



LG Research & Development Scheme

Local Government Association
of South Australia

The voice of local government.

Local Government Research and Development Scheme

2024-25 Guidelines

Version 1

Table of contents

Before you get started	3
LGR&DS Timeline 2024.....	3
Introduction	3
Funding available.....	4
Eligibility	4
Who can apply?.....	4
Eligible Projects.....	5
Non-Eligible Projects	5
Annual Research Priorities	5
Assessment Process	6
Conditions for funding.....	7
Agreement.....	7
Reporting Requirements.....	7
Appendix 1 – LGR&DS 2024 Assessment Criteria.....	9
Appendix 2 – Scheme Logic	11
Appendix 3 – 2024-25 Research Priorities.....	12
Appendix 4 – Additional Information	14

Before you get started

Please read the eligibility and assessment criteria to ensure your proposed project is eligible for funding.

Before applying, you must also review the information on the [Local Government Research and Development Scheme \(LGR&DS/the Scheme\) website](#)¹.

All potential applicants are encouraged to attend the online information session and to discuss their proposal with the LGR&DS Grants Coordinator, Email: lgrds@lga.sa.gov.au, Phone: 08 8224 2057

The LGR&DS is only accepting applications and attachments via our online grant portal.

Smarty Grants.

LGR&DS Timeline 2024

2024-2025 Internal Grant Round (LGA and its subsidiaries)

February –May 2024 (key dates will be publicised internally)

2024-25 LGR&DS External Grant Round	
Opening Date and Time	Monday 17 June, 9 am
Closing Date and Time	Monday 12 August 4 pm
Information Session for Potential Applicants	Monday 24 June, 11 am
Applications considered by the LGR&DS Advisory Committee	Friday 13 September
Successful applications approved by the LGA Board	Thursday 3 October
Applicants are advised of the outcome of their application	Wednesday 9 October
Project timelines and agreements finalised	14 October – 15 November
Project start date	18 November

Introduction

The [Local Government Research and Development Scheme](#) (LGR&DS/the Scheme) invites applications for projects that are of strategic benefit to local government as a whole.

The scheme is looking for sector wide solutions ensuring that councils are well equipped to deliver to their communities in the future.

¹ [Local Government Research & Development Scheme | LGA South Australia](#)

About the LGR&DS

The Local Government Research and Development Scheme was created in 1998 and is funded by the Local Government Tax Equivalent Fund in accordance with the Local Government Finance Authority Act. The Principles and Purposes of the Scheme are formalised in a MOU between the Treasurer and the LGA President.

The LGA manages the Scheme through the LGR&DS Advisory Committee, whose role is to monitor the activities of the Scheme and provide advice to the LGA Board of Directors.

Funding available

The estimated total pool for the 2024-25 will be available and included in the guidelines by 1 June 2024.

There is no fixed maximum or minimum funding amount for project proposals. An overview of previous successful projects and the funding allocated to these projects is available through the LGA Research Library.

Eligibility ²

Who can apply?

The LGR&DS Internal funding round

A funding call in March each year is limited to projects initiated by the LGA and its subsidiaries.

LGR&DS External funding round

The external funding round is open to the following applicants:

- South Australia's 68 councils
- Regional Local Government Associations
- Education Institutions and Universities
- Local Government Professional Bodies
- Local Government Unions
- State and Federal Government Agencies
- Any other organisation interested in collaborating with local government in South Australia.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- The financial viability of their organisation.
- A minimum of \$1 million professional indemnity and \$10 million public liability insurance coverage.
- That they have met all the reporting requirements from previous projects funded through the Scheme.

² Further details are available through the Please view the LGR&DS Eligibility Policy for further details.

Eligible Projects

All projects funded through LGR&DS must:

- provide benefits to the entire local government sector,
- be aligned with the purposes of the Scheme, and
- be linked to the LGR&DS annual research priorities.

Projects must demonstrate the following:

- Why the local government sector needs the project.
- How will the local government sector will be engaged throughout the project?
- How does the project connect with previous research and work in the LG sector?

Please note that a complete overview of the project requirements is available in **Appendix 1 - LGR&DS Assessment Criteria**.

