Overview of Innovative Solutions Support

1. Why would a service apply for this support?

To fund innovative and flexible solutions to address a barrier to inclusion for children with additional needs. This is where barriers identified cannot be addressed through the advice and expertise of the Inclusion Professional, an additional educator for centre-based services, or the FDC top up payment for Family Day Care services.

This stream aims to empower services to consider their inclusion challenges and take an active role in finding solutions.

2. What are children with additional needs?

A service may seek to include children from the local community or specific children from the following cohorts:

- Children with disability including those undergoing assessment for disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Children from a refugee or humanitarian background
- Children with serious medical condition/s
- Children presenting with language and speech delays
- Children presenting with disruptive behaviour

3. How much funding can a service apply for?

The allowed range of a single application is $300-$3000. Applications over $3000 will be referred to the Department of Education and Training for consideration.

4. What can the Innovative Solutions support be used for?

Innovative Solutions Support aims to support services to include children with additional needs and build the capacity and capability of educators to embed inclusive practices. Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- facilitating connections and relationships with the local community,
- provision of bicultural support,
- purchase of translating and interpreting services, and
- specialist advice and support to assist educators to include a particular child or children.

5. Who is eligible to apply?

Services eligible to apply are:

- Long Day Care services
- Outside School Hours Care services, including Vacation Care services
- Family Day Care services
- Occasional Care services
- Mobile Services
- Budget Based Funded Programme services

6. When can the service apply?

Applications for funding can be made at any time during the program so services can respond to barriers to inclusion as they are identified.

7. What are the application requirements?

The service must develop and complete a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) in the IS Portal, in collaboration with their IA. If through the development of a SIP, a barrier to inclusion is identified, the service may consider making an application for Innovative Solutions support if this is the most appropriate funding stream.

The service will need to develop a business case in the IS Portal. The business case must include the following information:

- Description of the inclusion barrier/s, and why funding is needed to address it;
- An overview of the intended outcome of funding, including estimated timeframes/duration of funding and milestones;
- Evidence that funding for the required purpose is not available elsewhere and that other options have been explored;
- Financial quotes to support the total value of funding being sought and the proposal being requested in the business case (GST inclusive). These quotes must represent value for money for the expenditure of government funding.
- Note that financial quotes must be GST inclusive and must display the value of the GST component. However, due to system requirements the budget line items input into the IS Portal must be GST exclusive.
- Financial quotes must have an ABN for the supplier. There are limited exceptions to this requirement (e.g. a service may provide a quote which will enable them to make a direct payment to a cultural expert such as an Indigenous community elder who may not have an ABN).

8. How long does it take to assess applications?

Applications marked as urgent will be processed by the IDFM within 5 business days, and within 15 business days for all other applications. The IA must email the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM) to advise that an urgent Innovative Solutions Support case has been submitted.

9. How will the service be notified of the outcome of their application?

The IDFM will notify the service of the outcome of their application by email. The email will be sent to the email address listed in the 'Manage SIP and CCB Approval' tile of the service's SIP.

If funding is approved:

- A letter of offer will be sent via email, outlining details of the project.
- The service must accept and sign the Letter of Offer, and
  return the signed Letter of Offer to the IDFM via email before funding can be provided.

If funding is not approved:

- An Application Declined letter will be sent via email, advising that the application has been declined with a rationale.

10. What happens once the signed letter of offer has been returned to the IDFM?

Following a successfully executed letter of offer, the service will typically receive payment within 4-6 business days to the nominated account via electronic transfer.

11. The entire amount of the approved project was not spent. What does my service do?

If your service does not spend the full amount of funding on the Project as approved by the IDFM, you must speak to your IA. If your IA agrees in writing, your service may spend the remaining funds on inclusion related activities to overcome the same or similar inclusion barriers outlined in your initial application. Any additional activity undertaken in line with the agreed change must be declared at the completion of the project.

12. What does the service need to do once the funding has ended?

At the completion of the project, the service must:

- Complete an online declaration through the IS Portal, no later than 10 business days from the end date. A reminder will be sent prior to the project end date;
- Declare that funding was expended for the approved purposes; and
- Provide details of the outcomes of the project, and if the intended deliverables where achieved.

13. How many times can a service apply?

There is no limit to the number of applications a service can submit for Innovative Solutions Support, however the IDFM will use discretion when assessing applications and process requests based on value for money.

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation, and the approval of any application made to the IDF – Innovative Solutions support is reliant on the availability of funding.

14. Where can I find more information about Innovative Solutions Support?

Further information regarding the Assessment Criteria used by the IDFM is available in F2.3 of the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP) Guidelines.

Additional Fact Sheets, including '*What is a Business Case'*, and Case Studies to support best practice can be viewed on the IDFM website http://www.idfm.org.au

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