



Frequently Asked Questions

May 2023

What is the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund?

The Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund (AFTF) provides grants and loans for:

1. The enhancement, maintenance and protection of Aboriginal cultural fishing, and
2. For Aboriginal communities to develop businesses associated with fisheries resources throughout

This Trust is established under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* prescribing key operational rules including the involvement of the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council in advising on expenditure.

What types of funding are available?

There are 3 different funding options to choose from when applying for funding:

- **Small Grants** – less than \$5000
- **Large grants** – up to \$500,000
- **Low (and possibly zero) interest loans** – up to \$500,00

Note. Upper funding limits are subject to availability of AFTF funds.

Who can apply?

To be eligible for funding **applicants** must be either:

- a) An Aboriginal person
- b) Aboriginal entity, which includes a family/clan or community organisation, or an Aboriginal owned and run business, or
- c) Someone acting on behalf of an Aboriginal entity

Refer to the [Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund – Guidelines for Applicants](#) for the definitions of these for the purposes of this program.

How much can I apply for?

Up to \$500,000 per application.

However, applicants should note that the total amount of funding available through the AFTF program is currently \$500,000 for this funding round.

Although applications may meet the stated assessment criteria, a grant or loan is not guaranteed. The Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund receives many more applications than it can support. Even if successful, applications may not be funded to the amount requested.

What can the grant or loan be used for?

The AFTF can provide funding across a wide variety of projects.

Priority areas for funding may include projects that fall into one or more of the following six platforms:

- Education and training
- Fishing access and facilities
- Cultural fishing enhancement
- Aquatic habitat rehabilitation and protection
- Economic opportunities
- Research

Funding may also be provided to projects outside these platforms.

Is my project better suited to a grant or a loan?

Grants:

Grants can apply to:

- One-off projects or investments
- Projects that benefit community as a whole
- Funding to help kick start long term or sustainable growth for new or struggling businesses

Note – Grants are not available for the purchase of fishing shares in a share management fishery, unless those shares are to be held by the Fisheries Administration Ministerial Corporation (see section on Purchase of fishing assets and fishing shares)

Loans

- Loans are more so for, but not limited to, ongoing or established programs or businesses

Upon review of applications, the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Expenditure Committee may contact applicants to discuss an alternate funding type to the one the applicant selected for the project.

Where can I get more information?

General

Information is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/AFTF.

Before applying, applicants should carefully read the *Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund - Guidelines for Applicants* available on the DPI website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/AFTF/apply-for-funds. For further assistance with completing your application and to ensure applications are consistent with priorities for funding contact:

Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund management team:

Phone: (02) 4424 7421

Email: aboriginal.fishingtrust@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Or visit the DPI Fishing website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/AFTF.

Business

Further assistance with understanding what is available across NSW for Aboriginal small business start-ups and/or existing/expanding small businesses can be gained from the following contacts:

- **YARPA NSW Indigenous Business and Employment Hub**

Web: <https://yarpa.com.au/>

Phone: 1300 017 177

Email: info@yarpa.com.au

- **Business Connect**

Web: www.business.nsw.gov.au/support-for-business/businessconnect

Phone: 1300 134 359

Email: connect@treasury.nsw.gov.au

- **NSW Small Business Commissioner**

Web: www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au/

Phone: 1300 795 534

Email: we.assist@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au

- **Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative**

Web: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/business/aboriginal-business-advisory-initiative>

Note: this list is not exhaustive and applicants should undertake their own research in addition to those contacts provided above.

When can I apply?

Future funding rounds will be advised on the DPI website each year, as well as through various community organisations and networks, and media.

Who assesses the applications?

Applications for funding are first assessed by an expert based committee called the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Expenditure Committee (AFTEC). The AFTEC assesses and ranks project applications against set criteria and provides its views to the Aboriginal Fishing Advisory Council (AFAC).

After considering applications and the advice of AFTEC, the AFAC then provide its formal views to the Minister for Agriculture who determines expenditure from the Trust.

AFAC: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/afac

AFTEC: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/AFTF/aboriginal-fishing-trust-expenditure-committee

How will my application be assessed?

The Aboriginal Fishing Trust Expenditure Committee will assess applications against a set of selection criteria which include:

- Whether the project addresses one of the AFTF objectives
- The value and extent of benefit the project provides to Aboriginal communities
- Cost effectiveness, value for money and sound budgeting, and
- The capacity and commitment of the applicant to undertake and complete the project.

The expenditure committee may also seek expert advice if needed, to assist in assessing applications.

For loan applications, the assessment will also include the applicant's capacity to repay the loan.

How can I apply?

Download the appropriate funding application form online at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aboriginal-fishing/AFTF or contact (02) 4424 7421 if you would like a form mailed to you.

Submit the completed form by the closing date to:

Email to aboriginal.fishingtrust@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Or

Mail to:

Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund
NSW DPI
LMB 3020
Nowra NSW 2541

NOTE: Email is the preferred method of receiving application forms

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