Frequently Asked Questions

Essential Grants Program

1. **Am I eligible to apply for the Essential Grants Program?**

   The Essential Grants Program is open to not-for-profit organisations delivering benefits to local communities where Essential Energy has a presence. This includes community groups and service providers, registered charities, and other not-for-profit organisations.

   Eligible organisations must be able to answer 'yes' to the questions below:

   a. Are you a not-for-profit organisation, charity or community group?

   b. Will your project provide a lasting and tangible benefit to the community in which you operate?

   c. Is your organisation located, or does your organisation deliver services, within the Essential Energy regional footprint (see https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/about-us/our-network-area).?

   Additionally, applicants must satisfy clauses 4b and 4c of the Terms and Conditions. Failure to satisfy these clauses would make an Applicant ineligible.

2. **How much money can my organisation apply for?**

   Grants of up to $15,000 (including GST) are available through the Essential Grants Program.

   If your project costs exceed this amount, you are still able to apply – you will simply need to demonstrate in your application how you plan to fund the remainder of the project expenditure needed to ensure you can successfully deliver your project.

3. **Can my organisation apply for a smaller amount?**

   Organisations are encouraged to apply for any amount between $500 and $15,000 through the program.

4. **If I'm successful, will I receive the full amount that I've requested?**

   Essential Energy reserves the right to partially fund projects and specify where funds must be directed. If the program receives a significant number of applications, we may choose to offer successful applicants less than the full amount requested to support a broad set of projects.

5. **Do I need to provide quotes to support my application?**

   We require evidence of costs (at least one quote or other proof of the project costs) as part of each grant application.

6. **My application includes operational costs such as printing. Does the Essential Grants Program cover these costs?**

   No. Operational expenses are not considered eligible for funding from the Essential Grants Program. If you believe operational costs form an important part of your project, include these costs as part of your application with an explanation of why they should be considered.

   Essential Energy reserves the right to partially fund your project and specify where funds must be directed.

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7. **My organisation has more than one project that needs funding – can we lodge more than one application in a round?**

   No. Each Applicant can only submit one application in each round of the Essential Grants Program.

8. **Can a project receive funding more than once?**

   No. If an application is successful and receives Essential Grants Program funding, it will not be eligible for funding in future grant rounds for the same project.

9. **Does our location alter our application eligibility?**

   Yes. As part of the Essential Grants Program eligibility criteria, projects that receive funding must directly benefit communities located in the Essential Energy footprint (see https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/about-us/our-network-area).

10. **My application for Essential Grants has been completed – do I need to do anything further at this stage?**

    You must be contactable and available during the period after the closing date. As part of the screening process for all applications, an Essential Energy representative may contact your organisation by phone or email.

    To ensure your application can progress smoothly, please ensure all contact details supplied to Essential Energy are correct.

    If Essential Energy is not able to contact your organisation for more information or answers to questions, your application may not progress through the screening process.

11. **When will Essential Energy contact me about whether my application has been approved?**

    All applicants will be notified via email of the outcome of their application approximately six weeks after the funding round closing date.

    Sometimes applications can take longer to process. If you have critical dates for securing funding, please tell us this in your application and we will do our best to assist you, but we cannot provide any assurances or guarantees.

12. **If my application is approved, when will my organisation receive its funding?**

    After receiving notification that their grant application is successful, applicants should receive grant funds within approximately 30 business days of funding acceptance and providing an invoice or payment details (any missing information will delay payment).

13. **Does the Essential Grants funding have to be spent in a specific timeframe?**

    Expenditure of funds received through the Essential Grants Program must be completed within six (6) months of the date of the grant, unless otherwise agreed in writing with Essential Energy.

    If grant funding is not expected to be spent in full within the timeframe specified by Essential Energy, you may request an extension to the timeframe in writing. If an extension to the timeframe is not granted, you must spend the funds within this time, or you will be asked to refund any amount not used.

14. **What is SmartyGrants?**

Essential Energy is utilising the SmartyGrants Platform, to facilitate the lodgement and management of applications. SmartyGrants is run by a not-for-profit organisation in Australia and provides an online platform where applicants can apply and upload all necessary documents, plus follow the progress of their application. You can find out more about SmartyGrants by visiting their website www.Smartygrants.com.au.

15. Can I submit a paper-based application?

This is an online program. Applications for the program must be submitted via the SmartyGrants Platform. Paper-based applications will not be accepted. Contact Essential Energy at sustainability@essentialenergy.com.au if you are having issues submitting an application.

16. How does Essential Energy and SmartyGrants handle my personal information?

Essential Energy is using a third-party supplier (SmartyGrants) to process grant applications. Please ensure you take the time to read the Privacy Policy available on the SmartyGrants page to understand how your personal information will be managed.