



Supporting Participation Program - 2026-27

Expression of Interest (EOI) Guide

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About the EOI guide

This guide is for people thinking about applying for the Supporting Participation Program - 2026-27. It summarises key information from the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (GOGs) to help people prepare their applications.

An Easy Read version of this document is available as 'Application Guide part 1 – Easy Read' and 'Application Guide part 2 – Easy Read'.

Please read the full GOGs if you need more detail or have questions. They are available on [GrantConnect Homepage: GrantConnect](#) and the [Supporting Participation Program | AHRC website](#).

Organisations should use the full GOGs and the Roles and Responsibilities document to make sure they have all relevant information.

About the grant program

This information is from GOGs section 2.

The Supporting Participation Program started in 2011. Its full name is the Supporting Participation by Representatives of People with Disability in Key International Forums on Human Rights Program.

The Supporting Participation program supports people with disability, through their disability representative and disability advocacy organisations, to take part in key international forums on human rights.

The program helps Australia meet its responsibilities under the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD is an international human rights treaty. Australia agreed to follow it in 2008. It sets out the human rights of people with disability. These CRPD Articles are important to the program:

- Article 4.3 says countries should work closely with people with disability and actively include them in decisions that affect them. This should happen through representative and advocacy organisations. It applies to laws, policies, and issues about people with disability.
- Article 29 says countries must make sure people with disability have political rights and can use those rights equal to other people.
- Article 33(3) says civil society, especially people with disability and their representative and advocacy organisations, must be involved in monitoring the CRPD.
- Article 40 says countries that have agreed to the CRPD will meet regularly at a Conference of States Parties to discuss how the CRPD is being put into action.

This regular meeting is called the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (COSP). It is held at the UN Headquarters in New York, United States of America (USA).

The Supporting Participation Program has 3 program activities:

- **Civil society participation at COSP** – supports civil society delegates who are people with disability to attend and contribute to COSP through their representative organisations. This grant opportunity focuses on this activity.
- **EOI process and expert supports** – supports the Expression of Interest (EOI) process and expert supports provided by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). The AHRC identifies and recommends people with disability, and their representative organisations, who may be suitable for funding. It also helps support delegates before and during selected forums.
- **Support for people to take part in international forums** – supports people to take part in other important international human rights forums. Recent examples include the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) in 2025 and support for people serving on international committees, such as the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The grant program aims to:

- support people with disability in Australia to take part in and contribute to international human rights forums about disability issues
- support Australia to meet its responsibilities under Article 33(3) of the CRPD
- increase awareness in Australia's disability and civil society sectors of issues raised at COSP
- increase awareness of disability issues raised in other international human rights forums, including issues that support treaty body discussions.

About the grant opportunity

This grant helps fund civil society delegates who are people with disability to take part in key international human rights forums. These forums promote the rights of people with disability. Delegates must take part through their representative or advocacy organisations.

The main goals of this grant opportunity are to:

- Support people with disability to take part through their representative and advocacy organisations. This helps make sure people with disability are meaningfully included in global discussions about disability rights and inclusion.
- Provide funding so people with disability can actively take part in the 2026-27 international forums. These include:
 - 20th Session of the United Nations (UN) Conference of States Parties (COSP20) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), UN Headquarters New York, United States of America (USA), 9 to 11 June 2027
 - 71st Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW71), UN Headquarters New York, USA, 8 to 19 March 2027; and
 - Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR), Sendai, Japan, 25 to 29 October 2027.

The expected results are that funded civil society delegates will:

- attend and participate at the identified forums as part of any wider Australian Delegation
- represent the experiences and interests of Australians with disability and speak up for policy change internationally
- have opportunities to:
 - network with advocates in the international disability movement
 - learn and build their human rights knowledge, skills and confidence, including how to do strategic advocacy in Australia
 - visit important UN organisations, and
 - build their capacity to represent the Australian disability sector internationally.

Delegates funded through this grant will be asked to join workshops and briefing sessions before and after the forum. These workshops will help delegates meet each other and agree on shared goals and messages before they attend.

Forum delegations might include:

- **General Delegation** – supports people with disability who have experience in the disability sector to attend. These delegates will represent Australians with disability and speak up for policy change internationally. They are expected to actively support the wider delegation before and during the forum, including by:
 - leading informal talks and raising issues for the delegation to consider
 - sharing what they have learned from any earlier international disability advocacy work
 - helping with group administration tasks
 - taking part in and/or helping arrange civil society delegation meetings during the forum.
- General delegates will mentor at least one person from the Emerging Young Leaders Delegation. Supports will be provided before and during the forums.
- Individuals applying to the General Delegation must be 18 years or older. Individuals aged 18 to 35 years can apply to this group instead of the Emerging Young Leaders Delegation if they want to.
- **Emerging Young Leaders Delegation** – supports young people with disability, aged 18 to 35 years, who are disability rights advocates and show leadership potential. This group helps build the next generation's skills to represent the Australian disability sector internationally. They will have opportunities to:
 - be mentored by a general delegate
 - network with advocates involved in international disability rights
 - learn about strategic advocacy and how to use it in advocacy work in Australia
 - participate in important international forum/s.

