

Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) Kickstart Grant Program

Round 3

September 2026



Grant program details

Grant program	Details
Opening date and time	28 September 2026
Closing date and time	12 April 2027, 2:00PM AEST or earlier if funding is fully exhausted prior to this date
Application type	One-stage application process
Application outcome date	Confirmation of outcome is provided up to six weeks from receipt of the completed application submission
NSW Government end-of-year closedown	25 December 2026 to 12 January 2027 (Note: assessment outcomes for applications submitted after 11 December 2026 may be delayed)
Caretaker period	19 February 2027 to 2 April 2027 [TBD] (Note: assessment outcomes for applications submitted during and around the caretaker period may be delayed)
Project period	From executing the funding agreement until the conclusion of the nominated SEP trial period and no later than 30 June 2029 (unless otherwise agreed with the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS) through the funding agreement process or a formal variation)
SEP trial timing	SEP trials must commence no later than 30 June 2028 and be completed no later than 30 June 2029 (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a variation)
Reporting requirements	Purple Flag Self-Assessment No later than 6 months after executing the funding agreement (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a variation), grantees must submit a completed draft Purple Flag self-assessment report that covers a boundary within the proposed SEP (unless a council already has an existing Purple Flag accreditation that covers a boundary within the proposed SEP) as well as a summary of Purple Flag related working group meeting dates, actions and attendees. Progress report No later than 9 months after executing a funding agreement (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a variation), grantees must submit a progress report via SmartyGrants. For information on what the progress report must include, refer to Section 6.8. Acquittal report No later than 4 weeks after the completion of the SEP trial(s) grantees must submit an acquittal report via SmartyGrants. The SEP trial(s) must be completed by 30 June 2029 (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation). Recipients must also provide post-acquittal reports within six-month and twelve-month of completing the project, at the conclusion of the SEP/s trial (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation), relating to the long-term success of the SEP/s, to assist with program evaluation via SmartyGrants. For information on what the acquittal report must include, refer to Section 6.10.

Grant program	Details
Evaluation timeframe (for successful applications)	30 June 2028 to 30 June 2030 (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation)
Decision-maker	Secretary, Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport
NSW Government Agency	Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner
Type of grant opportunity	Demand-driven or ‘first-in, first-served’
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	Grant program value: \$1,200,000 (total funding, excluding GST) Individual grant amounts: from \$20,000 to \$250,000 (per council, excluding GST), comprising: • \$20,000 to \$200,000 (excluding GST) for the purpose of establishing a SEP • \$10,000 to \$50,000 (excluding GST) for the purpose of investigating Purple Flag Accreditation
Enquiries	Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au nsw.gov.au/seps

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1. Overview of the grant program

1.1. Background

The NSW Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) Kickstart Grant Program (Program) has been developed by the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner and is administered in partnership with Create NSW. The Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner (O24HEC) and Create NSW form part of the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS).

The SEP Kickstart Grant Program (the ‘Program’) is a non-competitive, demand-driven, ‘first in first served’ grant program providing total funding of up to \$1.2 million (excluding GST), open to eligible NSW councils for the purpose of establishing a SEP. Up to \$250,000 is available per eligible council.

The Program will be open from 28 September 2026 to 12 April 2027 or may close earlier if the Program funding is fully exhausted prior to this date. All grants are GST exclusive.

The Program has two components.

Eligible SEP costs (up to \$200,000) include hiring temporary staff or consultants to undertake activities such as preparing a precinct management plan, and/or developing sound criteria framework, and/or for community engagement activities related to the SEP establishment, including during the SEP trial.

To encourage councils who are establishing SEPs to embed principles of safety, wellbeing and excellence in night-time precinct management, the grant requires all eligible councils to also prepare a Purple Flag precinct self-assessment report. Councils may optionally apply for up to \$50,000 in additional funding to support this work and explore pursuing Purple Flag accreditation, an international standard recognising safe and vibrant night-time precincts. Councils who currently have existing Purple Flag accredited precincts within the proposed SEP/s cannot apply for additional funding to support the investigation of Purple Flag accreditation, and do not require a resolution to investigate a Purple Flag accreditation.

Eligible Purple Flag costs include costs related to coordination of working group meetings, stakeholder engagement activities and development of documentation related to pursuing Purple Flag accreditation, including a Purple Flag precinct self-assessment report.

While pursuing full Purple Flag accreditation is not mandatory, completing the self-assessment report is required for all recipients of funding.

The program also reserves up to \$250,000 for regional councils outside the Sydney Metropolitan Area to encourage broader uptake, as defined in this Program in [Section 5.1.1](#) of these Grant Guidelines. If the reserved funding is not fully allocated to eligible regional councils, any remaining funding will be made available to other waitlisted eligible councils at the closure of the grant.

1.2. Grant value

A total of \$1,200,000 (excluding GST) in FY 2026/27 has been committed for this Program.

The amount available for each eligible council is:

- \$20,000 to \$200,000 (excluding GST) for the purpose of establishing a SEP/s; **and**
- an additional \$10,000 to \$50,000 (excluding GST) for the purpose of investigating Purple Flag accreditation including the costs of preparing a Purple Flag self-assessment report

While the grant requires all councils establishing SEPs to *investigate* Purple Flag accreditation and prepare a Purple Flag self-assessment report, the request for additional funding is optional. For example, councils may not require the additional funding if they have sufficient internal resources to do this work. In addition, the SEP Kickstart Grant does not require councils to obtain Purple Flag accreditation. The accreditation will be subject to a separate assessment and process.

Read more about Purple Flag at nsw.gov.au/purple-flag.

1.3. Special Entertainment Precincts

Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs) have been developed by the NSW Government as a tool for local councils to help unlock the potential of their night-time economies, encourage live performance and support vibrant and diverse going-out precincts.

A SEP is established under Part 3 of Chapter 8 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and is an area, streetscape or single venue where trading hours and sound conditions are set by a council in a precinct management plan to support live performance and provide operational certainty for venues, neighbouring residents and businesses.

The Vibrancy Reforms strengthened the SEP framework by offering greater incentives for venues, streamlining regulations, and improving governance.

The NSW Government wants safety to be at the forefront of precinct planning and supports councils to embed principles of safety into SEPs with Purple Flag accredited precincts.

Read more about SEPs at nsw.gov.au/seps.

1.4. Purple Flag accreditation

The integration of the internationally-recognised Purple Flag night-time precinct management framework and SEPs provides a solid roadmap for strengthening coordination, collaboration and continuous improvement within each precinct, and aligns with the NSW Government's [24-Hour Economy Strategy](#) to create vibrant, coordinated precincts and places and foster a collaborative approach to building an environment where the 24-hour economy can thrive.

The Purple Flag Accreditation Program recognises precincts that achieve high standards of excellence in managing their night-time precincts in relation to wellbeing, movement, appeal, place and strategic alignment. Both Purple Flag and SEPs initiatives share objectives to create safe, diverse and vibrant places to visit.

Note: Purple Flag accreditation will be subject to a separate assessment and process. Information about Purple Flag including the Purple Flag precinct self-assessment report template will be provided to councils that are successful in receiving grant funding. It is not mandatory for SEP Kickstart Grant recipients to achieve Purple Flag accreditation.

Read more about Purple Flag at nsw.gov.au/purple-flag.

1.5. Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Program is to encourage councils to take up and implement trial SEPs across NSW and integrate the Purple Flag principles for excellence in night-time precinct management into the creation of sustainable and successful SEPs. It will also support actions under the NSW *24-Hour Economy Strategy* to foster collaboration and create vibrant, diverse and coordinated precincts.

Following two successful rounds of the Program, there is an identified ongoing need to assist more NSW councils wanting to establish SEPs. Funding allocated to eligible councils through Round 3 of the Program may be used for resourcing the required experts and consultants to establish SEPs in accordance with Step 1 (Establishing a SEP) of the SEP Guidelines, and to investigate Purple Flag accreditation.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- support councils to establish sustainable and successful SEPs
- support actions under the NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy to foster collaboration and create vibrant, diverse and coordinated precincts
- support streamlined and strategically placed night-time economy growth
- support safe, accessible and well-managed night-life precincts.

