



COVID-19 RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND

The Australian Government has established a \$1 billion COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund to support regions, communities and industry sectors that have been disproportionately affected by the Coronavirus crisis. The initiatives announced under the Fund are supporting industries including aviation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism and the arts.

HOW DOES THE FUND WORK?

The Deputy Prime Minister chairs a Ministerial Advisory Group, which meets regularly to consider proposals submitted from across a number of portfolios.

Funding is channelled through existing mechanisms where possible to ensure support is provided quickly. New funding mechanisms are established where there is a critical need.

Initiatives under the Fund are administered by the department or agency with the relevant sector responsibilities.

WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORT ARE AVAILABLE?

Support is tailored to meet the needs of communities and industries that need assistance during the crisis and into recovery. This includes:

- fee or levy relief applied through existing mechanisms requiring little or no action by businesses;
- increasing payments through existing grant programs in ways that are quick and simple to deliver; and
- establishing targeted new programs to support the particular needs of an industry sector.

HOW CAN INDUSTRIES, REGIONAL BODIES OR COMMUNITIES APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE?

Information on how businesses, industry groups, regional bodies and individuals can access or apply for assistance is available under each of the initiatives in this fact sheet and on the implementing department's website. For more information about the COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund, email ReliefandRecoveryFund@infrastructure.gov.au.

WHAT INITIATIVES ARE PART OF THE FUND?

The following initiatives are part of the COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund:

- Regional Airlines Funding Assistance
- Regional Air Network Assistance
- Airfreight Support
- Levy Relief for Commonwealth Fisheries
- Additional Funding for the Export Market Development Grants Scheme
- Supporting Indigenous Visual Arts Centres
- Crisis Relief for Regional Arts
- Support Act: Crisis Relief to Artists, Crew and Music Workers

- Supporting Australia’s Exhibiting Zoos and Aquariums
- Commonwealth National Parks – Support for Tourism – Fee Waivers
- Temporary Waiver of Environmental Management Change in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- Renewing Reef HQ Aquarium

REGIONAL AIRLINES FUNDING ASSISTANCE

The Australian Government is providing \$100 million to assist smaller regional domestic air service providers to help manage cash flow issues they may be experiencing as a result of the impacts of the Coronavirus. This is helping these service providers to maintain essential connectivity for regional and remote communities. Air service providers can apply to the Government to be considered for support for assistance on a month-by-month basis, where there is a demonstrated need.

Eligibility

Airlines that operate Regular Public Transport air services are eligible to apply, as are contracted aero-medical providers and a range of essential services providers.

Timing

Funding will be available upon application, and up to monthly thereafter, through to 30 September 2020, with flexibility to consider airlines’ individual circumstances.

Administration

Applications for support from air service providers will need to include a range of financial information and can be made to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

The contribution of the service providers to regional communities, in line with the Government’s priority of maintaining minimum connectivity across the country, will be considered. Payments will be in the form of a grant, with a funding agreement put in place with each successful applicant.

Additional information

For more information please refer to the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect website: www.grants.gov.au.

REGIONAL AIR NETWORK ASSISTANCE

The Australian Government is providing \$198 million to assist domestic commercial airlines to maintain a basic level of connectivity across their network of regional routes. This is supporting critical air services, connecting regional Australia to freight, medical testing, supplies and essential personnel.

Eligibility

Airlines that operated Regular Public Transport air services in regional locations prior to the Coronavirus crisis are eligible to apply for a grant to operate a basic level of air connectivity per week on each route, for an initial period of up to six weeks. The Program is underwriting these services on a shortfall subsidy basis, with the cost offset by remaining commercial revenue from passengers and freight.

Timing

The services supported by this grant opportunity are for flights undertaken from 28 March to 30 September 2020. Applications close 31 August 2020.

Administration

Applications will be assessed by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

A grant agreement will be put in place with each successful applicant.

Additional information

For more information please refer to the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect website:
www.grants.gov.au.

AIRFREIGHT SUPPORT

The Australian Government has set up a \$110 million **International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM)** to keep open key international freight links with trading partners for goods coming into and going out of Australia.

IFAM will support the efforts of businesses trading internationally, including in the agricultural, seafood and healthcare sectors, to re-establish key global supply chains, which have been disrupted by COVID-19, supporting the international economic recovery. IFAM is essential to helping secure items critical to the ongoing health response in Australia, such as essential medical supplies, medicines and personal protective equipment.

IFAM is a targeted, emergency and temporary measure helping Australian business in its efforts to deal with the COVID-19 crisis.

Additional information

Businesses in the agricultural and seafood sectors wishing to access the mechanism can register their interest at haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/international-freight-assistance or by calling the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on (02) 6272 2444.

