



ACT ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

2020-21

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Publication No 18/1647

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	ABOUT THE 2020-21 ACT ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM	2
3	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	4
4	ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS	5
5	AVAILABLE FUNDING	6
6	PAYMENTS	7
7	REPORTING AND ACQUITTAL OF FUNDS	8
8	EVALUATION CRITERIA	8
9	EVALUATION PROCESS	10
10	APPLICATION PROCESS AND KEY DATES	11
11	COMPLAINTS PROCESS	12

1 INTRODUCTION

The ACT Government is committed to empowering all Canberrans with the knowledge and skills they need to lead rewarding lives and contribute to the community. The ACT Adult Community Education (ACE) Grants Program supports this commitment by funding projects that enable all Canberrans to participate in work and lifelong learning opportunities.

ACE learning activities are delivered in welcoming, informal, community-based settings. The non-threatening, inclusive adult environment makes ACE an attractive option for those seeking to develop foundation skills critical for effective vocational education and training (VET) and labour market participation. ACE activities support participants to gain the skills and confidence they need to thrive in formal VET settings—such as traineeships, apprenticeships or other work-related training—and for successful entry into the workplace.

The online application process for the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program will open on 14 December 2020 and close at 5:00 pm on 19 February 2021.

The ACT ACE Grants Program is an ACT Government initiative.

2 ABOUT THE 2020-21 ACT ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The purpose of the ACT ACE Grants Program is to deliver quality foundation skills training in accessible and inclusive community settings, to support Canberrans experiencing barriers to learning, training and work to meet their needs and aspirations.

OBJECTIVES

The 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program is seeking applications from eligible organisations for projects that:

- > offer highly supportive pathways into further training and work
- > engage Canberrans with low levels of educational attainment and/or who experience social, health and/or economic barriers to thriving in learning, training and work
- > develop the employability and core language, literacy, numeracy, learning, and digital technology skills of adult learners
- > tailor training provision to the needs of a target cohort/s and local labour market needs for skilled workers
- > implement outcomes-focused project delivery, assessment and reporting.

TARGETED COHORTS

The 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program is designed to support:

- > the unemployed, underemployed or people not in the labour force
- > youth at risk (17-24 years)
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- > people living with disability
- > parents returning to the workforce
- > people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- > mature-aged people (45 years or older)
- > workers displaced due to industry restructures
- > veterans seeking to enter the civilian workforce
- > carers
- > people without post-school qualifications.

OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes from the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program projects are:

- > increased participation in work-related foundation skills training by adult learners from targeted cohorts
- > participants transitioning to further training, employment or volunteering after engaging in an ACE project.

3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Any organisation seeking a 2020-21 ACE Grant must demonstrate that it meets all the following criteria:

- > is not-for-profit
- > has a physical presence in the ACT
- > has an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- > has a minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance
- > has volunteer workers insurance cover if volunteers are engaged by the applicant
- > has worker's compensation insurance.

Eligible ACE participants are:

- > 17 years or older; and
- > an Australian or New Zealand citizen; or
- > a holder of a permanent residence visa; or
- > a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker holding a temporary or bridging visa providing work and/or study rights.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE?

- > Commercial organisations or RTOs that are for private profit.
- > TAFEs.
- > Universities.
- > Organisations that are not registered as a business in the ACT or whose principal place of operations is not in the ACT.
- > State or Federal government agencies.

Auspecting arrangements (for accredited training delivery)

- > An ACE Provider (who is not a not-for-profit RTO) can deliver accredited training through an auspecting arrangement with an RTO. The RTO may be a not-for-profit RTO, a for-profit private RTO or a TAFE.
- > The training and assessment is delivered by the RTO. The RTO issues the statement of attainment to participants and is responsible for the training and assessment meeting the national registration requirements of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).
- > The ACE provider can only enter into an auspice training arrangement with an RTO that has the relevant Training Package on their scope of registration to deliver in the ACT.

4 ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Successful applicants must:

- > enter into a Deed of Grant with the ACT Government which outlines the requirements of the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program and the conditions under which the funding is awarded
- > report project outcomes and acquit the grant funding as outlined in Section 7 – Reporting and Acquittal of Funds
- > hold and keep current for the grant period, all insurance coverage required by law, including, but not limited to:
 - workers compensation insurance
 - public liability insurance for \$10 million or more per claim, including voluntary workers insurance cover if volunteers are engaged by the applicant
- > include an acknowledgement of the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program as an ACT Government initiative on all publicity relating to the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program, including publications, promotional and advertising materials, public announcements and activities or any products or processes developed as a result of these guidelines
- > participate in publicity opportunities, including assisting in writing short articles on the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program and achievements for local and national newsletters and reports
- > collect and retain information (for example, a range of demographic information), as specified in the Deed of Grant.

