

Advisory Committee Manual



Updated: June 2022

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Introduction

This manual has been prepared to assist new CBF Board and Advisory Committee members to understand their role and responsibilities within the broader operation of the Community Broadcasting (CBF). It will help you understand and participate effectively in the processes associated with CBF grants assessment, monitoring and review.

Should you have further questions about the CBF's processes, policies or procedures, please contact the CBF Support Team and we will do our best to help. In the first instance it's best to speak to the Grants Support Team Volunteer Manager or Grants Support Team member supporting your committee.

The CBF Advisory Committee Manual was first drafted in June 2010 and was most recently reviewed in June 2022. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains accurate. GAC members are encouraged to suggest improvements to this manual at any time.

About the CBF

The Community Broadcasting CBF (CBF) is a proud champion of community media – Australia's largest independent media sector.

Our funding helps connect people living in major cities, regional towns and remote communities across the country. It ensures the millions of people who tune in to their local community-owned and operated radio stations every week are hearing local information, news, stories and voices.

Our grants support a strong and thriving sector where community broadcasters are embedded in and a reflection of the diverse communities they represent and serve. This includes First Nations, ethnic and print disabled Australians, as well as those in our communities who are under-represented in other media.

Each year, we distribute more than \$19 million in funding to help community media organisations across Australia communicate, connect and share knowledge with their communities through radio, television and digital media.

Our grant programs

We distribute three types of grants: [Content](#) (including [Specialist Programming](#)), [Development & Operations](#), and [Sector Investment](#)).

The projects we fund range in size and scope, from nation-wide projects that enhance the impact of community media to local-level grants for equipment, capacity-building and governance.

Many of our grants also support the production of content that fosters discussion about local and national issues, provides information in community languages, amplifies local stories and voices, and highlights groups, services, musicians and artists in the community. These programs, series and segments are shared with audiences on-air or on-demand in communities across Australia.

Consultation & independence

We believe in the need to be independent and transparent in supporting a resilient sector for the long-term. Our independence is essential for fair and equitable grants processes.

Our grants review process is based on a peer-review model. Experienced community broadcasters and industry experts are central to how we operate. Together, our volunteers review almost 500

grant applications each year. Our volunteers contribute their insights and experience so that our grant programs respond and adapt to meet the changing needs of community media. For more information on the work of the CBF visit www.cbf.org.au.

In line with the CBF's vision, volunteers sit at the heart of the CBF. Their knowledge, expertise and passion for community media is central to our decision-making, ensuring our grants reflect the many perspectives, people and communities our sector serves. By drawing membership of its Advisory Committees from the community broadcasting sector the CBF can incorporate peer group involvement in the conduct of its grants processes. As an Advisory Committee member your skills, experience and your knowledge of the community broadcasting sector greatly assists the work of the CBF.

The CBF is supported by the Australian Government principally through the Federal government. The government defines the broad funding conditions for each funding allocation received by the CBF in our Funding Deed. The wording employed determines the parameters within which the CBF must work in disbursing the funds through its grant processes.

Read [our stories](#) about how we are supporting community media through our grants.

Learn more about [the history](#) of the CBF and how we have been helping Australians share their stories through community media since 1984.

The CBF [Annual Report](#) details CBF activities for the year. The [Strategic Plan](#) outlines our goals and objectives over the coming years.

Structure

The key structural elements of the CBF are:

- [Board of Directors](#) – Responsible for overall governance of the CBF, providing direction on organisational objectives, policy and practice.
- [Sector Investment Advisory Committee \(SIAC\)](#) – review and provide feedback on funding objectives, policy and practice, and make funding recommendations on [Sector Investment grants](#)
- [Development & Operations Grants Advisory Committee \(DOGAC\)](#) – review feedback from our grant assessors, make funding recommendations on [Development & Operations Grants](#), and contribute to the formulation of funding policy.
- [Content Grants Advisory Committee \(CGAC\)](#) - review feedback from our grant assessors, make funding recommendations on [Content Grants](#), and contribute to the formulation of funding policy.
- [Assessor Team](#) – Independently considers, scores and provides advice on [Content](#) and/or [Development & Operations](#) grant applications

Appointments are made by the CBF Board in accordance with a skills matrix and the [CBF Diversity, Access & Equity Policy](#).

Appointments to the CBF Board are the responsibility of current Board members, supported by our [Nominations Advisory Group](#). This group is comprised of national sector representative organisations.