LEVY RELIEF FOR COMMONWEALTH FISHERIES

The Australian Government is waiving the final two instalments of levies for Commonwealth managed fisheries, reducing levies for the 2019-20 financial year by two thirds. This will support fishers' cash flow during the outbreak, and help them remain viable and able to return to full production when the outbreak subsides. Many Commonwealth managed fisheries are struggling with a loss of export markets and the diversion of traditionally exported seafood onto the domestic market at lower than normal prices and higher input costs.

Eligibility

This measure will apply to all Commonwealth managed fishers who pay levies to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA). Fishers who have already paid their second instalment will have that money refunded.

Timing

The second and third instalments of Commonwealth fisheries levies do not need to be paid.

Administration

No action is required from fishers, they will be notified of the changed requirements.

Additional information

For further information visit <https://afma.govcms.gov.au/afma-covid-19-update> or contact the levies area of AFMA: Phone 1300 723 621 or email levies@afma.gov.au.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE EXPORT MARKET DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SCHEME

The Australian Government is providing an immediate cash flow boost to eligible Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) applicants in the 2019-20 financial year.

The EMDG scheme reimburses small and medium-sized businesses up to 50 per cent of their eligible overseas market-promotion and export-development activities, to a maximum of \$150,000. This new

initiative will increase funding for the 2019-20 financial year by almost \$50 million so that eligible applicants receive their full entitlement.

Total funding for the EMDG scheme will now reach \$207.7 million for 2019-20.

This initiative is helping eligible exporters to retain staff and sustain their business. It will also improve prospects for small businesses that want to reinvest in export promotion once the Coronavirus crisis has passed.

Eligibility

Additional funding will benefit more than 1,600 exporters that have already applied for reimbursement under the EMDG scheme, but who would otherwise have received a lower reimbursement.

Timing

Recipients whose claims have already been assessed have received their additional payment. The remaining funds will be paid as the outstanding claims are assessed.

Administration

Additional funding is being distributed to eligible recipients by Austrade. Eligible businesses will receive the additional payment automatically.

Additional information

For more information visit www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Export/Export-Grants or contact the EMDG team at Austrade: emdg.help@austrade.gov.au.

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS VISUAL ARTS CENTRES

This \$7 million contribution to the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) Program is supporting Indigenous Art Centres and Indigenous Art Fairs during the Coronavirus crisis and beyond. Payments are being made directly to IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Art Fairs to maintain operations and employment levels, ensuring that they continue to support artists and their communities.

Because of travel restrictions and the impact on tourism, as well as the economic downturn, Indigenous Art Centres throughout Australia will not be able to achieve normal sales in the peak tourism and art sales season. The Supporting Indigenous Visual Arts Centres initiative will ensure that IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres are well placed to re-enter the market once the Coronavirus crisis has passed, and that IVAIS-funded Art Fairs are in place to assist to build the market for art by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Eligibility

Grants will be provided to Indigenous Art Centres and Indigenous Art Fairs that already receive funding through the IVAIS Program.

Payments of up to \$85,000 will be made to each IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centre, spread across 2019-20 and 2020-21. Payments of up to \$70,000 will be made to each IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Fair in 2020-21.

Timing

Art Centres will receive the funds across two payments – one in 2019-20 and one in 2020-21. Art Fairs will receive one payment in 2020-21.

Administration

Funding recipients do not need to apply for funding. Payments will be made directly to IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Fairs through the IVAIS Program.

Funding will be tied to existing funding agreements with IVAIS-funded Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Art Fairs, administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

Additional information

For more information phone 1800 006 992, email ivais@arts.gov.au, or visit <https://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update>.

CRISIS RELIEF FOR REGIONAL ARTS

This \$10 million measure for the Regional Arts Fund will provide crisis relief and targeted support to organisations, artists and arts workers that are critical to delivering the arts to communities in regional and remote areas.

Regional communities have been severely affected by the shutdown of arts venues and restrictions on tourism.

This targeted support from the Australian Government will allow Regional Arts Australia to support artists, arts workers and small-to-medium entities outside Australia's metropolitan centres to be adaptable and productive throughout this period of crisis, in response to the needs of their communities. It will also assist them to develop new ways of working and establish new networks and resources for communities.

Regional Arts Australia is an established not-for-profit body with an intimate understanding of the challenges that regional organisations face as a focal point for communities, and their artistic and cultural identity. These organisations serve as community pillars, often in partnership with health, education and employment services.

Projects will need to demonstrate community need and respond to the requirements over coming months to provide relief now, as well as recovery later, from the effects of the Coronavirus crisis.

Eligibility

Assistance delivered through the Regional Arts Fund will provide targeted support to arts organisations and artists in regional and remote Australia whose communities have been affected by shutdowns in response to the Coronavirus crisis.

Timing

Funding will be delivered through the Government's Regional Arts Fund in the 2019-20 financial year.

