



Australian Government

**Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

Broadband for Seniors **Program Guidelines**

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1 Preface

These guidelines provide the framework for the implementation and administration of *Broadband for Seniors*. The guidelines provide the basis for the working relationship between the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA or the Department) and the service delivery organisation. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the funding agreement.

The program guidelines include:

- The purpose of *Broadband for Seniors*.
- FaHCSIA's expectations of a service delivery organisation to implement *Broadband for Seniors*, performance and reporting expectations, guiding principles and values.
- Monitoring and contract management arrangements, including accountabilities and program governance arrangements between FaHCSIA and the service delivery organisation.
- Other relevant information essential to guide the successful delivery of *Broadband for Seniors*.

FaHCSIA reserves the right to amend these guidelines to ensure that the service delivery organisation is best equipped to provide a quality service and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments on its website www.fahcsia.gov.au.

2 Program Overview

Broadband for Seniors is part of the wider Australian Government initiative "Making Ends Meet - Plan for Older Australians, People with Disabilities and Carers".

The Australian Government is committing \$5 million each year over the next three years, 2008-09 to 2010-11 for *Broadband for Seniors*.

The needs of older Australians wishing to be trained in the use of the internet will be met by the creation of approximately 2,000 seniors internet kiosks, located in community organisations that support seniors. Kiosk sites will be identified on the basis of demonstrated need and willingness to provide a free service.

Broadband for Seniors will provide one-off support worth up to \$10,000 per kiosk for desktop computers, broadband internet service, training and/or regular workshops to help build the confidence of seniors in using new technology.

2.1 What are the aims of *Broadband for Seniors*?

Broadband for Seniors aims to:

- Provide older Australians access to computers and the internet via free internet kiosks.
- Support older Australians to gain confidence and build skills in using new technology.
- Address the issue of older Australians feeling isolated and 'left behind' in a technological age.
- Build community participation and social inclusion amongst older Australians.

2.2 What is the planned outcome for *Broadband for Seniors*?

The planned outcome for *Broadband for Seniors* is to increase the confidence and skills of older Australians in using computers and the internet, helping to build their community participation and social inclusion.

3 Program Management and Service Delivery Details

3.1 Implementation

The department aims to implement *Broadband for Seniors* nationally through a single service delivery organisation under a funding agreement.

The department may consider engaging more than one service delivery organisation, to ensure national coverage of the program.

The department will work in partnership with the successful service delivery organisation(s) to ensure that the program is implemented in a timely and cost-effective way.

3.2 Application Process

An open selection process will be conducted to identify a service delivery organisation to implement *Broadband for Seniors* nationally. The successful service delivery organisation will be selected based on an order of merit as outlined in the Application Guidelines.

There is an expectation that the service delivery organisation will have organisational policies and processes in place that will support them in implementing *Broadband for Seniors*, including policies on:

- Privacy and confidentiality
- Mandatory reporting
- Insurance and governance
- Issues management
- Occupational health and safety
- Complaints mechanisms and processes

3.3 Funding for the Program

Funding of \$15 million is available over three years. Funding will be distributed as follows:

- 2008-09 - \$5 million
- 2009-10 - \$5 million
- 2010-11 - \$5 million

3.4 Role of Service Delivery Organisation

The successful service delivery organisation will be expected to:

- Apply their strategy for the selection of:
 - postal areas from the list provided by the department (Application Guidelines - Attachment A);
 - location(s) within the postal areas; and
 - community organisations able to operate an internet kiosk or kiosks in the identified locations and willing to provide a free service to seniors.
- Source and provide broadband internet service for three years to all seniors internet kiosks supported under the program, with the following expectations around the level of broadband service to be provided:

- Each kiosk should consist of at least two internet connected terminals.
 - Each kiosk should have internet access at a minimum upload/download speed of 1500kbps/256kbps.
 - Each terminal should have internet access at a minimum upload/download speed of 512kbps/128kbps.
 - Download usage allowance should be a minimum 1GB per month per terminal (with no restrictions within these limits on downloads or uploads or on usage time or peak/off-peak limitations).
 - Shaping of data should be to no less than 64kbps at no cost or excess data charges of no more than five cents per megabyte, with no shaping for any data used above the specified monthly data usage allowance (which may include advance purchase of blocks of data).
 - Where possible ADSL2+ equipment and services should be considered.
 - In locations where broadband service availability is limited, the equivalent satellite or wireless broadband technology should be used, with a minimum expected upload/download speed of 512kbps/128kbps and minimum recommended 1GB per month data allowance per terminal.
 - The ISP provider should inform the service delivery organisation/and or the kiosk provider within 24 hours of current usage limits and any associated costs beyond the limit having accrued.
 - Broadband service costs should be averaged across kiosks, so that organisations are not disadvantaged in regards to equipment and/or training provided, where the real cost to provide broadband is higher.
 - The level of broadband service at all kiosk sites will be reviewed and upgraded as appropriate as higher levels of broadband service become available over the course of the three year period from establishment of each kiosk.
- Source and install computer hardware and software for all seniors internet kiosks supported under the program.
- All terminals must have at least minimum hardware and software capabilities to enable typical computer/internet usage such as word processing, web browsing, e-mail and online audio and video usage.
 - Internet equipment such as modems should be compatible in order to accommodate future levels of broadband internet service within the three year period from establishment of each kiosk. (For example, ADSL2+ modems should be installed to enable both ADSL and ADSL2+ services.)
 - All computers must have the capacity to accommodate future levels of broadband internet service during the three year period from establishment of each kiosk.
 - All computers must be provided with adequate protective software.
- Ensure timely maintenance of equipment and customer support/service.
- Ensure infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate seniors internet kiosks prior to installation.
- Open the first seniors internet kiosks as soon as possible once funding has commenced and in accordance with their overall service delivery strategy.
- Ensure an effective communication strategy to reach seniors in local communities.

