

Background

In November 2020, the Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, approved \$100 million from the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) to go to the four Northern Territory land councils to 'support Aboriginal businesses and jobs'. The Central Land Council (CLC) has received \$36.7 million of this funding which is referred to here as *ABA Economic Stimulus* funding (Stimulus funding). The CLC is working with Aboriginal businesses and organisations and other stakeholders to identify projects that will support these aims and create benefits for CLC constituents.

What can Stimulus funding be spent on?

Funding can only be spent on projects that align with one or more of these principles:

- **Investing in existing Indigenous community businesses** so they can adapt and deliver.
- **Investing in Aboriginal-owned infrastructure** to connect people to economic opportunities, including pastoral, tourism, gas and mining opportunities.
- **Building the skills of men and women on Country** through rangers, learning on Country programs and workplace experiences.
- **Investing in small-scale infrastructure projects** to create jobs and improve the potential of Aboriginal land, such as fencing, water infrastructure and homelands upgrades.
- **Maximising the ABA investment through co-investment** and co-ordination with other government funding streams and contributions from corporate and philanthropic sectors.

For small-scale infrastructure projects on homelands (outstations), funding can only be spent:

- a. For an outstation prioritised under the CLC ABA Outstation Project- to supplement a budget shortfall for work identified during this process, or
- b. For an outstation that was short-listed but was unsuccessful under the CLC ABA Outstation Project- for small-infrastructure works, or
- c. For an outstation that has been identified as a priority by constituents through CLC community development processes, and
- d. Where funding is provided to a resource centre or other capable provider in the CLC region to deliver this work.

More information about funding for outstations is in the *Guide for Outstation Upgrades- CLC ABA Economic Stimulus Funding*. The CLC understands the importance of outstations and supports constituents' aspirations. CLC is committed to continuing to advocate for funding for outstations.

What can Stimulus funding not be spent on?

- Projects to help start a new enterprise, unless an Aboriginal business or corporation is already running an enterprise/s and wants to move into a new sector.
- Projects that will only happen while the funding lasts and do not have a plan for sustainability (e.g. self-generated revenue or ongoing grant funding).
- Projects that do not have a business or organisation to deliver the project.
- Projects where the project value is 10% or less of the business or corporation's cash at bank.
- Paying off debt.



Who can apply for Stimulus funding?

- Aboriginal businesses or sole traders in the CLC region.
- Aboriginal corporations in the CLC region.
- A non-Aboriginal business, organisation, or sole trader that can do a project that aligns with one or more of the investment principles, and is in the CLC region.

When do I need to apply?

This funding needs to be spent quickly, as it is for stimulating Aboriginal businesses and jobs. We will accept proposals until the funding has been spent. We expect this process to be completed by mid-2022.

What is the assessment criteria?

CLC assesses proposals against three criteria:

1. Does the project address a priority need and how will it do so?
2. Can the proponent deliver the project?
3. Is it a good use of Stimulus funding?

What should my proposal include?

When you make an enquiry to CLC and we confirm that your project is eligible, we will provide you with a Proposal Form and a list of documents you need to provide.

The Proposal Form, includes questions about:

- **The project's objectives and all steps or activities involved.** A clear outline of what you will do helps CLC to understand exactly what the project will deliver. Including information about the objectives can show the benefit of the project and the difference the investment will make.
- **Your business or organisation's ability to deliver.** This includes your governance structures, sectors your business or organisation operates in, key achievements and capabilities. Make sure you include details of any similar projects you have delivered in the past because this will show that you have the capability to deliver this project.
- **Your project management approach.** This includes how your business or organisation is currently governed and how you will manage the project, such as your project leader and project team (including roles and responsibilities) and the processes you have in place to manage projects (such as administration, accounting, schedule management, cost management).

The documents you need to provide will depend on the size and the complexity of the project. It will include things like financial statements, quotes, and insurance certificates. For large and complex projects, CLC will expect more detail and information, such as a business plan, strategic plan, project management plans, and profit and loss forecasts.



What is the process for CLC Stimulus funding?

1. Expression of interest

- CLC identifies projects in discussion with constituents

OR

- Proponents submit an expression of interest (EOI) with basic information about themselves, the proposed project, and financial statements for 3 financial years.

2. Eligibility assessment

- CLC assesses whether the proponent and the proposed project are eligible.
- If you are eligible, CLC will ask you to submit a proposal form and supporting documents.
- If you are not eligible, CLC may confirm this or ask for further information.

3. Proposals

- CLC checks that the proposal is complete and that the right documents are attached.
- CLC will contact you if they need more information.

4. Proposal assessment

- CLC Economic Participation Unit (EPU) assesses the proposal using the assessment criteria and makes recommendations.

5. Decision

- EPU provides recommendations to the CLC GM and CLC CEO for decision.
- CLC notifies the proponent of the outcome.

6. Contract

- CLC drafts the contract for the project, including details of timing for payments and reporting requirements.

Can CLC provide support with proposals?

CLC can provide advice about whether you and your project are eligible. We cannot help applicants to write proposals or supporting documents, but can help to refer you to someone who can.

CLC can also cover the costs of preparing profit and loss forecasts if assistance is required.

Managing expectations

There is a lot of interest in the Stimulus funding and CLC is receiving a large number of requests. We will respond to these requests as soon as we can. We also recognise that the need for Stimulus funding is likely to be higher than the funds available. CLC is doing its best to identify projects which will create maximum benefit for CLC constituents.

Contact information

For information about whether you and your project are eligible, please email aba.stimulus@clc.org.au or call the Economic Participation Unit on **(08) 8951 0667**.