The intended outcome of the Program is to:

- provide local councils with access to funding for essential planning and setup activities related to the establishment of SEPs, as required by the SEP Guidelines, to support live entertainment and cultural activity, and invigorate the local economy
- support councils to investigate Purple Flag accreditation for the SEP, to embed principles of safety, wellbeing and excellence in night-time precinct management into their SEP.

The Program will be administered in accordance with the legislated NSW Grants Administration Guide.

1.6. Your responsibilities when applying for the Program

These Guidelines contain information about the Program. You must read and understand these Guidelines before applying for the Program.

These Guidelines set out the:

- purpose, outcomes and objectives of the grant;
- application and assessment process;
- governance arrangements; and
- operation of the Program.

These Grant Guidelines may be updated by DCITHS at any time. If this occurs, the revised Guidelines or any addenda will be published on the Special Entertainment Precinct Kickstart Grant Program webpage and the NSW grants and funding webpage. If there is an update to the Grant Guidelines and your application is already submitted, you will be notified and be provided with an opportunity to modify your application.

Please note also that councils establishing SEP trials are required to follow the mandatory steps outlined in the SEP Guidelines issued under the *Local Government Act 1993*. The SEP Guidelines can be viewed at nsw.gov.au/seps. This is supported by an online SEP Support Hub containing downloadable resources and templates for use by councils. O24HEC staff are available to answer queries on the SEP Guidelines, Purple Flag Accreditation, and the process for establishing a SEP.

2. Eligibility criteria

The Program is a non-competitive, demand-driven, ‘first in, first served’ grant process. Eligibility will be assessed in the order of receiving a complete, assessable application. Provided an application is eligible, and there is funding available (noting the \$250,000 reserved for councils located outside of the Sydney Metropolitan Area) at the time of the assessment being undertaken, the application will be recommended for funding.

Submissions must be received no later than **2:00 PM AEST on 12 April 2027**, or earlier if the Program closes due to funds being fully exhausted.

Submissions will not be accepted after the Program closes to applications.

Please note this section (Section 2) summarises the eligibility criteria. Section 4.1.2 explains the evidence required to demonstrate each criterion.

To be eligible for the Program, applicants must:

- be a local council in NSW who has not previously received funding from the NSW Government to establish a SEP/s; **and**
- have a Council resolution to:
 - establish the SEP/s, which must identify a specific location and boundary for the SEP/s; **and**
 - commit to establishing a Special Entertainment Precinct working group (PWG); **and**
 - investigate Purple Flag accreditation for the same boundary as the proposed SEP/s in the project period; **and**
- have one of the following:
 - a. an adopted night-time economy strategy; **or**
 - b. another adopted strategy document or strategic planning statement in which the night-time economy is identified as a priority, objective, pillar or key action; **or**
 - c. Council resolution to prepare a night-time economy strategy or plan and have other demonstrated strategic context including a visitor economy strategy or plan or economic development strategy or plan; **and**

- demonstrate that the decision to establish the SEP/s has been informed by early engagement on the principle of the SEP with the local community and businesses; **and**
- demonstrate project deliverability by clearly detailing Council’s capacity to deliver the SEP/s and investigate Purple Flag accreditation; **and**
- be able to deliver the project within the project period, noting the requirements of the SEP Guidelines.

Refer to [Section 4.1.2](#) for a detailed description of each criterion.

DCITHS cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

Important note – council resolution wording

- Strict requirements apply to the council resolution to establish the SEP/s. Resolutions containing terms such as “investigate”, “discuss”, “consider”, or similar wording that does not provide a clear council commitment will not be eligible.
- Please read these Grant Guidelines carefully to ensure you understand the requirements.
- Refer to Appendix A for more information.

3. Eligible costs

Funding may only be expended on eligible or agreed activities.

To be eligible, costs must:

- be incurred within the Project Period; **and**
- reflect competitive market rates; **and**
- be a true and accurate reflection of costs required to deliver the activity.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project cost and request evidence of costs such as supplier contracts, quotes, invoices and receipts. We may request financial reports and credit checks from independent third-party service providers.

You must demonstrate value for money by ensuring project costs are reasonable and reflective of market rates. We may assess the reasonableness of costs against comparable projects, market information, and other relevant evidence.

DCITHS will make the final decision on whether the claimed cost is eligible or reasonable. If DCITHS determines to only pay the reasonable amount of the claimed eligible cost, it may result in applications to be offered partial funding.

The grant cannot be used to fund the following activities:

- activities that will not be delivered prior to the end of the grant project period, per agreed project milestones in the funding agreement, unless otherwise approved by formal variation
- activities that have commenced or been completed prior to the execution of the funding agreement made to successful councils (i.e. no retrospective funding)
- permanent staff salaries
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- projects requiring ongoing funding from the NSW Government
- projects that are ongoing or constitute the normal course of business.

3.1. Eligible and ineligible costs for SEPs funding

Eligible councils may request between \$20,000 and \$200,000 (excluding GST) of funding for eligible costs as per Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 for the purposes of establishing a SEP.

3.1.1 Eligible costs for SEPs

To be eligible, costs related to the establishment of the SEP/s must be a direct cost related to activities outlined within Step 1 (Establishing a SEP) of the SEP Guidelines. Costs associated with marketing and communication of the SEP/s **must not be** the only costs requested.

Eligible expert and consultant costs for SEPs include, but are not limited to:

- labour expenditure for temporary employment for the project
- external or third-party costs, such as
 - acoustic specialists to prepare or test the sound management framework
 - strategic planning consultants to prepare internal reporting and maps, a planning proposal, draft Development Control Plan (DCP) provisions, and/or draft precinct management plan
 - community engagement consultants to develop engagement strategies and undertake engagement activities (such as letterbox drops or support PWG meetings)
 - costs associated with marketing and communication of the SEP/s (**Note: this must not be the only cost requested**)
 - monitoring, data collection and/or evaluation costs during the SEP/s trial and its preparation.

3.1.2 Ineligible costs and activities for SEPs

The grant cannot be used to fund the following activities:

- other than minor boundary changes, establishment of a SEP/s in a different location than originally proposed in the grant application
- physical activation of the SEP/s once established
- capital works or physical works within the SEP/s
- funding for works that are part of the council's ongoing maintenance and management of the SEP/s
- the purchase of land or property
- marketing and communication of the SEP/s **if this is the only cost requested** - costs associated with marketing and communication of the SEP/s **must not be** the only costs requested.

3.2. Eligible and ineligible costs for Purple Flag funding (optional)

Eligible councils may request an additional amount between \$10,000 and \$50,000 (excluding GST) of funding for eligible costs as per Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 for the purposes of investigating Purple Flag accreditation.

Councils who currently have existing Purple Flag accredited precincts within the proposed SEP/s **cannot apply** for additional funding to support the investigation of Purple Flag accreditation, and do not require a resolution to investigate a Purple Flag accreditation.

The request for funding for Purple Flag is optional; however, the grant requires all funded councils establishing SEPs to prepare a Purple Flag self-assessment report unless a council already has an existing Purple Flag accreditation that covers a boundary within the proposed SEP.

Purple Flag accreditation will be subject to a separate assessment and process. The self-assessment report template will be provided to councils that are successful in receiving grant funding. It is not mandatory for SEP Kickstart Grant recipients to achieve Purple Flag accreditation.

For further details, refer to nsw.gov.au/purple-flag.

3.2.1 Eligible costs for Purple Flag

To be eligible, costs related to the investigation of Purple Flag accreditation must be to:

- coordinate working group meetings and manage stakeholder engagement activities related to the Purple Flag framework, self-assessment, and/or accreditation
- undertake activities related to investigating Purple Flag accreditation including developing a Purple Flag self-assessment report, developing a precinct map, and compiling other supporting information to progress a Purple Flag application, such as a precinct snapshot and precinct overview. For more details, see Section 3 of the [Purple Flag Program Guidelines](#).