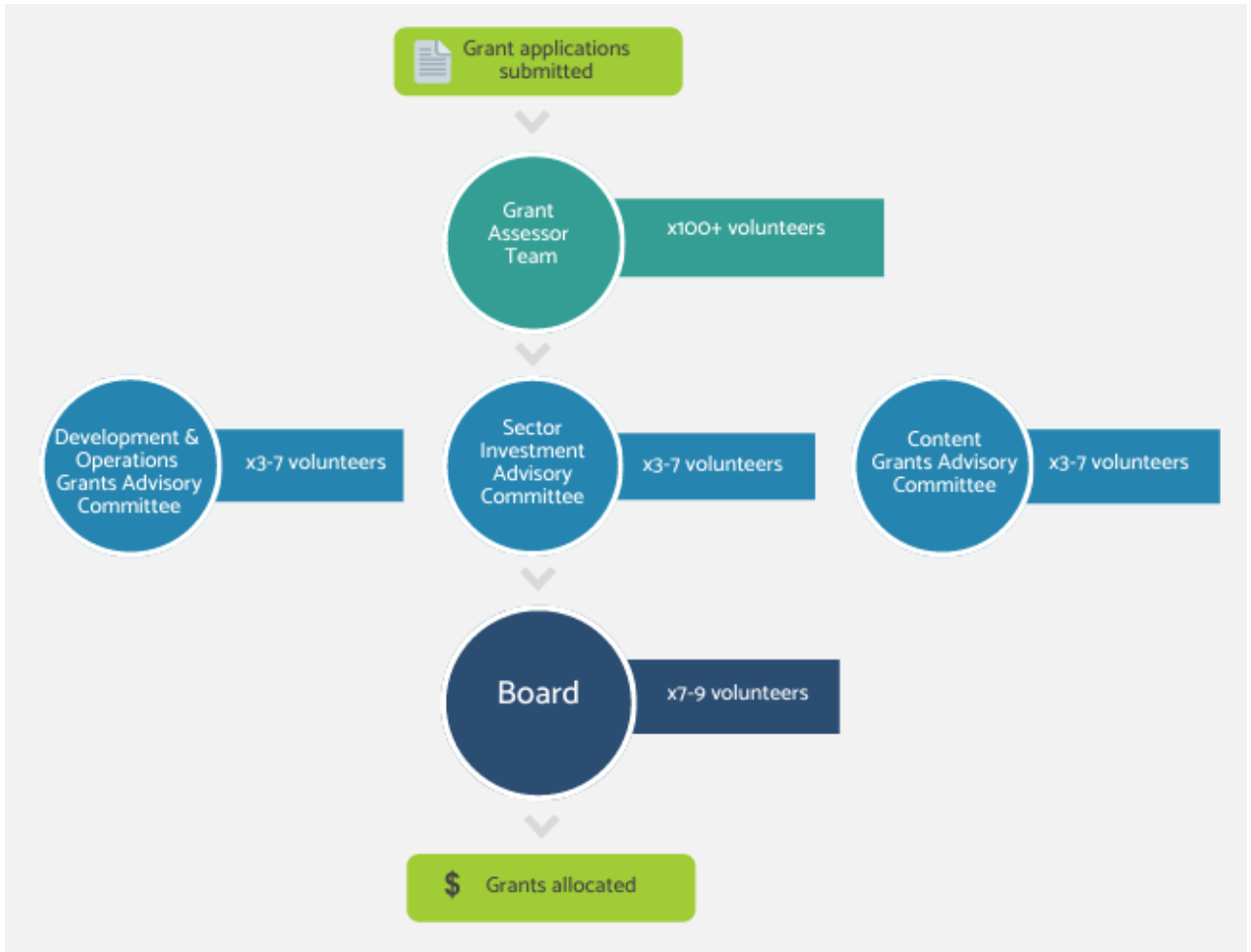
Five Board members (the majority) are appointed from nominations provided by community media and sector organisations. Each organisation may nominate up to two candidates. Additionally, our Board may recruit up to three Independent Directors to optimise leadership and governance skills. Recruitment of these independent Directors is the responsibility of the CBF Board.

The CBF President is appointed from nominations provided by the community broadcasting sector's peak representative body – the [Community Broadcasting Association of Australia](#) (CBAA).

The CBF Board is advised by a number of volunteer committees that make grant recommendations and provide expert advice.

We are very fortunate to have many volunteers who willingly offer their time and expertise on our grants advisory committees. Appointed by our Board through a nomination process that prioritises our Diversity, Access and Equity Policy, as well as specific experience and skills (See [Committee Roles and Responsibilities](#)).

The [CBF Assessor Team](#) independently review, score and provide advice on grant applications to our Grants Advisory Committees. Appointed by the CBF Board through a nomination process, grant assessors are called on twice annually to review incoming applications. Their scores and comments about the merits of applications assist the Advisory Committees in making recommendations for grant allocations to the CBF Board.



For more information about the structure of the CBF and the rules the organisation runs by, refer to the [CBF Constitution](#).

The CBF Support Team

The day to day operations of the CBF are undertaken by the CBF Support Team. The Support Team includes the CEO, Executive Officer, Finance Manager, Strategic Communications Manager, Administrative Officer and the Grants Support Team.