Skills Canberra may visit providers funded under the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program for the purpose of observation and information gathering.

5 AVAILABLE FUNDING

A total of \$188,150 (GST incl.) is available in 2020-21. Funding is available for individual and joint projects. Projects may:

- > deliver only non-accredited foundation skills modules
- > deliver a combination of non-accredited foundation skills modules and accredited FSK units of competency
- > combine general FSK and entry-level industry-specific competencies.

Note: Any one organisation will not be funded for more than two projects.

Individual projects

Up to \$50,000 (GST incl.) will be available for individual two-year projects. Individual projects can deliver non-accredited training, accredited training, or a combination of both (*see below for more information*).

Joint projects

Up to \$100,000 (GST incl.) will be available for joint two-year projects. Joint projects can deliver non-accredited training, accredited training, or a combination of both.

Joint projects are defined as two or more ACE providers partnering to deliver an ACE project.

Applications for joint projects have the following additional conditions:

- > all project partners must be eligible ACE providers
- > each project partner must be able to clearly articulate their role in the project
- > each project partner must be listed and sign the application form to acknowledge their role and responsibilities in the delivery of the project
- > only one organisation can be identified as the lead organisation
- > the lead organisation is responsible for all legal requirements outlined in the Deed of Grant
- > grant funds will only be paid to the lead organisation (organisations that apply for joint applications should have an agreement in place between all partners prior to the commencement of the project).

Projects delivering non-accredited training

Funding for non-accredited training is based on approximately \$600 per participant per year.

Non-accredited training must be designed to prepare individuals for successful entry into further training and/or employment. Non-accredited training should focus on general competencies, also called foundation skills. Foundation skills refers to employability/work-readyskills, work experience, and learning, reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy, digital technology, problem solving and teamwork capabilities.

Projects offering non-accredited modules must use the FSK Training Package as a guiding framework and demonstrate a natural progression (pathway) from ACE non-accredited modules to accredited units of competency.

FSK Training Package units of competency are published on training.gov.au. This information will be useful when designing non-accredited modules that map to an accredited FSK unit.

Projects delivering accredited training

Funding for accredited training is based on approximately \$1,000 per participant per year.

Accredited projects can deliver and assess training using any relevant units from the FSK Training Package and/or industry-specific units from Certificate I, II or III level qualifications.

The 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program provides the opportunity for ACE providers to select combinations of units that will enable learners to build the specific foundation skills required to achieve vocational competency.

The aim is to prepare individuals for successful entry into further training and/or employment (such as an apprenticeship or traineeship) through short courses which may combine general and industry-specific competencies. ACE projects delivering accredited training can include work experience to support the ACE participant to gain employment on completion.

THE FOLLOWING WILL NOT BE FUNDED

- > Applicants' existing services unless the applicant can demonstrate additional outcomes.
- > Duplicative services that are already being delivered in the ACT.¹
- > Purchasing or leasing of real estate.
- > Capital equipment to assist with the ongoing operation of the organisation.
- > Retrospective costs – projects or activities which are already underway or have been completed.
- > Staff travel and accommodation expenses.
- > Expenses incurred prior to signing the Deed of Grant.

6 PAYMENTS

A payment schedule will be negotiated between the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate and successful funding recipients. Payment will be made available in accordance with the agreed payment schedule and conditions in the Deed of Grant.

¹ The delivery of full qualifications would be considered duplicative as this is funded under other VET programs, such as Skilled Capital and Australian Apprenticeships. Skill Sets that are funded under the Skilled Capital Program would also be considered duplicative.

7 REPORTING AND ACQUITTAL OF FUNDS

Successful applicants must expend the approved funds on the delivery of the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program funded activity by the end of the project period, as specified in the Deed of Grant. The recipient must complete and submit the following reports to Skills Canberra via skills.projects@act.gov.au:

- > half-yearly progress reports in the format stated in the Deed of Grant
- > financial acquittal report in accordance with the due date/s and format specified in the Deed of Grant.

8 EVALUATION CRITERIA

To select the applications that best meet the objectives and requirements of the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program and offer the best value for money, applications will be assessed against the following evaluation criteria.

