



Australian Government

**Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs**

Settlement Grants Program Policy Paper

2005



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SETTLEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

Policy Paper

September 2005

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Minister's Foreword

Welcome to the Settlement Grants Program Policy Paper. This paper has been developed with input from the community sector and outlines the framework for the new program.

Beginning a life in a new country can be challenging, and many migrants need assistance to settle into their new community. Australia's settlement services are among the best in the world, providing a range of programs for new arrivals. These include the Adult Migrant English Program, the Translating and Interpreting Service, services provided under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy, and now the Settlement Grants Program. This new program combines funding previously provided to Migrant Resource Centres, Migrant Service Agencies and the Community Settlement Services Scheme.



The Settlement Grants Program will provide support and assistance to recently arrived humanitarian entrants and family stream migrants who have low levels of English proficiency. Projects will focus on building self-reliance and fostering connections with mainstream services in the early settlement period. The Target Group for the program is around 140,000 new arrivals.

The needs of these new arrivals will be identified and prioritised through an annual planning process. The planning process will ensure that the Settlement Grants Program delivers services that are targeted to those new arrivals most in need, and is responsive to changing settlement patterns and needs.

The Australian Government is committed to the continuing development of a strong and effective network of settlement service providers. The Government recognises the important role that Migrant Resource Centres and Migrant Service Agencies, Community Settlement Services Scheme-funded organisations and the community sector have played in supporting new arrivals. I look forward to working with the sector under the Settlement Grants Program to deliver services that assist migrants and humanitarian entrants to participate fully in the wider Australian community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Cobb'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'John' being larger and more prominent than the last name 'Cobb'.

John Cobb
Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

1. Purpose

This paper outlines the broad policy framework of the new Settlement Grants Program recommended by the May 2003 *Report of the Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants*.

2. The Settlement Grants Program

Settlement services funded by the department focus on building self-reliance, developing English language skills and fostering connections with mainstream services in the early settlement period.

Many of the needs of migrants are shared by the wider Australian community. Where migrants need government assistance, it is most appropriately provided by mainstream services.

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs' (the department) role in settlement services is to provide some additional assistance to new arrivals as they orient themselves to life in Australia, including to the mainstream service environment. Programs and services available to help include the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), and services provided under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) and the Settlement Grants Program.

The Settlement Grants Program (SGP) is a discretionary, application-based grants program. Decisions to award grants are made by the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs. The Minister's decision is final and there is no review or appeal process.

2.1 Program objective

To deliver services which assist clients (individuals or groups) and communities in the settlement services target group to become self-reliant and participate equitably in Australian society as soon as possible after arrival.

2.2 Settlement Services Target Group

To ensure that the limited settlement resources are directed to those most in need, the SGP will continue to focus on providing services to:

- individual migrants in the Settlement Services Target Group, ie permanent residents who arrived in the previous five years, as humanitarian entrants or family stream migrants with low English proficiency; and
- communities that require assistance to develop their capacity to organise, plan and advocate for services to meet their own needs and which are still receiving significant numbers of new arrivals in the Settlement Services Target Group.

More established migrant communities are able to provide a level of support to new arrivals in their community to ease the settlement transition. Migrants outside the Target Group may need assistance to access Government services well after their initial settlement period, but it is not the department's role to meet the full range of migrants' needs indefinitely. The *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* requires each Government agency to provide services that are appropriate and accessible for all Australians, including migrants.

2.2.1 Services in rural and regional areas

Skilled migrants and their families are not part of the Settlement Services Target Group. To complement regional migration initiatives in rural and regional areas, services are available to support dependents of skilled migrants who have low English proficiency and who need settlement assistance.

2.3 **Service types**

2.3.1 What will be funded

The types of settlement services funded by the SGP will fall under the broad categories of:

- *provision of information, referral and casework services* to new arrivals – casework refers to a staff member working intensively with individual clients over a relatively short time to develop a tailored response to their needs, such as linking them to a range of mainstream services;
- *community capacity building* – supporting the settlement, establishment and participation of communities in the wider Australian community, including assisting them to develop their capacity to organise, plan and advocate for their own needs; and
- *service planning, development and integration* – developing planning and service delivery networks to encourage delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services by mainstream and other settlement service providers, including playing an advocacy role.

