

Accessible Australia in Queensland

Expression of Interest Guidelines

Issued by: Department of Families, Seniors, Disability
Services and Child Safety
(‘DFSDSCS’)

Closing time: 5:00 pm
Friday, 21 August 2026

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1. Part A: About this Expression of Interest

The Queensland Government is calling for Expressions of Interest (EOI) in future funding opportunities to improve accessibility in community spaces for people with disability, based on the information available for previous grant rounds for the Accessible Australia initiative.

This section provides an overview of the Accessible Australia initiative and outlines key details of Queensland's EOI process. Respondents are encouraged to review this information to gain a clear understanding of the program's objectives and submission requirements.

1.1 Background

The Queensland Government is committed to building inclusive and accessible communities that support and empower the more than 900,000 people with disability across Queensland.

The Commonwealth Government is investing \$17.1 million to 2027-28 to increase inclusion in community spaces across Australia through the Commonwealth Accessible Australia initiative (Accessible Australia).

Accessible Australia is a national program that helps make community spaces easier to use for people with disability. It provides funding to enhance both built environments and natural spaces including buildings, playgrounds, beaches, and parks.

Accessible Australia builds upon the earlier Changing Places initiative. Changing Places are more spacious than standard accessible toilets and include additional features designed to meet the needs of people with disability and their carers. Accessible Australia now includes more ways to make public spaces easier to use for people with disability.

Accessible Australia supports the goals of the *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27: Together, a better Queensland*, by fostering an inclusive environment that promotes participation, provides support, and encourages community engagement for people with disability.

Government-owned entities, such as local councils, and not-for-profit organisations can apply for this funding.

Accessible Australia funds:

- fixed Changing Places toilet facilities;
- portable Changing Places toilet facilities;
- portable equipment for inclusive beaches (like beach wheelchairs, floating wheelchairs and accessible beach matting systems);
- portable amenities for inclusive national parks (like all-terrain wheelchairs and accessible paths); and
- fixed inclusive play spaces (like Liberty Swings and all-access spinners).

The Commonwealth Government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) is responsible for the implementation of Accessible Australia, which is being undertaken in partnership with state and territory governments.

The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (DFSDESCS) is running this EOI process to gauge interest and identify potential projects that could align with any future grant rounds released by the Commonwealth Government.

1.1.1 What accessible amenities are eligible?

EOIs are sought for:

- up to 100% of the total build cost for:
 - o inclusive beaches (up to \$30,000);
 - o inclusive national parks (up to \$20,000); and
 - o portable Changing Places toilet facilities (up to \$200,000).

- up to 50% of the total build cost for:
 - o inclusive play spaces (up to \$300,000 *e.g. grant contribution \$150,000*); and
 - o fixed Changing Places toilet facilities (up to \$250,000 *e.g. grant contribution \$125,000*).

The number of successful Respondents will be dependent on funding allocated to Queensland.

Changing Places

Changing Places are facilities for people with high support needs who are not adequately supported by standard accessible toilets. Changing Places are larger than standard accessible toilets and have extra features to meet the needs of people with disability and their carers.

Changing Places facilities must meet the [Changing Places Design Specifications 2020](#) and be accredited by a Changing Places assessor (see further details in [Part B: Service Requirements](#)).

Accessible Australia funding does not provide funding for Changing Places accreditation costs.

Inclusive Beaches

Inclusive portable beach infrastructure may include:

- beach wheelchairs: wheelchairs designed to access sand, mud, gravel and uneven terrain;
- floating wheelchairs: wheelchairs that allow the user to be partially submerged in water, allowing the sensation of floating; and
- accessible beach matting systems: a roll-out access mat designed to provide a stable surface for people who use wheelchairs or have reduced mobility.

Inclusive National Parks

Inclusive portable national park infrastructure may include:

- all-terrain wheelchairs: all terrain wheelchairs allow visitors to access more rugged walking tracks that are not otherwise accessible with conventional wheelchairs. They often have adjustable seating and supports, making them suitable for adults and children with varying abilities; and
- accessible paths: these modular systems provide temporary, wheelchair-accessible pathways for outdoor areas and can be placed on various terrains including gravel.

Portable resources must be in urban/natural park and beach environments. Accessible paths must be portable (e.g. accessible beach matting) rather than fixed; sealed or compacted gravel paths do not meet the portability criteria.

Inclusive Play Spaces

Inclusive play spaces may include:

- inclusive play equipment such as Liberty Swings, sensory play platforms and all-access spinners. Inclusive play equipment is accessible to individuals regardless of age or ability; and
- inclusive equipment for people with physical and psychosocial disability, including visual communication toys for non-verbal children or those with communication delays.