Eligible expert and consultant costs for Purple Flag include, but are not limited to:

- labour expenditure for temporary employment for the project for the coordination of the Purple Flag project
- external or third-party costs, such as:
 - data collection
 - preparation of documentation
 - stakeholder engagement

3.2.2 Ineligible costs and activities for Purple Flag

The grant cannot be used to fund the following activities:

- the investigation of Purple Flag for a precinct or part of a precinct that is already Purple Flag accredited
- ongoing operational costs such as staff salaries, rent, utilities, maintenance/repairs and administrative overheads. This excludes the costs associated with the appointment or funding of temporary employment for the project.

4. Application process

4.1. How to apply

Round 3 of the SEP Kickstart Grant Program follows a one-stage application process.

Only one complete application per council will be accepted. However, each application can comprise of more than one SEP (to be consolidated in a maximum of one (1) planning proposal).

Where an application comprises of more than one SEP, the maximum amount of funding that can be requested is up to \$250,000 (excluding GST) per council. Funding will be allocated per council/application, not per SEP.

Before applying, you must read and understand these Grant Guidelines. The Grant Guidelines, and any alterations and addenda,¹ will be published on the Special Entertainment Precinct Kickstart Grant Program webpage.

To apply, you must:

- complete the application form on the Special Entertainment Precinct Kickstart Grant Program webpage;
- submit the application through the SmartyGrants portal;
- provide all information requested;
- address and meet all the eligibility criteria;
- include all necessary attachments to satisfy the eligibility criteria, as specified in the application form and [Section 4.1.2](#) of these Grant Guidelines; and

submit your application in accordance with the timelines outlined in these Grant Guidelines.

You are responsible for ensuring your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence in accordance with Section 307B of the *Crimes Act 1900*. We may investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

Applications are completed and submitted online via the SmartyGrants portal. You will receive an automated email from the SmartyGrants portal when your application is received. You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

One application per council will be assessed. If more than one application is submitted, only the latest application will be considered.

Eligibility will be assessed in the order of receiving a complete, assessable application. We may seek clarification on information provided in your application, where doing so does not change the nature of the application. Assessment of other complete, assessable applications will continue while the requested information is outstanding.

¹ Alterations and addenda may include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to closing times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents.

Once all required information is received, the application will re-enter the assessment queue and be assessed in the order of receiving a complete, assessable application.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time; receipt of any additional information is at the discretion of DCITHS.

Councils must not lobby the NSW Government on an issue related or seen to be related to the Program that may or may be perceived to give an unfair advantage to the applicant. Councils are required to comply with all applicable laws including the [*NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct*](#).

If there are changes to the Grant Guidelines or the application process, DCITHS will notify you via email and provide you with information about whether and how to amend your application accordingly.

If the funds are exhausted earlier than 2:00 PM AEST on 12 April 2027, DCITHS will notify potential councils by posting a notification on the NSW [Grants and Funding](#) website. Potential councils are recommended to check the website regularly for updates.

Applications will not be accepted after the Program closes to applications.

4.1.1 Reapplying

Councils whose applications have been deemed ineligible may reapply, provided the new application is received before the application close date of 2:00 PM AEST on 12 April 2027 or earlier if the available funds are exhausted prior to this date.

Councils who reapply must do so via the SmartyGrants portal and the submission will be assessed as a new application, based on the date of receipt of the new reapplication. Note that eligibility will be assessed in the order of receiving a complete, assessable application.

4.1.2 What to include in the application

Applications for funding for eligible councils will be assessed against and must meet the following criteria.

Important: resolution checklist

The Council resolution/s required for the application must meet all of the following requirements:

Is it an endorsed/approved resolution?
(i.e. not draft)

Does it outline a specific boundary and location for the SEP/s? (The location can be indicated via a map, or a description inclusive of suburb and/or roads. For example: "Council approves the establishment of a Special Entertainment Precinct at [precinct boundary]...")

Does it include text that council will investigate achieving Purple Flag accreditation for the same boundary of a precinct where the SEP/s is proposed?

Does it commit to establishing a Precinct Working Group for the SEP?

The resolution must not be for endorsement of a strategy or plan that references an entertainment precinct, unless it is specifically acknowledged in the strategy/plan that a specific boundary and location for the SEP has been identified and will be established.

The resolution must not include words such as 'investigate', 'discuss' or 'consider' a SEP or similar wording demonstrating a lack of commitment.

Criteria	Description
Council resolution to establish the SEP/s	Your council must have a Council resolution to establish the SEP/s, which must identify a specific location and boundary of the SEP/s, and must follow the wording requirements below and in Appendix A. You must provide evidence such as a copy of the approved Council minutes and the formal council resolution. A Council resolution to establish a SEP is required in Step 1.3 of the NSW SEP Guidelines which are mandatory for councils to follow when establishing SEPs under Section 202 of the Local Government Act 1993. This is because a resolution demonstrates the Council's commitment to begin working with a community and NSW Government agencies to establish a SEP, who may form part of the PWG. For further information, refer to the SEP Guidelines and Handbook. For example: • Council approves the establishment of a Special Entertainment Precinct at [precinct boundary]. The resolution must not: • be for endorsement of a strategy or plan that references an entertainment precinct, unless it is specifically acknowledged in the strategy/plan that a specific boundary and location for the SEP has been identified and will be established. • include words such as 'investigate', 'discuss' or 'consider' a SEP or similar wording demonstrating a lack of commitment. Note: One application can be used to cover multiple SEPs, but they can only be lodged as one planning proposal.
Council resolution to establish a Special Entertainment Precinct Working Group (PWG)	Your council must have a Council resolution that commits to establishing a PWG to guide the establishment of a SEP. You must provide evidence of commitment to establishing a PWG. Acceptable evidence may include approved Council minutes and the formal Council resolution. Refer to Appendix A for further information on the required wording of the Council resolution. Refer to the SEP Guidelines for more information on PWGs.
Council resolution to investigate Purple Flag Accreditation	Your application must demonstrate a commitment to investigate Purple Flag accreditation for the precinct. You must have a Council resolution to investigate achieving Purple Flag accreditation for the same boundary of a precinct where the SEP is proposed. Important exemption from the above: Councils who currently have existing Purple Flag accredited precincts within the proposed SEP/s cannot apply for additional funding to support the investigation of Purple Flag accreditation, and do not require a resolution to investigate a Purple Flag accreditation. You must provide evidence of commitment to investigate Purple Flag accreditation. Acceptable evidence may include approved Council minutes and the formal Council resolution. Refer to Appendix A for further information on the required wording of the Council resolution.

Criteria	Description
Strategic alignment with the night-time economy	Your application must demonstrate that the SEP/s align with Council’s strategic policies in at least one of the following ways. Councils must have: a. An adopted night-time economy strategy; or b. Adopted another strategy document or strategic planning statement in which the night-time economy is identified as a priority, objective, pillar or key action; or c. Resolved to prepare a night-time economy strategy and have other demonstrated strategic context including a visitor economy strategy or plan or economic development strategy or plan. You must provide evidence of the relevant strategy (a or b) or the Council resolution and complementary visitor economy strategy or plan, or economic development strategy or plan (c). A discussion paper or study is not acceptable in satisfying this criterion. Refer to Appendix B for further information on the requirements.
Informed by early engagement with the local community and businesses	Your application must demonstrate that the decision to establish a SEP/s has been informed by early engagement with the local community and businesses on the principle of a SEP/s. Engagement must have been undertaken within the last 12 months. Applications with inadequate early engagement, for example, engagement on a project such as a strategy or masterplan that does not reference the proposed SEP/s, will be deemed as ineligible. While early engagement must be demonstrated, it is not required to be comprehensive. It must address the below criteria but Councils will have the opportunity to undertake a full program of engagement once they commence preparation of a SEP. You must provide an Engagement Outcomes Report that addresses the following: • Engagement activities must have been undertaken within the last 12 months • Engagement activities have included consultation with both local businesses and residents of the SEP/s area • Engagement has been on the principle of a SEP/s • Engagement methods used to engage with each group have been outlined • A summary of the feedback from both community and businesses is provided (for example: survey results or other reporting).

