



# Immediate/Time-Limited Support

## Inclusion Support Program

This information sheet is to assist early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in applying for the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) for the Immediate/Time-Limited Support (ITL) stream and should be read in conjunction with Section 7 of the [Inclusion Support Program \(ISP\) Guidelines](#).

### What is the purpose of Immediate/Time-Limited Support?

The IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support provides a significant Commonwealth funding contribution towards the short-term employment of an Additional Educator to support the inclusion of a child with **high support needs**, where there are **immediate barriers to participation**. This support is designed to be responsive to immediate barriers, enabling services to include a child while they embed strategies in their Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) and build their capability and capacity for longer-term inclusion.

ITL support can be approved once per child, per service for up to a 12-week period and for a maximum of 150 hours. Weekly hourly limits apply depending on service type (see Section 7.4 of the ISP Guidelines).

With an increased educator to child ratio in the care environment, educators can implement strategies to help address the identified immediate barriers to inclusion.

Additional Educators funded by the ISP do not provide one-to-one support for a child who has additional needs, they are required to work as a member of the team to support the participation of all children in the care environment.

### What are the eligibility and application requirements?

As this funding stream is designed to be responsive to immediate barriers, services are not required to complete a SIP at the time of application. However, eligible Centre-Based Day Care (CBDC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services are required to complete and submit a project outline in the Inclusion Support Portal (IS Portal). The Project Outline must:

- Identify the child's relevant cohort under the ISP, including whether they:
  - have a disability or developmental delay (including children awaiting diagnosis)
  - are presenting with challenging behaviours
  - have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health
  - are presenting with trauma-related behaviours

- Identify the immediate barriers to participation
- Demonstrate the high support need that is giving rise to these immediate barriers. Please note, it is important for the service to differentiate between high support need and what is reasonable childhood development and behaviour (including expected emotional and behavioural changes for a child participating in the applicable care environment)
- Describe the strategies the service intends to implement with an increased educator-to-child ratio and how these strategies will be embedded over the course of the approval period to support the long-term inclusion of the child
- Demonstrate that the support is time-limited and that longer-term solutions will be determined to support the child's ongoing inclusion, without further IDF-Additional Educator funding.

Note: if it is identified that longer term need is more appropriate to support the inclusion of the child, the Service will be redirected to apply for IDF-Additional Educator in the first instance.

- Documentary evidence of the child's **high support need** is not required for IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support, however supporting documentation should be included in the application, where available
- A correct parent/guardian consent form must be completed.

## What should be considered prior to applying for this support?

Before applying for IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support, services should reflect on the inclusion barrier and assess whether this funding stream is the most appropriate solution.

Services should consider and address the questions (below) in the project outline section of the IS case. Educators may also seek advice and collaborate with the family and other professionals, where appropriate, as well as engage in professional learning to support the child's inclusion.

- **Identify the high support need and applicable cohort:** does the child present with an additional need outlined in the ISP cohorts? Is it a genuine high support need or do the behaviours relate to reasonable childhood development stages (for example, a child that is unsettled, emotional dysregulation etc)?
- **Identify the barrier:** What are the specific challenges preventing the child participating in the environment and interacting with their peers?
- **Assess the appropriateness of support:** Is an increased educator-to-child ratio the most suitable solution to the barriers identified? Clarify the impact of additional support:
  - What will educators do differently during and after the approval period?
  - What changes to routines and the program may be possible?
  - What specific strategies will educators implement?
  - How will educators work collaboratively as a team to support inclusion?
  - Could the barriers be resolved with an Innovative Solutions Support project?
  - Is the short-term nature of the support appropriate?
- **Review existing support:** Is there any IDF support already approved for the care environment? If so, consider if additional support is needed and identify the specific hours/days where this

support is needed. ITL will generally not be considered where existing IDF support is available within the environment, where overlapping sessions exist.

