

Frequently Asked Questions

Expression of Interest (EOI) – Closing the Gap Socio-Economic Outcome 17: Digital Inclusion

Background information

Closing the Gap

In July 2020, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap came into effect. The National Agreement is the first agreement of its kind to be negotiated and agreed between all Australian Governments, Aboriginal Peak Organisations, and other Aboriginal stakeholders. It is built around ambitious socio-economic outcome (SEO) targets and new Priority Reforms designed to change the way governments work with Aboriginal people and communities to improve life outcomes.

For more information, visit the Closing the Gap closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement

Socio-Economic Outcome (SEO) 17

The Department of Customer Service (DCS) is the NSW government lead agency, co-leading SE O17 in partnership with NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisation (CAPO), BlaQ Aboriginal Corporation (BlaQ), that *'by 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion'*:

- Increasing levels of digital access, affordability, ability and media participation
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives.
-

Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1: What is a Digital Inclusion Hub?

A Digital Inclusion Hub is a place-based digital community hub that delivers digital skills uplift programs in selected regional, remote and metropolitan communities in NSW.

Question 2: What services will a Digital Inclusion Hub provide?

Digital Inclusion Hubs aim to help close the digital divide by addressing one or more of the 4 targets under SEO 17 (access, affordability, ability and media participation). Services may include:

- Establishing place-based Digital Inclusion Hubs in selected metropolitan, regional and remote NSW locations, informed by the findings of Phase 1
- Delivering digital skills uplift programs tailored to local community needs
- Promoting digital education and awareness using culturally relevant content and delivery
- Empowering local digital mentors to lead and sustain community engagement.

Your grant application should outline what services, programs or initiatives you will deliver that will close the digital gap in your community based on the 4 targets above.

You may also propose initiatives outside the 4 targets if they support your community in closing the digital divide.

Question 3: How do I know if my organisation is eligible to apply for the grant?

The DCS and NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisation, BlaQ invite applications from:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) located in NSW (defined below)
- ACCOs that work in the community where a Digital Inclusion Hub will be established
- ACCOs that are not currently receiving funding to deliver a Digital Inclusion Hub.

ACCOs that participated in the Phase 1 community consultations are highly encouraged to apply.

The definition of an ACCO is set out in Clause 44 of the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#)

Clause 44 states:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control is an act of self-determination. Under this Agreement, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Organisation delivers services, including land and resource management, that builds the strength and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people and is:

- a. Incorporated under relevant legislation and not-for-profit
- b. Controlled and operated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- c. Connected to the community, or communities, in which they deliver the services
- d. Governed by a majority Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander governing body.

Question 4: Who is not eligible to apply for the grant?

An organisation is not eligible to apply if it:

- Does not meet the definition of an ACCO as outlined in Clause 44 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Is located outside of NSW
- Has a real or perceived conflict of interest that cannot be resolved
- Does not have the organisational capacity and/or governance to deliver a Digital Inclusion Hub within the required timeframe
- Is not connected to the community where services will be delivered.

Question 5: How long will a Digital Inclusion Hub be funded?

Funding is provided for up to 18 months.

Question 6: How much funding is available?

The funding is up to \$250,000 (GST inclusive).

Question 7: What is a digital mentor?

A digital mentor is the main contact person for a Digital Inclusion Hub.

The successful ACCO can employ a digital mentor if required. Wherever possible, the digital mentor should be from the local community and have relevant digital skills and knowledge.

Question 8: Will Digital Inclusion Hubs be evaluated?

Yes. Digital Inclusion Hubs will be evaluated by an external consultancy. DCS and BlaQ will provide successful ACCOs with an evaluation framework.

Question 9: Will data collection and reporting be required?

Yes. Regular report will be required. ACCOs will be required to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The data collected will assist in the evaluation of the program.

Question 10: Do I need to provide a reference with my application?

Yes. Each application must include at least one reference in support of the submission.

References may come from a community member, a government agency, or a non-government organisation, and can be provided in either written or verbal form.

Question 11: Can the application process change?

Yes. DCS and BlaQ may at their discretion, and at any stage of the application process, request additional information from an applicant, change the scope or requirements of the guidelines, or vary, amend or terminate the application process.

Question 12: When do the applications close?

Applications close at 11.00pm – Friday 15 May 2026.

Question 13: When will applicants be notified of the outcome?

Applicants will be advised of the outcome June 2026.

Question 14: Where can I get more information?

Webinars will be held to explain the Digital Inclusion Hub grant and the application process. If you are interested in attending a webinar or need more information, please email the DCS Closing the Gap team at closingthegap@customerservice.nsw.gov.au