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Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Submission

For decision

PDMS Ref. Number: MS24-000380

Date of Clearance: 04/04/2024

To Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

Subject Social Cohesion Measures - \$25 million package - Implementation Submission – Part C – Engaging Social Policy Group (SPG) to deliver the Community and Cohesion Support Program (CCSP) for community led grants

Timing For consideration by 8 April 2024, as agreed with Advisor s. 22(1)(a)(ii) in order to allow for grant implementation to progress.

Recommendations

That you:

1. note that you previously agreed for the Department of Home Affairs (the Department) to exercise the power to vary and administer grants to Social Policy Group (SPG) and to vary the existing SPG funding agreement to distribute small grants (of up to \$20,000) (MS23-002316 refers);
2. note that community feedback indicates the small grant amount of \$20,000 may be insufficient to achieve the proposed objectives of the funding;
3. agree to the Department varying the existing SPG funding agreement to allow SPG to distribute small grants of up to \$50,000;

noted / please discuss

noted / please discuss

agreed / please discuss

noted / please discuss

s. 42(1)

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5.

s. 42(1)

agreed / please discuss

6.

s. 47C(1)

signed / please discuss

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

Signature.....



Date 23/4/2024

Minister's Comments

Key Issues

1. On 22 December 2023, you agreed to the Department varying the existing SPG funding agreement to distribute small grants (up to \$20,000) for local initiatives targeted at youth, women and mental health and well-being under Part C of the Social Cohesion Measures. The Department advised that we would work with the s. 47C(1) in order to reduce the level of constitutional and legislative risk (MS23-002316 refers).
2. In line with that decision, the Department has published high-level information about Part C on its Webpage which states that:

"...The Department will provide \$4 million to the Social Policy Group (SPG), a national not-for-profit specialising in social cohesion, to deliver a Community and Cohesion Support Program (CCSP)...Under this program, community groups will be able to apply for grants up to \$20,000 to develop local initiatives for Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other affected communities..."

3. SPG has also established a website for community organisations to express their interest in this grant opportunity and advised that feedback on the program is overwhelmingly positive, but that grant amounts of up to \$20,000 are likely to be insufficient for communities to achieve the outcomes intended from the program.
4. The Department recommends that funding amounts are increased to up to \$50,000 for this SPG administered grant opportunity. This will ensure that recipients are able to fund larger projects and use funding to contribute to staffing as well as project costs. A limit of \$50,000 would ensure that smaller grass roots organisations are still able to apply for smaller funding amounts where suitable and that a reasonable amount of recipients will receive funding (a minimum of 64 recipients). It will also differentiate it from the open-competitive grant round proposed in MS24-000477 where organisations will be able to apply for medium sized grants (\$100,000 to \$500,000).

5.

s. 42(1)

s. 42(1)

s. 47C(1)

Background

10. On 23 November 2023, you agreed to the implementation arrangements for the \$25 million package of social cohesion measures to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities affected by the Hamas-Israel conflict (MS23-002210 refers).

s. 42(1)

s. 42(1)

Consultation – internal/external

13. The following internal areas have been consulted on this submission: Chief Finance Officer; External Budgets and Revenue Branch; Financial Operations Branch, Israel-Hamas Social Cohesion Taskforce; Media and Communication Branch; Procurement and Contracts Support Branch; and Settlement Program Operations Branch. Legal Group have cleared the approach outlined in this submission.
14. The following external areas have been consulted on the contents of this submission:
s. 47C(1)

Consultation – Secretary / Associate Secretary Immigration

15. The Secretary was not consulted on this submission. However, the Secretary was consulted on the department's approach to the package of Social Cohesion Measures (MS23-002210 refers).
16. The Associate Secretary Immigration was not consulted on this submission.

Client service implications

17. N/A.

Risks and Sensitivities

S. 47C(1)

23. The Department's Media and Communication Branch will work with your media team on a communication approach and any supporting media products (talking points, media releases) required to support further media announcements for this package.

Financial Implications

24. All grants under the Social Cohesion package are funded through existing appropriations, and will not result in any additional impacts on the underlying cash balance of the Commonwealth Budget.