- Enable training and/or regular workshops suitable for seniors.
- Ensure that by 30 June 2011 all equipment provided under the *Broadband for Seniors* program is gifted to and remains the property of the community organisations.
- Ensure measures are in place across all kiosks around appropriate use of the equipment and services provided under the program.
- Enter into a funding agreement with the department to deliver these goods and services.
- Provide reports to the department every six months based on the outcome of the program, to be stipulated in the funding agreement.
- Ensure independent, formative and final evaluations are undertaken across the delivery of *Broadband for Seniors*.

3.5 Service Delivery Organisation Eligibility

To be eligible to deliver *Broadband for Seniors* nationally, the organisation must be one of the following:

- Incorporated Association
- Incorporated Cooperative
- Organisation established through specific Commonwealth or State Territory legislation (eg Churches, Universities, Unions, PBIs)
- Company (Incorporated under Corporations ACT 2001)
- Non-government legal entity

3.6 Community Organisation Eligibility

Community organisations that provide services to older Australians and are a legal entity will be eligible to deliver a seniors internet kiosk.

Entities not eligible to deliver a seniors internet kiosk are:

- Individuals
- Commonwealth and State Government Departments
- Non-Australian legal entities
- Third parties seeking funds on behalf of others

4 Responsibilities and Accountabilities under the Program

4.1 FaHCSIA Responsibilities and Accountabilities

FaHCSIA must act in accordance with the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct and the Financial Management and Accountability (FMA) Act 1997.

FaHCSIA must:

- Act honestly, fairly and ethically.

- Achieve results for the public good.
- Establish workplace relations that value communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees.
- Promote equity in employment.
- Deliver services fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously.
- Be sensitive to the diversity of the Australian public.
- Spend funding in a transparent, fair, accountable, efficient and effective way.
- Achieve value for money when procuring any good or service in relation to the funding.
- Be responsive, open, transparent and accountable in relation to any government or public inquiries relating to the use of the funding.
- Advise the Department of Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) of the successful service delivery organisation(s).

For further information about the APS Code of Conduct and APS Values, visit the Australian Public Service Commission website at www.apsc.gov.au.

For further information about the FMA Act of 1997, visit the Department of Finance and Deregulation website at www.finance.gov.au.

Under this program FaHCSIA is responsible for the following:

- Providing all applicants, as Attachment A to the Application Guidelines, a prioritised list of postal areas, to be used to select locations for internet kiosks. The list of postal areas prioritised into three categories, according to seniors population, income level, education and the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA).

The three categories being:

- A - High need postal areas for which more than one kiosk site each is recommended
- B - High need postal areas for which one kiosk site each is recommended
- C - Lower need postal areas
- Assisting the service delivery organisation where possible, to obtain relevant statistical data if required, as part of the service delivery organisation's selection strategy of locations within postal areas and/or to select community organisations.
- Where required, negotiate with the most highly rated organisations to ensure the program is delivered nationally.
- Identifying a suitable service delivery organisation (or organisations) to deliver *Broadband for Seniors*.
- Providing the service delivery organisation with a clear and concise funding agreement.
- Working in partnership with the service delivery organisation to ensure that the program is implemented.
- Providing clear and concise advice to the service delivery organisation in relation to the program.
- Ensuring that the outputs and outcome contained within the *Broadband for Seniors* Program Guidelines are being met.
- Evaluating the service delivery organisation's performance every six months.

4.2 Service Delivery Organisation Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Under this program the successful service delivery organisation is responsible for the following:

- Working collaboratively with FaHCSIA to deliver *Broadband for Seniors*.
- Adhering to the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.
- Ensuring that by 30 June 2011 all equipment provided under *Broadband for Seniors* is gifted to and remains the property of the community organisations.

4.3 Community Organisation Responsibilities

Community organisations that support seniors internet kiosk(s) are responsible for:

- Providing suitable location(s) for the kiosks.
- Ensuring that the internet kiosk is open at convenient times for seniors to attend.
- Ensuring access to and use of the internet kiosk, including related training, is free to seniors.

5 Performance Management and Evaluation

5.1 Performance Framework

FaHCSIA endeavours to focus on outcomes, however other information, not related to outcomes includes information that can be used to:

- Monitor the ongoing operation of the program for evaluation of services.
- Track issues that may affect the operation of the program.