1.1.2 Accessible Australia eligible funds expenditure

Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated with the intent of the initiative. Only new projects are eligible for funding and the project must not have commenced prior to funding being approved for the project.

Your EOI response must clearly outline how your proposed expenditure aligns with the funding streams identified above and is reflected in the budget submitted with your EOI.

The facility or amenity that is subject to funding must be situated in a location accessible to everyone, such as a public building, space or facility that is open and available for use by the general public.

1.1.3 Accessible Australia funding exclusions

Organisations must use any issued funds, including any interest earned, for the purposes of the initiative.

Items or activities for which funding cannot be used include, for example:

- demolition costs;
- Changing Places assessor and accreditation costs;
- design, project management or insurance fees; or
- costs not directly related to constructing or purchasing the Accessible Australia facility (e.g. the building costs associated with a larger construction project, pathways or signage to an Accessible Australia amenity, or the costs ongoing maintenance and cleaning of a fixed Changing Place).

Amenities to be established in commercial enterprises, such as shopping centres, is out of scope.

1.1.4 Eligibility criteria - who can apply?

Eligible parties must be:

- government-owned entities, such as local councils; or
- not-for-profit organisations.

The organisation must be based in Queensland if it is a government owned entity. The organisation must have operations with an established base in Queensland if it is a not-for-profit organisation.

The organisation must be registered for GST or hold an exemption for GST.

1.1.5 Construction and/or purchase timings

Facilities and amenities must:

- be purchased or the build commenced within 12 months of receiving funding; and
- be installed or built within 18 months of purchase or building commencement.

1.2 How this EOI process works

DFSDSCS is conducting an EOI process to gain preliminary information from Respondents regarding the service requirements in [Part B: Service Requirements](#) and determine the level of interest to participate in any future funding opportunities.

This EOI process will provide information regarding the potential procurement of the services described in [Part B](#) and invites prospective Respondents to submit an EOI. Respondents should be aware that DFSDSCS has discretion to proceed with the requirements in a manner that is different from that described in [Part B](#) or may not proceed with the activity at all.

Overall, depending on the nature of the EOIs received, DFSDSCS may:

- request more detailed submissions from Respondents;
- enter into direct negotiations with a Respondent in relation to its EOI;
- establish a limited-term short-listed panel comprising selected Respondents from which future services can be purchased, if and when the need arises;
- decide not to proceed any further; or
- do something other than the above.

It is important to note: This EOI process is not a Request for Tender. It is not a commitment or representation of any kind by DFSDSCS that it will at any time issue a Request for Tenders for the services described in Part B, or that DFSDSCS will otherwise seek to procure any services to achieve the desired outcomes.

DFSDSCS may contact one or more of the Respondents after the Closing Date and Time to discuss the Community outcome, Service outcome, Statement of Requirements or plans or needs of DFSDSCS generally.

1.3 How to lodge an EOI

This section outlines the steps and requirements for lodging an EOI, providing Respondents with clear guidance to ensure a smooth and successful submission process.

1.3.1 Form and content of the EOI

To lodge a valid EOI, you must complete and submit the Application Form in the SmartyGrants portal, as outlined in [Part C](#). This will include the Respondent Details section and your organisation's response to the Qualitative Criteria and proposed budget.

Respondents must:

- complete the online Application Form via the SmartyGrants portal;
- provide all necessary supporting information/evidence;
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria;
- detail how the project will develop and/or enhance accessibility for people with disability;
- provide evidence that the project has been co-designed and/or informed by people with disability (letter from relevant group or peak body or reference to relevant policy or accreditation);
- detail how the project meets any applicable legislative or compliance requirements (if applicable);
- provide a detailed project plan which includes:
 - o project objectives;
 - o location/s of eligible activities;
 - o implementation methodology;
 - o timeframes for all project stages up to, and including, project completion;
 - o project budget, cash flow forecast, procurement plans and evidence of project costings, e.g., quotes;
 - o evidence of capacity and capability to deliver the project; and
 - o identify risks and include any risk mitigation plans.

When completing the Application Form, assume that DFSDSCS has no knowledge of your organisation, its activities, experience or any previous work undertaken by your organisation.

1.3.2 Lodgement format

You are only able to lodge an EOI in the following way:

- register and submit the Application Form at: <https://communities.smartygrants.com.au/accessible-australia-qld>;
- create a password protected log-in to access the Application Form;
- provide all the information requested, including addressing all assessment criteria;
- provide the Application Form in English;
- provide an indicative budget using the template in the response form in the SmartyGrants portal; and
- submit the Application Form by the closing date and time, late lodgements will not be accepted.

