



Higher

Education Participation and Partnerships Program

2018 National Priorities Pool – Frequently Asked Questions

The purpose of this document is to:

- a. inform applicants about the 2018 National Priorities Pool Expression of Interest (EOI) process and highlight any changes from previous rounds.
- b. answer questions that are frequently asked during the National Priorities Pool EOI process.

Disclaimer: This document should be read in conjunction with the [Other Grants Guidelines \(Education\) 2012](#), the *2018 National Priorities Pool Investment Plan* and the *Guide for Applicants*. In the event of ambiguity, the aforementioned prevail over this document.

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1. Eligibility

1.1 What types of projects will be eligible under the 2018 National Priorities Pool?

The Australian Government is commissioning a number of projects under the 2018 National Priorities Pool. All expressions of interest (EOIs) must respond to one of the project scopes appended to the Guide for Applicants. For general guidance on submitting an eligible EOI, see Guide for Applicants, section 2.1 – Eligibility requirements and section 2.2 – Grounds for removal from the assessment process.

1.2 How are “regional” and “remote” defined?

The areas are described as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote and are identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Geography Standard, Remoteness Structure Areas. See Guide for Applicants, section 4.2 – Equity groups. This includes links to an interactive locator map.

1.3 My project targets a particular equity group. Can I submit an EOI?

Projects must target students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds. Projects that include other identified equity groups are appropriate but only if these individuals are also identified as being from a low SES background.

1.4 Do EOIs for the International Literature Review: Equity in Higher Education project need to address low socio-economic status, Indigenous and regional/remote students?

The project scope specifies that the EOI addresses the groups: low socio-economic status, Indigenous and regional/remote students in the Australian context.

1.5 Do EOIs for the Investigating the Effects of Cumulative Factors of Disadvantage need to include qualitative research?

As stated in the Project Scope of the Guide for Applicants, the department expects this project to draw on qualitative research as required. The proposed project team will be best placed to determine the extent to which qualitative research will feature in the project based on the individual strengths of the team.

1.6 Can I apply if my project has previously been supported by HEPPP funding?

No, projects that have previously been supported by HEPPP funding are not eligible.

1.7 Can I apply if my project has previously been supported by National Priorities Pool funding?

No, projects that have previously been supported by National Priorities Pool funding are not eligible.

1.8 I understand projects cannot have been supported by HEPPP or National Priorities Pool funding in the past. But can my project be based on the outcomes of a previously funded project?

Projects that represent a direct continuation of work previously funded through HEPPP or the National Priorities Pool are not eligible. However, a project which uses the outcomes of a previous project to support the development of an entirely new project will be considered eligible. Please note the requirement to directly address the commissioned project scopes.

1.9 How many applicants will receive funding for each commissioned project?

The available funding is for a single commissioned project on each topic unless stated otherwise. The funding amount listed for each project is the total available funding. Funding (up to the total amount) will be granted to one successful applicant per commissioned project.

2. Forms and submissions

2.1 What are the correct forms?

The correct forms are:

1. 2018 National Priorities Pool Expression of Interest - Part A (Word).
Written responses to questions must be provided using this form.
2. 2018 National Priorities Pool Expression of Interest - Part B (Excel).
The project plan, risk management plan, and budget must be provided using this form.
3. 2018 National Priorities Pool - Part C (Declarations).
The form must be signed by an authorised officer, scanned and submitted in PDF format.

2.2 Where do I obtain the EOI forms?

Your Research Office can provide you with the EOI forms or they can be downloaded from <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>

EOIs must be coordinated and submitted through the Administering Organisation's Research Office or equivalent business unit with responsibility for contact with the Commonwealth concerning grants proposals under the organisation's grants policies.

2.3 How do I submit my completed application?

EOIs must be submitted by uploading the correct forms via the portal at <https://submissions.education.gov.au/Forms/HEPP-CP18/>

Do not send EOI forms to the Equity Inbox.

2.4 How many EOIs can I submit?

A maximum of two EOIs may be submitted for each topic. A university can also be involved as a non-administering partner for any number of projects.

2.5 Who do I contact if I have questions or technical problems?

Please contact equity@education.gov.au for assistance. This email address is only monitored during business hours (Australian Eastern Standard Time). **Do not send EOI forms to the Equity Inbox.**

2.6 What is the closing date for submissions?

EOIs must be submitted by **7:00pm Thursday 21 February 2019** (AEDT). [Early details stated 6:00pm Thursday 21 February 2019 (AEST) – this has now been revised to account for daylight savings time].

Late EOIs will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the Program Delegate. Requests for late submissions must be made prior to the deadline and addressed to the Program Delegate at equity@education.gov.au. See Guide for Applicants, section 2.5.

2.7 Who can sign the Part C Declarations form as the “Authorised Officer”?

The “Authorised Officer” will depend on the delegations and lines of responsibility for grant applications at your university.