Advisory Committees

The CBF's structure enables peer group involvement in the grants process and development of funding categories through a range of Advisory Committees. There are three advisory committees that provide independent advice on grants disbursement and the development of funding objectives, policy and practice: the [Sector Investment Advisory Committee \(SIAC\)](#), the [Development & Operations Grants Advisory Committee \(DOGAC\)](#) and the [Content Grants Advisory Committee \(CGAC\)](#).

Each Advisory Committee consists of up to 7 members appointed by the CBF Board through a nomination process that ensures the [CBF Diversity, Access & Equity Policy](#) is met and a range of appropriate experience and skills are optimised. Individuals can self-nominate or be nominated by a community broadcasting station or sector organisation.

Advisory Committee members serve a three-year term and may serve up to three consecutive terms. Terms of appointment are staggered to ensure regular renewal while retaining institutional memory. Filling of casual vacancies and re-appointments are determined by the CBF Board.

Sector Investment Advisory Committee (SIAC)

Our Sector Investment Advisory Committee (SIAC) is a team of volunteers who provide feedback on policy and the distribution of funds for [major projects](#) enhancing community media. This committee ensures recommendations align with the [CBF Strategic Plan](#). The members of our Sector Investment Advisory Committee bring extensive experience in community broadcasting, expertise in the industry and a passion for community broadcasting.

SIAC makes recommendations on the development of grant guidelines to the CBF Board, with advice from the Grants Advisory Committees (GACs). It also acts as an information conduit between the GACs and the Board.

The Committee recognises the important role that the Foundation has in supporting the development, creativity and sustainability of community broadcasting in Australia, particularly through building the capacity of community broadcasters in a converging and evolving media landscape.

SIAC assesses [Sector Investment](#) grant applications and monitors the progress and outcomes of those grants. It also provides an advisory role to the CBF Board on overall grants disbursements and the formulation of funding policy as well as a global budget for the funding allocation for the next financial year or funding period. This budget will outline projected annual income and expenditure usually split between administration costs, sector project grants and grants to stations. The SIAC includes one Board Director and one member from each GAC.

Grants Advisory Committees (GACs)

Our grants advisory committees are made up of volunteers who have been appointed by the Board. These passionate committee members apply their extensive knowledge of community media to provide feedback on policy and the distribution of grant funds. [DOGAC](#) and [CGAC](#) make funding recommendations on [Development & Operations](#) grants or [Content](#) grants.

Each Committee has a Terms of Reference which describes the roles and responsibilities of committee members and how the GAC measures the success of their grant funding allocations.

Responsibilities

Our Grants Advisory Committees are independent, expert advisors with the following responsibilities:

- Determine funding recommendations based on the priorities and policy principles of the CBF and distribution of funding as broadly as possible
- Provide independent, informed advice on grants policy and practice to our Sector Investment Advisory Committee (SIAC)
- Undertake a high volume of assessments of grant applications (sometimes 30 or more per round)
- Consider Content or Development & Operations grant applications and make recommendations to the CBF Board, taking into account Grant Assessor scores and overall allocations according to identified priorities

- Monitor the progress and outcomes of relevant grant projects
- Approve the release of staged grant payments for multi-year funding agreements on the basis of progress reports provided
- Recommend global budget estimates based on identified priorities by our SIAC and available funds for each grant category
- Suggest amendments to funding priorities, grant guidelines and grant application forms to best meet funding objectives for consideration by our SIAC
- Review the effectiveness of funding allocations against funding policy
- Abide by the [CBF Code of Conduct](#), including the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- Remain abreast of current and emerging community broadcasting issues, policy and practice including better practice in grant-making and sector development.

The following chart provides a broad comparative overview of respective responsibilities of the CBF’s Board, GACs and Grants Support Team.

Board	Sector Investment Advisory Committee	Grants Advisory Committees	Grants Support Team
Responsible for governance, operation and strategic development of the CBF	Responsible for providing independent, informed advice on the strategic development of the CBF, funding policy and practice.	Considers applications with the assistance of assessors and makes recommendations on funding allocations to the CBF Board.	Responsible for supporting the assessor team and Advisory Committees by initial processing of applications, providing supporting information and analysis;
Appoints Advisory Committees and Assessor team.	Drafts Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.	Monitors the progress of grants.	maintaining policy libraries and providing advice on CBF rules, policies and procedures.
Approves grant categories and grant guidelines and global budgets for sector projects as recommended by the SIAC. Approves Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.	Devises grant categories, drafts grant guidelines and global budgets for sector projects.	Provides advice on funding policy to the SIAC and CBF Board.	Records the decisions of the Advisory Committees by taking minutes at meetings.
Approves funding as recommended by the Advisory Committees.	Receives advice from sector project managers and their advisory committees.		Liaises with and helps grant applicants with their applications and grantees with their acquittals.
Withdraws funding.	Reviews the effectiveness of grant categories and makes recommendations about grant		Receives grant reports and determines whether they are sufficient to acquit a grant. Tracks grant
Monitors grant acquittal compliance levels.			

