OCTOBER 2026

# Education and Care Professional Learning Grant

# Grant Guidelines & Information Pack

**An initiative of the Education and Care Grant Program administered by Department for Education, Children and Young People**

Department for Education,
Children and Young People

Tasmanian Government

# Professional Learning Grant

## At a glance

Apply for a Professional Learning Grant (PLG) to fund a professional learning project that will support providing safe, inclusive, high-quality education and care for Tasmanian children.

Eligible early childhood education and care (ECEC) providers and services and licenced childcare services can apply for a PLG. Two PLG rounds will be offered during the 2026/27 financial year.

PLG is to support professional learning in a way that allows ECEC providers and services the flexibility to determine the priorities and opportunities that would have the most impact and positive outcomes in their organisation.

PLG grants provide a funding stream that can be used to support professional learning to strengthen the skills, knowledge and capability in the areas where ECEC providers and services see the most benefit – this allows providers and services to apply for grants they consider will support professional learning, capability and quality improvement within their service/s and workforce. The PLG can provide providers and services with an investment of between $2000 and $10,000.

Please review the information in this pack and consider applying for a PLG.

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| **Round 1 Opening date:** | 28 October 2026 |
| **Round 1 Closing date:** | 11:59pm Sunday 29 November 2026 |
| **Round 1 Applicants Notified:** | Application outcomes and grant offers made December 2026 |
| **Round 2 Opening date:** | Final dates will be confirmed and communicated in advance. Round 2 expected to open in late February or early March 2027 |
| **Round 2 Closing date:** | Final dates will be confirmed and communicated in advance. Round 2 expected to close April 2027 |
| **Administering entity:** | Department for Education, Children and Young People |
| **Enquiries:** | If you have any enquiries, please contact **Grants.ECU@decyp.tas.gov.au** |
| **Date guidelines released:** | 27 October 2026 |
| **Type of Grant opportunity:** | Open grants - eligibility-based |

# Table of Contents

Version 1.0 – 27/10/2026

Professional Learning Grant ..... 2

At a glance ..... 2

1 Program Purpose ..... 4

2 Objectives ..... 5

3 Eligibility Criteria ..... 5

4 What Can Be Funded ..... 5

5 What Will Not Be Funded ..... 6

6 Priorities ..... 6

7 Application Process ..... 6

8 Assessment Criteria ..... 7

9 Grant Amounts ..... 7

10 Application Review and Funding Decisions ..... 8

11 Acquittal and Reporting ..... 9

12 Privacy and Information Handling ..... 9

13 Grievances ..... 9

14 Definitions ..... 9

15 Relevant Policies and Procedures ..... 10

# Education and Care Grants Program

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) provides targeted funding through its Education and Care Grants Program (ECGP) to support safe, inclusive, high-quality education and care for Tasmanian children, families and communities.

Each ECGP initiative supports outcomes for children attending ECEC services in Tasmania by providing funding and supports to the ECEC sector through initiatives that achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- Strengthening awareness and supporting practices that ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services in Tasmania.
- Supporting improvements to educational and developmental outcomes for children attending education and care services in Tasmania.
- Promoting a commitment to quality and continuous improvement by those providing education and care in Tasmania.
- Supporting ongoing development of workforce capacity, capability, skills and leadership across the ECEC sector in Tasmania.
- Enabling inclusive practices that support every Tasmanian child to access, participate meaningfully and experience positive outcomes in ECEC - with consideration given to each individual child's learning styles, first language, cultural identity, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location.
- Improving public knowledge and promoting community understanding of the importance and value of safe, inclusive, high-quality education and care.
- Supporting efficiencies that reduce regulatory burden while ensuring education and care quality is not impacted.

DECYP's Early Childhood Outcomes and Regulation administers the ECGP. Visit the ECOR website to find out more about the Education and Care Grants Program.

# Education and Care Professional Learning Grant

ECOR are offering an Education and Care Professional Learning Grant (PLG) as part of the ECGP.

