year, we announced a $11.6 million investment over the next two years to develop and implement a landmark Foundational Supports Strategy,” Minister Rishworth said.

“Work on the Strategy is underway, with all levels of government committed to strengthening Australia’s disability supports ecosystem and responding to key recommendations of the NDIS Review.”

A list of the grant recipients is available on the Department of Social Services website.

The current rounds of grant funding have been decided by the independent delegate at the Department of Social Services, separate to the Government.

The ILC program allocates grants to organisations that support the economic, social, and community participation of people with disability, regardless of whether they are eligible for the NDIS.

The Independent Review of the NDIS made recommendations regarding support for people with disability to access the information they need to engage with local mainstream, foundational, and NDIS supports.

The full response to the NDIS Review will be released later in 2024.

More information about the ILC program is available on the Department of Social Services website .

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