Migration advice can be provided to humanitarian entrants who have arrived in the last five years and who are seeking to propose family members, but only as a part of casework, not as a stand-alone service. Migration advice must be provided by a registered migration agent. It must only be one component of a work program, where it has been identified as a priority settlement need and it must be reported on to the department.

Organisations cannot use SGP funding to provide migration advice beyond these limitations. Organisations can arrange for registered migration agents to provide migration advice from the service location either *pro bono*, on a fee-for-service basis or under other funding programs such as the Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme.

Immigration-related client services can continue to be provided to Target Group clients as part of existing information, referral and casework services. This would include assisting clients to access the department's website, helpline or forms, or helping them to fill in forms where migration advice is not needed.

Organisations need to be aware of how 'migration advice' is defined by the *Migration Act 1958* and to ensure that their staff understand what types of assistance they can provide if they are not registered migration agents. For more information, see Attachment A.

The SGP will fund the provision of services that complement and follow on from services provided by the IHSS, but do not duplicate them. Humanitarian entrants can access services provided under the SGP while they are receiving IHSS assistance, if those services are not available under the IHSS. When clients exit the IHSS, they have full access to services provided under the SGP.

2.3.2 What will not be funded

The following activities will not be funded by the SGP:

- *provision of specialist counselling services.* A range of other programs are specifically funded and better equipped to provide specialist counselling services, such as torture and trauma, family relationship and other specialist areas. Settlement service providers funded by the department have a duty of care to provide information about and make referrals to the appropriate providers if specialist counselling is needed;
- *services that are the responsibility of other Commonwealth, State or local government agencies, or specialist services.* This includes services such as education support, health care, childcare, English language tuition, job placement and cross-cultural awareness training. As stated above, one of the SGP's priorities is to develop effective working relationships with mainstream service providers so that these agencies can better understand and appropriately respond to the needs of the diverse client group;
- *provision of professional translating or interpreting services.* Fee-free interpreting will continue to be available from TIS National for services provided under the SGP. However, staff employed under the program will not be funded by the department to directly act as interpreters. Staff may provide SGP services in a community language, but are not funded to provide interpreting services to other agencies or individuals;
- *multicultural events (eg festivals, celebrations).* While these events are very valuable in promoting community harmony and cohesion, they are not funded under the SGP. Funding for these events can be obtained from a range of sources, including State and Territory multicultural affairs departments, the private sector and the community itself.

2.3.3 Complementary services

The Department encourages organisations to broaden their service base and provide complementary and related services so that they can respond to the complex needs of the Target Group. Services which do not have a strict settlement focus as defined under the SGP can still be provided, but they will not be funded by the SGP. Where other government-funded or for-profit services are provided from the same location, the other funding agencies should expect to provide a proportional contribution to rent and other overheads.

2.4 Identification of settlement need

Funding priorities for the SGP will be informed by an annual assessment of settlement needs. The settlement needs-based planning process will enable the department to more effectively identify and prioritise settlement needs and advertise for services to address the identified needs. This approach aims to reduce gaps in service delivery, improve service coordination and referral between agencies, and deliver a more targeted response.

Within each State and Territory, the planning process will identify settlement needs on a regional basis, including:

- which communities and/or groups are most in need of assistance through settlement services funded by the department; and/or
- areas where settlement services are most needed, based on the planning regions (see Attachment B). This process may take into consideration more specific and smaller areas within each broader planning region.