Commissions independent external reviews of funding programs and sector projects.	categories to the Board.		acquittal compliance and provides compliance reporting to the Advisory Committees and CBF Board.
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The role of the Grants Support Team (GST)

Working with the wider CBF team including the CBF Board and volunteer Grants Advisory Committees, the Grants Support Team works collaboratively to ensure our grant programs are implemented and managed effectively, applicants are supported through the grants process, and our committees and volunteer grant assessors have what they need to make decisions. The GST is responsible for the efficient administration and management of grants and projects that support community media broadcasters.

The Grants Support Team has three key roles in relation to Advisory Committees:

- An administrative support role:
 - drafting and compiling meeting agendas, discussion papers and Board reports
 - following up actions and supporting Committee communication between meetings
- A record keeper:
 - recording minutes of meetings and grant decision-making outcomes
 - maintaining Grants Advisory Committee policy registers and evaluation frameworks
- An advisor:
 - guiding and advising on policy development and compliance
 - reminding Committee members of the parameters within which they operate, such as the CBF constitution or CBF policy

Relationship with national sector representative organisations (SROs)

Sector Representative Organisations (SROs) are sometimes involved in the nomination process of the members of some Advisory Committees. However, it is important to understand that such Advisory Committee members are not representatives or agents of those nominating bodies since such formal links would compromise the independence that is necessary for the fair and impartial conduct of our funding processes. Advisory Committee members need not provide reports to the SRO who may have supported their nomination. The CBF provides regular reports to SROs on its activities with more detailed information exchange being undertaken through formal correspondence. We also regularly attend and participate in SRO annual conferences and other SRO activities such as the [Community Broadcasting Sector Roundtable](#).

The Roundtable is an independent and informal working group of national community broadcasting sector organisations convened by the CBAA to deal with sector policy, development and funding. Since its establishment in 2013 the Roundtable has been the driving force behind collective sector strategic action.

The Roundtable identifies and discusses sector needs, emerging issues, policy positions, funding requirements and joint advocacy initiatives. Each year the Roundtable aims to develop a funding submission for consideration as part of the federal budget process and lobbies for its support. In election years the Roundtable also devises and implements a strategic campaign to advance the interests of the community broadcasting sector.

It's important to note that the CBF has a commitment to consult with relevant SROs prior to the introduction of any significant changes to funding policies and practices (see [CBF Consultation Policy](#)).

The SIAC will also undertake ongoing communication with sector organisations, as it assesses and monitors Sector Investment funding. SROs will often be invited to attend SIAC meetings in person to provide progress reports, briefings and to speak to their applications. Where the CBF is invited to provide reports to the constituency of an SRO at its annual conference or on other occasions, SIAC members and particularly the SIAC Chair may be involved in such presentations. Your Grants Support Team member is available to assist in the preparation of such reports.

Advisory Committee members should also be aware that they should not speak on behalf of or otherwise represent the CBF in any formal way, unless authorised to do so by the CBF Board, the CBF's Executive Officer or Strategic Communications Manager.

Consultation

We actively consult with the community broadcasting sector to ensure that our grant programs and processes are responsive to sector needs, and to encourage cooperation and collaboration within the sector.

Our primary method of sector consultation is through our Board and Advisory Committee membership. Our funding decisions employ peer review processes; the voluntary involvement of experienced community broadcasters and industry experts is at the heart of how we operate.

The CBF also has a commitment to consult with relevant SROs prior to the introduction of any significant changes to funding policies and practices. This consultation takes place both formally via the circulation of draft reports, strategic plans, grant guidelines and other materials for comment, and via regular input from SROs to the CBF's Board meetings through the exchange of written or verbal reports.

Further consultation of the wider community broadcasting sector is largely managed through sector projects (Amrap, National Training Project, Industry Capacity & Skills Training, Digital Radio Project, Enhance National News Project and the Multiplatform Distribution Project) and sector coordination grants (CBAA, NEMBC, RPH Australia). These consultations include formal and informal direct station/broadcaster feedback and the consultative committees and forums which facilitate the gathering of representatives from national peak representative sector organisations to provide advice on sector projects.

The CBF also receives direct station/broadcaster feedback through formal correspondence and informal interactions which are filtered through to Advisory Committees where appropriate. Further

consultation comes through sector research, including the National Listener Survey and Station Engagement surveys, and regular independent reviews.

When considering changes to grant programs, Advisory Committees consider how to best consult with the sector and should seek the Board's endorsement for any new approach. Consultation options include:

- Advisory committees
- Sector project and coordination grant consultations
- Independent reviews
- Focus groups
- Online surveys
- Interviews with key stakeholders

All consultation advice is considered by the relevant GAC and the Board and actioned as relevant. (see [CBF Consultation Policy](#)).

