Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery Draft Guidelines (Scoping and Delivery)

Public Consultation Paper

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures, and the Elders past and present.

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Introduction to the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program

In the 2023-24 Federal Budget, the Australian Government announced it is investing $436.4 million over 4 years in a redesigned Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program from 1 July 2024. The Program will improve access to English language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills training for around 27,000 Australians.

Eligibility for the SEE Program is being expanded. It will no longer be necessary to be a registered jobseeker to participate. All Australians over the age of 15 who have left school will be eligible.

The redesigned SEE Program has two streams:

- *Stream 1:* LLND skills training delivery to individuals by SEE Providers (RTOs), contracted by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the department) (including some place-based project delivery).
- *Stream 2:* whole of community LLND skills training delivery to First Nations people by First Nations community organisations, in partnership with RTOs or Adult Community Education (ACE) providers through place-based grants.

What is the SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery?

SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery is specifically designed for First Nations people and community organisations. However eligible First Nations people can choose to access services through both the SEE Program Stream 1 and Stream 2.

SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery is being designed to support community engagement. Participants will have the opportunity to improve their LLND skills. In developing LLND skills participants may experience other benefits such as, participating in work or further study; improving cultural, social and emotional wellbeing; higher levels of empowerment and self-actualisation; and improving the capacity and economic development of their community. Improvements in LLND can also support work towards Closing the Gap by removing barriers to accessing education and training for First Nations people.

The program will fund place-based, whole of community projects designed to meet the community's LLND training needs. These projects will be delivered by First Nations organisations – Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) – who will partner with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) or Adult Community Education (ACE) providers to deliver co-designed LLND training.

For more information, including proposed eligibility criteria, please refer to the draft guidelines.

Purpose of this consultation process

The department is developing a grants process for the provision of services for Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery of its redesigned SEE Program.

This consultation paper provides interested people and organisations with information about the services being provided, and the opportunity to comment on the draft guidelines for both the Scoping and Delivery grants.

The department is mindful of its responsibilities throughout this process and to ensure transparency and accountability across the design of this opportunity.

What consultation has already taken place?

The department engaged widely to inform the development of the redesigned SEE Program.

In October 2022, the Foundation Skills Advisory Group (Advisory Group) was formed to ensure the SEE Program re-design properly understood and considered stakeholder views. This included supporting work to build the evidence base on the levels of foundation skills among Australian adults. The Advisory Group brings together experts and representatives from a range of organisations, including foundation skills peak bodies, industry, employers, unions, First Nations people, and state and territory governments.

In December 2022 the discussion paper *Future delivery of foundation skills training in remote Australia* was released. Responses to the discussion paper were facilitated through online conversations with stakeholders.

In August 2023 the department released *Future delivery of foundation skills training in remote Australia – Discussion Paper Response Summary and Analysis*.

Based on feedback it was determined that the focus for Stream 2 of the redesigned SEE Program should be on First Nations delivery nationally. This means LLND delivery can take place anywhere across all of Australia where First Nations communities feel there is a need.

In September 2023 the SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery Working Group, comprising of First Nations and LLND stakeholders, was formed. The Working Group has met 4 times and provided feedback on an earlier version of the draft guidelines. All stakeholders have actively worked towards embedding cultural safety in this process.

Development of the draft guidelines has also been informed by the recommendations made in the Remote Community Pilots evaluation report.

We want to hear from you

We want to hear from all stakeholders – whether you are a potential learner, an ACCO, a training provider, you live in a First Nations community, you are a LLND trainer, or someone who is interested in improving the LLND skills of all people in First Nations communities in Australia.

The SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery draft guidelines are now available for your consideration and comment, before they are finalised to open grant rounds. There are 2 sets of draft guidelines:

	SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Scoping Grants (**Scoping Grants**)	SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery Grants (**Delivery Grants**)
Type of grant		
Purpose of grant	Small grants of up to $50,000 (GST exclusive) to help eligible organisations develop a SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery grant application.	Grants to eligible organisations to co-design and deliver English LLND skills training to First Nations people across Australia. This is the major SEE Program Stream 2 component.