Attachments:

s. 42(1)

s. 47C(1)

Authorising Officer

Cleared by:

Angus Kirkwood
First Assistant Secretary
Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Division

Date: 4 April 2024

Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Contact Officer Erica Biddle, Assistant Secretary, Multicultural Affairs Branch,

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Through CFO

CC Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Cyber Security
Associate Secretary, Immigration
Chief Operating Officer
DS Executive
Group Manager Legal
FAS Executive Coordination
Chief of Staff Israel-Hamas Social Cohesion Taskforce

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Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Submission

For decision

PDMS Ref. Number: MS24-000477

Date of Clearance: 25/03/2024

To **Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs**

Subject **Social Cohesion Measures - \$25 million package - Implementation Submission: Open and Competitive Grant Round**

Timing *For consideration by 27 March 2024, as requested by Advisor* s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Recommendations

That you:

1. agree to undertaking an open competitive grant opportunity to distribute the remaining unallocated funding of approximately \$5.218 million from the \$25 million social cohesion package to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities;
2. note that the Department of Home Affairs will design this grant opportunity in consultation with the community; and
3. note that after the design of the grant opportunity, the Department of Home Affairs will submit Grant Opportunity Guidelines to you for approval.

agreed / not agreed

noted / please discuss

noted / please discuss

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

Signature.....

Date: 4/4/2024

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Minister's Comments

Can we please roll out the grant program as soon as possible and provide weekly progress update to my office?

Key Issues

1. At this time, funding of approximately \$5.218 million over two years to 2024-25 remains unallocated from the \$25 million package of social cohesion measures to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities affected by the Hamas-Israel conflict (MS23-002210 refers).
2. In response to the urgent nature of the conflict, funding under this package has prioritised measures that could be facilitated as quickly as possible. As these initial measures are underway, the Department of Home Affairs (the Department) recommends that this funding be distributed through an open and competitive process that enables all relevant and eligible community organisations the ability to engage in the process, apply for funding and be considered on their merits. This is also the recommended approach for achieving value with Commonwealth funding.
3. The Department recommends that this grant opportunity target funding to cultural, ethnic and faith based community organisations for small to medium sized initiatives that foster social cohesion at the community level. Stakeholders have indicated that Australian Palestinian, Muslim and Arab communities affected by the conflict in Gaza are seeking avenues for funding that fill the gap between funding that has already agreed and announced under this Package. In particular they have identified the need for funding that:
 - supports Australian Palestinian, Muslim and Arab community organisations to directly respond to and support their communities in Australia that remain deeply affected by the events in Gaza; and
 - supports smaller scale security upgrades to facilities and places of worship; and
 - is informed by consultation with key stakeholders.
4. To ensure this grant opportunity meets the expectations of the community, the Department intends to engage key Palestinian and Arab community stakeholders in the design phase of the program through a rapid series of consultation workshops held over April.
5. Following the final design, the Department will present the proposed Grant Opportunity Guidelines to you for approval, as well as s. 47C(1) advice on constitutional and legislative risks and any actions necessary to reduce these risks.

6. Based on consultations to date, the Department envisages that the grant opportunity could fund:
 - Security improvements which may include fencing upgrades, CCTV, vandal deterrents.
 - Community driven, solution focused projects that aim to:
 - Facilitate access to relevant support services;
 - reduce instances of discrimination;
 - develop tolerance and resilience;
 - promote integration;
 - promote Australian values; and
 - improve safety as a result of threats due to the conflict.
7. Grant amounts will be finalised following stakeholder consultations, but it is expected that organisations would be able to apply for between \$20,000 and \$100,000 for physical security improvements to facilities and between \$100,000 to \$500,000 for social cohesion projects. Organisations will have 12 months to complete activities.
8. Based on the proposed grant amounts, it is estimated that between 20 and 50 organisations would receive funding through this opportunity.

Timeframe

9. The Department is required to use a grants Hub for the administration of grant opportunities. The Department of Social Services Community Grants Hub has advised that, using their standard timeframes for an open competitive process, they expect the grant round can be opened for applications in July 2024, with funding dispensed to successful applications in early December 2024. The Department will work with the Hub to compress these timeframes where possible. Prior to the grant round opening for applications, the Department will remain engaged with the community to inform the program design.