Assessable Criteria	Weighting
1. Organisational effectiveness (overall weighting = 40%)	
Criterion 1a: Community engagement	
The applicant organisation/s effectively engages with and responds to its community or community of interest.	10%
Criterion 1b: Adult community education focus	
The applicant organisation/s clearly identifies that adult community education is one of its key functions.	10%
Criterion 1c: Capacity	
The applicant organisation/s demonstrate the capacity to deliver quality adult education programs and services to meet the learning needs of the local community or a community of interest.	10%
Criterion 1d: Past performance	
The past performance of the applicant organisation/s as an ACE Provider (where relevant) will be considered.	10%
Applicants new to the ACT ACE Program should provide evidence of past performance in delivering similar projects.	

2. Activity effectiveness (overall weighting = 60%)

Criterion 2a: Target cohort/s

Each target cohort is clearly identified and strategies to attract and retain participants are well explained. 15%

Criterion 2b: Training and Learning Plan

The learning objectives, content, approach and methodologies are clearly defined and there is strong evidence that the proposed course will deliver quality adult education outcomes. 25%

Criterion 2c: Relationships and networks

The applicant organisation has effective relationships and networks with other organisations who can support the project and the transition of participants into further training and/or employment. 15%

Criterion 2d: Risk management

Potential and known risks are identified and strategies have been provided to mitigate risk. 5%

Non-Weighted Assessable Criteria

Criterion 3: Value for money²

Clearly demonstrates value for money is a likely outcome of the proposed project.

² Proposals should indicate any financial and/or in-kind contributions the applicant organisation can make towards the project. Financial and/or in-kind contributions from the applicant organisation are not mandatory. However evidence about how the proposed project design will leverage the applicant organisation's existing resources will strengthen assessment against the relevant criteria.

9 EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process will include the following steps:

Compliance check

Each application will be checked to ensure it:

- > meets the eligibility criteria (see Section 3)
- > proposes new initiatives and does not seek funds to support applicant's existing services unless the applicant can demonstrate additional outcomes
- > will not be duplicative of ongoing projects/initiatives
- > includes a financial proposal with itemised budget for the entire duration of the project
- > provides all information required by the application format.

In the instance of an incomplete application, Skills Canberra will contact the applicant requesting the required information be provided within two working days. Applications that pass the Compliance Check will be shortlisted for assessment by the Evaluation Panel.

Assessment by Evaluation Panel

Applications will only progress for assessment by the Evaluation Panel if they pass the Compliance Check. The Evaluation Panel will assess the written applications against the evaluation criteria and the value for money each application offers.

The Evaluation Panel will be comprised of government officials, and may include industry experts, peak bodies or representatives provided the organisation or the individual does not have a conflict of interest. The Evaluation Panel members will be required to sign a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Undertaking form and other disclosure documents.

A final selection will be made based on applicants' ability to soundly demonstrate the suitability of their application to meet the requirements of the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program. The Evaluation Panel may seek clarification from applicants and consider references before recommending their selections.

The Evaluation Panel will provide their recommendations to the ACT Government delegate for the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program fund who will make the final decision about which projects will receive grants.

10 APPLICATION PROCESS AND KEY DATES

Applications must be submitted via the Smarty Grants online application process. The Smarty Grants weblink is: <https://CMTEDD.smartygrants.com.au/2020-21ACE>

The Smarty Grants weblink will be available from 14 December 2020 and will remain open until 5:00 pm on 19 February 2021.

The details in the application must be complete and correct at the time of submission. No additional documents or attachments will be considered by the Evaluation Panel, unless requested by Skills Canberra or the Evaluation Panel. Applicants will be provided with a receipt at the time of lodgement.

Organisations awarded grants will be published on the Skills Canberra website (www.skills.act.gov.au/grants) following notification and the execution of the Deed of Grant. Grant recipients should not publish any announcement of their success prior to Skills Canberra's publication of the list of grant recipients.

Unsuccessful applicants may request verbal feedback on applications from the Directorate. Requests for feedback must be submitted in writing to skills.projects@act.gov.au and received by Skills Canberra no later than 30 April 2021.

Milestones	Dates
Application process opens	14 December 2020
Submission closing date	19 February 2021
Notification of funding outcome	30 March 2021
Contract negotiation	31 March 2021 - 14 April 2021
Project commencement	From April 2021
Project completion	Up to 30 June 2023

11 COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Grievances or complaints relating to the 2020-21 ACT ACE Grants Program may be lodged via the Directorate's Complaints Handling Process. The complaint/appeal must be made in writing and can be emailed to CMTEDDCorporate@act.gov.au. Complaints/appeal must be lodged within five working days of the announcement of the successful ACE Grant recipients. The Delegate will review the complaint/appeal within 15 calendar days and inform the applicant of the final decision. This decision will be final and cannot be challenged.