2.4.1 Information gathering

Each year, the department will review where Settlement Services Target Group clients are located and identify their service needs. The review will draw on a range of information, including statistical data and issues identified by the department settlement planning officers and grant managers. It will also be informed by regional consultations with stakeholders including clients, the community, service providers, and Commonwealth, State and Territory and local government agencies. Options for stakeholder input will vary between regions, but could include:

- broad community consultation;
- bilateral discussions with major stakeholders;
- written submissions; and/or
- consultation with existing groups, such as Settlement Planning Committees, Area Consultative Committees etc.

Information gathered in this way will inform the distribution of grants funding at a national level and will also inform the development of advertisements for the SGP. The department will share information on identified needs that are outside the scope of its settlement services with relevant mainstream agencies and other organisations, and actively advocate for these needs to be addressed.

2.4.2 Advertising settlement needs

Advertisements calling for funding applications will be placed in major newspapers, including the ethnic press. These advertisements will contain broad information about the grants program and the types of services which can be funded (see *Section 2.3 - Service Types*, above). The advertisements will also direct applicants to the grants website (www.immi.gov.au/grants), where detailed information on settlement patterns and priority needs will be available. Priorities will be based on the type and level of settlement needs identified by the planning process, and the funding available to address those needs.

The department reserves the right to approach organisations to address an advertised need where no suitable application has been received.

3. Application Process

3.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for funding under the SGP, an organisation must be:

- a not-for-profit, incorporated, community organisation; or
- a local government organisation; or
- an organisation which is currently funded to deliver services under the AMEP.

3.1.1 Rural and regional areas

In rural and regional areas, there may be fewer members of the Target Group and limited providers with experience in settlement service provision. In these cases, government service delivery organisations which can demonstrate established links with the Settlement Services Target Group are also eligible to apply.

As a general rule, rural and regional areas are locations outside the major metropolitan areas of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Darwin, Canberra, Newcastle, Wollongong and the Gold Coast. For more detail, see Attachment B.

3.2 Selection criteria

The selection criteria for the SGP are:

- *Consistency with Target Group and service types – threshold criterion*

Your project proposes to deliver services consistent with SGP service types to the SGP Target Group, and/or to dependants of skilled migrants with low English proficiency in rural and regional areas.

- *Suitability of the project – 40%*

Your project is consistent with advertised Target Groups and region(s). You demonstrate how the proposed project meets the needs of clients through the Work Program and describe the services you propose to deliver. You demonstrate the value of expected outcomes for clients. Your proposed budget and staffing plan are appropriate.

- *Suitability to deliver the services – 30%*

Your organisation has the relevant skills and experience, community links, and physical infrastructure to deliver the services.

- *Ability to comply with reporting and accountability arrangements – 30%*

Your organisation has the ability to administer and account for grant funds, meet SGP performance reporting and accountability arrangements, and understands and can implement quality and risk management practices.

3.3 Grant period

Grants are based on financial years. The SGP includes some flexibility to award funding for one, two or three years. The period of funding granted will depend on a range of factors, including a clearly demonstrated continuing settlement need. Funding is not recurrent, as priorities change over time.

From 1 July 2006, all new grants will operate under the SGP. Continuing multi-year grants will operate under the old CSSS program until they cease.

3.4 Funding cycle

The annual funding cycle is summarised below:

Funding round opens <i>October</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertisements calling for applications appear.• Applications preferably lodged on-line.
Round closes <i>Minimum of six weeks after round opens</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All applications and supporting documentation must have been lodged.• The department is under no obligation to accept late applications.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All eligible applications are assessed.
Minister's Announcement <i>May</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Minister announces the successful applications.• All applicants are advised in writing of the outcome of their applications.
Work Program/Milestones/ Budget Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The department negotiates with successful organisations an Approved Work Program, Milestones and an Approved Budget which form part of the Funding Agreement.
Agreements signed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects commence on <i>1 July 2006</i>.

3.4.1 Minister's decision

The SGP is a discretionary grants program. All decisions to award grants are made by the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs. The Minister's decision is final and there is no review or appeal process.

3.5 Work Program

All organisations applying for a SGP grant will need to provide a proposed Work Program. Applicant organisations will be able to select outputs and performance indicators from a menu of funded service types. Use of a standard Work Program will simplify the application process for organisations. It will also streamline negotiations to finalise the Funding Agreement.