All delegates are expected to:

- Take part in any pre-briefings arranged by the department and/or the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
- Actively take part in event activities and follow the event's processes and rules.
 - For example, at COSP, delegates are expected to:
 - participate in events
 - network and engage with other attendees
 - contribute to the civil society aims and goals
 - work with the full delegation. This may include organising, helping with, or supporting an intervention, joint statement, or side event.
- Actively work with the Australian delegation if it is present, including delegates from other organisations and the government delegates.
- Support Emerging Young Leader delegates.

- Follow Work, Health and Safety duties.
- Follow relevant policies and rules for the forum.
- Make sure passports, visas, insurance and travel documents are organised. Delegates must follow the laws of the country where the forum is held and any countries they travel through.
 - For example, delegates under 21 years old should not buy or drink alcohol under USA laws. Some medicines that are legal in Australia are banned in the USA and should not be taken.
- Attend most of the event in person (unless the event changes to a virtual format).
- Identify events and networking opportunities that may be useful, including ways to engage with and support the Australian delegation.
- Take part in post-event briefings and events for delegates arranged by the department and/or DFAT.

The Supporting Participation Program mainly supports people to attend in person. It can also support forums that are virtual or a mix of in person and virtual attendance.

To receive funding each delegate must aim to attend at least 60 per cent of the event in person, during the time they are funded to take part in the forum.

Eligibility criteria

This information is from GOGs section 4.2.

Additional eligibility criteria

We can only accept applications for individuals with disability from organisations that:

- have UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Consultative Status; or
- are approved for the specific forum they are applying for, such as having COSP Accreditation.

Applicants must be 18 years or older. Applicants for the Emerging Young Leader Delegation must be 18 to 35 years old when they apply.

What the grant money can be used for

This information is from GOGs section 5.

Eligible grant activities

To be eligible, your grant activity must help the successful individual take part in the selected key international human rights forum.

Activities can include costs for attending in person, attending online, or both.

Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant money on eligible costs for eligible grant activities. These include:

- overseas travel costs, such as airfares and transfers
- accommodation costs

- travel insurance
- passport and visa fees
- forum fees
- assistive technology needed to attend and take part
- extra support if needed, such as accessibility support for travel or accommodation, and costs for carers or support people if needed
- minor costs, such as taxi or bus fares and internet access for work purposes
- administration costs that directly relate to arranging attendance at the event.

Organisations must give all funding to the funded individuals. Organisations must not keep any funding or charge funded individuals for administration or in-kind support.

What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for:

- personal travel, accommodation, and travel insurance costs that are not linked to going to the event
- any costs not linked to going to the event, such as souvenirs and sightseeing
- alcoholic drinks
- costs from before the grant agreement start date
- costs for preparing a grant application or related documents
- construction or capital works
- activities that other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies are mainly responsible for
- wages or salaries
- paying ransom for ransomware, cyber-attacks or any other type of cybercrime.

Assessment criteria

This information is from GOGs section 6.

You must answer all assessment criteria in your application.

The AHRC will assess your application using the points available for each criterion. The highest possible score is 30 points.

See GOGs section 8.1 for more information about how applications are assessed.

The detail and evidence you provide should match the size, complexity and amount of funding you are asking for.

Assessment Criterion 1: Organisation's support

(participation costs: 3 points; in-kind support: 2 points; maximum of 5 points)

Explain how your organisation will support the individual to take part. This support should be reasonable for the size and capacity of your organisation. Support may include:

- contributing to some participation costs

- providing in-kind support, such as help with travel arrangements, administration, or staffing support before, during or after the forum

Assessment Criterion 2: Organisation's experience

(0-5 points)

Describe your organisation's experience and involvement in human rights work. Your response could include:

- your organisation's vision, purpose, or values
- your organisation's participation in UN processes, such as treaty reporting, submissions to Special Rapporteurs, or comments on draft General Comments
- how your organisation uses a human rights approach in its advocacy and work in Australia and overseas.

Assessment Criterion 3: Individual's knowledge and experience

(0-5 points)

General Delegate: Explain the individual's knowledge of and experience working with the CRPD, human rights, UN processes, and how the CRPD and other relevant human rights treaties are put into action and monitored in Australia.

Emerging Young Leader Delegate: Explain the individual's relevant knowledge of and experience in the disability sector and human rights advocacy.