Grants

The following section is intended to familiarise you with the CBF's grant processes and your role in grant assessment and monitoring. The CBF uses an online grant management system called *SmartyGrants*. If you would like further clarification of any aspect of this material, please contact the CBF Grants Support Team. CBF grant opportunities may be competitive or non-competitive.

Competitive Grants – Development & Operations Grants, Content Grants (except for Specialist Radio Programming)

All competitive applications are assessed on their merits.

Competitive grant applications take the following journey:

1. Application prepared and submitted
2. Application processed by Grants Support Team to ensure eligibility
3. Application assessed against the following assessment criteria by at least five assessors, including at least three members of our [Grant Assessor Team](#) and two members of the relevant Grants Advisory Committee
4. The GAC will consider priority weightings applied to average score, scores and comments, and make funding recommendations to our Board of Directors
5. Funding allocations finalised by the CBF Board.
6. Grants Support Team advises applicants of funding decisions

At least half of the assessors of applications for and by First Nations people, groups and organisations will be First Nations assessors. Applicants may also recommend that assessors with particular skills or perspectives read and score your application (e.g. technicians to assess transmission equipment and women to assess a women's training project).

All assessments are collated by the GST onto a master ranking sheet that is provided to the GAC meeting. It is important that all GAC members are familiar with the process for assessing competitive grants, particularly because much of the work of assessing grants takes place prior to the GAC meeting.

Development & Operations grant applications will be considered by DOGAC based on:

- aggregated assessment scores, including priority weightings to be applied on regionally-based organisations (+ 5%) and organisations with an average annual income (over the past 3 years) less than \$100,000 (+5%) (concurrent loadings may apply)
- the level of ethnic [Specialist Radio Programming](#) produced. All or part of your grant may be drawn from the Ethnic Community Broadcasting Fund if you have submitted a Specialist Radio Programming application demonstrating eligible ethnic programs within the same funding period as your D&O application.
- the total amount of CBF funding to the organisation in previous rounds
- the overall financial position of your organisation
- the total funding available in each round
- a balance of regional, remote, suburban and metropolitan stations
- a balance across all states and territories
- a balance between stations and sector organisations
- a balance across all communities of interest
- stations significantly affected by drought, fire, and other disasters.

Content Grant applications will be considered by the CGAC on the basis of:

- aggregated assessment scores, including priority weightings to be applied on regionally-based organisations (+ 5%) and organisations with an average annual income (over the past 3 years) less than \$100,000 (+5%) (concurrent loadings may apply)
- the number of projects funded per organisation
- the total funding amount funded per organisation
- balancing funding support between new ideas and established projects
- the total funding available in each round
- a balance of regional, remote, suburban and metropolitan organisations
- a balance across all states and territories
- a balance between local, multi-station and a national focus
- a balance of audio, video and online platforms
- a balance across a mix of communities of interest.

Whether an eligible applicant is successful will depend upon the ranking they achieve, the quality of all applications received and the amount of funding available.

[Non-Competitive Grants – Sector Investment, Specialist Radio Programming](#)

Non-competitive grant opportunities may be invitational or involve applicants establishing their eligibility for funding. Once eligibility is established, they will receive funding as determined by the Advisory Committee.

[Sector Investment Grants](#)

[Sector Investment grants](#) aim to strengthen and develop Australian community media by providing sector organisations with funding to address broader funding objectives for the sector.

This fund supports sector coordination for sector organisations and sector-wide projects such as Amrap, NEMBC Sector Coordination and CBAA Sector Coordination. These are the organisations and initiatives that require high-level investment, and strategic analysis and assessment to produce maximum sector benefit. This category helps the CBF to assist the sector to respond to and embrace change in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

Outcomes based funding

In broad terms, outcomes-based funding allows grantees greater flexibility to respond and adapt their activities across a funding period in order to better meet their identified outcomes. All Sector Investment grants operate within an outcomes-based funding and reporting model, whereby sector organisations develop outcomes maps in collaboration with SIAC as part of their grant agreements and report on the progress of outcomes throughout the funding period. Some sector organisations apply for and receive multi-year agreements for sector coordination and sector projects.

Sector consultation

In funding sector projects (Amrap, the Digital Radio Project, the Enhanced National News Project, the Multiplatform Distribution Project, the National Training Project and Industry Capacity and Skills Development) the CBF requires the project manager to establish and maintain a consultation process with the stakeholders served by the project. Currently sector project staff consult with the SROs and other stakeholders independently and may form consultative or reference committees. Sector projects also provide briefings to the [Sector Roundtable](#). Consultation with stakeholders helps to determine the direction and activities of the project within the scope of the funding objectives. This is developed into an outcomes map which SIAC will consider ensuring the project is best meeting funding objectives and the needs of the community broadcasting sector.