3.6 Project Budget

A fully costed project budget will form part of each application for funding. All aspects of Work Program expenditure, including infrastructure, salaries and related overheads, including rent, phones, fax and coordination costs, must be included.

Funding provided by the department cannot be used to cross-subsidise the operational costs of projects or activities funded by other organisations, including other Commonwealth agencies.

3.6.1 Costs for interpreting services

Fee-free interpreting will continue to be available from TIS National. Funded organisations will be required to maintain statistics on their interpreting usage patterns, including the use of volunteers and bilingual staff, to enable them to more accurately determine the cost of delivering services.

Organisations which are also funded to deliver AMEP or IHSS services have included the cost of interpreting in their contract price. These organisations will only be able to access fee-free interpreting services from TIS National when delivering SGP services.

4. Accountability Measures

4.1 Risk assessment

A risk assessment tool will be used to identify specific or potential risks for each application and assist in planning the management and monitoring of grants. It will help the department's grants managers to target assistance and manage the Funding Agreement.

As part of the Funding Agreement negotiations, the department will work with the organisation to develop an appropriate management strategy to address the identified risk issues.

4.2 Reporting arrangements

The standard reporting arrangements for the SGP are:

- *progress reports*. These are required from funded organisations at least twice a year, either by interview or in a standard written form. The reports address the funded organisation's delivery of its agreed outputs against the agreed performance measures in its Work Program and include other items such as service principles and any identified risk issues;
- *financial statements*. An unaudited financial statement is required mid-year. Audited financial statements will be required at the end of the year with, or followed by, the annual report; and
- *standardised client statistical reports* for direct client services. These are required quarterly.

For at least one progress report in each 12 month period, the department's grants manager will interview representatives from funded organisations to discuss and record performance information in an on-line review form. The review form will focus on work program performance measures, service principles, compliance with the Funding Agreement and any identified risk issues. When all answers and comments in the form have been agreed on, it can be printed and co-signed immediately. This becomes the organisation's progress report.

The interview process and on-line recording will provide the mechanism for consistent reporting across all organisations and provide an opportunity for feedback from the department.

Organisations will be able to enter client statistical details into the SGP Online Settlement Client Activity Reports (OSCAR) via the internet. Aggregated data from OSCAR will be available to funded organisations at an appropriate level of detail.

4.3 Service Principles

The SGP Funding Agreement will include a set of Service Principles, listed below, which provide an overarching guide for organisations to develop and deliver programs funded under the SGP. Organisations will be required to report against the service principles as part of their standard reporting. Funded organisations must adopt these Service Principles:

- a) Clients must be involved in the design of programs, services and service delivery processes;
- b) Services must promote and encourage self-reliance;
- c) Organisations must work with the department to identify clients and their needs, and create services to meet those needs;
- d) Organisations must work with clients, other funded organisations and mainstream agencies to deliver services in a coordinated way, minimising gaps and duplication;
- e) Organisations must seek continuous improvement in the quality and effectiveness of the services provided;
- f) Organisations must have a complaints process that is actively promoted to clients; and
- g) Organisations must commit to and publicly display a Client Service Charter which contains clear guidelines on:
 - i. provision of services without discrimination, irrespective of a client's country of birth, language, culture, race, religion or gender;
 - ii. application of Privacy Principles set out under *Privacy Act 1988*; and
 - iii. a comprehensive complaints mechanism which is actively promoted and designed to resolve client issues and complaints in a timely and professional manner.

Funded organisations which already have a Client Service Charter that meets these Principles can continue to use it. The department will provide a standard Client Service Charter, for organisations which need it, for their use or to assist them in developing their own Charter (see Attachment C).

5. Further Information

A detailed Applicant Information Package will be available when the grants round is advertised in October 2005. Information sessions on how to apply will also be held in all capital cities.

WHO CAN PROVIDE MIGRATION ADVICE?

