



# COVID-19 RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND

The Government has established a \$1 billion COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund to support regions, communities and industry sectors that have been disproportionately affected by the Coronavirus crisis. This includes those heavily reliant on industries such as tourism, transport, agriculture and education.

## HOW WILL THE FUND WORK?

The Deputy Prime Minister chairs a Ministerial Advisory Group, which meets regularly to consider proposals submitted from across a number of portfolios.

Funding will be channelled through existing mechanisms where possible to ensure support is provided quickly. New funding mechanisms will be established where there is a critical need.

Initiatives under the Fund will be administered by the department or agency with the relevant sector responsibilities.

## WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE?

Support will be tailored to meet the needs of communities and industries that need assistance during the crisis and into recovery. This may include:

- fee or levy relief – this can be applied through existing mechanisms, requiring little or no action by businesses;
- increasing payments through existing grant programs – in ways that are quick and simple to deliver; or
- establishing targeted new programs to support the particular needs of an industry sector.

## HOW CAN INDUSTRIES, REGIONAL BODIES OR COMMUNITIES APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE?

Information on how businesses, industry groups, regional bodies and individuals can access or apply for assistance is available under each of the initiatives. Information can also be provided to the Minister and department or agency responsible for administering initiatives under the Fund, or emailed to [reliefandrecoveryfund@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:reliefandrecoveryfund@infrastructure.gov.au).

## WHAT INITIATIVES ARE CURRENTLY PART OF THE FUND?

The following measures are part of the COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund:

- Regional Airlines Funding Assistance
- Regional Air Network Assistance
- Airfreight Support for Essential Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Industries
- Levy Relief for Commonwealth Fisheries
- Additional Funding for the Export Market Development Grants Scheme
- Arts Industry Support Package

## REGIONAL AIRLINES FUNDING ASSISTANCE

The Australian Government is providing \$100 million to financially assist smaller regional domestic air service providers to help manage cash flow issues they may be experiencing as a result of the impacts of the Coronavirus. This will help these service providers to maintain essential connectivity for regional and remote communities. Air service providers can apply to the Government to be considered for support for assistance on a month-by-month basis, where there is a demonstrated need.

### *Eligibility*

Airlines that operate Regular Public Transport air services are eligible to apply, as are contracted aero-medical providers and a range of essential services providers.

### *Timing*

Funding will be available upon application, and up to monthly thereafter, through to 30 September 2020, with flexibility to consider airlines' individual circumstances.

### *Administration*

Applications for support from air service providers will need to include a range of financial information and can be made to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

The contribution of the service providers to regional communities, in line with the Government's priority of maintaining minimum connectivity across the country, will be considered. Payments will be in the form of a grant, with a funding agreement put in place with each successful applicant.

### *Additional information*

For more information, please refer to the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect website: [www.grants.gov.au](http://www.grants.gov.au).

## REGIONAL AIR NETWORK ASSISTANCE

The Australian Government is providing \$198 million to assist domestic commercial airlines to maintain a basic level of connectivity across their network of regional routes. This will support critical air services connecting regional Australia to freight, medical testing, supplies and essential personnel.

### *Eligibility*

Airlines that operated Regular Public Transport air services in regional locations prior to the Coronavirus crisis are eligible to apply for a grant to operate one service per week on each route, for an initial period of up to six weeks. The Program will underwrite these services on a shortfall subsidy basis, with the cost offset by remaining commercial revenue from passengers and freight.

### *Timing*

The services supported by this grant opportunity are for flights undertaken from 28 March to 30 September 2020. Applications close 31 August 2020.

### *Administration*

Applications will be assessed by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

A grant agreement will be put in place with each successful applicant.

### *Additional information*

For more information, please refer to the grant guidelines on the GrantConnect website: [www.grants.gov.au](http://www.grants.gov.au).

## AIRFREIGHT SUPPORT FOR ESSENTIAL AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY INDUSTRIES

The Government is backing a \$110 million freight service to enable Australia's agricultural and fisheries sector to export their high-quality produce and reconnect with their international customers.

The International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) will help Australian agricultural and fisheries producers who have been heavily impacted by Coronavirus containment measures around the world.