SIAC can also seek additional advice from the sector and relevant stakeholders to determine policy directions when required.

Sector Project Global Budgets

Sector project staff develop a draft global budget for the funding allocation for the next financial year or funding period in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Grants process

Grant Guidelines

Grant guidelines are drafted by the GACs (as a result of their terms of reference), reviewed by SIAC and approved by the Board. Guidelines are aligned with funding objectives set out in the Government Funding Deed but are developed by the GACs to produce greater outcomes for these grant categories. The relevant SRO must be consulted prior to the introduction of any significant changes to funding policies and practices.

Assessment Criteria

As a matter of transparency and better practice the CBF uses a consistent set of assessment criteria in evaluating competitive grant applications. The assessment criteria, their weighting and their relationship to questions on the grant application form are published within the grant guidelines.

Example grant assessment criteria

Weighting	Criteria	Example application form questions
20%	Ideas – the application puts forward a reasonable proposal or concept for which there is a demonstrated need.	How will you engage with your communities? Why do you need CBF support now?
20%	Capacity– the application demonstrates that your organisation has the capacity to deliver on its goals.	Who will be involved? How well are you achieving the goals of your strategic plan?
40%	Impacts – the application will have a demonstrable, positive outcome for the station / community / sector.	How will you measure the success of your activities? How will your activities address gender inequity?
20%	Planning – the application demonstrates clear planning and good value for money.	How will the proposal be carried out? Details of the grant Budget.

Application Forms

Application forms for CBF grants programs are based on a formal standard application template in accordance with the required compliance, eligibility and assessment criteria for each category. Applications for grants provide:

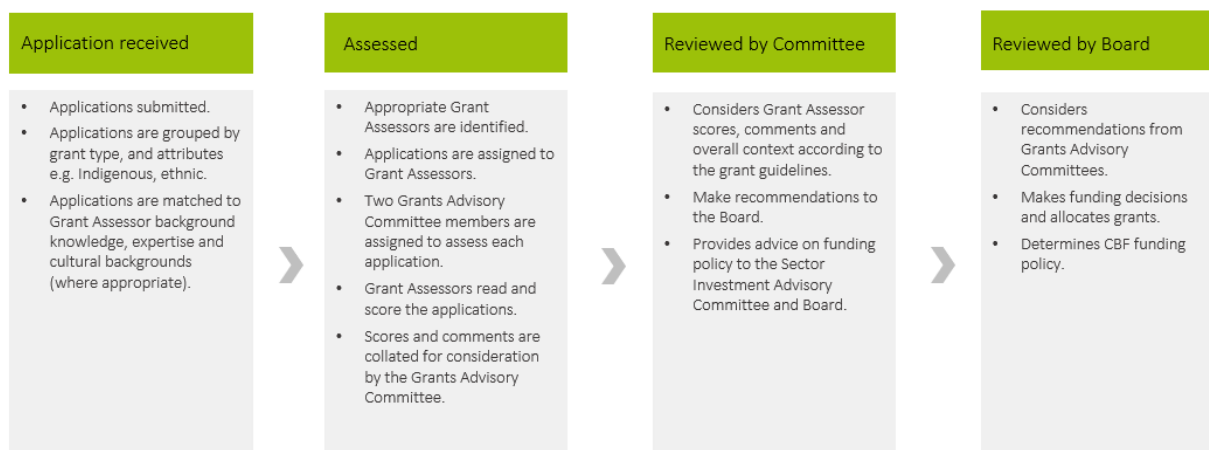
- Organisation details
- Project summary
- Responses to grant criteria:
 - Capacity (D&O only)
 - Idea(s)
 - Impact(s)
 - Planning and budget

Grant application forms are developed to determine eligibility and to ensure that relevant and sufficiently detailed information is provided by applicants to allow assessors to assess each application

against the established grant criteria. The questions on grant application forms are framed in a manner that is aimed to draw information from applicants relevant to the published grant assessment criteria.

Assessing Grants

Grant assessment process



Assessment forms

Assessors and GAC members assess each application allocated to them for assessment using an Assessment Form in SmartyGrants. Assessment forms must be submitted within the timeframes advised so the scores can be aggregated and a ranking prepared for the GAC’s consideration at the meeting.

The Assessment form includes:

- Comments from the Grants Support Team highlighting information you need to know prior to assessing the application
- A Rating Scale and single-choice question for a score (0-3) for each criterion (half-points are permitted)
- A single-choice question where you can identify whether you suggest full, partial or no funding for the application
- An open text question where you can provide advice to the GAC about the application
- An open text question where you can provide constructive feedback to the applicant in the event their application is not supported

Rating Scales describe what each score for each criterion means, and are an internal text that GAC members set to help assessors give fair scores to help the GAC make clear and consistent decisions.

