

Expression of Interest Guidelines and Form

Higher Education Gender-based Violence (GBV) Equity and Response Uplift Projects.

EOI opening date and time	11:00 am (AEST) Monday 13 July 2026
EOI closing date and time	5:00 pm (AEST) Friday 21 August 2026
Administering Entity	Department of Education
Date Guidelines released	Monday 13 July 2026
Enquiries	GBVRegulator@education.gov.au Questions will be responded to via email. While the EOI is open, answers may be published on the Gender-based Violence Regulator's website at: www.education.gov.au/highereducationgbvregulator/grant-program
Lodgement details	Proposals must be submitted using the EOI Form located on pages 7-11 of this document. The EOI Form must be completed, signed and submitted via email to: GBVRegulator@education.gov.au The GBV Regulator will acknowledge receipt by email. Proposals will not be accepted after the closing date and time. Extensions will not be granted under any circumstances. No additional material or information will be accepted after the closing date and time.

Introduction and purpose

The Department of Education invites eligible Table A and B higher education providers to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for funding to support a small number of **Higher Education Gender-based Violence (GBV) Equity and Response Uplift** projects.

Grants will be awarded to support research and trial initiatives that promote equality of opportunity in higher education and strengthen equity practice at both national and institutional levels, with a

particular focus on embedding equity-centred, trauma-informed responses to GBV under the [National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence](#) (National Code).

Context

GBV is a pervasive and systemic issue within higher education, with well documented negative impacts on student safety and educational outcomes.

The burden of GBV is disproportionately carried by First Nations women, women with disability, LGBTQIA+ communities and women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. This highlights the compounding effects of intersectional discrimination and the need for responses that are inclusive and equity focused.

Student accommodation is also widely recognised as a high-risk setting for GBV, with many students residing in accommodation from rural and regional areas, having relocated to pursue education.

GBV can have significant short, medium and long-term impacts on student participation, retention and academic success, with flow-on effects for employment and lifetime outcomes. Victim-survivors are more likely to reduce study load, take extended time away from education or withdraw entirely, contributing to an education gap in attainment.

Effective institutional responses are therefore critical to mitigating harm, supporting participation and improving student outcomes.

The National Code establishes a whole-of-organisation framework for prevention and response that reflects the needs and experiences of students, staff and their communities, particularly those disproportionately affected. There are embedded requirements across the National Code to ensure that responses, practices, processes and support services are timely, culturally appropriate, inclusive, safe, person-centred and trauma-informed.

Implementation of the National Code is supported by a risk-based and outcomes-focused regulatory framework, prioritising areas of greatest harm and impact. As the sector is in the early stages of implementing the National Code, there is a critical opportunity to embed equity, accessibility and inclusivity from the outset, to strengthen how institutions respond to GBV in practice, rather than adapting systems retrospectively.

A number of high-impact response areas have been identified as priority areas as they represent key points of system risk and areas of variability in current practice:

- Risk assessment processes
- Responding to disclosures
- Tailored support plans
- Investigations and decision-making processes

Grant funding is focused on supporting the practical implementation of the National Code by strengthening priority response areas and supporting the development of approaches that are effective, equitable and scalable across the sector. It aims to build a shared evidence base of what works in practice, while improving consistency, capability and outcomes over time.

Objective

Grant funding is intended to support the higher education sector to embed the principles of universal design, safety by design, and co-design into the systems, policies, and processes that underpin institutional responses to GBV.

As providers work to meet their obligations under the National Code, early system design presents an opportunity for providers to embed inclusive, accessible and equity focused practices from the outset, particularly for students who face heightened risks of GBV, or barriers to accessing support.

Funded projects will develop and implement practical, evidence-informed approaches that improve institutional responses.

Projects are expected to demonstrate how equity considerations are embedded at the core of design and delivery, including initiatives that address the needs and perspectives of equity cohorts. The funding will also support the development and sharing of inclusive, responsive and accessible evidence-based models that drive continuous improvement, uplift and inform best practice across the sector.

Funded projects will not reduce or replace existing provider requirements under the National Code. It will support the development and implementation of evidence-based practices, ensuring that equity principles are foundational to system design and support the development and implementation of improved practices and approaches.