Questions to think about

We have included some questions below which may help you formulate your feedback. You are free to comment on any aspect of the proposed guidelines. If you make a comment that relates only to the Scoping Grant guidelines or only to the Delivery Grant guidelines, please state this in your response. We also welcome any other feedback about this grant opportunity.

We recommend you use the online survey in the consultation hub to answer the following questions or send your written responses to SEEfuture@dewr.gov.au.

Program intent

1. Based on your understanding of the intent of the SEE Program Stream 2 (developing community-based and community-led LLND training delivery for First Nations people who want to improve their LLND skills)

    -   **Do you think the guidelines support that sufficiently?**

2. In addition to improved LLND, the program could support outcomes such as, participating in work or further study; improving cultural, social and emotional wellbeing; having higher levels of empowerment and self-actualisation; and improving the capacity and economic development of communities.

    -   **Do you think the program, as described by the guidelines, would support ongoing, meaningful and positive outcomes? What would have to change in the program guidelines to achieve successful outcomes, or to make them easier to achieve?**

Capacity

3. With the introduction of Scoping Grants of up to $50,000, community organisations may have to determine their capacity to apply for the Delivery Grants. *Capacity can apply to an organisation's*

ability to manage a project - for example, whether the organisation is able to meet legislative, administrative and reporting requirements.

- **Do you see issues with the capacity of smaller organisations to respond to the Delivery Grants Round?**
- **If so, how can the department help make the Delivery Grants more accessible to all interested community organisations?**

Data collection and sharing information

4. Priority Reform 4 in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap is about shared access to data and information at a regional level. One of the objectives of the SEE Program Stream 2 – First Nations Delivery is to use data from projects to improve the LLND evidence base and the program. This data would also be shared with community organisations and communities to support efforts to close the gap and drive their own development into the future.

- **What meaningful program related data could be collected and shared to inform First Nations communities and organisations?**
- **What would be needed to facilitate sharing between different organisations delivering training to improve outcomes for learners?**

Help us get ready

5. Communities vary in size and in their literacy profiles. In some places the number of people reached by a project may be small.

- **Do you have any thoughts on the anticipated demand for the program (both as to how many communities might apply and how many participants each project might involve)?**

6. The following questions are relevant to those who represent an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO). The intent is to gauge the potential level of interest:

- **Is your organisation likely to respond to either the Scoping and/or Delivery Grant opportunities?**
- **If yes, what geographic regions and how many participants might you expect to deliver services to? If no, why not?**
- **How much Delivery Grant funding is your organisation likely to seek?**
- **Have you thought about which RTO/ACE provider you are likely to partner with (if known)?**
- **Are you likely to make a joint application? If so, have you thought about who you might collaborate with?**

General feedback

7. Is there any other feedback you would like to provide?

How to provide feedback

You can provide your feedback using the survey in the consultation hub. You can also provide feedback in writing to the seefuture@dewr.gov.au mailbox. Responses are due by 6pm (AEDT) on 19 March 2024 (this is an extension from the previous closing date of 12 March 2024).

Please note all responses to this survey and this broader consultation will be confidential. Individual responses will not be published. The department may release a short paper summarising the feedback received.

To assist the department to best utilise feedback that is submitted, in providing your feedback you agree to the following:

- The department may use and copy submitted feedback for purposes related to the SEE program, including any SEE program-related procurement and/or grant processes. However, you will retain ownership of the intellectual property in the information you submit to the department.

- The department will retain feedback in accordance with Commonwealth record keeping requirements.

- The department is permitted to publish your feedback submitted in response to this paper but will de-identify your responses in any publication so readers cannot tell who the response came from.

- You are responsible for any costs and expenses incurred in responding to this paper if you choose to provide feedback.

- Providing feedback in relation to this paper will not give you any right, advantage, or benefit, or result in any disadvantage, in any future grant rounds. Not participating in this consultation process will also not result in any advantage or disadvantage in any future grant rounds.

Where do we go from here?

Your feedback will help inform the final design of the program, including the guidelines.

We currently expect to open the finalised guidelines on GrantConnect for community organisations to apply from 31 May 2024. Note this date may be subject to change.

Contact us

Please email us at SEEfuture@dewr.gov.au if you have any questions.