

**LOCALBUYING
FOUNDATION**

AN INITIATIVE OF THE LOCAL BUYING PROGRAM

FUNDING GUIDELINES

National

January 2026

**LOCAL BUYING
PROGRAM**
BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

BHP **BMA** **C-RES**
BHP Mitsubishi Alliance COMMUNITY RESOURCING
FOR THE FUTURE

PROUDLY DELIVERING THE LOCAL BUYING PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP

Contents

What is the Local Buying Foundation? 3

Overview 3

 Before Getting Started on Your Application 3

 Funding Regions 3

 How are funding opportunities communicated? 3

 Funding Limits 4

 Additional Funding Sources..... 4

 How are funds awarded? 5

LBF Intent..... 5

Funding Categories 5

Sponsorship Objectives..... 6

 Eligible Events..... 6

 Ineligible Events..... 6

 Submission Requirements..... 6

Funding Eligibility Criteria 7

 Eligibility Criteria 7

 Success Criteria..... 7

 How do I submit an application?..... 8

After Submitting a Funding Application..... 9

 Review and Approval Process 9

 LBF Advisory Committees..... 9

 When are applications approved?..... 9

 When are LBF Funding Rounds funds disbursed? 9

Find out more 9

What is the Local Buying Foundation?

The Local Buying Foundation (funded by contributions from BHP's Local Buying Program) is a key element of BHP's Local Buying Program (LBP). The LBP enables small, local and Indigenous businesses to supply goods and services to BHP and BMA via a competitive tender process with reduced payment terms. From each approved work instruction through the LBP, a small percentage is contributed by BHP to the Local Buying Foundation in each state.

Through funding received via the Local Buying Program (LBP) from BHP and BMA, the Local Buying Foundation supports organisations in delivering projects and initiatives that strengthen business communities. This funding helps facilitate workforce development, foster innovation, and enhance the capability and growth of local businesses and industries, thereby supporting the economic potential of regional areas.

Overview

Before Getting Started on Your Application

- Prior to submitting an Application, we encourage you to contact a Local Buying Foundation Project Officer to discuss your project on 1800 536 663 or info@localbuyingfoundation.com.au. If your project is over \$200,000 or 12 months in duration, it is a requirement to have a discussion with a LBF project officer prior to your submission.
- Review the funding eligibility criteria (see page 7) and ensure your submission fits the guidelines
- Download our **Project** templates here:
 - [Budget Template](#)
 - [Risk Assessment Template](#)
- Download our Tips for Creating a **Sponsorship** Prospectus
 - [Prospectus Tips](#)
 - [Example Prospectus](#)
- For sponsorship applications, the funding criteria must be met and full sponsorship prospectus provided.

Funding Regions

Funding is only eligible for projects that support region/regions below:

- QLD: Isaac, Mackay
- NSW: Muswellbrook, Singleton and/or Upper Hunter Shire
- WA: Shire of East Pilbara and/or Town of Port Hedland
- SA: District of Mount Remarkable, Port Augusta City Council, Port Pirie Regional Council, Roxby Downs Council, Whyalla City Council, Outback Communities Authority

How are funding opportunities communicated?

Funding rounds and closing dates for applications will be advertised via the Local Buying Foundation website www.localbuyingfoundation.com.au and promoted via C-Res and LBF Social Media.

Funding Limits

Each Local Buying Foundation (LBF) operates independently within its respective state, and the size, funding capacity, and priorities of each foundation can vary significantly. As a result, the total funding available differs from state to state. Funding assessments are conducted individually for each foundation, which directly considers expected income into the LBF, actual funds available, and future anticipated commitments and projects. This ensures that funding decisions are financially responsible, strategically aligned, and sustainable, supporting the long-term impact of the Foundation in each region.

Additional Funding Sources

The Local Buying Foundation (LBF) is committed to fostering sustainable economic and business community development across the regions in which it operates. To maximise the impact and long-term viability of its funding, the LBF strongly recommends that applicants demonstrate evidence of other funding sources, in-kind contributions, or potential revenue-generating outcomes associated with their proposed projects. This ensures that LBF support is complemented by contributions from other stakeholders and that projects achieve broader community and economic benefits.

Therefore, project applicants are required to:

- Clearly outline any on-going funding requirements that may affect the results of the project.
- Demonstration of value for money and clear total cost.
- Value of contribution by status partners whether a direct or in-kind contribution.