Criteria	Description
Deliverability	Your application must clearly detail your capacity to deliver the SEP/s and to investigate Purple Flag accreditation within the project period by outlining: • The intended objectives and outcomes of the SEP/s, including, if applicable, alignment with existing night-time economy initiatives either existing or proposed in the LGA such as Uptown Precincts, Purple Flag, and/or Safer Cities; and • The proposed timeframe for SEP establishment, noting the requirements of the SEP Guidelines, unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation, for: – proposed date for the Gateway lodgement to Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI); and – proposed date for the start of the SEP trial which must be no later than 30 June 2028; and – proposed date for the end of the SEP trial (approx. 12 months) which must be no later than 30 June 2029; and • The proposed expenditure of grant money – a detailed budget to be provided with evidence of costs. A minimum of 1 x evidence of cost is required for each eligible cost type sought. Acceptable evidence of cost includes quotes, cost estimates, reasonable assumptions or evidence from similar projects prepared by a relevant professional, within the last 12 months. Evidence provided must be in writing. Where a professional has prepared a cost estimate, their qualifications and role should be identified in the application. All costs must be reasonable, represent value for money, and reflect competitive market rates; and • The proposed project team (job titles only) comprising members from at least 2 different Council departments or teams to demonstrate a cross-collaborative approach; and • The proposed approach to investigating Purple Flag accreditation. Note: Successful applicants will be required to complete a Purple Flag precinct self-assessment report no later than 6 months from executing the funding agreement, unless they already have Purple Flag accreditation in the proposed SEP. The self-assessment report template will be provided to councils that are successful in receiving grant funding. It is not mandatory for grant recipients to achieve Purple Flag accreditation.

Note: To support the assessment of your application, we may request clarification or additional information to verify details provided in your application. DCITHS reserves the right to use third parties to validate information in applications as part of the assessment process.

Templates for certain Request for Quote (RFQ) documents are available at nsw.gov.au/seps.

4.2. Support available to councils

To assist councils in preparing their applications, additional information and resources, including Program FAQs, can be found on the SEP website at nsw.gov.au/seps or by email at seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

For further information on the Purple Flag program, please visit the Purple Flag website at nsw.gov.au/purple-flag or contact purpleflag@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

An online webinar (with invitations to be sent to all NSW councils) will be held in later 2026, and will cover an overview of the Program, how to apply, and eligibility requirements, followed by a Q&A.

5. Assessment process

5.1. Assessment of grant applications

This Program is demand-driven, ‘first in, first served’, and non-competitive. This means that applications that satisfy stated eligibility criteria will be recommended for funding in the order of receiving a complete, assessable application.

Eligible applications will be considered based on a non-competitive process and will be assessed by DCITHS staff with experience in council and precinct strategies. As noted above, applications will be assessed in the order in which applications are received, subject to DCITHS receiving all required documentation. Applications submitted that do not meet eligibility criteria will not be considered.

Throughout the assessment process, we may request clarification from councils to verify details provided in your application. Advice and information may also be sought from other NSW Government agencies or other parties to assist with the assessment of applications, including an independent probity advisor. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.

5.1.1 Regional applications

To encourage regional SEPs to be established and for councils to investigate aligning them with Purple Flag precincts, up to **\$250,000** (excluding GST) of the total fund will be reserved for priority allocation to councils located outside of the Sydney Metropolitan Area.

Councils in regional areas will also be eligible for funding from the remaining \$950,000 of the total funding pool, with a total allocation not to exceed \$250,000 per council, excluding GST.

If the reserved funding is not fully allocated to eligible regional councils, any remaining funding will be made available to other waitlisted eligible councils at the closure of the grant.

Regional NSW and Sydney Metropolitan definitions

For this program, the allocation of grant funding between Regional and Sydney Metropolitan areas in NSW is determined by specific geographical definitions set by DCITHS. DCITHS reserves the right to amend this categorisation at its discretion.

The following areas of NSW are defined as Regional:

Area	Location
Central Coast	Central Coast.
Central West and Orana	Bathurst Regional, Blayney, Bogan, Cabonne, Coonamble, Cowra, Dubbo Regional, Forbes, Gilgandra, Lachlan, Lithgow, Mid-Western Regional, Narramine, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Warren, Warrumbungle Shire and Weddin.
Far West	Balranald, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Central Darling, Cobar, Walgett and Wentworth.
Hunter	Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and Upper Hunter Shire.
Illawarra-Shoalhaven	Kiama, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven, Wollongong.
New England and North West	Armidale Regional, Glen Innes Severn, Gunnedah, Gwydir, Inverell, Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tamworth Regional, Tenterfield, Uralla and Walcha.
North Coast	Ballina, Bellingen, Byron, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, Kyogle, Lismore, MidCoast, Nambucca Valley, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Richmond Valley and Tweed.
Riverina Murray	Albury, Berrigan, Bland, Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra Gundagai, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga.
South East and Tablelands	Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Goulburn Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan Palerang, Snowy Monaro Regional, Upper Lachlan Shire, Wingecarribee and Yass Valley.
Unincorporated	Unincorporated Far West, Lord Howe Island.

The following areas of NSW are defined as Sydney Metropolitan:

Area	Location
Inner	Bayside, Hunter's Hill, Inner West, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Randwick, Sydney, Waverley, Willoughby, Woollahra.
Outer	Blacktown, Burwood, Camden, Campbelltown, Canada Bay, Canterbury Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Georges River, The Hills, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Liverpool, Northern Beaches, Parramatta, Penrith, Ryde, Strathfield, Sutherland.
Surrounds	Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Wollondilly.

5.1.2 Waitlist

Should a council submit an application after the total Program funding has been allocated but before the application closing date, they will be notified of the closure of the funding round. If eligible, their application will be kept on file and they may be successful in receiving funding if an earlier application is deemed ineligible, a successful council withdraws, a council requires less funding than originally requested, or if further funding becomes available.

If additional funding becomes available, waitlisted councils will be assessed in the order of application receipt (complete, assessable application only), until funding is again exhausted.

5.2. Recommendation and decision making

The assessor will undertake an eligibility assessment for each application to determine if the application meets the requirements outlined in the Grant Guidelines. The eligibility of the application will be based on the criteria outlined in [Section 2](#) of these Grant Guidelines and determined met/not met. Only applications assessed as eligible (all criteria met) will be recommended for funding and approval. There are no exceptions to the eligibility criteria.

DCITHS's decision is final in all matters including:

- application eligibility
- the assessment outcome
- the approval of the grant, and
- the grant amount to be awarded.

We may also consider other factors that may affect our decision to provide the grant including whether there are any conflicts of interest, whether the council and any person associated with the council are fit and proper and whether there is any reputation risk associated with providing the grant.

Councils may be offered less than their requested amount in the application if:

- insufficient funds remain in the Program to cover the full requested amount, and/or
- ineligible costs have been identified in the proposed expenditure.

The decision-maker will not approve funding if there are insufficient funds remaining in the Program, but may have discretion to offer less than requested.

5.2.1 Probity advice

An independent probity advisor will provide guidance to DCITHS on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process.

5.3. Notification of application outcome

5.3.1 Successful applicants

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of applications in writing via email. Successful councils will be notified **within 6 weeks** of receipt of their application (which includes all required information). This will be followed by an offer of funding.

The offer of funding will include a funding agreement which must be reviewed, signed and returned to DCITHS **within 2 weeks** of its receipt. Payment of funding is conditional on the successful applicant entering into a funding agreement with DCITHS, and subject to the terms of the funding agreement.

If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant. This could include a request to keep the grant confidential for a specified period due to an announcement being made by the NSW Government in relation to the grant.