# 1 Program Purpose

PLG provides the ECEC sector the opportunity to apply for funding for professional learning priorities that will best support upskilling, building capability and quality improvement within their service/s and workforce. ECEC providers and services have different levels of capacity, capabilities and system maturity which impacts professional learning needs and the PLG provides the opportunity for providers and services to decide on the professional learning that will best suit their workforce needs.

# 2 Objectives

The objectives of the PLG are to fund professional learning program that will:

- Build and support workforce capacity, capability, skills and leadership.
- Address identified skills needs and knowledge gaps.
- Support safe, inclusive, high-quality practice and continuous improvement.
- Improve outcomes for children.

Programs can focus on individuals, teams, or whole-of-service professional learning.

# 3 Eligibility Criteria

**Applicants must be:**

- An approved provider of an education and care service under the *Education and Care Services National Law* or *Tasmanian Child Care Act 2001*.
- Operating in Tasmania.
- Able to demonstrate the professional learning need and aligns with at least one PLG objective.
- Able to demonstrate the activity and proposed costs are eligible under the published guidelines.
- Seeking funding of between $2,000 and $10,000.
- Able to commit to funding being fully expended within 12 months.
- Compliant with reporting and acquittal requirements where previous funding from ECGP has been received in the past two financial years.

**Not eligible:**

- Individuals applying outside a service context.
- Programs already completed prior to submitting an application.
- Costs already funded through another source (e.g., JobTrainer, ACECQA scholarships).

# 4 What Can Be Funded

**Funding may support:**

- Registration or enrolment costs for workshops, conferences, courses, or webinars.
- Group-based professional development for multiple educators.
- In-service or team-based learning sessions.
- Mentoring or coaching programs.

**Eligible costs may include:**

- Registration or course fees.
- Facilitator, presenter or trainer costs.
- Learning materials.

# 5 What Will Not Be Funded

Professional Learning grant funding is not intended as a contribution towards:

- General operating or administration costs.
- Regular operational costs (e.g. wages, rent, utilities).
- Relief staff or backfill to release educators to attend training.
- Travel or accommodation to attend workshops, courses or conferences.
- Capital or equipment purchases.
- Activities already funded by another source.
- Projects not directly linked to educator professional learning.

# 6 Priorities Program focus

Funding priority may be given to professional learning that:

- Clearly identifies a learning need or skills gap.
- Is linked to your service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), Licensing Action Plan (LAP) or service goals.
- Builds lasting capability and supports sustained improvement.
- Demonstrates strong leadership commitment and organisational support.
- Provides value for money and benefit for children, families, and educators.
- Supports services with a Working Towards rating of the National Quality Standard.
- Relates to identified non-compliance within the last 12 months (i.e. addressing adequate supervision).
- Supports educators, service and providers operating in or supporting disadvantaged or vulnerable communities.
- *Please note, for round 2, funding will be prioritised for those that did not receive funding in round 1.*

# 7 Application Process

- Applications must be submitted by the closing date through SmartyGrants to be considered.
- Applications must meet the eligibility criteria and provide supporting documentation for the funding request to be considered.

# How to apply

1. Read these guidelines carefully.
2. Discuss your professional learning idea with your team and identify links to the PLG objectives.
3. Complete and submit your application through SmartyGrants at https://doetasmania.smartygrants.com.au.
4. Attach relevant supporting information (for example, QIP extracts, facilitator details, course outlines).
5. Submit your application by the closing date.

If you need assistance with the application process, contact the grant program team at **Grants.ECU@decyp.tas.gov.au**.

# Tips for a strong application

- Clearly describe *why* the professional learning is needed and how it supports your QIP, LAP, or service goals.
- Be specific about *who* will benefit and what will change as a result.
- Explain *how* the learning will be shared or sustained within your service.
- Provide a clear and realistic budget.
- Avoid jargon and keep your responses concise and to the point.
- Have someone review your application before submitting it.