A migration agent is anyone who uses knowledge of migration law and procedure to assist a person wishing to obtain a visa to enter or remain in Australia, review a decision not to grant a visa, nominate or sponsor a prospective visa applicant or apply for review of a decision to cancel their visa.

Anyone who provides migration advice in Australia must be registered with the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) unless exempted by law. Lawyers and people who work for community organisations and provide their advice free of charge must be registered with MARA. There are penalties ranging up to ten years imprisonment for people who practice in Australia as unregistered agents for a fee or reward.

Other unregistered people can not provide migration advice. They can, however, provide other immigration related administrative services. For example, they can:

- provide generic advice that a person must apply for a visa;
- guide someone to where they can find visa information (eg the department's website);
- post or deliver a visa application form;
- do clerical work associated with a visa application;
- provide translation and interpreting services to help prepare a visa application or other document;
- receive written communications from the department on a visa applicant's behalf;
- pass on correspondence without providing substantial comment; or
- help someone make a request for ministerial intervention or an immigration representation (as long as no fee or reward is obtained for this service).

If you are unsure whether your activities may be within the range of activities set aside for registered migration agents please contact:

The Director
Agent Initiatives and Monitoring Section
Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Phone: (02) 6264 2845
Email: agent.queries@immi.gov.au

SETTLEMENT PLANNING REGIONS Metropolitan and Regional Australia by State and Territory

SD = Statistical Division; SSD = Statistical Sub-Division; SLA = Statistical Local Area
(see Note below)

ACT Metropolitan

Canberra SD (all SSDs):
 North Canberra SSD
 Belconnen SSD
 Woden Valley SSD
 Weston Creek-Stromlo SSD
 Tuggeranong SSD
 South Canberra SSD
 Gungahlin-Hall SSD

ACT Regional

Australian Capital Territory – Bal SD

NSW Metropolitan

Sydney SD (all SSDs):
 Inner Sydney SSD
 Eastern Suburbs SSD
 St George-Sutherland SSD
 Canterbury-Bankstown SSD
 Fairfield-Liverpool SSD
 Outer South Western Sydney SSD
 Inner Western Sydney SSD
 Central Western Sydney SSD
 Outer Western Sydney SSD
 Blacktown SSD
 Lower Northern Sydney SSD
 Central Northern Sydney SSD
 Northern Beaches SSD
 Gosford-Wyong SSD

Hunter SD (part):

Newcastle SSD (part):
Newcastle – Inner SLA
Newcastle – Remainder SLA

Illawarra SD (part):

Wollongong SSD (part):
Wollongong SLA

NSW Regional

Hunter SD (part):

*all areas excl. Newcastle – Inner SLA
 and Newcastle – Remainder SLA*

Illawarra SD (part):

all areas excl. Wollongong SLA

Richmond-Tweed SD

Mid-North Coast SD

Northern SD

North Western SD

Central West SD

South Eastern SD (*managed by ACT)

Murrumbidgee SD (*managed by ACT)

Murray SD (*Albury SSD managed by VIC)

all other areas managed by ACT)

Far West SD (*managed by SA)

* these areas are located within NSW but are administered by other State and Territory Offices of the department.

NT Metropolitan

Darwin SD (part):
 Darwin City SSD
 Palmerston-East Arm SSD
 Litchfield Shire SSD (part):
Litchfield Shire Part A SLA

NT Regional

Darwin SD (part):

all areas excl. Litchfield Shire Part A SLA

Northern Territory Bal SD

QLD Metropolitan

Brisbane SD

Brisbane City SSD
Gold Coast City (Part A) SSD
Beaudesert Shire (Part A) SSD
Caboolture Shire (Part A) SSD
Ipswich City SSD
Logan City SSD
Pine Rivers Shire SSD
Redcliffe City SSD
Redland Shire SSD

Moreton SD

Gold Coast City (Part B) SSD
Sunshine Coast SSD
Moreton SD Bal SSD (part):
Caloundra SLA
Maroochy SLA
Noosa SLA