For general information about SmartyGrants, please refer to the SmartyGrants webpage: <https://smartygrants.com.au>.

Prior to submitting a response, please ensure you:

- read and understand these EOI Guidelines; and

- meet all the eligibility criteria (as defined in [section 1.1.4](#)).

If you have any technical difficulties with logging in, progressing or submitting your EOI, please contact SmartyGrants on 03 9320 6888 or by email service@smartygrants.com.au.

Please refer to the <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/> for assistance on completing your EOI via the SmartyGrants portal.

1.3.3 Closing date and time

The Closing Date and Time for lodgement of EOIs is as set out on the front page of this EOI Guidelines document. EOIs should be received by 5pm on Friday, 21 August 2026.

EOIs that are not received in full by the Closing Date and Time will not be evaluated by DFSDSCS.

1.4 How your EOI will be assessed

DFSDSCS will assess your EOI against the Qualitative Response Criteria outlined in [Part C](#). To the extent that the DFSDSCS considers appropriate, it may also take into account any other information available to DFSDSCS regarding the Respondent or the EOI.

DFSDSCS will review all eligible submitted EOIs and make recommendations to the Commonwealth Government to award funding.

The Commonwealth Government remains the sole decision makers of successful recipients of funding under the Accessible Australia initiative.

1.4.1 Assessment process and next steps

DFSDSCS will review all submitted responses against the eligibility criteria ([section 1.1.4](#)) to confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria and are able to be further assessed.

EOI responses will be assessed against three individual project assessment criteria (see [Part C](#)) and broader access and equity considerations. Respondents will also be required to submit a budget outline as part of their response.

Information contained in responses may be shared with other Queensland Government agencies to assist with cross government coordination.

A panel will assess eligible EOI responses against the assessment criteria and may make recommendations for potential allocation of future grant funding to the Commonwealth Government.

Successful Respondents may subsequently be offered funding through a formal Service Agreement with DFSDSCS. Prior to issuing a Service Agreement, DFSDSCS reserves the right to engage with Respondents to negotiate and finalise the terms of the funding arrangement, ensuring alignment with program objectives and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.

1.4.2 Priorities for Accessible Australia amenities

Priority will be given to EOIs to deliver projects for **fixed amenities** that:

- are from LGAs where there are no other fixed Changing Places facilities within that municipality (refer to the [Changing Places Toilet Map](#) to see LGAs without a Changing Places toilet); and
- demonstrate an identified need for a Changing Places facility in their local community and provide evidence of the extent of local support for the proposed facility; or
- are from LGAs with an existing facility but can demonstrate a clear and compelling need for an additional facility in the proposed location, supported by evidence of demand from people with disability, their families, friends, and carers, and the local community.

Priority will be given to EOIs to establish **portable amenities** that:

- demonstrate high visitor patronage or other local/regional tourism data;
- demonstrate an identified need from people with disability, their families, friends, and carers for a Changing Places facility;
- demonstrate commitment to access and inclusion with other accessible amenities such as accessible pathways and boardwalks, beach matting, accessible viewing platforms/areas and disabled parking bays; and
- demonstrate the potential for sustained and regular use of the portable amenities over time, supported by clear plans or strategies to ensure their ongoing utilisation and long-term viability.

1.4.3 Notification

You will receive a formal notification of the outcome of your EOI following any finalisation of arrangements with the Commonwealth Government. If successful, you will receive a letter advising of the approval and the amount of funding approved.

You must not pay for the service/s, in part or full, until funding approval has been confirmed.

You may request feedback on your EOI response up to four weeks after you are notified of the outcome.

1.5 Insurances

Respondents are asked to provide a copy of all relevant insurance policies and certificates in the Application Form.

Recipients of funding must maintain current and adequate insurance appropriate to the activities/services funded to cover any liability of the recipient that might arise in connection with the performance of its obligations under a grant funding agreement. This must include but is not limited to a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

1.6 Obligations and reporting

Parties who receive funding as an outcome of an EOI will be required to submit bi-annual progress reports. Further reporting information will be provided in a grant funding agreement if issued.

All projects must be completed 18 months after your approved project start date. If granted funding, you are required to submit a Final Report as per your grant funding agreement.

It is a requirement that all financial records related to funding expenditure and acquittal be retained by the committee of the organisation for seven years. If the committee changes, these documents must be forwarded to the new incoming committee.

