

VOLUNTEER MUSEUM GRANT PROGRAM

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS
2025 GUIDELINES

Amount Available: \$2,500 - \$7,500
Closing Date: Sunday, 7 September 2025

Supported by the



This is a Create NSW devolved funding program, administered by Museums & Galleries NSW on behalf of the NSW Government

Purpose of program

The Volunteer Museum Grant Program provides assistance to volunteer-initiated community and Aboriginal cultural spaces (such as cultural centres and Keeping Places) with collections and displays in NSW.

This is a Create NSW devolved funding program, administered by Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) on behalf of the NSW Government. The program provides access to funding for collection-focused projects, in addition to providing experience in the grant application process.

Project Development Grants allow community museums and Aboriginal cultural spaces to carry out projects relating to museum management, collections or community/visitor engagement that have mid to long term outcomes.

These grants can also provide museums and Aboriginal cultural spaces with the chance to work productively with an appropriate consultant as a skill development opportunity.

There are no set categories for funding, and applications for a broad range of projects will be considered.

Amount available

The amount that can be applied for under this program is a minimum of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$7,500 (GST exclusive).

All Volunteer Museum Grants are awarded free of GST. If the applicant is registered for GST M&G NSW will pay that component.

If the applicant is not registered for GST they may request that the GST component be added to the grant. See the Important Things to Remember section for more details.

Timeframe

There is one round of Project Development Grants offered annually. No late applications will be accepted.

If you must post your application, it must be postmarked on or before Sunday, 7 September 2025. Projects cannot commence before mid-December 2025 and must be completed no later than 31 December 2026. Acquittal reports are due by 28 February 2027.

Note: A maximum of one Project Development Grant **or** one Small Grant can be awarded to each organisation per year.

Staff contact

Applicants must contact M&G NSW to discuss their project. Staff members are on hand to provide advice on writing grant applications, developing a project, budgeting and sourcing appropriate consultants. First-time applicants and those unfamiliar with grant-writing are encouraged to get in contact for detailed and ongoing assistance.

Enquiries can be directed to: Alice Norwood Museum Coordinator

phone: (02) 56632338
free call: 1800 114 311 (regional only)
email: alicen@mgnsw.org.au

Eligibility criteria

To apply for Project Development Grants, an organisation must:

- Be incorporated (or provide the details of an auspicing body that is incorporated, such as a local council) OR provide evidence of appropriate alternative governance structures (eg. S355 Committee, Trust, Company limited by guarantee, Local government authority, etc.)
- Be not-for-profit
- Be an established museum or Aboriginal cultural space with a displayed collection (not an archive or historical society without a museum function)
- Be regularly open to the public (i.e. not open by appointment only)
- Have no more than the equivalent of two full-time paid positions
- Have a current Strategic Plan, or be requesting funds in this application to develop such a plan
- Have a Collection Policy
- Have discussed their application with an M&G NSW team member
- Have a volunteer from the applying organisation as the contact person for the application
- Agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the grant
- Not apply for funding if they have also applied for, or received, Create NSW funding for the same activity
- Have acquitted all previously awarded Volunteer Museum grants (excepting current Leg Ups)
- Ensure that the project meets all current NSW Health Covid Safe Guidelines

Note: Museums that are currently supported by a Museum Advisor through M&G NSW's Museum Advisor Program must have a signed supporting letter from their Museum Advisor.

Museums & Galleries of NSW prefer grant applications to be completed via SmartyGrants.