LBF encourages projects to develop a balanced and sustainable funding model. While LBF can play a significant role in supporting initiatives, projects that rely solely on LBF funding without a clear explanation of why alternative funding sources are not being pursued are less likely to be prioritised. The Foundation aims to support applications that demonstrate:

- Collaborative investment from multiple stakeholders.
- A diversified funding model to ensure long-term viability.
- A clear plan for leveraging LBF funding to secure additional resources or achieve broader outcomes.

Applications must provide a clear breakdown of the funding model, including percentage contributions from LBF and other sources. Projects that cannot demonstrate diversified funding will be required to provide justification for this reliance on LBF.

Where possible, provide any evidence or information that no other funding opportunities exist or if they exist, they do not meet the requirements or timelines of the project. An example might be an excerpt from Grant Guru or similar comprehensive grant listing.

How are funds awarded?

Organisations / businesses are required to submit a funding application for consideration by the LBF Advisory Committee. Funds are allocated in alignment with the Foundation’s Intent and assessed against the Foundation’s criteria (page 7).

LBF Intent

The Local Buying Foundation will support projects and programs that facilitate workforce development, innovation, and the productive capacity of business and industry to grow the potential of their regional economies, building local capabilities and opportunities for growth in current and emerging industries.

Funding Categories

The Foundation’s objectives and priority areas are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant to the economic environment and aligned with changing business community needs. The current priority areas (or categories) of the Foundation are:

| Category | Focus | Includes |
|--|---|--|
| Innovation, Skills and Business Development | Building the capability and competitiveness of regional businesses and industries through innovation, skills development, and strategic growth initiatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support services, training, and planning for SMEs • Industry-specific and economic development planning • Workforce development programs and future skills training (e.g. workshops) • Shared workspaces, maker spaces, incubators, and accelerators • Initiatives to drive sustainability, reduce carbon emissions, and strengthen cybersecurity |
| Indigenous Economic Development | Promoting economic development for Indigenous communities | Employment, business, asset, and wealth creation opportunities for Indigenous people |
| Sponsorship | Supporting local business events, awards, and conferences | Sponsorship applications reviewed against guidelines, considering broader economic impacts and strategic opportunities |

Sponsorship Objectives

The LBF aims to sponsor events that:

1. Foster networking and business development opportunities for local communities.
2. Showcase local business capabilities, including small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and Indigenous enterprises.
3. Align with regional economic / business priorities.

Eligible Events

Sponsorship will be considered for:

- Business awards and ceremonies.
- Business and economic development Conferences (in-person, hybrid, and virtual).
- Networking forums.
- Educational expos and initiatives that enhance workforce development.
- Industry-specific field days or summits.

Ineligible Events

- **Workshops** – funding for workshops must be applied under one of two project categories: Innovation, Skills and Business Development or Indigenous Economic Development.
- **Community Events** – i.e. events that do not have strong alignment with business and economic outcomes e.g. Multi-cultural Fair, Markets, Rodeos, Races, School Fetes

Submission Requirements

1. **Sponsorship Prospectus (that shows opportunities for any potential Sponsor and is not limited to the Local Buying Foundation)** – Tips for Creating a Sponsorship Prospectus **download available on Page 3**:
 - Organisation details.
 - Event objectives and expected outcomes.
 - Sponsorship levels and benefits.
2. **Impact Metrics:**
Applicants must define quantifiable outcomes, such as:
 - Anticipated attendance (in-person and online).
 - Stakeholder diversity, including engagement of small, local and Indigenous businesses.
 - Economic benefits.
3. **Digital and Hybrid Events:**
 - Applications for hybrid events must outline expected digital engagement metrics.
 - Support for digital platforms and virtual branding opportunities may be considered.
4. **Sustainability, Culture, Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Commitments:**

Applicants must outline initiatives to support sustainability, culture, environment, social and governance commitments such as:

- Use of local suppliers.
- Environmentally friendly practices.
- Recognition of Traditional Owners

Funding Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria

To apply for funding through the Local Buying Foundation, submissions must meet the following mandatory eligibility criteria:

- Project or sponsorship directly supports the eligible communities.
- Project objectives align with one of the three funding categories.
- Sponsorship objectives align with the sponsorship category.
- Projects and sponsorship must be open to all businesses in the region to access and not be exclusive to certain groups or members (exceptions may include - women in business, Traditional Owner and Indigenous businesses, etc).
- The project or sponsorship has not already occurred, and funds are not being sought retrospectively.
- Application is not from a Government Entity, School or Commercial Business.
- Applicant organisation must have a formal governance structure and/or registered with the appropriate government bodies.
- Applicant organisation has demonstrated capacity, financial stability and leadership to support this project.
- Funding request cannot be for capital works, infrastructure including buildings and building improvements, tenancy/leases.
- Funding request cannot be for funding applicant's business as usual activities.

