

South East Queensland (SEQ) – Liveability Fund

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Eligible applicants are encouraged to read the Applicant Guidelines and accompanying FAQ prior to applying for funding under the SEQ City Deal – Liveability Fund.

For grant application support and general program information, please contact the SEQ City Deal team at SEQLiveabilityFund@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au.

What is the SEQ Liveability Fund (the Fund)?

The South East Queensland (SEQ) Liveability Fund is a SEQ City Deal initiative to invest in community infrastructure, public spaces and environmental infrastructure, which will deliver a more liveable SEQ and leave a legacy for local communities.

What is the application process?

Projects will be approved following a two-stage application and assessment process, which will consist of an Expression of Interest (EOI) and then a Detailed Application (for successfully shortlisted projects).

Applicants are required to submit their EOI via the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning's (the Department) online grants system, SmartyGrants.

How will EOIs be assessed?

The focus of assessment at the EOI stage is to confirm:

- the eligibility of both the applicant and the project
- the alignment of the project against the Fund's objectives. Projects must align to at least one of the first three objectives outlined in the Applicant Guidelines:
 - Improve access to quality public open spaces and the natural environment.
 - Improve access to Community Infrastructure that promotes health and wellbeing, belonging or cultural diversity; and
 - Deliver Community Infrastructure that complements new housing supply or urban renewal.

Recommended projects will be considered by the SEQ City Deal Coordination and Implementation Committee and the SEQ City Deal Executive Board and approved by the SEQ City Deal Leadership Group.

When will outcomes of the EOI stage be known?

It is expected the assessment and approval process will be completed in December 2023, with applicants being notified in writing of the outcome of their EOI. At that time successful EOIs will progress to the Detailed Application, which will open in January 2024.

What happens if my EOI is ineligible or unsuccessful?

If an EOI is considered either ineligible or not recommended to progress to the Detailed Application stage, then the SEQ City Deals team (SEQLiveabilityFund@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au) will work with applicants to ensure the full funding allocation is utilised, including ability to submit new EOIs.

What are eligible project costs?

Approved funding may only be applied towards eligible project costs.

Any project costs incurred before the release of the Guidelines will be the applicant's responsibility and cannot be claimed through the Fund as eligible project costs (for approved projects).

Applicants will be responsible for all ineligible project costs. Ineligible project costs are not considered part of the applicant's co-contribution, and any ineligible project costs are in addition to the applicant's minimum co-contribution.

Can projects currently underway be funded under the Fund?

No. A project must either be a new infrastructure project, or a new stage or independent component of an existing infrastructure project. The project cannot have commenced construction.

When do projects need to be completed by?

Your application must demonstrate that the project can be completed by 30 June 2027.

Following project completion, applicants will be required to submit a Project Completion Report to acquit the project.

Will successful applicants have to contribute financially towards their project/s?

Eligible applicants have been allocated to one of three funding streams that determine:

- the ratio of funding available from the Australian and Queensland Governments (in total and per project);
- the ratio of the applicant's required financial co-contribution; and
- the minimum Estimated Total Project Cost per Application.

If the applicant's co-contribution is less than the identified minimum co-contribution, as outlined in the Applicant Guidelines, then the Australian and Queensland Government contributions will be in proportion in accordance with the applicant's co-contribution.

Applications may include third-party funding, including additional funding from other Australian and Queensland Government sources. This additional funding cannot be used to replace the applicant's financial contribution.

Can a single application be submitted for multiple project proposals?

No, applicants seeking funding for multiple projects must submit a separate EOI for each project.

The total funding being sought across all EOIs must not exceed the total financial contributions from the Australian and Queensland Governments (see Applicant Guidelines for funding totals from the Australian and Queensland Governments).

The funding ratio of each applicant's co-contribution is set out in Applicant Guidelines and must be met in each EOI.

Can I enter into a partnership arrangement?

Eligible applicants may collaborate with other entities (whether eligible or ineligible entities) to deliver a project. In such circumstances, one eligible applicant must submit the EOI and act as the project lead. If the project is approved for funding, the project lead will be responsible for entering into a Project Funding Agreement with the Queensland Government and for delivery of the project.

If multiple eligible applicants are involved in a single EOI, the financial co-contributions of eligible applicants other than the project lead will not be regarded as contributing to the minimum financial contribution the applicant is required to make towards the project.

If an eligible applicant enters into a partnership arrangement for a project, a formal written agreement must be in place between all parties before the EOI is submitted. This should include details of the partnering arrangements provided as part of the EOI.

If successful, how will the funding arrangement be formalised?

Successful applicants will be required to execute a Project Funding Schedule (PFS) under their Head Funding Agreement with the Queensland Government, and this will constitute the Project Funding Agreement. The Project Funding Schedule will set out the arrangements for funding payments according to a milestone schedule.

Can council submit a project with multiple sites as part of a wider program of works?

SmartyGrants allows councils to identify multiple locations if a project is across multiple sites e.g. an LED lighting project. Council can click on the *Add More* button for each location under Section 7 (Project Location) of the EOI form.

If a project has not obtained all necessary approval and permissions e.g. development approvals, Native Title, landowner permission then how do councils demonstrate approvals and/or permissions are being progressed?

Councils can provide details of the project's necessary approvals/permissions under questions 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 of the EOI form. This is where you can outline the details for any approvals required.

Would a project be considered eligible where the design and construction of the project e.g. new aquatic centre is to be funded under the Liveability Fund but for a commercial operator to be responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the asset?

For a project of this nature council will need to clearly articulate the expected leasing arrangements between them and the commercial operator. It is expected that any council will continue to retain ownership of the asset and have responsibility for things such as structural maintenance, asset failure/renewal and future upgrades.

What level of community engagement is required for proposed projects?

The Applicant Guidelines stipulate councils need to provide evidence of community consultation/engagement at the Detailed Application stage only. Demonstration of community consultation/engagement is not required for EOIs.

For projects which will commence after all their approval it is considered reasonable that evidence of community consultation/engagement will not be required at the Detailed Application stage. Council could however provide evidence of how the proposed projects align with any strategic priorities, corporate plans etc., especially if the outcomes aim to improve community well-being/liveability.

What do councils need to provide to demonstrate their financial contribution has been approved?

For the EOI and Detailed Application stage councils do not need to provide evidence of their financial co-contribution. Approved projects however will be conditional of satisfactory confirmation of council's financial co-contribution.

For approved projects, council's financial co-contribution will be detailed in a Project Funding Schedule, which once executed, will form the project funding agreement. Approved project funding will be dependent on council's financial co-contribution meeting the agreed funding ratio between the Australian Government (AG), Queensland Government (QG) and Local Government e.g., 1:1:1 funding ratio. If council's financial co-contribution is less than the identified minimum co-contribution, then AG and QG co-contributions will be in proportion to council's financial co-contribution.