



All West Australians Reducing Emergencies (AWARE) Program 2026-27

GUIDELINES

Opening date	8 am, 7 September 2026
Closing date and time	12 pm (midday), 9 October 2026
Total grant funding	\$219,940
Funding per project	\$2,500 – \$35,000 (no GST applied) per application, including local level risk assessment projects
Co-contribution	25% of the total project cost
Enquiries	Disasterresiliencegrants@dfes.wa.gov.au

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1. All West Australians Reducing Emergencies (AWARE) Program

AWARE is a State funded grant program which aims to establish a set of projects to enhance Western Australia's emergency management arrangements in partnership with the local governments. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services administers the AWARE program on behalf of the State of Western Australia (WA).

1.1 AWARE Objectives

The objective of the program is to enhance WA's emergency management arrangements by investing in capacity building and preparedness activities at a local level.

2. Grant Funding and Period

2.1 Grant amount available

The 2026-27 AWARE program will distribute \$219,940 to local governments via competitive grants to projects that build emergency management capability at a local level.

Applications must be requesting a minimum of \$2,500 and a maximum of \$35,000 (no GST is applied), including local level risk assessment projects.

2.2 Co-contribution

Applicants must contribute at least 25 percent of the total project cost comprising of cash and/or in-kind. In-kind contributions must be expressed in monetary terms. All co-contributions must be directly attributable to the delivery of the project, itemised on the application and tracked throughout project delivery to facilitate reporting.

Contributions may include:

- A financial (cash) contribution provided at the time of project commencement.
- In-kind contributions, such as wages of personnel directly contributing or providing input to the delivery of the project, and/or supplies, materials, facilities and specific equipment required to execute the project.

2.3 Project duration

The AWARE program targets projects of up to 12 months duration.

3. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

Only Western Australian local governments are eligible to submit applications. Local governments are encouraged to collaborate and submit joint applications.

Applicants are also encouraged to refer to the Eligibility Checklist (see Addendum) before proceeding with their application to ensure the proposed application meets all program requirements.

4. What the funding can be used for?

To be eligible projects must:

- Have the primary purpose of increasing emergency management capacity or preparedness in line with AWARE objectives.
- Meet requirements for eligible activity type (section 4.1) eligible expenditure (section 4.2), co-contributions (section 2.2), and project duration (section 2.3) where applicable.
- **Must not** have commenced activities for which AWARE funding is sought, or be completed, before the Funding Agreement is endorsed.

4.1 Eligible funding activities

To be eligible, projects must address at least one of the four categories below:

Furthering the emergency risk management process

- Local level risk assessment final report and risk register
 - The final report and risk register must be completed using the process outlined in the [State Emergency Risk Management Guideline](#), and in consultation with your District Emergency Management Advisor (DEMA)

Facilitating capability-based exercises

- To help identify and assess the skills, resources, infrastructure, equipment, systems and plans necessary for response and recovery
 - Includes field, workshop and desktop settings

Projects that support the review and improvement of Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)

- To align LEMA with contemporary emergency management requirements including adoption of the [new LEMA templates](#).

Delivering emergency management training, events or forums

- To host or facilitate emergency management training, events or forums that may include:
 - Enhancing the knowledge and capacity of local government personnel, community members and emergency management agencies
 - Assessing risk
 - Community engagement/education
 - Professional development

4.2 Eligible expenditure

To be eligible, the expenditure must:

- Be incurred between the project start date and end date, as nominated in the endorsed Funding Agreement.
- Be directly associated with delivering the activities specified in the project application and subsequent Funding Agreement.
- Not be ineligible expenditure as outlined in section 4.3.

Eligible expenditure could include:

- Staff, contractor and consultant salaries, wages, fees, and on-costs including administration, utilities and travel that are directly attributed to the project activities.
- Writing, reporting, consultation, and engagement costs that are directly relevant to delivering the project.
- Community engagement and communications initiatives directly related to delivering the project.
- Hire of venues and equipment required for project activities.
- Modest catering costs that relate to meetings, workshops or travel that are essential to delivering the project.

4.3 Ineligible expenditure

The following may not be purchased using granted funds or used as a component of co-contribution:

- Capital or asset purchase, or an upgrade or maintenance.
- Salary, wages or consultancy or contractor fees not directly attributable to delivering the project.
- Costs incurred prior to the signing of the Funding Agreement, including costs associated with developing the grant application.
- Activities conducted outside of Western Australia.
- Interstate or international travel.
- Alcohol including in relation to hospitality, functions, events, catering, corporate travel, bar tabs, mini bars, and personal use.

- Medication including prescription or 'over the counter' medication.
- Mementos provided to participants at grant funded events unless approved in the Funding Agreement. Examples of mementos are branded or personalised pens, caps, coffee mugs, and t-shirts.
- Gifts of any consumer items, goods and services, samples, discounts, and cash, including tickets to entertainment events.
- Hospitality except if approved in the Funding Agreement. Hospitality includes providing meals, accommodation or travel to stakeholders, conference delegates and official visitors. Coffee unless purchased as part of catering for a meeting, workshop or travel that is essential to delivering the project.
- Benefits that bestow personal advantage on the purchaser due to special offers, loyalty reward schemes, frequent flyer points, or other benefit schemes.
- Any other transaction disallowed by the terms and conditions set out in the Funding Agreement or any other applicable written law, policy, instruction or standard.