5.3.2 Unsuccessful applicants

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of applications in writing via email. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified **within 6 weeks** of receipt of their application and will be offered the opportunity to request feedback on their application and requirements to meet the eligibility criteria. If the application is unsuccessful, they may submit a new application to the Program if it is still open for funding.

5.3.3 Feedback on applications

Unsuccessful applicants can request a feedback session. Feedback sessions will be delivered by DCITHS. To register for a feedback session, please contact seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

5.4. Publication of grants information

The Grants Administration Guide (Guide) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see [Section 6.5](#) of the Guide and [Appendix A](#) to the Guide). This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined. All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.

6. Successful grant applications

6.1. Grant funding agreement

Successful councils will be required to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with DCITHS which includes the agreed project outline and terms and conditions.

The NSW Government makes no funding or other commitment to the successful applicant until all parties have signed a grant agreement. You must not make financial commitments reliant on this grant until the grant agreement is signed and executed by all parties.

- We do not encourage amendments to the grant agreement template. However, where you cannot accept the terms and conditions in the template, you must notify DCITHS in writing of your proposed amendments to the template and qualify the reasons for your proposed amendments **at least 5 business days** prior to the date your signed agreement is due.
- We may or may not accept these proposed amendments at our discretion.
- Where you do not propose any amendments, you will be deemed to have accepted the terms of the grant agreement template.

The grant agreement can only be signed by authorised officers or delegates of your organisation.

All council applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in the application form.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their staff have the capacity and availability to understand, complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of their grant agreement, and for it to be signed by the correct authorised signatories. Important terms and conditions associated with the funding are attached to the grant agreement.

6.2. Grant payment

The grant will be paid in full to the nominated bank account only after the grant agreement has been executed by the relevant parties.

Payment/payments will be made:

- Upon the successful execution of the grant agreement
- Upon the receipt of a correctly completed invoice
- Within the specified timeframe set out in the grant agreement

Funding amount awarded will be exclusive of GST. Payments will be made inclusive of GST.

6.3. Variations to the grant agreement

Any variations to the funding agreement, including project scope or activities, location or timeframes outlined in the application form and Grant Guidelines must be submitted in writing for approval by DCITHS. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.

DCITHS has the sole discretion to approve or reject any variation request from a grantee where the grant agreement has already been executed.

All requests for a variation must be submitted in writing to DCITHS. To submit a variation request you must email via seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

Recipients may then be asked to provide additional details in a Variation form, submitted through the SmartyGrants portal.

Change requests will be assessed on their impact to the purpose, scope, timing and conditions of the approved project, and will only be allowed once agreed upon by all parties through a formal variation.

Significant changes (e.g. requesting additional funds, or use of allocated funds for a different, unapproved purpose) may be viewed as a request for a new grant. These changes will only be approved at the sole discretion of DCITHS.

Minor changes include requests such as:

- an extension-of-time request of a relatively short duration (within the dates specified in these Guidelines)
- a minor change to scope that aligns with the approved purpose and does not involve the seeking of any additional funds.
- reallocation of funds for an approved purpose

If approved, information on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder may be updated to reflect the project change.

Where a SEP trial does not proceed, DCITHS will determine whether costs already incurred are eligible and able to be acquitted having regard to the approved project scope, evidence of expenditure, compliance with the funding agreement, and any approved variations.

If you are unsure if your enquiry qualifies as a variation, contact seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

6.4. Unspent funds

Evidence of costs incurred throughout the project will be requested, for validation, in the project acquittal report.

Any allocated grant funds which remain unspent, or have been identified as ineligible costs or does not meet the definition of an eligible cost such as costs that are not reasonable and reflective of market rates, will need to be returned to DCITHS.

6.5. Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

You must submit reports as set out in the grant agreement. We may provide sample templates for these reports in the funding agreement.

We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project reporting and outcomes; and
- expenditure of the grant.

The scope of works and milestones submitted as part of your application will form the basis of project reporting requirements.

6.6. Three-month Purple Flag Accreditation briefing – council executive meeting

Successful councils must attend a meeting (held online, time and date TBC) **within 3 months** of executing a funding agreement to discuss Purple Flag accreditation with O24HEC (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation).

Council's Executive staff must be in attendance.

6.7. Purple Flag Self Assessment

No later than 6 months after executing a funding agreement (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation), councils must submit a completed Purple Flag self-assessment report and a summary of Purple Flag related working group meeting dates, actions and attendees (unless a council already has an existing Purple Flag accreditation that covers a boundary within the proposed SEP).

Note: Purple Flag accreditation will be subject to a separate assessment and process.

The self-assessment report template will be provided to councils that are successful in receiving grant funding. It is not mandatory for grant recipients to achieve Purple Flag accreditation.

6.8. Nine-Month Progress Report

No later than 9 months after executing a funding agreement (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation), councils must submit a progress report via SmartyGrants.

The progress report must include:

- the draft documentation and request for Gateway Determination that will be submitted to DPHI, including:
 - the precinct management plan (with the trading hour and sound criteria framework)
 - development control plan amendment if applicable
 - engagement outcomes report
 - SEP Boundary maps
 - relevant Council resolutions and reports
 - any other draft documents that will be submitted with the Planning Proposal (such as Good Neighbour Policy) and
 - the planning proposal.

- a Special Entertainment Precinct working group (PWG) consultation outcomes report on the activities of the PWG including:
 - composition of the PWG (number of residents, names of businesses or venues, community groups, NSW Government agencies, council officers, others)
 - meeting dates and actions or issues resolved
 - summary of feedback received
 - how the feedback informed the precinct management plan and/or the establishment or operation of the SEP.
- information relating to expenditure carried out for the project to date (e.g. invoices, payment remittance) relevant to investigating Purple Flag accreditation
- information relating to expenditure carried out for the project (e.g. invoices, payment remittance) relevant to establishing the SEP/s
- baseline data to enable evaluation of the SEP/s prior to the trial starting, including:
 - number of venues participating in the SEP trial
 - number of venues regularly (weekly) hosting live music or entertainment within the SEP
 - number of dedicated live music and performance venues
 - community and stakeholder satisfaction around the SEP trial
 - safety of the SEP
 - business composition of the SEP.

Refer to [Appendix C](#) for more information on data evaluation support available.

6.9. SEP trial

SEP trials are to commence no later than **30 June 2028** and be completed no later than **30 June 2029** (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation).

As noted elsewhere in these Guidelines, Purple Flag accreditation will be subject to a separate assessment and process. Purple Flag enquiries can be directed to purpleflag@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

6.10. Project acquittal report

No later than 4 weeks after the completion of the SEP trial(s) grantees must submit an acquittal report via SmartyGrants. The SEP trial(s) must be completed by **30 June 2029** (unless otherwise agreed with DCITHS through the funding agreement process or a formal variation).

This will include a signed statement of income and expenditure relating to the grant, and proof of purchases, invoices and payment remittance as required.

Project acquittal reports must also:

- identify if and how outcomes of the SEP trial were successful and achieved
- (if applicable) identify if Purple Flag accreditation has been achieved, or how it will be achieved
- include the agreed evidence as specified in the funding agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred and provide evidence of expenditure as required and
- be submitted within timeframe and in the format provided in the funding agreement.

Recipients must also provide a six-month and twelve-month post-acquittal report, relating to the long-term success of the SEP/s, to assist with Program evaluation.

These reports must include data on:

- number of venues participating in the SEP/s
- number of venues regularly (weekly) hosting live music or entertainment within the SEP/s
- number of dedicated live music and performance venues in the SEP/s
- community and stakeholder satisfaction around the SEP/s
- safety of the SEP/s
- business composition of the SEP/s; and
- Purple Flag Accreditation status of the SEP/s (if applicable).

6.11. Acknowledgement

All recipients of NSW Government funding must acknowledge this financial support in accordance with the [Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines](#) for Recipients of NSW Government Grants.