Give details about relevant experience in the disability and human rights sectors. This may include:

- formal qualifications or relevant training
- achievements, such as academic or leadership awards
- personal experience
- professional experience in human rights, disability and human rights advocacy
- knowledge of UN processes, the CRPD, and experience with how the CRPD and other relevant human rights treaties are put into action and monitored in Australia.

Assessment Criterion 4: Individual's delegation supports

(0-5 points)

Explain how the individual will work with people from other organisations as part of a combined civil society delegation. This may include:

- asking for input and advice about issues to discuss
- putting their name forward to speak or work with others on an intervention at a roundtable or side event
- **General Delegate:** Explain how the individual will actively mentor members of the Emerging Young Leaders Delegation.
- **Emerging Young Leader Delegation:** Explain how the individual will actively take part as a mentee role with members of the General Delegation.

Your response could describe activities such as:

- building delegates' skills so they can attend and contribute to the event
- asking for input and advice about issues to discuss
- mentoring activities that build the skills of Emerging Young Leaders
- plans for side events or other whole of delegation events
- plans to work with others for side events

Assessment Criterion 5: Impact of attendance

(0-5 points)

General Delegate: Explain how attending the forum would help the work of the individual and the work of their organisation.

Emerging Young Leader Delegate: Explain how attending the forum would benefit the individual, including their future goals in human rights, and the work of their organisation.

Your response could describe the impact:

- for the individual
- for the work of their organisation
- on their future goals; and
- how the knowledge and relationships gained will support stronger advocacy.

Assessment Criterion 6: Sharing forum outcomes

(0-5 points)

Explain activities the individual and the organisation will do after the forum. Explain how they will share the forum outcomes with Australian civil society.

How to apply

This information is from GOGs section 7.

To apply you must:

- read all documents about the grant opportunity
- complete the EOI Application Form and Privacy Collection Notice
- provide all the information asked for, including which forums applied for
- answer all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- include any attachments
- email your application by the closing date and time to disability@humanrights.gov.au

You can apply in different formats. Please use these size limits when answering the assessment criteria in section 2.4 of the EOI Application Form:

- Written (2 pages)
- Easy Read (no length limit)
- Video (5 minutes)
- Audio file (5 minutes)

If you send an Easy Read, video, or audio response, you can also include a written summary of up to 1 page.

The grant selection process

This information is from GOGs section 8.

The AHRC and the department developed the assessment criteria and scoring system together. The criteria are designed to support the best outcomes from this grant. They consider the individual's experience, what they could contribute to the forum, and how attending could support their future work and advocacy.

This grant opportunity is not intended to pay for all costs related to attendance. Organisations that show they can work with the department and contribute funding or in-kind supports will be viewed favourably. This may allow more delegates to be supported. Organisations must give the full grant amount to successful applicants. Organisations must not keep any part of the funding for administration or in-kind support.

Stages of Assessment

Stage 1 – Eligibility assessment – the AHRC will first check applications to confirm that the organisations and the individual meet the eligibility requirements. This includes checking the age of applicants for the Emerging Young Leader Delegation.

Stage 2 – Organisation and individual assessment – eligible organisation and individual applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria in Section 6.

The AHRC will give the department a recommendation report and all applications. The report will include ratings for all eligible applications. It will consider the balance between the General Delegation and the Emerging Young Leaders Delegation.

We will rate your application using the Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrix.

Rating (for individual criterion)	Score
Excellent – the individual meets the criterion at the highest possible standard. They have very strong and relevant skills and abilities. They are outstanding.	5
Very Good – the individual is very good. They have highly developed and relevant skills and abilities and clearly go beyond what is required.	4
Good – the individual has well developed and relevant skills and abilities. They have shown they can meet the required level.	3
Satisfactory – the individual has relevant skills and abilities. They have shown some competency.	2
Requires development – the individual has some skills and abilities. They have shown some ability to meet the criterion, but their evidence is limited in other areas.	1
Unsatisfactory – the individual does not meet the criterion or cannot show that they have the relevant skills and abilities.	0

Each of the 6 assessment criteria will be scored out of 5. The highest total score an application can receive is 30.

Only applications that score Good or above against each of the 6 assessment criteria (based on the above rating scale) will be considered for funding in the first instance.

Stage 3 – Final decision on funded delegates – the department will review the AHRC recommendation report. The department will decide which applicants will receive funding.

COSP20 is expected to be the main funding priority. Funding for CSW71 and APMCDRR is expected to be lower and will depend on the quality of applications for each forum.

The department will balance funding across the General Delegation and the Emerging Young Leaders Delegation. It will also consider diversity across the Australian community. This may include disability experiences, age, gender, First Nations people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people from regional and remote areas, and people from the LGBTQIA+ community.

Further information

Please refer to the GOGs for further information related to the grant opportunity and organisation requirements.