Scope and Priorities

Projects must focus on building capability, and support consistent, high-quality equity-centred implementation of the National Code (particularly Standards 4 and 5 related to Response) with an emphasis on one or more of the following core areas:

- Risk assessment processes
- Responding to disclosures
- Tailored support plans
- Investigations and decision-making processes

Projects must clearly identify the equity cohort(s) that the project will focus on and how the project will benefit and support these cohort(s).

Strengthening practice in these areas aligns with a risk-based and outcomes-focused approach to implementation and will support more consistent, effective and equitable responses across the sector.

Projects should prioritise the design, testing and implementation of practical solutions that strengthen institutional responses.

Projects may include:

- Design and implementation of improved response models under the National Code
- Trials of innovative, practice-based approaches to implement the National Code requirements in responding to GBV in higher education settings
- Development and application of tools, frameworks, processes and guidance to support providers to meet the requirements under the National Code

- Targeted research where directly connected to implementation and improvement of response practice

Projects must demonstrate a clear pathway to implementation and should not be confined to research or analysis alone. Projects should contribute to a growing evidence base of effective, scalable and equity-centred approaches, supporting sector-wide consistency, capability uplift and continuous improvement.

Duration

It is anticipated that the projects will have phased delivery over the two-year period, including project initiation and planning, research and development, design and delivery, evaluation, with a view to sharing best practice nationally.

Milestones under executed Conditions of Grant (CoGs) are to be negotiated with successful grant recipients. Projects must be scheduled to be completed no later than 30 June 2028.

Outcomes

The funding is intended to support projects that:

- Embed meaningful engagement and collaboration processes with equity groups
- Embed equity-focused, person-centred and trauma-informed practice in responding to GBV
- Reduce barriers to accessing support and reporting pathways for equity cohorts
- Improve the consistency and quality of institutional responses to GBV, including in risk assessment, support planning, disclosures, investigations and decision-making
- Support earlier identification of risk and more effective safety planning for students impacted by GBV
- Generate scalable or transferable, evidence-based solutions
- Build evidence about what works in equity-centred GBV response in higher education settings
- Strengthen GBV response capability and support nationally consistent good practice across the sector
- Improve student safety, wellbeing and equity outcomes

Projects should explicitly address:

- How outcomes benefit equity cohorts
- How findings will be shared across the sector

Eligibility

EOIs are invited from higher education providers listed in Table A and B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (either individually or in partnership).

In circumstances where two Table A or B providers wish to join together to deliver a project, a 'lead provider' must be nominated. Only the lead provider can submit the EOI proposal and, if successful, enter into a CoG. The proposal must identify the partner provider and include a letter of support.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with the partner provider prior to execution of a CoG.

Funding Available

A total of up to \$2.4 million (GST exclusive) grant funding is available to support projects across **2026-27 and 2027-28 financial years**.

- the minimum individual grant amount **per project, per year** is \$200,000 (GST exclusive)
- the maximum individual grant amount **per project, per year** is \$400,000 (GST exclusive).

The maximum grant amount that can be awarded over the life of a project is \$800,000 (GST exclusive).

Eligible expenditure

If your proposal is successful, you can only spend the grant funding on eligible expenditure you incur to deliver the project, as specified in the CoG.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and may include:

- Planning and research costs
- Design and development costs
- Delivery costs
- Evaluation and reporting costs

Grant money cannot be used for:

- To fund any capital works
- For marketing in relation to the higher education provider
- Consultancy fees, contractors and staff wages/salaries not directly related to the delivery of the project
- For travel, unless approved by the department
- Costs incurred prior to the project start date
- Costs incurred in the preparation of the EOI proposal
- For any purchase or other activity for which the grant is being provided with other Commonwealth, State or Territory funding

Assessment Criteria

Each EOI will be assessed on its merits against the following assessment criteria:

No.	Criterion	Details	Weighting
1.	Alignment	• Alignment with National Code (particularly Standards 4 and 5) • Identification of the equity cohort(s) that the project will focus on • How the project will inform equity practice nationally and at an institutional level. • How the project will respond to emerging priorities that will maximise outcomes for students.	25%
2.	Approach	• Use of evidence and appropriate methodology	15%

		• Demonstration of trauma-informed, person-centred and inclusive design • Consideration of intersectionality	
3.	Outcomes and Impact	• Clear articulation of intended outcomes • How these will be evaluated to determine whether they are achieved	20%
4.	Application	• Potential for scaling, replication/transferability • Contribution to sector wide capability and knowledge	25%
5.	Capability and Delivery	• Institutional capacity and experience • Ability to deliver required elements within the required timeframe and budget • Appropriate expertise	15%
6.	Value for money	• Overall assessment of EOI	

Assessment Timeframes

The Assessment Panel will recommend applications for grant funding to the departmental delegate for approval. The GBV Regulator will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing.