1.7 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect;
- why we collect your personal information; and
- who we give your personal information to.

In submitting an EOI, you agree to the Queensland Government collecting your personal information, including your name, contact details and role in your organisation, so we can assess your response and for the purpose of grants administration. If you do not provide this information, we cannot assess your EOI response.

The Queensland Government may also use and disclose information collected about you under this EOI in any other Queensland Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on the DFSDSCS website and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us in your response, including personal information, with other State entities, the responsible Minister and their staff, and with Members of Parliament, for other purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, or as otherwise authorised or required by law.

1.8 Where to get more information

If you have any enquiries about this EOI, please contact the authorised DFSDSCS representative listed below:

Name: Kate Hine, Principal Program Officer, Programs and Sector Engagement

E-mail: dsggrants@families.qld.gov.au

1.9 Complaints and feedback

Complaints or other feedback should be directed to disabilityenquiries@families.qld.gov.au.

We are committed to effective complaints management and will deal with all complaints against our actions, decisions, or officers' conduct in a responsive, confidential, and fair manner. Please refer to the compliments and complaints section at the DFSDSCS website: <https://www.families.qld.gov.au/contact-us/compliments-complaints>.

2. Part B: Service requirements

The Accessible Australia initiative aims to foster an inclusive environment for people with disabilities by prioritising participation, support, and community engagement. This aligns with the vision and goals of the *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–2027: Together, a better Queensland*.

This section provides an overview of the potential service requirements for this initiative, highlighting community priorities, desired service outcomes, and key objectives.

It is divided into three parts: **community outcomes**, **service outcomes**, and **service requirements for Changing Places fixed amenities**.

Respondents are encouraged to address these elements comprehensively as part of their EOI response.

2.1 Community outcomes

Public spaces across Queensland must be welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for everyone in the community. Expanding the network of Accessible Australia amenities across Queensland will:

- promote the inclusion, participation, and independence of people with disability in all aspects of community life;
- support the development of accessible and inclusive communities where everyone can live well, with dignity and respect; and
- encourage the design and enhancement of buildings, public spaces, recreational and tourist destinations, entertainment venues, and sporting facilities to ensure they are welcoming and accessible for all.

2.2 Service outcomes

Expanding the network of Accessible Australia amenities across Queensland will:

- foster inclusive and accessible built environments that support all Queenslanders, ensuring everyone can participate fully in community life;
- promote the use of universal design principles in publicly accessible infrastructure to create spaces that are welcoming and functional for all; and

- enable people with disability, including those with high support needs, along with their families and carers, to actively participate in and contribute to their communities, recognising the value of accessible spaces in bringing diverse groups together for the benefit of the entire state.

2.3 Service requirements for Changing Places fixed amenities

As part of the Accessible Australia initiative, DFSDSCS is seeking EOIs to expand the network of fixed Changing Places across Queensland to meet the above community and service outcomes.

Respondents expressing interest in funding for fixed Changing Places must:

- build to completion a fixed Changing Place/s according to the [Changing Places Design Specifications 2020](#);
- ensure the Changing Places facility is **accredited** and listed on the [Changing Places website](#) and the National Toilet Map. Changing Places Assessors can be found on the Changing Places website page, [Changing Places Engage an Assessor](#);
- demonstrate an identified need from people with disability, their families, and carers for a Changing Places in their local community;
- provide a certificate of compliance by a registered Changing Places Assessor upon completion;
- commence construction of Changing Places within 12 months of receiving funding;
- complete construction within 18 months of building commencement; and
- fund at least 50% of the cost to construct the Changing Place/s.

In addition, responses must align with the National Standards for Disability Services.

3. Part C: EOI Application Form overview

This section provides an overview of the required content within the SmartyGrants EOI Application Form. Respondents must complete and submit their EOI using the SmartyGrants platform in accordance with [Part A, section 1.3](#).

It is important to note: This document is not the EOI Application Form and cannot be used to submit an EOI. This section is an overview of the information that will be required to be submitted via the SmartyGrants portal.

3.1 Respondent details

Respondents are required to provide organisational contact details and organisational structure and existing funding relationship details in the 'Respondent details' section of your Application Form in the SmartyGrants portal.

3.2 Qualitative response criteria

Responses to the Qualitative Criteria are designed to demonstrate your organisation's capacity and/or experience. All sub-criteria must be addressed where applicable.

Please ensure that any claims or statements made to address any aspect of the criteria are supported by examples.