Recipients must also act in accordance with the SEP Kickstart Grant Communications Guide for Grant Recipients, which will be supplied to successful councils after the funding agreement is executed.

You must seek our written consent prior to any significant public announcement, marketing, press announcements, or official launch in relation to the Program.

The NSW Government logo and the 24-Hour Economy logo must be used on all materials related to grants provided to the SEP/s.

Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the NSW Government.

Non-personally identifiable information provided by councils may be used by DCITHS or the NSW Government for media and communication purposes.

7. Additional information and resources

7.1. Enquiries and feedback

Any enquiry you have about the assessment process or the outcome of your application for this Program should be sent to seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

General inquiries and interactions with councils will be recorded in a register with any support and the reasons for giving the support documented.

All information provided to councils through a direct inquiry will be made available to other councils through publishing FAQs on the program website.

Purple Flag enquiries can be directed to purpleflag@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

7.2. Complaint handling

All decisions regarding the eligibility of councils are final; however, if you wish to make a complaint about the way your application has been handled, please contact seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au.

In the first instance, complaints will be reviewed by DCITHS. If we cannot resolve the complaint within 20 business days of receipt, we will refer the matter to an internal review team within DCITHS who will advise of the next steps.

If the complaint is unable to be resolved, you can refer the matter to the NSW Ombudsman for external review. Please note that the NSW Ombudsman will not consider a complaint unless the matter has been first raised directly with DCITHS.

NSW Ombudsman

**Level 24,
580 George Street,
Sydney NSW 2000**

Ph: 1800 451 524

7.3. Support for councils

For further information about SEPs please refer to the NSW Special Entertainment Precinct webpage, nsw.gov.au/seps, which includes:

Resource	Description
Aboriginal Arts and Culture Protocols	If your project involves working with or engaging Aboriginal communities, applicants are encouraged to refer to the NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Protocols for guidance on respectful and meaningful engagement. As these Protocols are a living document and may be updated from time to time, please refer to the online version for the most current guidance: Aboriginal Arts and Culture Protocols NSW Government .
SEP Support Hub online form	Dedicated support service staffed by Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner SEP team. Email: seps@24houreconomy.nsw.gov.au
NSW Special Entertainment Precinct Guidelines	Identify the mandatory steps to establishing, operating, suspending or revoking a SEP – all councils must follow these Guidelines.
SEP Acoustic Toolkit	A technical resource for councils to use when developing a sound management framework for SEPs.
SEP Handbook	Best-practice guidance to be read alongside the SEP Guidelines.
SEP Resources	Frequently asked questions, links to important information relevant to SEPs, and community and business factsheets.
Model templates including RFQs for consultants	Optional Request for Quote (RFQ) templates for an acoustic consultant, strategic planning consultant and community engagement consultant.

For further information about Purple Flag please refer to the following resources:

Resource	Description
Purple Flag webpage	Includes information about the Purple Flag program. Access the webpage at nsw.gov.au/purple-flag .
Purple Flag Program Guidelines	Set out the 6 steps involved in applying for Purple Flag accreditation. View the Program Guidelines .
Purple Flag Precinct Assessment Rubric	Set out the criteria against which precincts are assessed when applying for Purple Flag accreditation. View the Assessment Rubric .
Purple Flag precinct Self-Assessment report	A structured review of how your precinct operates at night, carried out by your working group. It involves walking through the precinct during the early evening and night-time, to observe and assess performance against the five core Purple Flag principles: • Wellbeing: welcoming, clean and safe • Movement: a secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure • Appeal: a vibrant choice and rich mix of entertainment and activity • Place: a stimulating destination and vibrant place • Strategic alignment: a clear aim and a common purpose Further information on conducting a self-assessment is available in the Purple Flag Program Guidelines (Section 3.5). Note: a Purple Flag Self-Assessment report template will be supplied by the O24HEC to successful grant recipients.
Purple Flag and SEPs Integration Fact Sheet	Outlines the key benefits of Purple Flag and SEPs, how they align, and the ways they can work together to strengthen and support your night-time precinct. Refer to Appendix D .
Purple Flag Case Study	Case study highlighting the benefits of the Purple Flag program based on the YCK (York, Clarence and Kent St, Sydney CBD) precinct. Refer to Appendix E .

7.4. Evaluation

DCITHS regularly evaluates its initiatives to determine the effectiveness of implementation and to examine the extent to which outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Evaluations are conducted and published in line with requirements from NSW Treasury and the NSW Grants Administration Guide.

We may use information from your application, grant activities and reports you have submitted for this purpose. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand your experience with the grant program, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in achieving its objective(s) and outcomes. All applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, may be contacted to participate in interviews or surveys for evaluation purposes.

You consent to the use of your information for this purpose by:

- DCITHS
- NSW Treasury
- the Minister or Minister's office
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Office of NSW
- office staff, consultants and advisers
- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the office to have a need or an entitlement to know that information (including any federal, state or territory agency or body), where that need or entitlement to know that information arises out of or in connection with the purpose above.

7.5. Access to information

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

More information about DCITHS's practices for managing requests to access information under the GIPA and for publishing information is available on DCITHS [Information access guide](#).

You can also contact DCITHS by email or by post:

Attn: Legal Officer (GIPA)

**Office of the General Counsel
Department of Creative Industries,
Tourism, Hospitality and Sport,
McKell Building, 2-24 Rawson Place,
Haymarket NSW 2000**

Email: information@dciths.nsw.gov.au

7.6. Ethical conduct

DCITHS will administer the grant in accordance with the published Grant Guidelines and the principles and processes set out in the NSW Grants Administration Guide.

DCITHS will implement measures and controls to enable a fair and transparent process and incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities, and other inappropriate conduct.

7.7. Conflict of interest management

Conflicts of interest are any factors that could compromise the judgement, decisions, or actions of a person or group of people.

Conflicts may arise if a party in the grants administration process, whether it be DCITHS staff, assessment panel members, the council or staff employed by the applicant:

- has a professional, commercial, or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the councils from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the council received a grant
- are involved in any other situations which could lead to unfavourable advantage.

Conflicts of interest for DCITHS will be handled as set out in the DCITHS's Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Councils must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as part of their application or, if successful, as they arise during project implementation.

You must inform us as soon as you identify an actual, apparent or perceived conflict of interest.

Note: You are advised to contact us if you are unsure whether something constitutes an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

Risks are managed in accordance with DCITHS's risk management framework. Risk management, including fraud controls, will occur throughout the grant life cycle.

7.8. Confidentiality

Successful councils may be required to keep the outcome of the application process confidential until the Government makes a public announcement. DCITHS follows all requirements of confidentiality required as part of the grants administration and assessment process as outlined in the NSW Grants Administration Guide.

Unless otherwise stated, any commercial-in-confidence provisions (as defined under the GIPA Act) provided by you as part of, or in connection with, a registration, application or negotiation process will be treated confidentially by the office. We may disclose commercial-in-confidence information provided by you to the following parties:

- the Minister or Minister's office;
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Office of NSW;
- office staff, consultants and advisers;
- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the office to have a need or an entitlement to know that information (including any federal, state or territory agency or body), where the need or entitlement to know that information arises out of or in connection with the office's assessment, verification or due diligence of any aspect of your application; and
- where authorised or required to by law.

If we disclose commercial-in-confidence information to any of the above parties, we will inform the party that the information is strictly confidential. We will otherwise only disclose commercial-in-confidence information provided by you with your consent.

7.9. Privacy

DCITHS will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable the implementation of this grant program.

DCITHS is required to comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PIIP Act). DCITHS collects the minimum personal information to enable it to contact an organisation and to assess the merits of an application. Councils must ensure that people whose personal details are supplied with applications are aware that DCITHS is being supplied with this information and how this information will be used.

We treat your personal information in accordance with the PIIP Act and the [DCITHS's privacy policy](#).

This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information, and
- who we give your personal information to.

The personal information will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies.