Non-Eligible Projects

The Scheme does not provide funding for:

- Incentives, prizes and sponsorship.
- The purchase of capital equipment.
- Administrative or corporate overhead costs not directly attributable to the project.
- Alcohol and entertainment at project-related events.
- Training (*with exemptions as stated in the LGR&DS Eligibility Policy 3.2.3.5*)
- Income generation (*unless declared and pre-approved by the LGA Board. See LGR&DS Eligibility Policy 3.2.4*).

Annual Research Priorities

Applicants are encouraged to link their projects with the 2024-25 annual research priorities that have been identified through the LGR&DS Annual Business Plan:

- Climate and Environment
- Community Wellbeing and Inclusion
- Planning and Infrastructure
- Financial Sustainability
- Building Sector Capacity

Budget Requirements

Applicants will be required to provide a project budget, including the stages of the project and costs for each component, excluding GST. GST will apply to projects funded by the Scheme.

Co-contributions and in-kind funding

The budget will include a section for co-contribution and in-kind funding.

Applicants are encouraged to explore opportunities for co-funding and in-kind funding. Co-funding is not compulsory but is highly recommended for projects seeking more than \$50,000 in funding from the scheme.

Cost Benefit Analysis

Applicants are encouraged to include a Cost Benefit Analysis showing the monetary value of the project. This is **compulsory** for projects with a value of more than \$100,000.

Assessment Process

The assessment will be undertaken through a three-stage process coordinated by the LGR&DS Grants Coordinator.

Step 1 - Initial assessment – LGA Staff

The application will initially be checked for eligibility. The application will then be scored against the following:

Criteria	% Weighting
1. Principle of the Scheme	eligibility criteria
2. Purposes of the Scheme	eligibility criteria
3. Research Priorities	15%
4. Research Links	10%
5. Delivery and Outcomes	30%
6. Engagement with the LG Sector	10%
7. Project Evaluation	15%
8. Value for Money	20%

The LGA will summarise the initial assessment score and any relevant comments to the LGR&DS Advisory Committee.

Step 2 - Assessment and recommendations - LGR&DS Advisory Committee

The LGR&DS Advisory Committee will meet to review the applications, including the LGA staff's initial assessment. The advisory committee will consider the assessment criteria and additional factors like strategic alignment with the sector's priorities for 2024-25. The committee will then prioritise the applications and forward their recommendations to the LGA Board of Directors.

Step 3 - Project approvals – LGA Board of Directors

The LGA Board of Directors will review the LGR&DS Advisory Committee's recommendations and make final decisions regarding the applications.

Conditions for funding

The funding provided must be used for the approved program/activity. Any changes to the funded activities agreed in the project application and funding agreement may not be undertaken without written approval from the LGA.

Agreement

Successful applicants will be asked to sign an agreement that will set out all the conditions associated with the funding, including:

1. project details
2. funds management requirements
3. reporting requirements
4. ownership and intellectual property requirements
5. acknowledgement of support and project promotion requirements.
6. insurance requirements
7. a payment and reporting schedule
8. any conditions imposed by the LGR&DS Advisory Committee or the LGA Board of Directors.

LGA Research Library

All project details, outcomes, and final reports will be publicly available through the LGA Research Library.

Reporting Requirements

Failure to adhere to the reporting deadlines may cancel the project. If this is the case, all funding must be returned to the Scheme.

Please view the LGR&DS Delivery Policy for further details regarding funding conditions.

Progress Report

All successful applicants must report regularly on the progress of their projects. All reports and attachments must be submitted electronically through LGA's electronic grant management system. The reporting dates may be linked to milestone payments. The LGA may also ask for additional progress reports.

Final Report and Evaluation³

After the project, the recipient must provide the Scheme with the Final Report and Evaluation by the funding agreement and the LGR&DS Delivery Policy. The template will be made available through Smarty Grants and must include:

- a summary of the:
 - impact of the project outcomes
 - effectiveness of the actions undertaken to achieve the project outcomes
 - benefits to the local government sector and how this has been communicated
 - the ability of this project to deliver ongoing outcomes beyond the project's life.
- a detailed financial statement of how the Scheme's funds were used by the agreement.
- an electronic copy of final publications and related collateral.
- Any additional evaluation requirements as describe in Appendix 1 – Assessment Criteria.

³ Please see Section 3.2.4.3, LGRDS Delivery Policy, https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/1284662/LGR-and-DS-Delivery-Policy.pdf

Submitting your application

The LGR&DS is only accepting applications and attachments via our online grant portal.

Smarty Grants⁴.

