We recommend you read the FAQs in combination with the *AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange Rules and Guidelines for Projects Commencing 2020*.

**Where can I apply for funding?**


**Tips for a competitive application**

- Make sure your application clearly describes your project, answers the questions, and addresses the selection criteria and program outcomes outlined in the program guidelines.

- Make your responses concise – don’t pad out your answers with unnecessary words that do not address the criteria. Word limits are maximums only – if you can answer a question in fewer words that still provides us with the necessary details, that’s great!

- Don’t assume the assessors know anything about your organisation or your project. Ensure all relevant information is provided in your application.

**What is the AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange Grants Program?**

In February 2017, the Prime Minister announced a whole-of-government research and evaluation strategy for policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ninth Closing the Gap Statement.

As part of this announcement, the Australian Government provisioned $10 million over three years for the establishment of an Indigenous Research Fund. AIATSIS will administer the Fund through the Indigenous Research Exchange.

Providing grant opportunities is the central pillar of the Exchange. The Grant Program will:

- Support high quality impactful Indigenous led research
- Improve the availability of quality robust research and evidenced based solutions
- Know more about what works
- Understand what and when something is not contributing to outcomes

**Will the intellectual property of my activity material that contains private and/or secret sacred Indigenous materials remain my property or the property of my community?**

AIATSIS does not and will not retain any intellectual property over any activity materials that contain any private and/or secret sacred Indigenous materials. This material is and will remain the confidential information of the relevant Indigenous person or Indigenous community.

The AIATSIS *Grant Agreement* will reflect this.
Can I apply for operational funds for my organisation?

A maximum of twenty per cent of the total AIATSIS grant money may be used for project administration. Project administration may include items such as project management, report-writing, book-keeping, audits and financial management. Universities that are eligible for research block grants (list here) are not eligible to apply for administration funds.

I am a sole trader/individual. Am I eligible to apply for an AIATSIS grant?

The AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange grants funding is provided for community projects and as such, individuals are not eligible for funding through AIATSIS. If you are a sole trader or an individual wanting to deliver a community project, and you can demonstrate the project you are proposing has been generated within, and is supported by, the community, you may be able to apply through an auspicing arrangement with an eligible organisation.

How can I find out more about the AIATSIS research ethics process?

All successful applicants will be required to submit an application to the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee as a condition of the Grant Agreement. The Committee assess compliance with the AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies to ensure that research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples follows a process of meaningful engagement and reciprocity between the researcher and the individuals and/or communities involved in research.

More information about the committee, including the 2020 meeting schedule and application documentation can be found here.

If I am applying for funding under an auspicing arrangement do I need a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or agreement with the auspicing organisation?

When applying for funding through an auspicing arrangement both parties should consider and develop an MOU or a formal partnership agreement that clearly sets out the expectations for both parties. This will alleviate any confusion and will ensure a smooth delivery of the project. A short form MOU Template is available here.

The auspicing organisation will be required to provide confirmation of the arrangement as part of the application form, a template is available here.

How should I demonstrate evidence of community support?

All projects must be of benefit to the Indigenous community. You should consider how Indigenous people, communities and organisations are involved in the planning and delivery of the project, as well as participating in the project. We expect to see evidence of community support through letters from community representatives. Letters of support should:

- identify the role of the applicant and/or the organisation they represent in the community
- explain why the project is needed in the community
• outline how the author and/or the organisation they represent will participate in the project, including any contributions of funding or resources (if applicable – note that this is not a requirement).

If the applicant organisation is a non-Indigenous organisation, your letters of support should also outline how the applicant and/or organisation they represent has been engaged in the planning and will continue to be engaged over the life of the project. Non-Indigenous organisations will be required to demonstrate strong Indigenous leadership and governance, a key assessment criterion of the Grants Program.

When we assess the level of community support for your project, we will take into account the scope and scale of the project. If your project will be delivered in multiple communities, you should provide evidence that all participating communities support the project.

Some examples of organisations you might seek support from include:

• RNTBC (native title bodies)
• relevant local Aboriginal corporations, language centres, cultural arts centres, resource agencies, reference groups
• Empowered Communities Reference Groups
• other non-government agencies such as those working with young people, employment, housing, substance abuse, justice issues
• regional development organisations
• Elders Councils

Who can I contact for help regarding my SmartyGrants application?

In the first instance you should email exchangegrants@aiatsis.gov.au for assistance. If your enquiry is a technical IT SmartyGrants system issue that we are unable to assist with, then your issue will be escalated to the SmartyGrants help desk.

Can I email my application as a word doc?

In order to be considered, applications must be submitted via Smarty Grants. However hard copy application forms may be provided in exceptional circumstances.

When will I know if my application has been successful?

We anticipate notifying all applicants of the outcome of their application in early 2020. You will receive an email advising the outcome of your application once the funding recipients have been announced.

How can I find out why my application was not successful?

If your application is not successful, you will be formally advised and, at the same time, you will be invited to seek more detailed feedback if you wish.
What happens if only part of our funding request is approved?

It is possible that AIATSIS may approve partial funding under certain circumstances. If this happens, we will work with your organisation to revise the project objectives, deliverables and budget before finalising your Grant Agreement.