Appendix A

Guide to wording of Council resolutions

SEP and Precinct Working Group resolution – mandatory wording requirements

A Council resolution to establish a SEP is required in Step 1.3 of the SEP Guidelines which are mandatory for councils to follow when establishing SEPs under Section 202 of the Local Government Act 1993.

This is because a resolution demonstrates the Council's commitment to begin working with a community and NSW Government agencies to establish a SEP, who may form part of the Precinct Working Group (PWG). For further information, refer to the SEP Guidelines and Handbook.

The Council resolution to establish a SEP required in the application **must meet the following requirements:**

- Councils must demonstrate an endorsed specific council resolution to **establish** a SEP/s, which must include a **specific boundary and location** for the SEP/s and commit to establishing a Special Entertainment Precinct Working Group (PWG). The location can be indicated via a map, or a description inclusive of suburb and/or roads.
- For example:
 - Council approves the establishment of a Special Entertainment Precinct at [precinct boundary].
 - Council approves the establishment of a Precinct Working Group for the Special Entertainment Precinct.

- It is required that:
 - the resolution must relate to a specific boundary and location for the SEP/s
 - the resolution must commit to establishing a Precinct Working Group for the SEP/s
 - the resolution must not be in draft form (i.e. must be endorsed/approved)
 - the resolution must not be for:
 - » endorsement of a strategy or plan that references an entertainment precinct, unless it is specifically acknowledged in the strategy/plan that a specific boundary and location for the SEP has been identified and will be established; and/or
 - » an intent to 'investigate', 'discuss' or 'consider' a SEP or similar wording.

Purple Flag Accreditation resolution – mandatory wording requirements

The Council resolution to investigate Purple Flag Accreditation required in the application must meet the following requirements:

- the resolution must note that Purple Flag Accreditation will be investigated in the same boundary as the SEP/s
- the resolution must not be in draft form (i.e. must be endorsed/approved).

Appendix B

Guide to strategic alignment with the night-time economy (NTE)

To satisfy the requirements for the strategic alignment with the night-time economy, at least one of the following options must be selected. Council must have:

- a. Adopted a night-time economy strategy; **or**
- b. Adopted another strategy document or strategic planning statement in which the night-time economy is identified as a priority, objective, pillar or key action, **or**
- c. Resolved to prepare a night-time economy strategy **and** have other demonstrated strategic context including a visitor economy strategy or plan or economic development strategy or plan.

A discussion paper or study is not acceptable in satisfying this criterion.

The table below can be used for reference.

Note: the examples in the table are indicative only and each application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria listed in these Grant Guidelines.

Table 1 Example assessment table (indicative guide with selected scenarios only).

Eligibility criteria – Strategic Alignment with the NTE	Acceptable	Not acceptable
a. Adopted a night-time economy strategy; or	An adopted night-time economy strategy or action plan.	- A night-time economy discussion paper or study - A draft night-time economy strategy
b. Adopted another strategy document or strategic planning statement in which the night-time economy is identified as a priority, objective, pillar or key action, or	An adopted strategic document or strategic planning statement which has a priority, objective, outcome, strategy, pillar or key action addressing or encouraging night-time activity in the LGA. For example: - An adopted Community Strategic Plan or Local Strategic Planning Statement - An adopted development strategy, place plan or masterplan for the SEP or wider area (including the SEP) - An adopted visitor or economic development strategy - An adopted Arts and Culture Plan - Another strategic document not listed above.	Draft strategies or plans - A priority, objective, pillar or key action that only references a location that is not the proposed SEP location
c. Resolved to prepare a night-time economy strategy <i>and</i> have other demonstrated strategic context including a visitor economy strategy or plan or economic development strategy or plan.	A council must satisfy both of the following: - A Council resolution to prepare or update an existing night-time economy strategy; and - An adopted and current visitor economy (or tourism, or destination management) strategy or plan or an adopted and current economic development strategy or plan. The strategy document or plan does not need to identify the night-time economy as a priority, action, objective, or pillar.	- Only one of the requirements being met - A draft Council resolution to prepare or update a night-time economy strategy - A draft visitor economy strategy or economic development strategy

Appendix C

Data evaluation requirements

Evaluating SEPs is required by Step 1.13 of the SEP Guidelines, available at:

[Special Entertainment Precincts | NSW Government](#).

Supplementary optional information is available in the [NSW Special Entertainment Precinct Handbook](#) and the [Model templates](#).

Several other resources can be accessed to assist with the quantitative data collection, including:

- [Data After Dark](#) – a digital platform on spend, demographics, mobility, employment, crime and business composition.
- [Transport for NSW – Open Data Portal](#) – mobility data hub. For further information on any Open Data Hub related queries: opendataprogram@transport.nsw.gov.au.
- [Liquor and Gaming NSW](#) – for information on liquor licences and dedicated live music venues.
- [BOCSAR data](#) – for information on crime and statistics.

Subject to availability of data, O24HEC will work with NSW councils to leverage data available from the Data After Dark platform to help them assess SEPs.

For qualitative data collection (e.g. surveys, interviews) and to assist the O24HEC, it is encouraged to use the SEP Communications Template (available at nsw.gov.au/seps) for engagement activities.

Councils will be required to use template survey questions on safety and perceptions of the SEP using supplied questions prior to the SEP trial commencing.

Appendix D

Purple Flag and SEPs Integration Fact Sheet

This document explains the key benefits and alignment between the Purple Flag Program and SEPs and how they can work together to strengthen and support your night-time precinct.

What is the Purple Flag Program?

Purple Flag is an internationally recognised accreditation program that celebrates precincts that achieve high standards of excellence in managing their night-time precincts. While Purple Flag precincts in NSW are the first of their kind in Australia, there are over 100 Purple Flag precincts globally in countries such as the UK, New Zealand, Sweden and Malta.

A precinct that meets or exceeds these **5 core principles** will achieve Purple Flag accreditation:

1. **Wellbeing:** your precinct is a welcoming, clean and safe environment.
2. **Movement:** there are secure ways for people to arrive, move around and leave your precinct.
3. **Appeal:** your precinct has diverse night-time activities and options for different ages, lifestyles and cultures at different times of the evening.
4. **Place:** there are a mix of pleasing and functional spaces in your precinct that make it a convenient and attractive night-time destination.
5. **Strategic alignment:** your precinct has a plan in place for ongoing collaboration between local businesses, members of the community and government agencies.

Purple Flag is administered by the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner, in partnership with the UK Association of Town and City Management (ATCM).



Miss Wolf, Marrickville. Photo: 24-Hour Economy NSW.

What is a Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP)?

A SEP is a defined area, streetscape or single premises, where council sets trading hours and sound conditions in a precinct management plan to encourage live performance and support vibrant going-out precincts.

Councils are enabled to make SEPs under Section 202 of the Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW SEP Guidelines, though in very limited circumstances the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces may also make a SEP in a State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).

A local council identifies a SEP by publishing a precinct management plan, created in consultation with community, venues, businesses and government, on their website and amending its Local Environmental Plan (LEP) through a planning proposal submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure.

How will Purple Flag and SEPs benefit your precinct?

When combined, Purple Flag and SEPs can benefit businesses in your precinct, the local economy and the wider community in general. Benefits include:

Raised profile and increased expenditure

When people see the Purple Flag sign, they know the area meets standards of excellence in vibrancy, diversity and safety at night. Combined with the structured planning framework of SEPs, this can help activate local areas, attract more visitors and increase local expenditure.

Boost confidence and investment

SEPs provide clear rules around trading hours and sound, giving businesses and residents certainty and reducing land use conflict. Purple Flag strengthens this by promoting the development of a vibrant and well managed night-time economy. Together, this can signal to businesses and investors, that your precinct is committed to the long-term success of its night-time economy, encouraging investment and opportunities for commercial partnerships and collaboration.

Improved stakeholder collaboration and precinct management

Both programs bring together key stakeholders including council, businesses, industry, as well as state government agencies and the broader community. This fosters stronger collaboration and partnerships, enabling people to work more effectively to manage, and continuously improve their precinct's night-time economy.