Administration

Funding will be delivered through the existing Regional Arts Fund framework. This comprises Regional Arts Australia and a network of state- and territory-based regional program administrator organisations that deliver the funding to arts organisations and artists on behalf of the Australian Government. Funding to Regional Arts Australia will be delivered through an agreement administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

Funding guidelines for grant applications will be on the websites of the organisations that deliver the program in each state and territory:

NSW: [Regional Arts NSW](#)

VIC: [Regional Arts Victoria](#)

QLD: [Flying Arts Alliance Inc](#)

WA: [Country Arts WA](#)

SA: [Country Arts SA](#)

TAS: [RANT Arts Ltd](#)

NT: [Darwin Community Arts](#)

ACT: [artsACT](#)

Additional information

For more information, email regional@arts.gov.au or visit <https://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update>.

SUPPORT ACT: CRISIS RELIEF TO ARTISTS, CREW AND MUSIC WORKERS

This \$10 million contribution to the performing arts industry charity Support Act will enable it to provide immediate crisis relief to artists, crew and music workers affected by the Coronavirus crisis.

Support Act is the Australian charity that is delivering crisis relief services for people who work in the Australian music and broader arts industry who are experiencing ill health, injury, or a crisis that affects their ability to work. This support from the Australian Government will enable Support Act to roll out much needed emergency support immediately.

Eligibility

Assistance from Support Act will provide emergency support to musicians, artists, technicians, sound engineers, roadies and other support workers in the live performance industry who have been affected by the shutdown of venues, festivals and other events in response to the Coronavirus crisis.

Timing

Funding will be delivered to Support Act in 2019-20 so that it can begin providing support to the sector immediately.

Administration

Funding will be provided to Support Act through a funding agreement administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

Additional information

For more information email music@arts.gov.au or visit <https://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update>.

SUPPORTING AUSTRALIA'S EXHIBITING ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

This initiative will provide vital funding to exhibiting zoos and aquariums whose tourism revenue stream has stopped as a result of the travel and social distancing restrictions in place to limit the spread of Coronavirus.

Funding will assist these businesses with the fixed operational costs associated with caring for animals, and will help exhibiting zoos and aquariums to remain viable and ready to welcome tourists when restrictions are eased.

Eligibility

Austrade is working with the Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA) and state and territory tourism organisations to identify businesses that will be eligible for this assistance. These businesses will be exhibiting animal attractions that are important at a national, state or regional level as they contribute to conservation and presentation of animals, and drive interstate and international visitation.

Eligible exhibiting zoos and aquariums will have access to a grant that contributes towards up to six months of its animal welfare operating costs. This includes animal feed, veterinarian and other specialised care expenses, and utilities directly related to housing and caring for animals.

The grant will not cover staffing costs as the Australian Government's JobKeeper program already provides support in this area. Capital expenditure or administration costs associated with the general operation of the business are also excluded.

As state and territory governments have primary carriage of animal welfare issues, this program only focuses on exhibiting zoos and aquariums and does not provide assistance to animal refuges and rescue organisations. Nor does it cover nature-based and on-farm experiences, farms, fisheries, reserves and marine-based experiences.

Timing

An initial payment will be made within 10 days of eligible applicants executing a funding agreement. The balance will be paid from 1 July 2020 when the expenses of eligible applicants who can show an ongoing decline in revenue of at least 30 per cent have been established.

Austrade will contact all eligible businesses in May 2020.

Administration

Eligible zoos and aquariums identified by ZAA or state and territory tourism organisations will be invited by Austrade to submit an application for a grant.

Additional information

For more information, visit www.austrade.gov.au/ or contact the Austrade Programs Team by emailing ZandAGrants@austrade.gov.au or calling 1800 048 155.

COMMONWEALTH NATIONAL PARKS – SUPPORT FOR TOURISM – FEE WAIVERS

This initiative assists businesses operating in Commonwealth National Parks by:

- Providing temporary relief from licence fees and permit charges levied by the Director of National Parks for the period of 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2021. The support will provide immediate respite from some operating costs and enable businesses to re-commence operations without having to pay for licences and permits.
- Free park entry. The introduction of free entry to the iconic Kakadu, Uluru, and Booderee National Parks, announced by the Australian Government in March 2020, will stay in place for the remainder of 2020. This will provide additional incentives for travellers to visit these must see destinations once travel restrictions are relaxed.
- Providing rent relief to tenants of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in accordance with the Australian Government's Rent Relief Policy.

Additional information

For more information, email parksonlinefeedback@awe.gov.au or visit www.parksaustralia.gov.au/covid-19.

TEMPORARY WAIVER OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CHARGE IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK

This \$8.1 million initiative temporarily waives the Environmental Management Charge for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park until 31 December 2020.

Additional information

For more information visit www.gbrmpa.gov.au or email emc@gbrmpa.gov.au.

RENEWING REEF HQ AQUARIUM

This initiative provides \$2.6 million for Reef HQ Aquarium to ensure the critical systems that control the environment within the aquarium are upgraded and maintained, supporting the health and wellbeing of the living exhibits while the aquarium is closed.

Additional information

For further information visit www.reefhq.com.au or contact the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Marketing Team on 0488 073 281 or email media@gbmpa.gov.au.