

# SmartyGrants Infrastructure Nominations Help Guide

Your council has been successful in receiving grant funding under the Faster Assessments Incentive Program Round One. You are now invited to nominate one infrastructure project via the SmartyGrants Platform. To be successful, the project needs to meet the eligibility and infrastructure assurance criteria outlined in the [Program Guide](#).

This help guide provides supplementary information to assist councils' nominating officers in accurately and thoroughly completing the application form within the required timeframe. The program team is available to answer any additional questions regarding the application form via the program email address at [FAIP@dphi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:FAIP@dphi.nsw.gov.au).

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## Nominating a project

Successful councils must nominate a maximum of one project via the SmartyGrants platform at the link below.

[Submit the application form](#)

There is additional guidance throughout the SmartyGrants form explaining the requirements. You can also access additional resources specific to SmartyGrants [here](#).

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## How to prepare a project application

### Before you start

The application form will require you to submit several documents to demonstrate your project is deliverable, services new homes and has strategic merit. If the Program team does not receive all required documents, the assurance process will not be able to be completed, and your application may be deemed ineligible.

We recommend gathering the following before you start:

- Project extent and service catchment (in GIS format)
- Funding strategy or equivalent
- Feasibility report or equivalent
- Contractor and procurement plans or equivalent
- Project cost estimate schedules

- Concept plan and detailed design if available
- Business case/ economic analysis if available
- Staging plan or equivalent document outlining key milestones
- Stakeholder and communications plan if available
- Landowner consent if required.

The application form will also allow you to include optional documents in support of the strategic merits of the project, such as evidence of Connecting with Country outcomes; community engagement outcomes or participation plan; evidence of climate and natural disaster merits; other project-specific relevant documents. These are optional but can assist in demonstrating project merits.

Before uploading, double-check that:

- The files are final versions and use the following naming convention:  
*FAIP – Council name – Project Name – Attachment name*
- Text documents are in accessible formats (PDF or Word preferred)
- The information is consistent across attachments (e.g. cost estimates match your project summary).

### Navigating the form

Once you have all documents ready, it is time to complete the application form. The table below offers practical tips on the purpose and expectations for each question in the form. Refer to it if you have any questions about how to interpret the requirements.

Question	Guidance
<b>Page 2. Applicant details</b>	
<b>Applicant details</b>	You will be asked in the ‘Applicant details’ section of the form whether you are an ‘individual’ or an ‘organisation’. This question is a locked question in the SmartyGrants platform. Please select <u>‘organisation’</u> as your answer for this question.
<b>DA assessment time improvement methodology</b>	You will be asked about the methods and tools used by your organisation to improve your DA timeframes in line with the Statement of Expectations Order. Your response will be used to understand what practical steps councils are taking to improve timeframes. It may also be used to highlight efforts by successful councils and provide guidance to other councils. Please include information on practical changes made by your council to meet these targets and point to any available policies if available.
Question	Guidance

Page 3. Project details

<p><b>Project Details</b></p>	<p>The <u>brief description</u> of the nominated project is a general overview of the project. You will be asked to expand your description of the project in the following two questions:</p> <p>“<u>Service need</u>”: focus on the problem that the project is intended solve and who will benefit from it (the why).</p> <p>“<u>Scope of works</u> (project inclusions)”: these are key elements and activities of the project (the what and the how). Note that any elements not listed here may be considered project exclusions for the purpose of the funding agreement.</p>
<p><b>Project extent (in GIS format):</b></p>	<p>This section requires you to specify the geographic boundaries of your project, including all areas that form part of the project site. The information you provide will be used by the Department to map and assess the footprint of your project.</p>