Example Rating Scales

<i>Criteria:</i>	Idea	Impact	Planning
<i>Weighting:</i>	40%	30%	30%
3 points	Provides clear evidence demonstrating a need for the content in the community.	Clear and appropriate measures of success and targets to increase	The people involved are clearly the best people for the project.

	Convincingly outlines how the idea will support self-representation by diverse community groups.	diversity and lead to long term outcomes.	Clear and realistic estimated timeframes. A clear budget demonstrating good value for money.
2 points	Provides some evidence demonstrating a need for the content in the community. Clearly outlines how it will support participation by diverse community groups.	Measures of success will increase diversity and lead to long term outcomes.	The people involved could make this project a success. Some clear timeframes provided. Budget demonstrates reasonable value for money.
1 point	Provides minimal evidence demonstrating a need for the content in the community. There is little evidence that the proposal will increase community participation or diversity.	Limited impact and outcomes for diverse communities.	Few experienced people involved in the project. Timelines are lacking or unclear. Budget isn't very clear.

Grant Assessment Summary spreadsheet

The Grant Assessment Summary spreadsheet is a list of all grant applications, in order of collated and weighted scores, providing information the GAC need to make decisions.

The GAC can review where the 'cut-off' point would be – usually determined by the level of funds available to allocate – and discuss applications that are ranked close to the cut-off point. GACs may take the opportunity to discuss these applications in greater detail, and adjust scores based on the outcomes from that discussion.

If at any stage you need assistance understanding the process of grant application assessment, please get in touch with the Grants Support Team and we will do our best to help.

Variation to grant agreement

Requests for variations to the terms of a grant agreement are occasionally received. Such requests are dealt with on their merits with the proviso that variations are only permitted for a similar purpose to that originally approved.

A grantee who wants to change the purpose of the grant can do so prior to the activity end date within a progress report (or a variation form if no progress report is required).

A grantee who wants to change the reporting timeframe, make minor adjustments to reporting conditions or budget can negotiate with the Grants Support Team. A request will be referred to the Advisory Committee only for more complex or contentious variation requests.

If the variation request is beyond the responsibilities of the Grants Support Team, they will send the request to the Advisory Committee for consideration at the next meeting or via our online

communication platform 'HQ'. Usually the Grants Support Team will recommend a course of action and the Advisory Committee members will be requested to respond as to whether they agree / disagree with the motion.

Grant reporting

The Grants Support Team have responsibility for considering and accepting grant reports (or 'acquittals').

An Advisory Committee may request to see a progress or final report for a specific project. If a more detailed or frequent reporting regime is considered necessary, the Advisory Committee can recommend that this be imposed as a specific condition in the Grant Agreement.

The Board sets targets for grant acquittal compliance. Grant acquittal compliance is monitored by the CBF Support Team and reported to the Board on a biannual basis. Advisory Committees may also monitor the progress of grant acquittals to ensure the category is meeting its aims.

Evaluation Framework

Grants programs are evaluated in order to assess their effectiveness and efficiency, to determine whether the grants helped to achieve the overall goal of the grant program and to determine how it could be improved.

Evaluation involves assessing and analysing the information gathered throughout the grant cycle to determine which approaches and models of projects work best. The results are also used to continue to modify the program goals, program design, and the grants management system.

Based on *Australian Institute of Grants Management* better practice advice in relation to grant program evaluation, the Support Team has developed a framework to plan and evaluate funding directions.

Grant programs are reviewed internally through the Terms of Reference process and independently through external reviews.

Terms of Reference process

The intention of the Terms of Reference process is for the CBF to take a formal and proactive evaluation approach through the process of establishing and regularly reviewing Terms of Reference (TOR) for each Advisory Committee.

The aim is to embed a formal process in which Advisory Committees brainstorm, consult, plan and evaluate their decisions. By setting goals and evaluation measures for each grant program the Advisory Committees will be well equipped to measure and evaluate the impact of the grants.

Each Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference includes the following:

- Background - how and why the Committee was formed.
- Composition and Nomination Process - the membership of the Committee and how members are nominated and appointed.

- Roles and Responsibilities - the activities Committee members will undertake, such as assessment of grants, drafting and revising grant guidelines, and specific tasks for Committee members such as the Chair.
- Meeting Schedule, Workload and Expectations - where and when Committee members will be required to undertake their roles.
- Aim and Objectives - an attachment detailing the Aim of the grant program as a whole, Objectives to meet the Aim, Activities to meet each Objective, and a set of Evaluation Measures for each Activity to track progress against established targets.
- Ongoing Monitoring and Review – an overview of how the TOR will be monitored, and how and how often the Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Committee.