If you are unable to complete via SmartyGrants, please email your application and supporting documentation on, or before the closing date to: alicen@mgnsw.org.au

If you are unable to email the supporting documentation you must inform M&G NSW and send the package to:

Volunteer Museum Grant Program
Museums & Galleries of NSW
Level 1, The Arts Exchange
10 Hickson Rd
The Rocks NSW 2000

Assessment criteria

Primary Criteria

The selection process takes into consideration whether:

- The project aligns with a Strategic Plan to address mid to long term outcomes for the museum or Aboriginal cultural space
- The project satisfies best museum practice
- The project incorporates capacity building for the museum or Aboriginal cultural space's workers or volunteers, such as skill development or knowledge transfer
- The museum or Aboriginal cultural space has a current and adequate Collection Policy
- Whether the application demonstrates the museum or Aboriginal cultural space has the capacity and resources (both financial and human resources) to undertake the project

Secondary Criteria

- The project builds on previous participation in NSW museum development programs (e.g. Standards Program, Museum Advisor Program, internships at state/federal institutions, etc.)
- Collaborative projects involving two or more museums, Aboriginal cultural spaces, and/or other community organisations. In the case of fully collaborative applications, all contributing organisations should be named, however one should be identified as the lead organisation or project manager.
- The level of community access to the organisation and its collection (opening hours, website etc.)
- The financial situation of the applying organisation (i.e. is the organisation more in need of assistance than others)

Priority areas

Priority is given to:

- Collection documentation projects including cataloguing, data entry and preparing statements of significance for collection items
- Projects that develop the capacity for cultural diversity within the organisation, particularly projects which involve partnership with/between one or more Aboriginal organisations.

Project Development Grants will fund

Various mid to long term strategic projects, such as (but not limited) to the following:

- Strategic planning and policy development - working with a consultant on elements of a strategic plan, business plan or policy development (e.g. strategic planning and policies concerning succession, disaster preparedness, interpretation, collections, access, cultural diversity, audience development, volunteers)
- Collection and significance assessments – working with a consultant to identify the themes, scope, and significance of a collection or objects
- Preservation needs assessments and conservation - working with a consultant to survey collections and their environments, and conduct conservation work if required
- Education and public programs - collaboration with educational organisations to develop public programs, education packages, research, and collection documentation projects
- Exhibition development – development of travelling exhibitions, exhibitions in-house, hosting a travelling exhibition or developing a virtual exhibition.
- Projects relating to Aboriginal and/or culturally diverse communities – projects that develop partnerships with/between Aboriginal or culturally diverse communities and address issues of access and the management of relevant collections

For specific examples of previously funded applications, visit the [M&G NSW Project Development Grants webpage](#). Lists of previous recipients are available for download.

Project Development Grants will not fund

- Retrospective projects or projects that have already started
- Capital works projects of any kind
- The purchase of office equipment of any kind including desks, chairs, computers or printers.

Please call M&G NSW staff for information on other funding sources available for these types of projects.

Application process

To apply, contact Museums & Galleries of NSW to discuss your project with a staff member and request a link to the SmartyGrants application form.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Museums Coordinator to receive grant-writing assistance whenever needed. Applicants may also pursue external grant-writing assistance. However, it must be clear that the museum volunteers have written the grant application, and that they have ownership over the project.

If your application specifically involves Aboriginal culture and heritage, you must supply evidence of consultation and support from the relevant communities. It is recommended you refer to Create NSW's [Aboriginal Arts and Culture Protocols](#).

It is the applicant's responsibility to complete and submit their application.

M&G NSW will acknowledge receipt of the application when it is formally submitted through SmartyGrants. **It is the applicant's responsibility to contact M&G NSW if this acknowledgement is not received.**

