

Social Justice Small Grants Criteria 2020

The Mercy Foundation's Social Justice Small Grants Program provides seed funding to assist communities and organisations to build capacity that will help create structural change and bring about greater social justice in Australia. The Mercy Foundation seeks to create greater social equity and inclusion in the Australian community.

Area of focus: Justice in the digital world

Each year, the program has a particular focus. The focus for 2020 is 'Justice in the digital world'. Please note that projects addressing other social justice issues will also be considered for funding.

Digital technology has transformed the way we communicate today. However, according to the Australian Catholic Bishop's Social Justice Statement for 2019-2020, some disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in our community are excluded from online communication as a result of age, income, geography, cultural background and living with a disability.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both in urban and rural areas face lower rates of digital inclusion. Older people face higher rates of exclusion than the young, largely driven by differences in digital abilities. Many low-income families and people who are long-term unemployed are without the technology that is now essential for accessing basic services and finding work.

Projects that address these issues will be prioritised in the 2020 Social Justice Small Grants program. This may include projects that:

- Provide access to the digital world for people who are currently excluded
- Protect vulnerable groups from being exploited or manipulated online
- Promote genuine human encounter in online neighbourhoods
- Address social exclusion by helping people stay connected with family and friends using online technology
- Address cyber bullying particularly for young people
- Projects that address the issue of online child exploitation will also be considered.

Grant amounts range from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Applications are due in by Monday, 27th April 2020

Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess Social Justice Small Grant applications:

- Innovative projects that require seed funding to increase social equity and inclusion and challenge unjust structures and systems will be prioritised. The focus for 2020 is on projects that promote inclusion and protect vulnerable groups in the digital world.
- The Mercy Foundation prioritises projects that target disadvantaged women and/or women with children, regardless of the annual social justice focus issue.
- Applications are accepted for projects that are run wholly within Australia, by community based groups or organisations based in Australia.
- Organisations applying for funds must be a legal entity (or auspiced by a legal entity), not-for-profit and therefore exempt from income tax, but are not required to have Deductible Gift Recipient status.

- Small to medium organisations with a turnover of less than \$500,000 with limited access to other funding sources are prioritised.
- Social Justice Small Grants are **not available** to fund:
 - a. Core (normal) operating costs of applicant organisations
 - b. Vehicles
 - c. For-profit organisations
 - d. Private individuals
 - e. Projects that require recurrent funding
 - f. General fundraising appeals
 - g. Research
 - h. Deficit funding
 - i. Duplication of existing services
 - j. Organisations that have, or have access to, significant government or other funding
 - k. Government entities
 - l. Projects that do not meet the identified goals and priorities of the Mercy Foundation.

Other considerations:

- a. The objective of the project must be clear and measurable.
- b. Organisations must demonstrate capacity to implement and manage the project.
- c. Organisations need to explain how a project will continue if the key person (who might be a board member, staff member or volunteer organiser) leaves the project while it is still being implemented.
- d. The application should include how the project will be evaluated and what developments or future actions will come from the project.
- e. Applications require the completion of the appropriate application form and a brief description of the organisation and an annual report or similar document to substantiate the organisation's status.
- f. Applicants must provide referees who can vouch for the organisation's competencies and the project's viability.

The applications will be assessed and prioritised for funding according to the above criteria, with consideration given to ensuring there is a fair representation of projects from different states across Australia.

Please contact the Mercy Foundation on 02 9911 7390 or email office@mercyfoundation.com.au if you have any questions about the grants eligibility guidelines.