



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying for the 2021 Smart Giving round. These guidelines are designed to help schools submit a quality Expression of Interest (EOI) to seek project funding to support the great work you're already doing in your school.

Australian Schools Plus (Schools Plus) is a national not for profit that aims to close the education gap. Through our Smart Giving program, schools have an opportunity to design and deliver projects that explore innovative, creative and progressive approaches in education. To enable schools to do this, Schools Plus matches schools with donors to provide funding for projects which can bring about transformational change.

Applications open 9am Monday 12 July, and close midnight AEST on Friday 03 Sept 2021.

Supporting you to submit a quality application



A short webinar is available to view on our [website](#) with information about the Smart Giving program and support in submitting a strong application. We strongly recommend viewing before beginning your application.

Is your school eligible to apply?

- Your school must have a value below 1000 on the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA). Schools with no (zero) ICSEA value must contact Schools Plus to determine eligibility, except for special needs schools which are eligible. For current ICSEA values, see your school's profile on MySchool at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
- Only one project per school or school cluster will be considered under this round.
- If your school has received funding through Smart Giving (including Smart Giving Invitation), Commonwealth Bank Teaching Awards or Fair Education programs within the last 12 months and/or your project has not been acquitted, you are not eligible to apply in this round. This includes any cluster schools involved in a project. Please contact us if you are unsure.
- Funding for projects designed to meet your long-term strategic school plan will begin in Term 1, 2022.

What is available to schools through this program?

Schools Plus is seeking submissions for strategic projects ranging in value from:

- Up to \$30,000 for an individual school project
- Up to \$60,000 for projects by a cluster of schools.

In addition to funding support, successful schools will be partnered with a coach allocated from our team of education experts.

- All our coaches have had extensive recent experience in schools and will provide each school with up to four coaching sessions over the duration of the project.
- Coaching sessions will be approx. 3 – 4hrs in length to be held with the project team and Principal either over the phone or face to face.
- Focused support will be provided on the design, implementation and evaluation of the project.

What sort of projects can be supported through Smart Giving?

- Projects that start in Term 1, 2022, and align with your long-term strategic school plan
- Innovative projects that trial new designs or strategies that have a sound research base and the potential for significant transformational change. The project can extend an existing school initiative that is having a proven impact or it could replicate projects where existing strategies are being tried in a new location or with a new group.
- All projects must lead to improved learning outcomes for students in schools facing disadvantage.
- In designing your projects, schools should be able to clearly identify why change is needed, how the project will enable the change to be achieved and the difference the change will make to the school community.
- Projects must be supported by the school leadership team and have an ongoing and sustainable benefit to the school community.
- Your project submission will be able to identify what evidence or research is available to support the purpose and design of the project, how you will measure the change it creates and how you will share that information with us.

Some examples of what we can't support

- Projects for which funding would normally be sought from government and system sources. Examples of these would be additional classroom teachers, school buildings and office equipment.
- Projects submitted from a private business or not-for-profit organisations. However, schools may subcontract such organisations to deliver part of the project, provided this is identified in the funding submission.
- Expenditure that has been incurred before the funding has been raised.
- Equipment, resources or technology not linked to student outcomes or your project.
- Playground upgrades (including sporting fields/courts, play equipment etc)
- Shade cloths / shade structures or air conditioning units

We welcome submissions from clusters of schools

In addition to supporting individual schools, Schools Plus is also keen to support schools which are part of a cluster.

- Groups of between four and 10 schools are invited to submit a joint EOI for a project that will be implemented across all their schools.
- All schools receiving funding for the one project submission need to meet the ICSEA eligibility criteria.
- Clusters may be existing local networks of schools or other schools working together on an initiative. They can also be cross-sector groupings. Based on learnings to date, clusters that are already working together tend to make better progress within the program.
- The project must be under the auspices of a lead school which will take responsibility for managing the project including the reporting.
- The lead school will submit one EOI on behalf of the cluster and include the school name and project contact details for each participating school.
- The application must be submitted in the name of the lead school and cannot be submitted using a Cluster name.
- Schools involved in a cluster application cannot submit a separate individual application.