SA Metropolitan

Adelaide SD

Northern Adelaide SSD
Western Adelaide SSD
Eastern Adelaide SSD
Southern Adelaide SSD

TAS Metropolitan

Greater Hobart SD

Greater Hobart SSD

VIC Metropolitan

Melbourne SD

Inner Melbourne SSD
Western Melbourne SSD
Melton-Wyndham SSD
Moreland City SSD
Northern Middle Melbourne SSD
Hume City SSD
Northern Outer Melbourne SSD
Boroondara City SSD
Eastern Middle Melbourne SSD
Eastern Outer Melbourne SSD
Yarra Ranges Shire Part A SSD
Southern Melbourne SSD
Greater Dandenong City SSD
South Eastern Outer Melbourne SSD
Frankston City SSD
Mornington Peninsula SSD

QLD Regional

Moreton SD (part):

*all areas excl. Caloundra, Maroochy
and Noosa SLAs*

Wide Bay-Burnett SD

Darling Downs SD

South West SD

Fitzroy SD

Central West SD

Mackay SD

Northern SD

Far North SD

North West SD

SA Regional

Outer Adelaide SD

Yorke and Lower North SD

Murray Lands SD

South East SD

Eyre SD

Northern SD

TAS Regional

Southern SD

Northern SD

Mersey-Lyell SD

VIC Regional

Barwon SD

Western District SD

Central Highlands SD

Wimmera SD

Mallee SD

Loddon SD

Goulburn SD

Ovens-Murray SD

East Gippsland SD

Gippsland SD

WA Metropolitan

Perth SD
Central Metropolitan SSD
East Metropolitan SSD
North Metropolitan SSD
South West Metropolitan SSD
South East Metropolitan SSD

WA Regional

South West SD
Lower Great Southern SD
Upper Great Southern SD
Midlands SD
South Eastern SD
Central SD
Pilbara SD
Kimberley SD

Note

Settlement planning regions are based on the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). This is a standard national framework used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for collection of statistical information on a geographical basis and divides Australia into Statistical Divisions (SDs), Statistical Sub-Divisions (SSDs), and Statistical Local Areas (SLAs). Benefits of the ASGC are that it:

- covers the entire geographic area of the country without gaps or overlaps, ensuring that no locations are excluded or double-counted in needs-based planning processes.
- enables settlement patterns and needs to be analysed at a national, State/Territory and regional level, while still allowing consideration of smaller and more specific areas of need.

Settlement Grants Program Client Service Charter

The staff of(*insert name of Funded Organisation*) are committed to abiding by the principles set out in this Charter, to ensure that our services are of a consistently high standard and founded on client satisfaction.

We will provide our services without discrimination, irrespective of a client's country of birth, language, culture, race, religion or gender. In all our dealings, we will strive to be informative, helpful and efficient, while at all times acting with due care and diligence.

What our clients can expect:

- To be treated courteously, sensitively, openly and honestly
- To be provided with accurate, consistent, timely and clear information
- To have suggestions and complaints taken seriously and learnt from
- To be looked after by trained staff
- That the information provided to us will be kept absolutely confidential, as required by the Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act 1988*, a copy of which is available on request
- That an interpreter will be arranged should one be needed to use our services
- That all Australian laws will be respected and adhered to in our dealings

Help us help you:

So that we can provide a high quality service, it is essential that you:

- give us accurate and complete information about your circumstances
- let us know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment
- let us know if you need an interpreter
- be courteous to our staff

If you are dissatisfied with our service or would like to suggest a change:

- Please discuss the issue with the person who provided the service or their Manager or Supervisor
- If you would prefer not to discuss the matter with the person concerned or their Manager, or you feel he or she has not resolved the issue, please contact us by telephone on XX XXXX XXXX or drop a written note into the Suggestions Box in the waiting area.
- Anonymous complaints will be treated equally, but identifying yourself to us will enable us to respond to your concerns.