This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where DFES determines they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objectives of the program.

5. The Grant Selection Process

The AWARE grant is administered in accordance with the Disaster Resilience Grants Governance Manual to ensure transparent and accountable management, including the assessment process and managing conflict of interest.

The grant selection process is as follows:

- Applications received by the deadline through the online application portal and reference number issued.
- DFES will conduct eligibility checks to ensure projects comply with the required eligibility criteria. Any applications that do not meet these criteria will not progress to the assessment stage.
- An assessment panel will be convened by the Disaster Resilience Grants team and Chaired by the Director Recovery Operations or delegated authority. Panel members are selected based on their knowledge of emergency management, risk management, financial management or project management or because they have specialised knowledge of relevant hazards or project activities.
- The projects recommended by the assessment panel are submitted for the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner's final approval.
- Notification of assessment outcome provided to applicants.

6. Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed using the assessment criteria below, with projects ranked from highest to lowest priority. The Panel may ask DFES to seek clarification or additional information from applicants to resolve an ambiguity or inconsistency within an application, provided it will not materially change the nature of the application or cause unfairness to other applicants. The total category scores for each application will then be added to generate an overall score.

Categories	Weighting Score	Criteria
Validity of the project	20	Addresses how the project will enhance emergency management capacity or preparedness at a local or district level.
Benefit of the project	20	Addresses how the project will provide community outcomes and be sustained once grant funding ceases.
Value of the project	20	Considers the impact of the project in relation to its cost and the feasibility of conducting the planned activities within the described budget and timeframes.
Project Deliverables	20	Assesses if the project deliverables are clear, appropriate, and realistic. This includes the relationship between outputs and outcomes and the likelihood of achieving both.
Capacity to deliver	20	This criterion considers whether the organisation is positioned to deliver the project and achieve the proposed outcomes.

7. Successful projects

If advised your application is successful, the following process will occur:

- AWARE Funding Agreement signed. If you are engaging third parties to deliver your project, appropriate quotations must be submitted to evidence the estimated costing before signing the Funding Agreement.
- AWARE grant funding awarded.
- Project commences and biannual progress reports submitted until project completion.
- Project concludes and final report supported by financial expenditure evidence submitted and accepted.

Please note:

- Your project must not commence without confirmation that you have been successful and have signed the AWARE Funding Agreement. DFES will not be responsible for any costs incurred by the applicant before the Funding Agreement is signed.
- No changes to the scope or budget of the project during the assessment stage and before Funding Agreement is established are possible. Any changes to the project must be approved by DFES before implementation through the established variation process once the Funding Agreement is signed.

8. Project Reporting

Projects funded by the AWARE grant program will be required to complete biannual reporting describing progress toward milestones and expenditure. A project closure report is also required upon conclusion of the project.

9. How to apply?

Applications for AWARE grants will open on **8 am, 7 September** and close on **12 pm midday, 9 October 2026**. Applications must be submitted via the [online application portal](#) on the [Disaster Resilience Grants](#) webpage. Applicants must complete all fields and submit the application by the round deadline. No extensions will be granted, and late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Applications not executed by an authorised representative of the applicant organisation will not be accepted. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their applications are complete and accurate.

10. Enquiries and feedback

Frequently Asked Questions are available on the [Disaster Resilience Grants](#) webpage to help with the application process. [Contact](#) the Grants team if you require further advice on these Guidelines and the application process. Any request for feedback from unsuccessful applicants from DFES must be submitted in writing to Disasterresiliencegrants@dfes.wa.gov.au

ADDENDUM 1 – Eligibility Check

The Eligibility Checklist below outlines the requirements applicants must meet to apply for AWARE funding. Applicants need to check “Yes” against each requirement to be considered eligible to apply.

SECTION 1

My organisation:

- ☐ Is a local government within Western Australia
- ☐ Will comply with the terms in the Funding Agreement
- ☐ Has the capacity to deliver this project
- ☐ Is compliant with AWARE, Disaster Ready Fund (DRF), and National Disaster Risk Reduction (NDRR) grants (i.e. has no current non-compliant grant projects)

SECTION 2

My project:

- ☐ Will only commence after signing the Funding Agreement
- ☐ Delivers community outcomes and does not provide a commercial advantage
- ☐ Has realistic and credible outcomes, outputs, timeframes, milestones and budget
- ☐ Is not applying for funds for capital or asset purchase, or an upgrade or maintenance
- ☐ Will commence prior to 1 May 2027

SECTION 3

My application:

- ☐ Is endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent) and Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent)
- ☐ Requests funding between \$2,500 and \$35,000, including local level risk assessment projects – no GST applied
- ☐ Contributes at least 25% of the project's total costs in cash and / or in-kind contributions