How the process works

- ✓ Schools are invited to lodge an online Expression of Interest from **9am AEST on Monday 12 July 2021** and the round **closes midnight AEST on Friday 03 September 2021**. The link to the EOI form is available at the end of these guidelines.
- ✓ The form asks for information about the school and responses to key questions. Guidance for the information to put in these questions is provided below.
- ✓ Our expert assessors will assess the EOIs and schools will be notified in September if they are shortlisted. The projects will be assessed on the basis of the quality of the responses provided to the key questions.
- ✓ Shortlisted schools will be further assessed by independent experts in the field of the project.
- ✓ Shortlisted schools will be notified in October of the outcome of the second assessment. Schools that proceed to the final stage will participate in a short phone interview to provide further details of the project. Questions will be supplied prior to the interview. These will take place in October 2021.
- ✓ Schools Plus will determine which of these projects have been successful. Interviewed schools will be notified early December of the outcome of their EOI.
- ✓ To ensure the long term focussed projects have the maximum impact on student learning outcomes, schools that have been allocated a coach will conduct an initial half day coaching session (approx 3 – 4hrs) in Term 4, 2021 or Term 1, 2022. This goal is to develop a high quality, detailed project plan that will incorporate best practice in design, implementation and evaluation elements. Schools will receive their funding once initial project documentation is returned and approved by Schools Plus and the coach.

What do we want to know in the Expression of Interest form?

The Expression of Interest form comprises four key questions. Below we have provided some guiding questions that we encourage you to use as your team develops your school's submission. Please note, you do not have to answer all of the guiding questions – they have been provided to help lead your thinking.

1. What is the project background? (maximum 300 words)

This question gives you the opportunity to tell your school's story, think both critically and objectively about the existing situation in your school and what has led you to seek change.

What are your observations about existing practice, both good and not so good? Why is it important to start to make changes now?

Who, in particular, are you wanting to change things for? Are they aware of what changes you are seeking?

Are your school leadership team, teachers, students and community ready to begin this change? How do you know?

Did you undertake any research, consultation, data analysis?

2. What key strategies and activities will you implement to bring about the change?

(maximum 300 words)

This question gives you the opportunity to think about the key strategies and activities that will help achieve change.

Please provide detail about the activities you will undertake (eg staff professional learning, design and introduction of new lesson plans, new student activities in class) and the timeframe in which those activities will occur (eg a breakdown by term of how the project will roll out).

What resources will you need to implement your strategies and who will be involved to make things happen?

3. How will you measure your project outcomes and impact? (maximum 300 words)

*This question gives you the opportunity to consider and describe how you are **measuring** your project. **What tools will you use** to evaluate your success/growth (eg: surveys, curriculum, assessments etc). What baseline data are you working from (eg: 5% of year 7 students are chronic non-attenders etc).*

*Describe **direct and indirect impact** your project will have on your school community – your students, teachers, parents and broader school community. (eg: change in mindset/ behaviour/ knowledge/skills for one or more of the groups?)*

4. How will you sustain the change beyond the funding of this project (maximum 300 words)

This question gives you the opportunity to consider the project's ongoing impact. Will the project have a long-term benefit to the school community? If so, how?

Will the project develop staff capacity to lead the project beyond those initially leading it?

Does the project rely on funding from external sources? Could the school raise future funds through other sources?

If the purchase of equipment is involved, can the school continue the maintenance of this equipment after the funding has been completed?

Conditions and further information for funded projects

- Schools receiving funding will be required to sign a Funding Agreement before funds can be transferred. Bank account details will need to be provided at this stage.
- Once the Funding Agreement is signed and the completed evaluation tools are returned to Schools Plus, the donation will be given to the school by electronic funds transfer. The school accepts these funds as a donation, no GST applies.
- Projects which are fully or partially funded will be required to provide reports updating Schools Plus on the progress of the project. Reporting dates are usually in April and November. Information in the reports will be shared with donors.
- Schools Plus will provide schools with a set of evaluation tools that will enable them to capture the impact of the project. With the support of their coach, schools will devise rubrics that will briefly cover activities, beneficiaries, achievements and evidence used to measure the results.
- If applicable and where possible, Schools Plus will provide support for schools to build a relationship with their supporters.

Sounds wonderful, how do I submit a project?

Schools Plus uses the SmartyGrants management system to receive EOIs. To submit your EOI:



- Please refer to the Schools Plus [website](#) to view our helpful webinar.
- Register with SmartyGrants via the link below and complete the form. If you already have login details, please use these.
- You can contact the Education Team via email - schools@schoolsplus.org.au – if you have any questions or you wish to discuss your project before submitting an EOI.

Use the following link to register and access the EOI form:

<https://schoolsplus.smartygrants.com.au/SmartGiving2021>

Submissions open: 9am AEST on Monday 12 July 2021.

Closing date: Midnight AEST on Friday 03 September 2021.

Late submissions will not be accepted.