Once an application has been received, a receipt of the application will be acknowledged via email.

Further information

Please see the [LGR&DS website](#) or contact Mathilde Thorsen, Projects and LGR&DS Grants Coordinator, Email: lgrds@lga.sa.gov.au, Phone: 08 8224 2057 for further information.

⁴ <https://lgasa.smartygrants.com.au/>

Appendix 1 – LGR&DS 2024 Assessment Criteria

All applications are assessed on a competitive basis against the following criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
1. Principle of the Scheme <i>The grant must be applied for local government development purposes, and the funding must be used strategically to benefit the Local Government as a whole.</i>	Eligibility criteria
2. Purposes of the Scheme <i>The grant must lead to one of the agreed purposes of the scheme.</i>	Eligibility criteria
3. Research Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the application address the Scheme's 2024-25 Research and Development Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate and Environment Community Wellbeing and Inclusion Planning and Infrastructure Financial Sustainability Building Sector Capacity 	15%
4. Research Links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does this application utilise the knowledge of any previous LGR&DS projects?⁵ How well does this application build upon and link to any other previous research and or projects? 	10%
5. Delivery and Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does this application describe its project methodology, and is the methodology clearly linked to the proposed milestones? How well does the application outline the project rationale, outcomes, and benefit to the local government sector? To what extent does the application link to the LGR&DS Scheme Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration across the local government sector Councils have the knowledge and capacity to improve services Council deliver more with less Councils are thought leaders and ready for the future Communities understand the role and value of local government Does the project have a clear plan for achieving the outcomes? 	30%
6. Engagement with the Local Government Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does this project connect and communicate with Local Government Stakeholders? How well does the application demonstrate how the project outcomes will be shared with SA councils, regional LGAs and the broader local government sector? 	10%

⁵ Please see the LGA Research Library for further information, <https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/members/financial-sustainability/grants/research-and-publications/research-library>

<p>7. Project Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does this application describe how the benefit of the project will be evaluated and measured? • To what extent does the application describe a clear and appropriate approach to measuring its reach and impact with the council, its partners and the community? <p><i>Additional Evaluation Criteria</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects applying for over \$50,000 in funding; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must demonstrate how an evaluation framework will measure the project's impact and effectiveness. ○ Allocate dedicated resources to complete the project evaluation. • Projects applying for over \$100,000 in funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An independent evaluator must also be engaged to undertake the evaluation. ○ 	<p>15%</p>
<p>8. Value for Money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does this application provide value for money? • What is the extent of the co-funding and in-kind funding? • Does this application consider potential risks and identify a practical risk management approach that will maximise grant funding? 	<p>20%</p>

Appendix 2 – Scheme Logic

Goal		Ongoing development of local government so that						
		- Councils achieve more for their communities						
		- Councils are equipped for the future						
Outcomes ¹	Collaboration across the local government sector	Councils have knowledge and capacity to improve services	Councils deliver more with less	Councils are thought leaders and ready for the future	Communities understand the role and value of local government	A clear return on investment from research and development		
Outputs	Wide research dissemination across the local government sector Communities of practice New or strengthened partnerships Co-delivery of projects by multiple councils and their partners	Resources and guidance on initiating, delivering, improving, reviewing, commercialising, or closing of council services Strong alignment of council services with community aspirations and legislation Performance measurement and reporting tools	Evidence base to identify new efficiencies Reduction in the duplication of effort Leverage government investment in programs/projects	Evidence base for local government improvement Research and analysis that generates new ideas and strategic insights Partnerships and networks that generate new thinking	Resources and guidance on improving community engagement, transparency, and accountability Collateral and campaigns that measure and communicate the role and value of local government	Measurement of the impact and effectiveness of the Scheme		
Activities	• Research and case studies • Resources, tools and templates • Partnerships and networks • Training Implementation support • Mentoring and guidance • Marketing the Scheme							
Foundations	Principle of the Scheme: <i>The grant must be applied for local government development purposes, and the funding must be used strategically for the benefit of Local Government as a whole.</i>	MOU between Treasurer and LGA President	Funding from the Local Government Tax Equivalent Fund in accordance with the Local Government Finance Authority Act	Oversight by Scheme's Advisory Group and LGA Board of Directors	Smart Grants Grant Management System	Grant administration by LGA staff	Scheme Policies and Procedures that address: - Eligibility - Application process - Shortlisting and selection - Project delivery - Use of grant funds - Project duration - Promotion of the scheme.	LGA Website, including R&D Library