# 8 Assessment Criteria

1. **Relevance and need** – the proposal addresses an identified learning need or knowledge gap.
2. **Quality and impact** – the professional learning is well-designed and likely to improve educator practice or service quality.
3. **Capacity** – the provider demonstrates the ability and commitment to successfully deliver the project.
4. **Value for money** – the budget is reasonable and proportional to expected outcomes.
5. **Reach and Sustainability** – the learning will continue to benefit educators and the service beyond the life of the grant.

# 9 Grant Amounts

- The total funding pool for the PLG is $200,000, with funds allocated between two rounds during 2026/27 financial year.
- The first round will open in late October 2026 and the second in February or March 2027.

- The minimum PLG value offered will be $2000 and the maximum $10,000. Funding amounts have been determined to maximise effectiveness, reach, impact and administration efficiencies.
- Grants may be offered to fully or partially fund professional learning projects based on responses to selection criteria, funding priorities and whether the funding pool is likely to be exhausted.

# 10 Application Review and Funding Decisions

A panel with representation from Early Childhood Outcomes and Regulation and an external member will be convened.

Step 1 – Conflict of interest.

Prior to review, a conflict of interest process will be undertaken with individuals who have a potential, perceived or actual conflict removed from reviewing and making recommendations or decisions on relevant applications.

Step 2 – Validation.

A validation review will determine if applications have met the eligibility criteria. Only applications that have met these criteria will progress. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will receive an outcome letter advising of invalid or ineligible application. Correspondence will be sent once all applications in the round have been reviewed.

Step 3 – Assessment and Recommendation.

Each application will be objectively assessed against the assessment criteria and a weighted merit assessment enabling applications to be scored and ranked. The panel may contact an applicant to seek additional information or clarity on a funding request.

The panel will then make a recommendation about:

- Which applications meet the funding criteria and the proposed funding amount that can be met within the ECOR budget (this may include recommendations for partial funding)
- Which applications meet the funding criteria but are not able to be prioritised within the available budget
- Which applications do not meet the funding criteria and are unsuccessful.

Step 4 – Approval

The delegate considers the recommendations for each application and makes a decision whether to approve the recommendation or make an alternate decision.

All applicants will receive advice of the decision relating to their application to advise of:

- Full funding
- Partial funding
- Unsuccessful or
- Invalid or ineligible

Successful applicants will be contacted to enter into a funding agreement that will be paid in advance of professional learning.

# 11 Acquittal and Reporting

Grant recipients will need to meet the following accountability requirements upon completion of the professional learning program:

- Provide evidence of attendance/completion.
- Submit a brief acquittal within 6 weeks of the activity.
- Retain receipts for all expenses.
- Provide a short final report outlining what was learned, what changed, and how this improved outcomes for children.

# 12 Privacy and Information Handling

Information obtained through the application process will be stored and accessed through SmartyGrants and the department's record management system in line with the departments Personal Information Protection Policy.

The assessment panel and grant program delegate will access and review information as required to support assessment and decision making, adhering to confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Information regarding successful grant funding, including names of services and funding amounts, may be published on the department's website and in reporting documentation.

# 13 Grievances

If you are not happy with the outcome of your application, please contact the Manager, Early Childhood Outcomes and Regulation to discuss your concerns.

If you are still not satisfied, please refer to the DECYP complaints process, as outlined on the Department for Education, Children and Young People website: https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au

# 14 Definitions

**Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)**

A QIP is a requirement for each approved service under the *Education and Care Services National Law*. QIPs help providers self-assess their performance in delivering quality education and care and to plan future improvements. The QIP also helps regulatory authorities with assessing the quality of the service.

**Licensing Action Plan (LAP)**

A Licensing Action Plan is a documented plan developed to address identified areas of non-compliance or improvement under the Tasmanian Licensing Standards. The plan outlines the specific actions, responsibilities, timeframes and evidence required to achieve and maintain compliance with the *Child Care Act 2001* and the relevant licensing standards.

# 15 Relevant Policies and Procedures

DECYP Grant Administration Policy

DECYP Grant Administration Procedure

DECYP Personal Information Protection Policy

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