

NSW Department of Education



# Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund (2023 – 2024)

## Program Guidelines

[education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au)



# 1. Program overview

The NSW Department of Education has established a Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund to support and encourage bold, innovative programs and/or initiatives that are created and offered by external providers, to be sourced by primary and secondary schools for the purposes of educating, informing or directly supporting individual students to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

The Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund will directly support student wellbeing outcomes and will build on the department's commitment to quality assure external student wellbeing programs to enhance the development and provision of high-quality external providers delivering evidence-based wellbeing programs/initiatives.

The Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund has two streams:

1. To provide one-off **capacity building funding** for providers of wellbeing programs/initiatives who are wanting to scale or deliver their wellbeing programs and/or initiatives in new areas or to new cohorts listed as a priority area (see below).
2. To support 'incubator' student wellbeing programs and/or initiatives by providing **seed funding** (via one-off grants) to providers to research, create, develop and test new approaches to supporting and addressing student wellbeing issues.

The objectives of the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund are to:

- **Support existing providers of wellbeing programs** to develop quality, evidence-based programs, become sustainable and provide ongoing offerings to students and schools
- **Encourage bold and innovative approaches** to addressing student mental health and wellbeing issues
- **Encourage authentic partnerships** between sector and schools
- **Build sector capacity and capability** to contribute to broader social and economic gains
- **Harvest new student wellbeing insights and evidence** to inform and guide NSW Government policies and programs
- **Improve the efficiency and responsiveness of schools** to meet individual student needs
- **Build an integrated framework of support** for students with schools, community and sector
- **Build an evidence-based relationship** between funding and student wellbeing outcomes.

Funding will be available to organisations that can support NSW schools and students, including cross-border organisations.

The allocation of a Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund grant does not imply an agreement to undertake evaluation and/or research within schools nor does it entail any guarantee schools will use the program or initiative that has received funding.

## 2. Priority areas

There are five **Priority Areas** for applications under the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund, embedding the wellbeing elements of belonging, resilience and behaviour, including:

- Primary school-aged students
- Students transitioning to Kindergarten and High School
- Students living in regional and remote areas
- Students from target cohorts, including First Nations students and culturally and linguistically diverse students; students with additional needs and/or disability; students from a migrant or refugee background; and female students
- Cyber health.

For the purposes of the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund the wellbeing elements are defined as follows:

- **Resilience** – A child or young person’s ability to withstand adversity, learn from their experiences and cope confidently with life’s challenges. The ability to ‘bounce back’ from a difficult situation.
- **Behaviour** – How a child or young person acts or conducts themselves in response to a stimulus or situation. It is a response to things that are happening internally (thoughts and feelings) and externally (the environment, including other people). Children and young people’s behaviours span a continuum, from positive, inclusive and respectful behaviours to complex, challenging and unsafe behaviours. To meet the needs of all students, programs are required across a multi-tiered continuum of care.
- **Sense of Belonging** – A child or young person’s perception of being accepted, valued and included in their school setting by their peers and others in their school.

Priority areas may be reviewed for the 2024 grants round.

# 3. Grant funding

**The Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund will be implemented through two grants rounds implemented over two calendar years (2023 and 2024). Successful applicants will be required to expend the funding within 18 months of grant allocation.**

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria, program objectives and priorities, application requirements and spending rules.

Eligible organisations can make an application against one of two funding grant levels through SmartyGrants:

- up to \$50,000 (ex GST)
- \$50,000 to \$200,000 (ex GST)

Funding will be provided as a one-off grant. Applications should not seek funding to support programs or initiatives with an expectation of ongoing funding.

Organisations may apply for a Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund grant for one or more programs or initiatives in each annual grant round (2023 and 2024). The following rules apply to applications in both grant rounds:

- Funding for capacity building grants is limited to one grant application only per program/initiative. That is, an application in the 2023 grant round OR an application in the 2024 grant round.
- An applicant receiving a seed funding grant in the 2023 grant round may apply for a capacity building grant in the 2024 grant round to extend the scope of the original program or initiative to other priority areas or locations.

Organisations are advised to choose to apply for a grant amount that best matches their proposal and ability to spend the grant. Partnerships are encouraged, however, one organisation will be the lead organisation for funding and reporting.

Funding cannot be used for the following resources and initiatives, and applications that propose the following are ineligible to receive funding:

- programs approved on the department's quality assured panel, unless to expand to focus areas (see priority areas)
- resources already funded by the department
- activities where the external provider is receiving funding through an existing alternative source
- activities that are centred around workforce capacity and capability, including professional learning activities.

The Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund is a competitive grants program. All eligible applications will be considered by an Assessment Panel and final decisions made by the Deputy Secretary, Learning Improvement, in the NSW Department of Education.

Application and reporting requirements increase in complexity with increasing grant amounts. Grants of between \$50,000 and \$200,000 are expected to focus on delivering significant evidence-based, quality programs with measurable impacts on student outcomes. Due to this, applications for grants of between \$50,000 and \$200,000 will be requested to provide more detailed information and will have correspondingly more detailed reporting requirements than the lower grant amounts.

## 4. Eligibility criteria

**Organisations must meet the following eligibility criteria before submitting a grant application:**

- be an incorporated charity or not-for-profit entity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, NSW Fair Trading or other equivalent regulatory bodies;  
*or*  
be a registered business with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and classed as a small business under the ATOs definition (annual turnover of \$10 million or less)
- demonstrate commitment to Child Safe standards<sup>1</sup>
- provide or intends to provide student wellbeing related programs, services or initiatives in NSW public schools (this does not exclude organisations that are located outside NSW borders).