## Can IDF Innovative Solutions Support be accessed at the same time?

**Yes.** To complement the support available through this stream, services can also apply for IDF-Innovative Solutions Support at the same time, or at any time after an IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support approval is given. IDF-Innovative Solutions Support is available to implement innovative and flexible solutions to address barriers to inclusion, which cannot be addressed by the support provided by an Inclusion Agency, or through other IDF streams.

Innovation Solutions Support projects can build on educator's skills, knowledge and confidence to provide a consistent team approach to supporting the participation of children.

There are five types of Innovative Solutions Support Projects:

- Bilingual Support
- Cultural Mentoring
- Specialised Training and Advice
- Guided Practice
- Unique Projects.

For more information, see Section 6 of the ISP Guidelines and the Inclusion Development Manager Fund (IDFM) website.

## Can this support be used to assist a child to transition to the most appropriate care environment?

**Yes,** a service can apply for IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support to assist a child to transition to the most appropriate care environment, provided the service has not previously applied for this support for the same child and there is no overlap with an existing Additional Educator in the new care environment. There must be demonstration of high support needs and the immediate barrier or barriers to participation within the new care environment.

Please note, applications for IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support will generally not be accepted in instances where a child is transitioning to a new care environment within a service that they have already been attending for an extended period. Exceptional circumstances may be considered.

## Can this funding be used to provide support due to temporary barriers to inclusion?

**No,** the support is intended to assist educators in addressing immediate barriers to inclusion while determining **longer-term and alternate strategies** required to support the child's **ongoing** inclusion. It is not intended to address temporary circumstances such as short-term or one-off increases in children's attendance, child injury (e.g. a broken leg), illness or related treatments, (e.g. recovery from surgery) or where a child is leaving the service.

Services must demonstrate that the inclusion barrier is not temporary, is a high support need and that the support will contribute to building the service's inclusion capability and capacity for longer-term inclusion.

## Can a service apply for ITL while waiting to receive documentary evidence or an approval for the IDF-Additional Educator stream?

**No.** IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support is **not** intended to 'fill a gap' between when the service applies for longer-term IDF-Additional Educator and when an approval for this IDF stream may be given. In circumstances where the service is waiting for documentary evidence, they should continue discussions with the family to obtain.

If services think longer term support will be required beyond 12 weeks, then they should apply for IDF-Additional Educator in the first instance. Applications where longer-term support is demonstrated will not be considered for ITL.

In some cases, a service may find that a child's needs are more complex than initially assessed. In such instances a service may (in limited circumstances) apply for IDF-Additional Educator following the initial support period. These applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the IDFM.

## Is ITL available for children in Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)?

**Yes,** OSHC services can apply for IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support for children with additional needs, identified as **high support** needs and where there is an **immediate barrier** to participation.

Before School Care and After School Care services can apply for up to 25 hours per week for a maximum of 150 hours for up to 12 weeks, combined. If a child is commencing attendance at both Before and After School Care at the same time, the hours can be distributed across both service types. If attendance at one service type begins later, and high support needs and barriers to inclusion are identified, the service may apply for support up to the standard limits for that care environment.

## Can Vacation Care services apply for this support?

**Yes,** Vacation Care services are eligible to apply for this support. Services can apply for a maximum of 12 weeks and a maximum of 40 hours per week up to a total of 150 hours. Vacation care services applying for ITL, can be approved over a 12-month approval period.

This recognises the limited operational weeks of the service type.

## Out of Scope

### Not immediate

IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support is designed to be responsive to immediate barriers, enabling services to include a child while they embed strategies in their SIP and build their capability and capacity for longer-term inclusion. For this reason, the following is out of scope for ITL:

- children who have been enrolled at the service for an extended period (unless exceptional circumstances apply, which will be assessed at the discretion of the IDFM)
- children who are preparing to transition out of the service

### ***What if a child has been there for a while but there is a sudden change impacting inclusion?***

The project outline needs to clearly outline the relevant cohort, change that has occurred and demonstration of the impact to inclusion and high support needs. The project outline should include the immediate barrier and why the sudden change has occurred.