Independent Reviews

From time to time the CBF seeks independent assessments of CBF funding programs in order to determine whether they are meeting the sector’s needs effectively and in an efficient manner. Expert analysis is also regularly sought as to how the sector may make best use of new and developing technologies within the limits of its available resources. The Federal government may also conduct reviews of grant programs and CBF operations.

The established practice is for independent evaluators to be engaged through an open tender process. When an independent review of a grant program is due, the Board will consider an appropriate allocation of resources to engage independent consultants.

Schedule of Independent Reviews

Activity being reviewed	Last Reviewed	Expected next Review due
Station Resilience	Never	2021
Sector Technologies	2014	TBC
Outcomes of CBF Structure & Governance Review	Never	2022
Supporting Sector Organisations to Thrive	Never	TBC
Compelling Content	2014	2023

Communicating and recording decisions

Code of Conduct

The CBF has a [Code of Conduct](#) that all Advisory Committee are provided with on appointment.

Conflicts of Interest

All Advisory Committee members are required to read and complete the Conflict of Interest Declaration. All Board and Advisory Committee members should be familiar with the procedures outlined in the CBF Code of Conduct, such as making a declaration and not participating in decision-making where there is a conflict of interest.

It is an essential principle of CBF operation that any Board or Advisory Committee member who has an actual or a perceived conflict of interest in a matter that is to be considered by the Board or the Committee must not be present, vote or be counted in a quorum in relation to that matter being considered.

Confidentiality

Grant applications and meeting papers may include information that is considered commercial-in-confidence or otherwise sensitive. All CBF grant applications, and all information gleaned from their consideration, should be treated as confidential and not circulated, discussed or otherwise utilised outside the processes of the CBF.

Advisory Committee meetings and decisions

Travel and accommodation

The CBF Administration Manager organises Advisory Committee members' travel and accommodation, as per the CBF Travel and Accommodation guidelines. An expense claim form is provided with each set of meeting papers.

Meeting papers

The Grants Support Team manage the collation of information and meeting papers for approval by the Chair before distribution. Meeting papers are generally circulated electronically to all Committee members via the HQ facility at least one week before the meeting to allow time for members to read before a meeting.

Making Decisions

Each Committee, guided by its Chairperson, determines their preferred way to make decisions, within the rules set out in the CBF Constitution.

The degree of formality employed may vary. Some Committees will have a formal process. A "Mover" and "Seconder" of each motion will be recorded and decisions will be determined by majority vote. Others will reach a decision through discussion and consensus recording only those decisions made unanimously. It is important that GAC members feel comfortable contributing to the decision-making process. The Grants Support Team will ensure that draft minutes are made of each meeting that may be reviewed and revised before being confirmed as accurate at the following GAC meeting.

In the case where an Advisory Committee decides to vote on a motion, Advisory Committee members have the option of "agreeing", "disagreeing" or "abstaining". Where there is a split vote, the Chair will have a second and deciding vote.

Minutes and Board reports

Grants Support Team members take minutes during Advisory Committee meetings to record the discussions and recommendations made to the Board during the meeting. The Grants Support Team will then prepare formal minutes to the meeting for the Committee and a report to the Board of any motions or critical information that needs to be considered by the Board, both to be approved by the Advisory Committee Chair before distribution.

Maintaining a Policy Register

To help Advisory Committees maintain consistent decisions, the Grants Support Team compile policy decisions made by the Advisory Committees into a Policy Register. Each decision is referenced back to the meeting where the decision took place. The register is distributed with each set of meeting papers.

The 'HQ' facility

'HQ' (also known by its generic name *Basecamp*) is the CBF's online project management and communications tool that allows Board and GAC members and the CBF Support Team to communicate with one another, provide information updates and make recommendations to the Board between GAC meetings. You will be provided with log-in instructions when we have set you up as a user. HQ has a range of short tutorials available that will assist you to make the most of the facility's capabilities.

Zoom

Zoom is the preferred program used by the CBF for online meetings. Zoom is free to download and your computer will require a microphone and camera to participate in a meeting. If you are unfamiliar with using Zoom then please get in touch with the Grants Support Team to introduce you to the program. You can also find some helpful introductory videos in the [Zoom learning centre](#).

Checklist for new Advisory Committee members

On your appointment onto an Advisory Committee, you will be provided with an Induction Kit containing a number of documents. This checklist summarises the things you should read and do before your first meeting:

To read:

- This GAC Manual
- Latest [CBF Annual Report](#)
- [CBF Strategic Plan](#)
- [CBF Code of Conduct](#)
- Glossary of Acronyms
- Recent Committee meeting papers
- Thought provoking or better grant practice articles
- Training Opportunities
- Travel and Accommodation Guidelines

To do:

- Log on to 'HQ' facility, say hi to your new co-Committee members, save as a bookmark
- Let us know if you have any particular travel preferences and provide any frequent flier numbers
- Let us know about any special dietary requirements