Under the scheme, planes will take off from points including Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth to deliver to key markets such as China, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore carrying premium Australian seafood, red meat, dairy and fruit and vegetables.

On return, they will bring back medical supplies, medicines and equipment to Australia to support our response to the Coronavirus outbreak.

This temporary, Government-backed freight service will assist our producers, many of whom lost access to airfreight due to Coronavirus travel bans and restrictions.

This is in addition to the \$198 million the Government has provided to ensure the continued operation of essential flights to regional communities and the \$100 million to provide direct financial support to smaller regional airlines.

The Government has appointed Mr Michael Byrne as International Freight Coordinator General. Mr Byrne will advise the Government on operational aspects such as departure points, arrival points, freight mix, product eligibility and other factors.

#### *Timing*

The funding is intended to operate until ordinary commercial markets return, or for six months, whichever is the earlier. If demand, value and need are clear, the program may be extended.

#### *Administration*

The program will be administered by Austrade and the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

#### *More information*

Exporters wishing to access the mechanism can register their interest at [haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/international-freight-assistance](https://haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/international-freight-assistance) or call the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on (02) 6272 2444.

## LEVY RELIEF FOR COMMONWEALTH FISHERIES

The Australian Government will waive the final two instalments of levies for Commonwealth managed fisheries, reducing levies for the 2019-20 financial year by two thirds. This will support fishers' cash flow during the outbreak, and help them remain viable and able to return to full production when the outbreak subsides. Many Commonwealth managed fisheries are struggling with a loss of export markets and the diversion of traditionally exported seafood onto the domestic market at lower than normal prices and higher input costs.

#### *Eligibility*

This measure will apply to all Commonwealth managed fishers who pay levies to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA). Fishers who have already paid their second instalment will have that money refunded.

#### *Timing*

The second and third instalments of Commonwealth fisheries levies do not need to be paid.

#### *Administration*

No action is required from fishers, they will be notified of the changed requirements.

#### *More information*

For further information visit [www.afma.govcms.gov.au/afma-covid-19-update](https://www.afma.govcms.gov.au/afma-covid-19-update) or contact the levies area of AFMA: Phone 1300 723 621 or email [levies@afma.gov.au](mailto:levies@afma.gov.au).

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE EXPORT MARKET DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SCHEME

The Australian Government will provide an immediate cash flow boost to eligible Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) applicants in the 2019-20 financial year.

The EMDG scheme reimburses small and medium-sized businesses up to 50 per cent of their eligible overseas market-promotion and export-development activities, to a maximum of \$150,000. This new

measure will increase funding for the 2019-20 financial year by almost \$50 million so that eligible applicants receive their full entitlement.

Total funding for the EMDG scheme will now reach \$207.7 million for 2019-20.

This measure will help eligible exporters to retain staff and sustain their business. It will also improve prospects for small businesses that want to reinvest in export promotion once the Coronavirus crisis has passed.

#### *Eligibility*

Additional funding will benefit more than 1,600 exporters that have already applied for reimbursement under the EMDG scheme, but who would otherwise have received a lower reimbursement.

#### *Timing*

Businesses whose claims have already been assessed can expect to receive their second tranche payment under the EMDG scheme in mid-April 2020.

Austrade will prioritise all remaining claims, and eligible businesses will receive their full payment shortly after their assessment is finalised.

#### *Administration*

Additional funding will be distributed to eligible recipients by Austrade. Eligible businesses will receive the additional payment automatically.

#### *More information*

For more information, visit [www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Export/Export-Grants](http://www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Export/Export-Grants) or contact the EMDG team at Austrade: [emdg.help@austrade.gov.au](mailto:emdg.help@austrade.gov.au).

## ARTS INDUSTRY SUPPORT PACKAGE

### SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS VISUAL ARTS CENTRES

The \$7 million contribution to the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) Program will support Indigenous Art Centres and Indigenous Art Fairs during the Coronavirus crisis and beyond. Payments will be made directly to IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Art Fairs to maintain operations and employment levels, ensuring that they continue to support artists and their communities.