### **Longer term needs**

In instances where it is identified that IDF-Immediate/Time-Limited Support or other strategies will not be sufficient to build the service's capability and capacity to include a child beyond 12 weeks, then services should apply for IDF-Additional Educator in the first instance. For example, a child has a diagnosed disability or awaiting diagnosis, identified as requiring longer term support. As outlined above, if longer term support is identified, the service will be redirected to apply for IDF-Additional Educator in the first instance.

### **One-to-one**

IDF funded Additional Educators do not provide individual (one-to-one) support for a child who has additional needs, they are required to work as a team with other educators to include all children within the care environment. In addition, where a service has existing IDF-Additional Educators in the care environment, ratios will be an element considered in ITL assessment.

### **Care Environments**

#### **Transition related:**

- As per the ISP Guidelines, funding support may be approved to address an immediate barrier or barriers to a child's inclusion, such as helping the service ensure a successful and safe transition for a child into the most appropriate care environment, while enabling the service to support the participation of all children:
  - **High support needs, immediate barrier** and **cohort** need to be demonstrated. ITL will generally not be considered where the environment the child is transitioning into already has an Additional Educator, where overlapping sessions exist
  - Where the child has been at the service for an extended period of time and no exceptional circumstances exist, ITL will generally not be considered
- Where a child is transitioning to formal schooling or leaving the service, ITL will not be considered
  - ITL support is designed to be responsive, enabling services to include a child while they embed strategies in their SIP and build their capability and capacity for **longer-term inclusion**. A child transitioning to school or leaving the service does not meet the intent for longer-term inclusion.

#### **Ratios and existing Additional Educators:**

- New ITL applications for care environments that have existing Additional Educators (either ITL or IDF cases) will generally not be considered, where overlapping sessions exist
  - Guidelines allow for Additional Educators to be approved above the service's National Law Ratio requirements
- Where there is an existing Additional Educator in a care environment, hours of ITL funding requested and ratios will be an element considered in ITL assessment.

## Common Non-approval reasons

- One-to-one support to a child requested for the majority of time they are in the care environment
- Where short-term Additional Educator is not the most appropriate solution to the inclusion barriers identified
- Where longer term IDF is more appropriate
- Where Innovative Solutions Support stream is more appropriate to build on educator's skills, knowledge and confidence to provide a consistent team approach for example: to supporting the participation of children presenting with challenging behaviours
- To meet licensing requirements such as ratios and including the provision of adequate supervision
- Where the child's high support need is not demonstrated
- Where an immediate barrier is not demonstrated
- How the Additional Educator above the current staffing levels (including existing approved IDF-Additional Educators) will facilitate inclusion has not been demonstrated
- ITL requested to address temporary barriers to inclusion such as, children who are preparing to transition out of the service or a child with a broken leg
- More than one ITL application for the same child at the same service
- The child has been enrolled at the service for an extended period and exceptional circumstances have not been identified
- Requested to 'fill a gap' while waiting to receive documentary evidence.

## Checklist prior to application

- Is there an immediate need for a short-term Additional Educator to increase ratios to support inclusive practices for the care environment?
- Does the child meet one or more of the cohort descriptions outlined in the ISP Guidelines?
- Does the child have high support needs that is over and above development needs for a child of that age that cannot be met through usual service practices?
- Is there an immediate barrier to inclusion that the service is unable to address without additional support?
- If the child has attended the service for an extended period, is it clear why the barrier to inclusion is presenting now?
- Is ITL the most appropriate support option, or would an Innovative Solutions Project or longer-term IDF-Additional Educator be a better fit?
- Is there already an ISP funded Additional Educator supporting the care environment?
- Has the child previously received ITL at this service?
- Is the child CCS eligible as determined by Services Australia?

Services are encouraged to contact their Inclusion Agency in the first instance to discuss support available through the ISP. More information is available at the following web sites:

[Inclusion Agencies](#)

[IDFM](#)

[ISP Guidelines](#)