Page 5. Deliverability

<p><b>Project deliverability</b></p>	<p>This section asks you to provide information to support your project’s technical soundness and proof that it can be delivered by June 2029. You will need to provide evidence the project is ready to commence and that it can realistically be delivered within this timeframe. What to include will depend on the project type and stage:</p> <p><u>Early-stage projects</u> will at a minimum include a feasibility report / concept design report, verifiable cost estimates / funding strategy, and a high-level delivery plan and timeline showing reasonable milestones.</p> <p><u>Shovel-ready</u> or construction projects should include more detailed documentation, for example, an itemised funding strategy, confirmation of relevant development or planning approvals, and a project schedule with detailed milestones.</p> <p>If your council is still finalising some of these details, provide the most up-to-date information available and outline when the remaining steps or approvals are expected. It is essential, however, that you demonstrate project soundness and deliverability.</p>
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<p><b>Question</b></p>	<p><b>Guidance</b></p>
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Page 7. Service new homes

<p><b>Project service catchment (in GIS format):</b></p>	<p>Projects have different geographic catchments depending on the infrastructure type, nature and extend of the project. This section requires you to specify what the geographic catchment is for your project and the methodology you used to calculate it.</p> <p>The information you provide will be used by the Department to map the catchment of your project and verify the <u>housing benefits</u> of the project. If you have any questions or issues completing this question, please reach out to the Program team.</p>
<p><b>Number of new dwellings supported</b></p>	<p>This question builds on the service catchment information provided by you. You will need to complete the table based on your methodology to estimate the number of new dwellings your project will enable and/or support within the service catchment, broken down by financial year (from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2029). If your project’s benefits extend beyond 2029, please include forecasts for post 2029. If your council uses housing or land supply forecasts, you can draw from those models. Otherwise, please provide a best available estimate which can be based on a verifiable source in line with your council’s policies.</p>

Page 8. Strategic merit

<p><b>Strategic justification</b></p>	<p>This question helps demonstrate how your project aligns with broader strategic plans for your area. The aim is to show that the project strategically supports planned growth, housing, or infrastructure priorities. When completing this section, have all relevant strategic planning documents that support or identify the need for your project handy, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant Regional and District Plans</li> <li>• Local Strategic Planning Statements</li> <li>• Other endorsed council or state documents that identify the project or related objectives.</li> </ul> <p>Briefly explain how your project responds to these strategies, for example, how it supports planned housing growth or addresses infrastructure capacity gaps. If your project is not specifically mentioned in a plan, you can still demonstrate strategic alignment by explaining how it supports the intent or outcomes of those documents.</p>
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## What's next?

At the end of the nomination period, the program team will review each project application against the eligibility criteria to ensure it includes all required information for the technical and strategic reviewers to undertake the assurance process. Eligible projects will then progress through a strategic and technical assurance process to evaluate their alignment with program objectives and technical feasibility. Following this assurance process, the successful projects are indicatively scheduled to be announced in April 2026.

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following questions have been asked by eligible councils and are provided to all councils as general information. For any FAQ's regarding the SmartyGrants platform, please visit [this page](#).

### **1. Can councils apply for funding to contribute to the delivery of a single project over the different rounds of the Faster Assessments Incentive Program?**

It is possible for a successful council to seek funding for a discrete project stage in Round 1 and then seek funding for subsequent stages of the same project in rounds 2 and 3, as long as the infrastructure eligibility and assurance criteria outlined in Section 3 of the guide are met (noting that program funding will only be available each round if that council is successful in that particular round).

### **2. Can the nominated project be across multiple sites?**

Successful councils will be asked to nominate only one project. However, that project may be delivered across multiple sites provided it meets all the eligibility criteria outlined in section 3.3 of the program guidelines.

### **3. When will funding be made available for round 1 of the Program?**

Funding agreements are expected to be finalised and executed shortly after the successful councils are announced in 2026.

### **4. If Council wished to nominate a project which still required some planning, approvals, or scheduling, is it still eligible for consideration under the program?**

As per the round one guidelines (refer to section 3.2 and Table 7), the council must be able to demonstrate that the project:

- is ready to commence or needs top-up funding to proceed, including a declaration of secured funding from other funding sources if required for delivery;
- is technically sound, including evidence of deliverability; and
- can be completed by 30 June 2029.

This includes projects seeking funding for planning and design, where council can demonstrate that the overall project can be completed within the required timeframe.