5.2 Outcome

The outcome for *Broadband for Seniors* will direct performance management and evaluation. *Broadband for Seniors* intends to increase the confidence and skills of older Australians in using computers and the internet, helping to build their community participation and social inclusion.

This major outcome for *Broadband for Seniors* will be reported against by the service delivery organisation.

5.3 Financial

The service delivery organisation must ensure the efficient and effective use of public monies, consistent with best value in social services principles, the funding agreement, and maintain a viable service. The service delivery organisation must only use public funds for the purpose for which they were provided and act responsibly to prevent fraud upon the Commonwealth.

5.4 Evaluation

Broadband for Seniors will be reviewed and reported six monthly.

Reporting milestones will be outlined in the funding agreement.

The program will be evaluated upon its completion.

5.5 Feedback

The performance of *Broadband for Seniors*, and therefore its reputation, will be heavily dependent on the operation of the service delivery organisation. It is essential that the service delivery organisation and FaHCSIA maintain high standards and an open and cooperative relationship.

FaHCSIA will develop a two way feedback process that will enable the service delivery organisation a free and open channel of communication between them and the program manager. This will enable both parties to be kept up to date on all performance issues and other developments.

The service delivery organisation is expected to contribute to this process by providing FaHCSIA with information on key learnings and emerging issues.

6 Funding Agreement

A funding agreement will be offered to the successful service delivery organisation. A copy of the department's draft Funding Agreement, Letter of Offer / Schedule and Terms and Conditions, is provided as part of the *Broadband for Seniors* application package. Final details of the funding agreement will be finalised with the successful service delivery organisation.

7 Privacy and Confidentiality

7.1 Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy and Confidentiality are covered in the Terms and Conditions of the FaHCSIA Funding Agreement.

7.2 Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) gives the public the right to access information in the possession of the department with certain limited exceptions. Information collected or held by the department may be made available on request, unless exempted under the relevant provision of the Act or under specific legislation that provides for the confidentiality of that information.

The department has a statutory obligation to observe the FOI Act and must help all applicants make a valid application under the Act. The department will observe strict time frames when acknowledging and responding to requests made for access to documents under the FOI Act. Any application for access to documents under the FOI Act must be made by letter or statement, or (where available) by completing a form.

7.3 Security of Information

The service delivery organisation will be required to store records in a secure place and dispose of them in an appropriate manner. The service delivery organisation needs to ensure that records containing personal information are retained for five years following the expiration of the funding agreement. They will be required to retain a copy of all reports, records or account books in original form in accordance with the provisions written in the funding agreement.

8 Complaints

8.1 Complaints - Service Delivery Organisation

The department has a formal complaints service and the service delivery organisation can lodge a complaint by telephoning 1300 653 227.

A complaint is defined as:

“Any expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service offered or provided”
[Australian Standard AS4269-1995]

The department has a ‘complaints recording system’ to capture complaints to the department about any of its services or those delivered by funded service providers.

For the purposes of the department’s complaints recording system, a ‘complaint’ does not include:

- Ministerial Correspondence;
- Freedom of Information requests; or
- Complaints made to the service delivery organisation, as these will be covered under the complaints mechanism outlined in the funding agreement.

If the service provider is dissatisfied at any time with our handling of their complaint, they can also contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.gov.au.

8.2 Complaints from Clients/Customers – Complaints Handling by Service Delivery Organisation

Complaints, queries and feedback are considered a valuable opportunity for the *Broadband for Seniors* service delivery organisation and FaHCSIA to review and improve their processes and the quality of services provided.

The successful service delivery organisation funded to deliver *Broadband for Seniors* must have an internal complaints procedure in place and its availability must be clearly communicated. The procedures should allow confidentiality of community organisations in order for them to express their concerns without any fear of their complaint impacting on the selection process or funding support.

The service delivery organisation’s internal complaint mechanism must:

- Have commitment from all levels of the organisation
- Be fair to all concerned, including the complainant and the organisation
- Allow for the involvement of advocates
- Ensure that the complainant does not suffer retribution or intimidation
- Be accessible – promoted internally and externally, in English and other languages as appropriate
- Have flexible methods of making complaints with assistance available to complainants as necessary
- Be responsive – a full impartial and timely process with fair and reasonable remedies

- Be effective – must address individual complaints, use information to improve overall service delivery and inform planning decisions
- Be open and accountable so program participants can judge for themselves whether the system is working effectively
- Provide for privacy, dignity and confidentiality
- Be provided free of charge
- Ensure that information about alternative avenues for complaint are provided to the complainant for any complaint that cannot be resolved internally (including referral to FaHCSIA).

9 Contact Information

Broadband for Seniors

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and indigenous Affairs

Locked Bag 5001

Tuggeranong Business Centre ACT 2901

Phone: 1800 625 136

Fax Number: 6244 6048

Website: www.fahcsia.gov.au/broadbandforseniors

Email: broadbandforseniors@fahcsia.gov.au

10 Appendices

The draft Funding Agreement, Letter of Offer / Schedule and Terms and Conditions, is provided as part of the *Broadband for Seniors* Application Package.