<sup>1</sup>[https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g\\_CSS\\_GuidetotheStandards.pdf](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf)

## 5. How to apply

All applications to the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund must be made using the SmartyGrants online grants management system and in accordance with these Guidelines [studentwellbeing.smartygrants.com.au](https://studentwellbeing.smartygrants.com.au). To apply, you will need to register for an account, or log in if you have an existing SmartyGrants account registration from another grant program.

Applications submitted via email, in the post, by hand or by fax will be deemed ineligible.

### Application dates:

- **Opens: Monday 20 February 2023 at 10:00 am AEDT**
- **Closes: Sunday 2 April 2023 at 11:59 pm AEDT**

The Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund SmartyGrants application system will close on Sunday 2 April 2023 at 11:59 pm AEDT. Applicants who do not submit an application before that time are encouraged to apply in the 2024 grant round, when it opens.

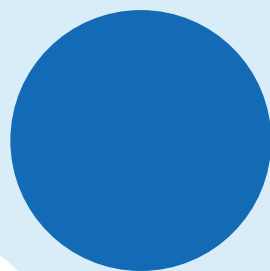
### All applications must:

- describe how the wellbeing program/initiative meets the objectives of the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund
- identify the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund funding stream and priority area/s the program/initiative will address
- detail the evidence-base to be used or developed in the development and delivery of the wellbeing program or program/initiative
- demonstrate organisational capacity and experience to manage the project and acquit funds by the due date, including any information regarding your organisation's expertise or experience delivering similar projects or outcomes, where the organisation is established, or demonstrate involvement of personnel with experience that details the expertise or experience delivering similar projects or outcomes to successfully undertake the proposed activity, where the organisation is a start-up or new entity

- provide a project budget (ex GST), including an itemised cost estimate incorporating all costs to be incurred by the organisation and any external partners in the development and/or delivery of the program. The cost estimate should include a transparent breakdown of staff, materials, cost estimates of internal resources and external contractors/suppliers. The cost estimate should also incorporate 'in kind' resources
- provide letters of support from any identified collaborating providers or organisations
- applications must be certified by an authorised officer; a person legally able to enter into agreements on behalf of the organisation.

**Applications should also demonstrate the organisation's financial capabilities by including:**

- financial statements and cash flow statements for the past two years (FY 2020/21 and 2021/22) and Independent Auditor's Report, where the organisation is established
- statement detailing the financial experience of the principal/s where the organisation is a start-up or new entity, as relevant to the proposed activity
- copies of current insurance details (public liability, professional indemnity and workers compensation) and certificates of currency
- ABN and/or ACN and details of governance structure of organisation
- information about financial ability to meet any on-going expenses associated with program development or delivery
- a specific project code or account for reporting purposes
- verified financial acquittals (at specified project intervals).



## 6. Assessment Criteria

All applications will undergo an eligibility assessment and if successful they will then be assessed using the following criteria:

- Aligned with the objectives of one or more of the priority areas for the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund
- Clearly articulates a student outcome-focused approach and how it will be measured
- Identifies at least one (1) NSW public school that will benefit from the program/initiative
- Identifies the evidence-base it will use or seeks to develop to improve student wellbeing (sense of belonging, resilience and behaviour)
- Demonstrates a collaborative approach, where partnerships are developed to deliver child-focused wellbeing outcomes
- Be technically feasible and can be delivered on time and on budget (ie projects must be completed within 18 months of funding)
- Details a credible means of monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the achievement of proposed student wellbeing outcomes
- Shows value for money.

In addition, for applications involving technology development (in addition to the above criteria):

- Provides information as to the technical skills required to successfully undertake the work, and the specific personnel proposed to do the work along with an outline of their demonstrated experience and competence to do the work
- Details how the technology will address inclusive design, data security, student safety, ongoing user support, and any technical integrations required



## 7. Notification of application status

All applicants will receive an email confirming that their application has been received.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified from early May 2023. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a feedback report outlining the reasons why they were not successful in this round.

## 8. Funding Agreement

A NSW funding agreement is required to be executed by the successful applicant and the NSW Department of Education before any grant can be paid.

The terms and conditions in that deed set out the understandings and expectations required of recipients of the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund.

Failure to execute the funding agreement before the end of the financial year of the respective grant round may result in the grant being withdrawn.

Once the funding agreement is executed the department will release the grant funding to the successful applicant as a one-off allocation, with first payment to be made by the end of June 2023.

# 9. Reporting requirements

**Reporting requirements will be proportionate to funding amount sought.**

- For funding allocations under \$50,000 (ex GST), a formal acquittal process is to be submitted within six (6) months of completion of the agreement, consisting of a statement of expenditure and a final report.
- For funding allocations between \$50,000 and \$200,000 (ex GST), a progress report is to be submitted after six (6) months and twelve (12) months of project implementation (depending on agreed project timeframe). A formal acquittal process is to be submitted within six (6) months of completion of the agreement, consisting of a statement of expenditure and a final report.

The final report will be required to include:

- Detail of the program or initiative, its outputs, outcomes and impact on students
- Evaluation of the delivery of the program or initiative
- Financial statement detailing expenditure of the grant funding against the approved project deliverables.

## 10. Contacts

For further information about the Student Wellbeing Innovation Fund please email:

**[StudentWellbeingGrants@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:StudentWellbeingGrants@det.nsw.edu.au)**



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We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay our respect to Country.