



Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle Recovery and Resilience Fund

Program Guidelines - May 2026

1 About the Fund

The Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle Recovery and Resilience Fund (the Fund) provides grant funding to support locally led recovery, resilience and preparedness activities in communities impacted by Severe Tropical Cyclone (STC) Narelle and associated flooding in March 2026. The Fund has been developed through a \$1.5 million contribution from Rio Tinto and is administered by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

The Fund is intended to complement, not duplicate, existing State and Commonwealth recovery assistance and supports activities that respond directly to recovery needs arising from STC Narelle.

2 Purpose of the Fund

The Fund aims to:

- Support community recovery and wellbeing following STC Narelle
- Strengthen resilience to future disaster impacts
- Improve disaster preparedness and readiness at a local level
- Deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes
- Support communities to identify and lead their recovery priorities

3 Eligible Locations

The Fund is available in the following local government areas:

- Shire of Ashburton
- Shire of Exmouth
- Shire of Carnarvon

Activities must address impacts arising from STC Narelle and be delivered within these locations.

4 Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants may include:

- Impacted local governments
- Incorporated not-for-profit and community organisations (including environmental and sporting groups)
- Industry bodies or peak organisations where funding is sought solely to deliver eligible activities that provide direct benefit to impacted communities.



Funding is not available to support:

- Normal operating costs or core business activities of commercial entities; or
- Activities that do not provide a direct benefit to impacted communities

Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to manage grant funding and deliver the proposed activities in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

5 Eligible Activities and Outcomes

Projects funded under the Fund must contribute to one or more of the recovery, resilience or preparedness outcomes set out below. Activities must be locally led, time limited, proportionate to demonstrated impact, and clearly linked to community needs arising from STC Narelle.

5.1 Recovery

Activities that support wellbeing, psychosocial recovery and community reconnection following STC Narelle, including:

- Community events and initiatives that rebuild social connection and wellbeing
- Environmental restoration, re-planting and rehabilitation activities
- Repairs or restoration of damaged community buildings and assets where losses are uninsured or underinsured
- Engagement of community recovery officers or specialist personnel to support local recovery delivery

5.2 Resilience

Activities that reduce vulnerability to future disasters by addressing risks and strengthening systems or local capability. Examples include:

- Community-led risk reduction initiatives
- Business adaptation and resilience initiatives
- Environmental protection, mitigation and restoration activities

5.3 Preparedness

Activities that improve readiness for future disasters through planning, training and capability development. Examples include:

- Business continuity planning training and workshops
- Community emergency management education and training

5.4 Ineligible Activities

The Fund will not support:

- Activities that duplicate or substitute funding through other State or Commonwealth programs
- Works, losses or activities that are fully insured or otherwise funded from another source
- Retrospective costs incurred prior to funding approval
- Compensation for individual or organisational losses

Where relevant, applicants may be required to demonstrate that proposed activities address uninsured or unfunded recovery needs arising from STC Narelle.



6 Grant Programs and Funding Levels

The Fund is delivered through the following two grant streams. Activities funded under either stream must align with the eligible activities described in Section 5.

6.1 Social, Economic and Environmental Recovery – Flexible Grants

Competitive grants from \$2,500 to \$50,000.

This stream supports a wide range of locally led recovery, resilience and preparedness activities aligned with community needs following STC Narelle. Flexible Grants are available to eligible applicants, including local governments, not-for-profit organisations, community groups and other eligible entities.

6.2 Local Government Recovery Support

Up to \$150,000 per activity, capped at \$300,000 per local government, is available.

This stream supports local governments to address unfunded recovery priorities arising from STC Narelle, including activities in Local Operational Recovery Plans.

7 Eligible and Ineligible Costs

Approved funding is provided as a grant to deliver the agreed activities, rather than as reimbursement of costs already incurred.

Eligible costs must be:

- Directly related to the approved activity
- Reasonable, necessary and clearly identifiable
- Incurred within the approved project period

Grant funding is provided exclusive of GST. Applicants are responsible for managing any GST obligations associated with their activities.

Ineligible costs include:

- Costs not clearly linked to the approved activity
- Costs funded or recoverable from another source
- Ongoing operational or recurrent expenses beyond the approved project scope

8 How to Apply

Applications must be submitted through the DFES SmartyGrants portal.

Applications must include:

- A description of the proposed activity (what, where and why)
- How the activity supports recovery, resilience or preparedness outcomes
- Evidence of community need and benefit
- A project budget (GST exclusive)
- An indicative delivery timeframe

DFES may contact applicants during assessment to clarify information or request additional details.

Applications may open in one or more rounds or on a rolling basis, subject to available funding. DFES may amend or close the Fund early where funding is fully committed. Application details will be published on SmartyGrants.



9 Funding Agreements, Payments, Reporting and Acquittal

9.1 Funding Agreements and Payments

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with DFES.

Grant funding is generally paid in instalments to support early delivery of approved activities while maintaining appropriate assurance.

Unless otherwise specified in the Funding Agreement:

- 80 per cent of the approved grant amount following execution of the Funding Agreement; and
- The remaining 20 per cent, once DFES is satisfied that approximately 80 per cent of the grant funds have been expended on approved activities.

9.2 Reporting and Acquittal

Grant recipients will be required to provide a short quarterly progress report for the duration of the funded activity.

Release of the final payment will generally require a brief progress update and evidence of expenditure, as specified in the Funding Agreement.

Final Report and acquittal requirements will apply at project completion and will be proportionate to the size and risk of the grant.

10 Exceptional Circumstances

DFES may, at its discretion, approve variations to grant conditions in exceptional circumstances. This may include variations to payment arrangements, funding amounts that exceed standard limits or activities not explicitly identified in these guidelines where they are clearly aligned with the purpose of the Fund.

Any variation must be requested in writing, supported by sufficient justification, and formally approved by DFES in writing.

11 Governance and Assurance

Grant recipients are responsible for:

- Complying with all applicable laws and governance requirements
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Ensuring funds are used only for approved purposes

DFES may undertake assurance activities, including desk-based reviews or site validation.

Applicants must disclose and manage any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest.

12 Communications

Funding provided under the Fund may be described as a donation, contribution or support from Rio Tinto.