3.2.1 Criterion 1 – Project overview

Respondents must provide a project overview that demonstrates that the site of their proposed Accessible Australia project meets the needs of people with disability, including, where applicable, compliance with the universal design approach, opening hours, accessibility, and ongoing maintenance.

Responses must:

- demonstrate why this location is a good choice for installing an Accessible Australia facility such as: popular local or tourist destination, proximity to other community facilities, complements other nearby accessible infrastructure, or that there are no other Accessible Australia facility or amenities nearby;
- illustrate why this site was selected in preference to other locations in their local community; and
- demonstrate commitment to universal design principles including an overall site design which incorporates clear continuous accessible paths of travel to/from the facility and designated accessible parking bays situated within proximity.

Responses must also provide the following if applicable:

- a copy of the proposed site plan/s;
- information about proposed opening hours;
- information about how the public can access the facility or amenity. For example, if a Master Locksmith Access Key (MLAK) is utilised, provide details of how and where the public can borrow the key from a nearby venue. [Master Locksmith Access Key](#);
- in instances where a fixed Changing Places facility is in a beachside or waterfront location, design options **must** include a shower facility;
- in instances where a fixed Changing Places facility is part of a larger project such as the construction or refurbishment of an amenities block, or part of a new build such as a community centre, information must be provided about the larger project; and
- in instances where the site is not owned by the Respondent, a copy of the relevant lease will need to be attached to your response in the SmartyGrants portal.

3.2.2 Criterion 2 – Identified need and public benefit

Respondents will be required to demonstrate the extent to which the project addresses need identified by people with disability, their families and carers and provide evidence of the extent of local consultation and support for the project. Respondents will also need to identify the benefits delivered by the project to people with a disability and their local community.

Respondents must, where applicable:

- provide evidence of assessing community needs such as Disability Action Plans, Toilet Strategies, Tourism Plans, Emergency Management and Economic Development plans or demographic data;
- describe how you have consulted with people with disability in choosing this location for your Accessible Australia project and demonstrate that the project location has support from the local community, including people with disabilities;
- provide evidence of community consultations such as advisory groups and forums, interviews, consultations, focus groups, and or results of any surveys; and
- clearly identify the expected social, economic and accessibility benefits that the project will deliver to people with disability, their families, and carers in the community.

3.2.3 Criterion 3 – Organisational capacity

Respondents must provide evidence of their ability to deliver the project in a timely manner and within budget, including:

- demonstrated experience or a sound approach to delivering the Accessible Australia project such as a project plan and strategies for successful completion;
- timelines for delivery of the project including project completion within 18 months from formal approval of funding;
- a communications plan for promoting the Accessible Australia amenity or facility once it is available to people with a disability, their families and carers, and the local community; and
- a copy of your complaints handling process and evidence of how it will be implemented.

3.3 Budget

A project budget should detail the income and expenditure for your proposed project (excluding GST), including the total funds sought from the Accessible Australia initiative and any other associated and ongoing costs (for example, cleaning and maintenance).

Please ensure any in-kind and co-contributions are identified in your budget outline.

In instances where an Accessible Australia fixed Changing Places facility is part of a larger project such as the construction or refurbishment of an amenities block, or part of a new build such as community centre, information must be provided about the larger project and an estimated total project cost.

3.4 Other access and equity considerations

The assessment panel will also consider broader access and equity considerations including:

- the geographic distribution of Accessible Australia projects across Queensland and where there are no other Accessible Australia facilities within that municipality;
- the level of support and identified need for your Accessible Australia project in the local community as demonstrated by extensive consultation with people with disability, their families, friends, and carers; and
- consistency with *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27* priorities and themes, with particular focus on making the built environment usable for as many people as possible through the construction and/or purchase of Accessible Australia amenities.

4. Part D: Conditions governing EOI process

This section provides an overview of the conditions governing this EOI process.

This EOI process is governed by the laws applicable in Queensland.

4.1 No legal relationship

No legal or other obligation shall arise between a Respondent and DFSDSCS in connection with this EOI process or any associated negotiation, unless and until a formal contract has been signed by both parties.

4.2 Reservation of rights

DFSDSCS reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to:

- modify the EOI process, including its structure, timing, or criteria;
- consider information from any source in evaluating responses;
- engage with Respondents for clarification, presentations, or interviews;
- conduct due diligence, seek external expertise, or request additional information;
- accept, reject, or negotiate with any Respondent or response, including non-conforming ones;
- terminate, reinstate, or extend the EOI process or closing date;
- publish Respondent names or preferred Respondents; and
- take any other action deemed appropriate.

4.3 Acceptance of conditions

In responding, Respondents are deemed to have accepted these conditions.