Successful grant recipients will be required to enter into a Conditions of Grant (CoG) and projects will commence following execution of a CoG.

Project governance and communication

The project team will be required to meet periodically with the department, including an inception meeting and progress meetings in accordance with milestones identified in the CoG. Meetings will occur online.

Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback within four (4) weeks of being advised of the outcome.

[The EOI Form begins on the next page]

Expression of Interest Form

Privacy

The Department of Education is subject to the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) and the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act. The information collected in this form is for the purpose of assessing your EOI for funding Higher Education Gender-based Violence (GBV) Equity and Response Uplift projects. The department will not disclose personal information collected without consent, except where authorised or required by law.

Instructions

Please read the guidelines carefully (pp 1-6) as they provide information that will assist you to complete this EOI form.

Please liaise with your Research/Project Office or equivalent, noting their internal deadlines before you begin.

You must complete all questions provided in this form and adhere to the word limits.

The EOI Form must be completed, signed and submitted via email to GBVRegulator@education.gov.au by **AEST 5:00pm Friday 21 August 2026**

Proposals will not be accepted after the closing date and time.

University name

Project lead	
Name	
Position	
Portfolio/Faculty	
Email	
Phone	

Name of Partner Provider (for joint proposals, if applicable)*

* A letter of support must be included (refer to the 'Eligibility' section in the Guidelines)

Project Title

Project Summary (high level outline of the aims, expected outcomes, benefits to students and institutions of this project). *(max 500 words)*

Equity focus and alignment to the National Code (target equity cohorts, how the project will incorporate trauma-informed practice, person-centred approaches, intersectionality).
(max 750 words)

Project Details (outline the problem being addressed, rationale, methods and techniques). *(max 500 words)*

Project Plan (including indicative timeframes, activities and milestones)*

*This item will be accepted in Excel format.

Outcomes and significance (describe how the expected project outcomes align with, and support, the funding objectives in the Guidelines, including how the project outcomes will be evaluated).
(max 500 words)

Application (how will project deliverables lead to sector capability uplift, including transferability and sharing of best practice. (max 500 words)

Details of Project team

Name	Role	Expertise

Estimated funding required over 2026-27 and 2027-2028*

Item	Description	Rationale	Budget year (26-27 or 27-28)	\$ amount

*This item will be accepted in Excel format.

Capacity to deliver (describe the project team's capacity to successfully deliver the project, including risk management and project management to deliver within the required timeframe and in a cost-effective manner. *(max 500 words)*)

Declaration

This declaration is made with reference to the information contained in the Guidelines and EOI Form.

Signatures and initials may be affixed manually or electronically depending on your university's policy.

I have read/I understand:	Initials of Project Lead	Initials of Authorised Officer/University Delegate
The Expression of Interest Guidelines for the Higher Education Gender-based Violence (GBV) Equity and Response Uplift Projects.		
The provision of false or misleading information or the making of false or misleading statements to the Commonwealth is an offence under the Criminal Code.		
If any actual or perceived conflict of interest arises, I will notify the Commonwealth immediately in writing of the facts giving rise to the actual or potential conflict of interest and take such steps as the Commonwealth may require to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest.		
If successful, the Department of Education will use this EOI to develop the Conditions of Grant.		
I am authorised to sign this form on behalf of the applicant institution.		
The project described in this EOI has not been previously funded, and is not currently funded, by the Australian Government. I understand that projects requiring recurrent Australian Government funding will not be considered. I understand that if the proposed project continues, builds upon, or complements a separately		

funded project, this must be clearly identified and funding sources stated.		
All relevant details of this EOI are correct at the time of lodgement, and the proposed project is achievable within the budget and timeframe described.		
Should the EOI be successful, I will inform the department immediately if significant changes to a project's Conditions of Grant may be required, including to the objectives, milestones, timelines and budget. I understand that significant variations to the Conditions of Grant will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.		

Responsible Officers

Details	Project Lead	Authorised Office/University delegate
Name		
Position		
Date		
Signature		