Because of travel restrictions and the impact on tourism, as well as the economic downturn, Indigenous Art Centres throughout Australia will not be able to achieve normal sales in the peak tourism and art sales season. The *Supporting Indigenous Visual Arts Centres* initiative will ensure that IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres are well-placed to re-enter the market once the Coronavirus crisis has passed, and that IVAIS-funded Art Fairs are in place to assist to build the market for art by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### Eligibility

Grants will be provided to Indigenous Art Centres and Indigenous Art Fairs that already receive funding through the IVAIS Program.

Payments of up to \$85,000 will be made to each IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centre, spread across 2019-20 and 2020-21. Payments of up to \$70,000 will be made to each IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Fair in 2020-21.

#### Timing

Art Centres will receive the funds across two payments – one in 2019-20 and one in 2020-21. Art Fairs will receive one payment in 2020-21.

## Administration

Funding recipients do not need to apply for funding. Payments will be made directly to IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Indigenous Art Fairs through the IVAIS Program.

Funding will be tied to existing funding agreements with IVAIS-funded Art Centres and IVAIS-funded Art Fairs, administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

## More information

For more information phone 1800 006 992, email [ivais@arts.gov.au](mailto:ivais@arts.gov.au), or visit [www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update](http://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update).

## CRISIS RELIEF FOR REGIONAL ARTS

The \$10 million measure for the Regional Arts Fund will provide crisis relief and targeted support to organisations, artists and arts workers that are critical to delivering the arts to communities in regional and remote areas.

Regional communities have been severely affected by the shutdown of arts venues and restrictions on tourism.

This targeted support from the Australian Government will allow Regional Arts Australia to support artists, arts workers and small-to-medium entities outside Australia's metropolitan centres to be adaptable and productive throughout this period of crisis, in response to the needs of their communities. It will also assist them to develop new ways of working and establish new networks and resources for communities.

Regional Arts Australia is an established not-for-profit body with an intimate understanding of the challenges that regional organisations face as a focal point for communities, and their artistic and cultural identity. These organisations serve as community pillars, often in partnership with health, education and employment services.

Projects will need to demonstrate community need and respond to the requirements over coming months to provide relief now, as well as recovery later, from the effects of the Coronavirus crisis.

## Eligibility

Assistance delivered through the Regional Arts Fund will provide targeted support to arts organisations and artists in regional and remote Australia whose communities have been affected by shutdowns in response to the Coronavirus crisis.

## Timing

Funding will be delivered through the Government's Regional Arts Fund in the 2019-20 financial year.

## Administration

Funding will be delivered through the existing Regional Arts Fund framework. This comprises Regional Arts Australia and a network of state- and territory-based regional program administrator organisations that deliver the funding to arts organisations and artists on behalf of the Australian Government. Funding to Regional Arts Australia will be delivered through an agreement administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

You will be able to find the funding guidelines for grant applications on the websites of the organisations that deliver the program in each state and territory:

NSW: [Regional Arts NSW](#)

VIC: [Regional Arts Victoria](#)

QLD: [Flying Arts Alliance Inc](#)

WA: [Country Arts WA](#)

SA: Country Arts SA

TAS: RANT Arts Ltd

NT: Darwin Community Arts

ACT: artsACT

[More information](#)

For more information email [regional@arts.gov.au](mailto:regional@arts.gov.au) or visit [www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update](http://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update).

## SUPPORT ACT: CRISIS RELIEF TO ARTISTS, CREW AND MUSIC WORKERS

The \$10 million contribution to the performing arts industry charity Support Act will enable it to provide immediate crisis relief to artists, crew and music workers affected by the Coronavirus crisis.

Support Act is the Australian charity that is delivering crisis relief services for people who work in the Australian music and broader arts industry who are experiencing ill health, injury, or a crisis that affects their ability to work. This support from the Australian Government will enable Support Act to roll out much needed emergency support immediately.

### Eligibility

Assistance from Support Act will provide emergency support to musicians, artists, technicians, sound engineers, roadies and other support workers in the live performance industry who have been affected by the shutdown of venues, festivals and other events in response to the Coronavirus crisis.

### Timing

Funding will be delivered to Support Act in 2019-20 so that it can begin providing support to the sector immediately.

### Administration

Funding will be provided to Support Act through a funding agreement administered by the Office for the Arts within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

### More information

For more information email [music@arts.gov.au](mailto:music@arts.gov.au) or visit [www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update](http://www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update).