Support for vibrant and safe night-time precincts

SEPs offer reduced liquor licensing fees, higher noise complaint thresholds, and trading hour incentives to licensed and unlicensed businesses and particularly venues that host live entertainment, and can support outdoor activation and events, while Purple Flag supports a coordinated approach to continuously improving the experience of the precinct for visitors, encouraging a more diverse night-time offering, and a safer, more inclusive and vibrant precinct.

The certainty provided by the frameworks encourages businesses to innovate in their services and offerings, to benefit the community.



Image: NSW 24-Hour Economy Precinct Programs

How can I integrate Purple Flag and SEPs in my precinct?

Purple Flag can complement your SEP, by providing a structured framework for night-time precinct management, helping ensure it continues to be a safe, vibrant, and diverse going out destination. It will also mean that your SEP can gain global recognition as a welcoming, safe and diverse night-time destination through the Purple Flag international accreditation.

Precinct boundaries

A Purple Flag precinct boundary should include your Special Entertainment Precinct. This helps ensure that all relevant stakeholders within a SEP are included in the night-time management of the precinct as well as share insights and work collaboratively to achieve stronger outcomes.

Working group

Both the Purple Flag and SEPs involve establishing a working group. A single working group could easily serve both programs and reduce duplication, or a dedicated Purple Flag sub-group could be formed from an existing SEP working group, with additional members for Purple

Flag activities added as needed. This approach enables stakeholders to collaborate effectively and councils to integrate both initiatives and ensure the goals of each program are strategically aligned – maximising the benefits.

Should I apply for a Purple Flag while planning a SEP?

Councils are encouraged to apply for Purple Flag accreditation during the initial planning of a Special Entertainment Precinct.

There are several benefits in applying for Purple Flag while developing a SEP. These include the increased stakeholder engagement and collaboration and working within an established, globally recognised night-time management framework for the precinct that can demonstrate to the community the council’s intent for a vibrant and diverse precinct that meets community expectations. Immediate precinct benefits include recognition as an accredited Purple Flag precinct, leading to greater coordination among the local business community, and a unified approach to precinct management and implementation of collaborative initiatives to improve mobility, perceptions of safety and vibrancy in the precinct.

Purple Flag and SEPs Integration – Summary

Purple Flag and SEPs both support the management and development of vibrant night-time precincts. The table below summarises the two frameworks:

Characteristic	Purple Flag	SEPs
Type	International Accreditation Program	Planning tool
Lead	Council or Precinct	Council or Minister
Has legislative or regulatory framework?	No	Yes: Local Government Act (Section 202)
Stakeholders	• Council, TfNSW, L&G NSW, DPHI, NSW Police, businesses and industry, health districts, local community	• Council, TfNSW, L&G NSW, DPHI, NSW Police, businesses and industry, health districts, local community
Common Benefits	• Supports the 24-hour economy and vibrant precincts • Strong stakeholder partnerships, coordination and collaboration • Established through genuine early engagement with all stakeholders • Joint support from NSW Government and council	• Supports the 24-hour economy and vibrant precincts • Strong stakeholder partnerships, coordination and collaboration • Established through genuine early engagement with all stakeholders • Joint support from NSW Government and council

Appendix E

Purple Flag case study – YCK Precinct

In February 2023, YCK Laneways (the York, Clarence and Kent Street precinct) in Sydney’s CBD became Australia’s first [Purple Flag](#) accredited district, joining a network of 100+ Purple Flag accredited destinations worldwide.

YCK Laneways achieved this milestone by building a strong collaborative working group including hospitality venues owners, property owners, police, liquor accords, and representatives from City of Sydney and Transport for NSW.

Since accreditation, the working group has led a portfolio of collective initiatives such as precinct activations, increased outdoor seating, and precinct-wide marketing and promotion to continuously improve perceptions of safety and vibrancy across the precinct. The working group also works closely together to regularly gather precinct data to monitor compliance with Purple Flag criteria.

YCK Laneways Association Vice President Karl Schlothauer welcomed the precinct’s achievement as the first in NSW to be recognised as a Purple Flag precinct, positioning it as a safe, welcoming and vibrant destination for locals and visitors.

“Whether it’s for retail therapy, visiting one of the superb small bars, grabbing a late-night bite or enjoying one of our regular arts and cultural events, we are committed to delivering our patrons a safe, friendly and fun experience,”

Mr. Schlothauer

The precinct collectively delivered ‘Summer Love’, a month-long event in January 2023 featuring over 130 free and ticketed events, and ‘The Night is Young’, a four-week festival held in late October and early November 2023 with over 50 late-night cultural events. In February 2024, the precinct hosted ‘Up Late and Loud’ a four-week in-venue activation celebrating NSW Government’s vibrancy reforms through live music, performances, and extended trading to showcase the precinct’s cultural energy and nightlife offering.

Other highlights have included YCK’s participation in the Sydney Comedy Festival with curated comedy tours throughout the precinct (July 2024). The precinct also launched ‘The Station Project’ as part of the Community Improvement District Pilot program, transforming underused laneway spaces into creative, welcoming areas.

YCK has also invested in initiatives that prioritise patron safety and inclusivity. Through the installation of the Clarence Street secure taxi rank, which sits at the heart of the YCK precinct, the precinct has focused on providing a safe and convenient late-night transport option for revelers.

YCK has also adopted SafeSpace@elevate, an independent reporting and support service digital platform to empower hospitality employees to report harmful behaviour, and helped enhance public realm safety through projects like Lightstream, a striking new lighting installation in York Lane.

In 2025, YCK expanded its partnership with the Sydney Comedy Festival through the delivery of the inaugural Comedy Crawl, a guided experience that took audiences through multiple YCK venues for a series of comedy performances in one evening. The activation encouraged patrons to explore a range of small bars and hospitality venues across the precinct, generating increased cross-venue visitation and showcasing the unique character of YCK’s laneways. The event sold out across multiple sessions and highlighted the precinct’s ability to leverage major cultural events to drive foot traffic, support local businesses and create memorable night-time experiences.

The Comedy Crawl also demonstrated the strength of YCK's collaborative governance model, with venues, event organisers and precinct stakeholders working together to deliver a safe, connected and engaging visitor experience. By encouraging people to move confidently between venues and discover new parts of the precinct, the activation strongly reflected the Purple Flag principles of safety, vibrancy, accessibility and partnership.

The precinct's ongoing success demonstrates that Purple Flag accreditation is not simply a one-off achievement, but a framework for continuous improvement. Through ongoing data collection, stakeholder collaboration and innovative activations, YCK continues to evolve its night-time economy offering while maintaining a strong focus on safety, inclusivity and visitor experience. Recent initiatives such as the Sydney Comedy Festival Comedy Crawl illustrate how major event partnerships can be leveraged to create new reasons for visitation while strengthening local businesses and enhancing the overall appeal of the precinct.

YCK has also continued to build strategic partnerships with major industry stakeholders, including repeat collaborations with Campari Australia for Negroni Month in both 2025 and 2026. Through coordinated precinct-wide promotions and venue participation, the initiative encouraged visitors to experience multiple venues across YCK while supporting local operators and fostering a vibrant yet well-managed night-time economy. The success of these annual campaigns demonstrates how Purple Flag precincts can leverage collective action and partnerships to enhance economic activity, create memorable visitor experiences and strengthen precinct identity.

Overall, these initiatives strengthen YCK's reputation as a precinct that balances energy and entertainment with safety and inclusion. The Purple Flag accreditation has instilled confidence in both visitors and investors, driving growth in the hospitality sector and setting a benchmark for future accredited precincts as the Purple Flag program is rolled out statewide.

YCK illustrates how effective local leadership, strong partnerships with local council and state government, and consistent programming can transform a Purple Flag precinct into a vibrant and internationally recognised night-time destination.



Purple Flag window sticker. Photo: 24-Hour Economy NSW

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