Success Criteria

Funding applications are assessed against specific success criteria, including:

Project Success Criteria:

- Impact - within and across communities in both the short and long-term.
- Sustainability - potential for the project to become financially self-sustaining.
- Cost Effectiveness - value for money and ability to leverage funds through other sources.
- Project Agility and Flexibility - identification of project risks, mitigation strategies and ability to respond to changing needs of the project.
- Project Alignment and Practicality - achievability of proposed scope of work.
- Indigenous Business Engagement - (Indigenous Economic Development Category Only but highly considered in all LBF applications) - Strong, well-documented approach demonstrating meaningful engagement, contributions, and positive outcomes for Indigenous businesses.

Sponsorship Success Criteria:

- Alignment and Practicality - achievability of proposed scope of work.
- Impact - within and across communities in both the short and long-term.

Project Application Requirements

Whilst all projects must meet the funding eligibility, the following are suggestions to make a strong application and are highly recommended including in all funding applications (excluding sponsorships), especially if they are high value (>\$200,000) or multi-year projects:

- **Letters of Support:** Ensure that the letters of support are from valuable partners that will benefit from this type of project or can provide an industry outlook on why this project is needed. Letters of support are also important from other funding partners and are mandatory for your LBF project applications.
- **Research / Data Evidence:** Projects that have supporting information on why there is a need for the type of project through the support of data whether through survey results, feasibility studies, strategies etc. If the project is a continuation from a previous project, ensure that reports are provided on success of previous projects.
- **Other Funding Partners:** The submission will be looked upon favourably if you can demonstrate confirmed funding from other funding sources. Having other funding partners onboard, shows that there are more supporters for the project and the project applicant has worked with other organisations to obtain funding.
- **Comprehensive Budget:** Ensure that budget items are broken down and budgets are clear to understand and align with LBF eligible funding. Mandatory budget template link available on page 3. Evidence may be requested in relation to project management costs and how this differs from day-to-day tasks. If project includes a salary, please outline the award the salary is to and why. If funds are intended for a third party, e.g. consultants or contractors, please ensure these details are provided for full transparency.
- **Detailed deliverables and success measures:** The deliverables and success measures will be used when developing Funding Agreements and key performance indicators to report on. If these are not substantial enough, on project approval, the LBF will work with the applicant to develop these success measures.

How do I submit an application?

Funding application forms are available on the LBF website at this [link](#)

All applications must be submitted by 5.00pm AEST on the relevant Funding Round closing date. These dates are listed on the [LBF website](#).

The receipt of applications is confirmed by Local Buying Foundation via email and the applicant will receive a full copy of their application. If additional information is required, the Local Buying Foundation will request this information through the grant platform directly.

After Submitting a Funding Application

Review and Approval Process

1. All applications are assessed for eligibility and alignment with the LBF's objectives, funding categories and strategic priorities.
2. Applications are presented to the relevant LBF Advisory Committee for review and endorsement.
3. Following Advisory Committee endorsement, applications are submitted to the LBF Trustees for final approval.

LBF Advisory Committees

The Foundation Advisory Committee (LBFAC) is a representative body of key stakeholders from across the regions/shires with an interest and/or skills and expertise in local regional economic development. Representation includes BHP, Local Government officials and representatives from economic and business groups from each region/shire and cross-regional industry groups.

When are applications approved?

The LBF Advisory Committee meets twice a year to assess and endorse funding applications.

Recommendation from the LBF Advisory Committee is then reviewed by the LBF Trustees (C-Res Board of Directors) for final approval. Not until LBF Trustees have approved the application is the application able to progress. The timeline in which a funding decision is notifiable to an applicant is approximately 8 weeks after the funding round closing date.

When are LBF Funding Rounds funds disbursed?

Generally, funding will be disbursed within one month of an approval decision or as agreed in the Funding Agreement.

Following approval of funding applications, a Funding Agreement is drafted by LBF. Once the Agreement is signed by the LBF Chair (unless a conflict of interest identified) and by a person of authority within the applying organisation, i.e. Chair or Executive Officer, funds are released to the applicant as per payment schedule in the Agreement.

Find out more

Visit www.localbuyingfoundation.com.au

Phone **1800 536 663** or email info@localbuyingfoundation.com.au

This document replaces the **LBF Sponsorship Guidelines Revised 2025 and LBF Funding Guidelines 2025** and is effective for all project and sponsorship applications submitted after 1 January 2026.