Background

10. On 23 November 2023, you agreed to the implementation arrangements for the \$25 million package of social cohesion measures to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities affected by the Hamas-Israel conflict (MS23-002210 refers).
 - Part A: nationally focussed programs- targeted to identified organisations to deliver specific programs;
 - Part B: small grants to support local community needs; and
 - Part C: funding to support multicultural peak body activities to identify and provide funding to support community-led grassroots programs (up to \$20,000 for local, time limited initiatives).
11. On 22 December 2023, you agreed to engage the first tranche of grant recipients under this package, including to vary existing grant agreements to community groups under the first tranche of Part B (totalling \$1.250 million) projects through an ad-hoc closed non-competitive process (MS23-002316 refers).

12. On 15 March 2024, you agreed to engage the second tranche of grant recipients under Part B through an ad hoc closed non-competitive process with funding totalling \$3.220 million for 2023-24 (MS23-002550 refers).
13. On 19 March 2024, you agreed to engage the Lebanese Moslem Association (trading as the Lebanese Muslim Association) and the Islamic Museum of Australia (IMA) under Part A through an ad-hoc closed non-competitive process with funding totalling \$2.000 million, over 2023-24 and 2024-5 to conduct youth initiatives (MS24-000243 refers).

Consultation – internal/external

14. The Chief Finance Officer, Legal Group, Israel-Hamas Social Cohesion Taskforce, Procurement and Contracts Support Branch, Settlement Program Operations Branch, and Media and Communication Branch have been consulted on this submission.

Consultation – Secretary / A/g Deputy Secretary Immigration

15. The Secretary was not consulted on this submission.
16. The A/g Deputy Secretary, Immigration was not consulted on this submission.

Client service implications

17. N/A.

Risks and Sensitivities

18. To mitigate the possibility of issues being raised by affected communities due to the perceived delay in providing access to grant funding the Department will:
 - Utilise the Hubs website, Grant Connect, to publish a 'forecast opportunity' to notify potential applicants of the upcoming grant opportunity and promote their registration on Grant Connect.
 - Continue to engage with community organisations providing updated details regarding the required timeframes for the grant opportunity and potentially hold a workshop to canvas design elements of the grant opportunity.
 - Work with the Hub to compress timeframes where possible.
 - Host an information webinar to provide high-level information to prospective applicants, following the approval of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, whilst noting the probity restrictions on the provision of information that may give unfair advantage to some prospective applicants over others.
19. The information contained in this submission is classified and should not be publicly released without the authority of the Department of Home Affairs. In accordance with long standing practices, should you wish for unclassified media lines to be prepared in relation to this issue please contact the Home Affairs Media Coordination team – media@homeaffairs.gov.au.

Financial/systems/legal/deregulation/media implications

Financial Implications

20. All grants provided through this Part B: Tranche 3 grant opportunity under the Social Cohesion package, including Grant Hub costs, are funded through existing appropriations, and will not result in any additional impacts on the underlying cash balance of the Commonwealth Budget.
21. The unallocated grant funding of \$5.218 million is expected to be paid in 2024-25. A request to the Department of Finance for movement of funds from 2023-24 to 2024-25 may be required to ensure sufficient funding is available to facilitate grant payments in 2024-25.

Legal implications

22. Commonwealth expenditure requires constitutional support and express legislative authority.
23. Following the detailed design of the grant opportunity, the Department will seek AGS advice on the constitutional and legislative risk of the proposed activity and provide advice on any actions required to reduce risks.

Media Implications

S. 47C(1)

27. The Department's Media and Communication Branch will work with your media team on a communication approach and any supporting media products (talking points, media releases) required to support further media announcements for this package. Any subsequent media engagement and media announcements will be developed in consideration of community concerns and to ensure national security, social cohesion and multicultural reputation and the reputation of funded organisations is protection.

Attachments

28. Nil.

Authorising Officer
Cleared by: Angus Kirkwood First Assistant Secretary Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Division Date: 25 March 2024 Mob: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Contact Officer: Erica Biddle, Assistant Secretary, Multicultural Affairs Branch, Ph: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Through CFO

CC AS Immigration
GM Legal
Chief Procurement Officer
FAS Refugee, Humanitarian and Settlement
FAS Executive Coordination
A/g Assistant Secretary, Media and Communication
CoS, Israel-Hamas Social Cohesion Taskforce