It should be someone with the appropriate delegation to authorise a grant application or expression of interest and to commit staff, cash or in-kind resources on behalf of the university. If you are unsure, your Research Office can advise you.

2.8 My budget worksheet is not calculating correctly. What do I do?

The budget spreadsheet will only calculate numbers. Please remove any spaces, symbols (\$) or commas. The format/formulas should then correct automatically.

2.9 Can I copy and paste into the Part B (Excel) form?

Please do not copy and paste into the Part B (Excel) form, as this can corrupt formulas. We recommend you type information into the form once your draft budget has been finalised.

2.10 Can I change the dates in the Part B Project Plan?

The June start date in the Part B Project Plan is indicative. Any modifications to the project start date will be negotiated at the time of award of the successful project. The form is designed to show the indicative month (or months) that an activity will occur in. If required, more information can be given in the milestone and activity section. This information will be used to develop the Conditions of Grant for the successful project and the project plan will be refined at this stage.

2.11 I am having trouble editing the Part B (Excel) form. What do I do?

Please ensure you are using the updated Part B form (provided by the department on 8 February 2019). If you are still having issues editing this form, please contact equity@education.gov.au with a detailed explanation of your issue.

2.12 How do I complete the Part C (Declarations) form?

We recommend that you print this form and fill out the required information by hand (including signatures). This document can then be scanned and included in your submission package.

2.13 My file is crashing. What could be the issue?

Please screenshot the error message and email the error message and/or the original file(s) to the equity@education.gov.au. This will help us isolate the issue and suggest a solution. Alternatively, contact your IT department, as IT settings within university networks can affect file functionality.

2.14 Do page limits include information provided in the form?

References to page limits in Part A refer to response information only. The page limit does not include the questions or description of what is required.

2.15 Can I include hyperlinks in my application?

Hyperlinks should not be included in your Expression of Interest.

3. Budget

3.1 Are there any restrictions on how HEPPP funding can be used?

The HEPPP provides funding to Table A universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds and improve their retention and completion rates.

HEPPP funding is governed by the [Other Grants Guidelines \(Education\) 2012](#).

Section 1.50.15 states that *“Funds may not be spent on infrastructure, which includes all buildings, fixtures, roads, pathways and modifications thereof. Funds may not be used for general facilities and services and transport vehicles that are not principally for the benefit of students from low SES backgrounds.”*

See Guide for Applicants, section 5 – General guidance on preparing your EOI (3.1) for additional advice on travel, equipment and in-kind costs.

3.2 Can I include project team members' time as in-kind contributions?

Yes. Team members who will receive a salary from a separate funding source to the HEPPP National Priorities Pool should be included in the budget as an in-kind contribution. You must state the proportion of time the staff member will spend working on the project and specify the nature of their contribution to the project.

3.3 Can institutional overheads be included in the budget?

Reasonable institutional overheads may be included in the budget, but a clear justification must be provided. Where appropriate, you should reference your institution's policy on the costing of institutional overheads.

3.4 Can salaries and on-costs of the researchers working on project be included in the budget?

You should include an estimate of salaries and on-costs for researchers working on the project as part of your proposed budget. This estimate should be based on the institution's standard salary scale for academic staff or professional/general staff as appropriate. It is helpful if you include the proposed appointment level and step (e.g. Academic level C3 or Higher Education Worker (HEW) 10) and Full Time Equivalent (FTE). Calculation of on costs should be consistent with the institution's published grants policies.

3.5 I require access to HEIMS data as part of my project. What should I do

Access to relevant HEIMS data will be negotiated with the successful applicant following the conclusion of the EOI assessment process. You should include an estimate of the costs associated with data requests in your proposed project budget.

3.6 How can I make my budget fit in the Budget and Justification spreadsheet?

The budget spreadsheet has been designed to ensure applicants provide sufficient information to allow an assessment of each proposal, while not asking an onerous amount of detail from applicants. In order to meet the constraints of the template, you should group more specific costs (line items) into broader categories (or heads of expenditure). You can then use the 'Item Description' and 'Rationale' Columns to provide further detail as necessary.

4. Timeframes

4.1 When are projects funded by the 2018 National Priorities Pool expected to start?

Commencement is dependent on approval of successful projects. Indicative EOI commencement timelines are from 30 June 2019.

4.2 When do projects funded by the 2018 National Priorities Pool need to finish?

Projects funded by the 2018 National Priorities Pool must be finalised by the indicative date specified in the relevant project scope. Finalisation comprises completion of project activities, full expenditure of project funds, and submission of the Final Report and Acquittal Report.

5. University-Proposed Projects

5.1 Will the Department of Education and Training invite EOIs for university-proposed projects under the 2018 National Priorities Pool?

No, a 2018 university proposed project round is not being held.