Important things to remember

- You may not start your project before the time stipulated in the Timeframe section of this document or before receiving confirmation of grant success by M&G NSW.
- If you are hiring a consultant please provide a letter of engagement or intent to be supplied by the consultant.
- In the Project Summary refer only to the activities, purchases or consultant that the program is being asked to fund. This section is not to be used to express any other aspect of the project or the organisation's activities; you may do so in the Project Description.
- The budget must be expressed in GST exclusive amounts.
- A grant application from an unregistered organisation cannot be made unless the application is willing to proceed without GST being awarded.
- You must attach a quote for each dollar being applied for. Any items included in the budget that do not have an accompanying quote will not be funded. No rounding up will occur. You will be asked to resubmit your application if there are multiple issues with your budget.
- You must supply both your Financial Report and your Bank Statements.
- Collection Policies and Strategic Plans are an important part of the assessment process for Project Development Grants so it is important to check that previously submitted current documents are submitted or on file with M&G NSW. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check this. M&G NSW do not undertake to keep an archive of museum documentation. If in doubt, simply resend the documents with each application.
- M&G NSW is not able to return any submitted supporting documentation.
- If you have any queries into the progress of your application, please contact M&G NSW.
- If emailing application:
 - Submit your application form and project description as a searchable PDF or Word document. Do not send scanned application forms. If you submit a scanned copy of a typed application form or project description you will be asked to resubmit. Scans of supporting documents are accepted.
 - Please submit your application and supporting documents as separate attachments to an email.
 - The maximum file size that can be received is 8MB. You may submit your application over several emails as long as you make clear how many emails are to be expected.

Assessment process

Once your application has been confirmed to be eligible, it will be assessed by the Volunteer Museum Grant Program Assessment Panel consisting of:

- Two members of M&G NSW's Panel of Peers. For further information on the Panel, please see M&G NSW's website www.mgnsw.org.au
- One independent member drawn from those working in a support capacity with volunteer museums
- An appropriate senior member of M&G NSW staff.

The decisions of the Volunteer Museum Grant Assessment Panel are final. A new panel is convened for each round of the Volunteer Museum Grant Program.

Announcements to applicants cannot be made until approval is received from Create NSW. It is anticipated that the turnaround time will be approximately 12 weeks after the Assessment Panel has met. The results of the assessment are communicated by email after this period. Please allow at least twelve weeks from the closing date before making enquiries.

M&G NSW will notify applicants of their outcome by email. Funds will not be available until the relevant grant acceptance documentation is completed.

Terms and conditions

Applicants should be mindful of the following terms and conditions associated with accepting a Volunteer Museum Grant. These include:

- All Volunteer Museum Grants are awarded free of GST. If the applicant is registered for GST M&G NSW will pay that component.
- A maximum of one Small Grant OR one Project Development Grant can be awarded to each organisation each year.
- If the applicant is not registered for GST they may request that the GST component be added to the grant. This decision will be made by M&G NSW staff after the assessment process and will be based on the financial documentation and budget (that clearly identifies the GST inclusive and exclusive cost of the project) provided in the application and on the available funds. The whole or a component of the GST may be awarded. A grant application from an unregistered organisation cannot be made unless the application is willing to proceed without GST being awarded.
- All awarded monies must be expended as per the approved application. A variation in the project must be reported to M&G NSW via email for approval.
- Unused monies must be reported to M&G NSW and returned in the proper manner (please do not send in a cheque before discussing the matter with M&G NSW).
- Successful applicants will be required to provide an acquittal report (see the Timeframe section for due dates). The acquittal report includes a one-page report to be written by the applicant on an overview of the project, and the resulting benefits to the museum, and/or the individuals involved in the project. Photographs, media clippings and brochures should be included in the acquittal documentation where available. M&G NSW may use all or parts of this report in marketing material for the Volunteer Museum Grant Program.
- M&G NSW and the NSW Government must be publicly acknowledged as supporting the project by using the appropriate logos and text acknowledgement on all printed and/or electronic material produced in relation to the funded activity. This includes publications, invitations, banners, websites and any printed or electronic material. Any products

developed as a result of the funded activity must also carry the M&G NSW and the NSW Government logos and acknowledgments.

- All acknowledgements that accompany the NSW Government logo must use the following wording: *This project is supported by Create NSW's Volunteer Museum Grant Program, a devolved funding program administered by Museums & Galleries of NSW on behalf of the NSW Government.*
- The logos and written acknowledgement should be placed in a position appropriate to the level of support. Logos and style-guides are available from the M&G NSW Information and Resources Officer on 02 9339 9900 or email comms@mgnsw.org.au.