Appendix 3 – 2024-25 Research Priorities

The 2024-25 research priorities are identified in the LGR&DS Annual Business Plan. In 2024-25, the LGR&DS will focus on projects that deliver clear long-term outcomes and address future and emerging needs of the South Australian local government sector in the following priority areas:

- Climate and Environment
- Community Wellbeing and Inclusion
- Planning and Infrastructure
- Financial Sustainability
- Building Sector Capacity

Within each of these priority areas, projects must address an issue of significant importance to local government and not duplicate existing research or resources available through the LGR&DS or other sources, including different levels of government. All projects must outline a plan of how the outcome and resources generated by the project will be shared and used by the local government.

Climate and Environment

Projects and collaborations that assist the sector in managing risks associated with and provide practical solutions to climate change and environmental issues, including:

- Initiatives that build on current research to support councils in dealing with the impact of climate change and natural disasters.
- Innovative solutions and collaboration relating to waste, recycling, and circular economy.
- Stormwater and wastewater management.
- Research and initiatives that lead to greener, sustainable, and more liveable cities and regions, including the retention and promotion of tree canopies.

Community Wellbeing and Inclusion

Resources and collaborative initiatives that will assist councils to strengthen well-being and resilience within local government's defined areas of responsibility, including.

- Initiatives that build capacity and increase the awareness and participation of underrepresented groups in local government services and decision-making process design.
- Projects promoting learning, collaboration and connection between local government sector and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Public Health Planning to improve SA communities' wellbeing and mental health outcomes.

Planning and Infrastructure

Projects that support local government by providing long-term solutions to ensure that the sector meets the future needs of its communities, including:

- Evidence-based research to support local government in advocating for the delivery of quality urban and regional planning outcomes, improving the liveability and sustainability of communities. Including projects linked to:
 - The review of the Greater Adelaide 30-Year Plan.
 - Changes to the Planning, Development, and Infrastructure Act.
- Strategic initiatives, resources, and partnerships that build on current research and address housing supply and affordability issues.
- Advocacy to ensure regional and rural communities in South Australia have access to safe and high-quality roads.
- Collaborations and initiatives to support local government in improving road safety.

Financial Sustainability

Projects that enhance the financial sustainability of the sector and support councils to place downward pressure on rates and achieve more for their communities through:

- The strengthening of long-term financial and asset management planning and addressing current and future cost pressures.
- Supporting councils with benchmarking and performance measurement to support innovation and improvement in the local government sector.

Building Sector Capacity

Strategic initiatives, research, and collaborations that build the capacity of the local government sector and provide long-term innovative solutions the skill shortages, including:

- Innovative solutions and collaborations that improve the efficiencies and address the skills gap of the local government workforce.
- Projects that develop, attract and retain the local government workforce.
- Initiatives that encourage people to gain skills, confidence, and experiences to pursue a career locally.
- Initiatives that expand inclusion and diversity in the workforce.
- Initiatives that provide innovative solutions to enable people to live and work in rural and regional South Australia

Appendix 4 – Additional Information

Please note that the following resources are available through the LGR&DS Scheme Website:

- Local Government Research & Development Scheme Annual Business Plan (2024-25): Identifies the Scheme's annual research priorities.
- Eligibility Policy: Detailed eligibility guide.
- Delivery Policy: Detail on how the program is administered by the LGA and your reporting requirements.
- Scheme Logic: Includes the goals and outcomes of the Scheme.
- MOU - Local Government Research and Development Scheme: The principles, purposes and processes that guide the program.
- Terms of reference: Used by the Advisory Committee to guide their operations and make decisions.

LGA Research Library

LGA Research Library includes a library of current of past projects funded by the Scheme.

Smarty Grants

- Help Guide for Applicants <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/> for further support.

Other Resources

- Grant attraction section (from p. 15), Best Practice Grant Management Guide for Local Government in South Australia, LG Grant Network and City of Holdfast Bay
- How to Write a Grant Application, Victorian Government
- Grant writing booklet, City of Onkaparinga (please scroll through the bottom of the page to access this booklet)
- Valuing Social Outcome Tools, SA Community Managers Network and LG Professionals
- Community Wellbeing Indicators Framework Tool, Southern and Hills LGA
- Exploring Program Logic – NSW Health

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