



Government of Western Australia
Energy Policy WA

Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy Grants Program

Guidelines 2020-21

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Abbreviations

The following table provides a list of abbreviations and acronyms used throughout this document. Defined terms are identified in this document by capitals.

Term	Definition
EPWA	Energy Policy WA
WA ACE Forum	Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy Forum
WA ACE Grants	Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy Grants

1. Background

The energy sector in Western Australia exists to provide electricity and gas to consumers. It is central to energy production and delivery that the long-term interests of energy consumers are served.

Whilst some large energy consumers have the capacity to influence policy and infrastructure investment decisions, smaller consumers face greater barriers to inclusion in informed, constructive debate about energy use. Given the critical role and impact energy has on households and small business, overcoming these barriers to enable the views of consumers to be heard is essential to improving and maintaining an effective energy sector.

In response to this need, a State Budget allocation has been made towards advocacy in the Western Australian energy sector.

A portion of this funding was directed to support a three-year, full time position with Energy Policy WA (EPWA) to co-ordinate and support consumer advocacy within government policy priorities.

The Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy Forum (WA ACE Forum) has been established to provide broad based representation of household and small business consumer views in a central forum, allowing issues to be raised and for consumers to share in the development of products and solutions for the energy sector. The WA ACE Forum is supported by the State Budget funding allocation.

To further support consumer advocacy and research, the Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy Grants (WA ACE Grants) have been established to distribute the remaining allocated funds.

These Guidelines provide information about the intent, structure and application processes for the WA ACE Grants program.

2. Program overview

The WA ACE Grants enable the distribution of government funds to support household and small business energy consumer advocacy.

Applications for WA ACE Grants can be made by Western Australian based organisations. Two grant rounds will be conducted for each of the 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years. Applications can be made on a per-project basis, considering the objectives and priority areas as outlined in these Guidelines.

The WA ACE Grant Guidelines are maintained by EPWA based on the input from the WA ACE Forum, consumers and the energy sector.

An independent panel will consider applications with reference to these Guidelines and make recommendations to the Western Australian Minister for Energy for final determination.

All applications and project outputs will be made available on the [EPWA website](#) and presented to the WA ACE Forum.

2.1 Funding available

A maximum of \$180,000 total grant funding will be distributed in any financial year, limited further by the total grant funding pool available. A maximum grant of \$50,000 will apply per project.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the WA ACE Grants are to:

- support energy advocacy activities;
- build knowledge and capacity of energy consumer advocates; and
- promote solution-focused consumer-centric research in the energy sector

that benefit the long-term interests of energy consumers in Western Australia.

3.1 Priority areas

Based on feedback from the WA ACE Forum, consumers and the energy sector, the following priority areas have been identified for the 2020-21 Grants rounds:

- Improving household and small business consumer understanding of, and integration with, the energy sector.
- Optimising energy consumer behaviour change programs.
- Measuring the benefits of consumer behaviour change.
- Enabling the uptake and management of Distributed Energy Resources.
- Managing energy use in a COVID-19 impacted environment.
- Improving household and small business consumer understanding and ability to access renewable energy.

4. Criteria

WA ACE Grant applications will be considered for eligibility and assessed based on the outlined selection criteria.

WA ACE Grants will be awarded to projects that meet the objectives of the program; are outcomes focused; timely and cost effective.

4.1 Eligibility Criteria

All applications must meet the following criteria to be eligible for funding:

E1. Completed applications must be submitted prior to the closing date of each Grants Round.

2020-21 WA ACE Grant Year	Opens	Closes	Indicative Decision Date
Round 1	13 August 2020	10 September 2020	22 October 2020
Round 2 - indicative only	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021

E2 Applications must be made on the [application form](#) to epwa-grants@energy.wa.gov.au before the closing date. Late applications will not be accepted.

E3 Applicants must be a Western Australian based organisation.

E4 Applicants can submit more than one application in each funding round.

E5 Projects must be delivered within 12 months following a successful application.

E6 Applications must be signed by the chief executive officer or authorised officer of the applicant's organisation.

E7 Applications must include a presentation to the WA ACE Forum in their scope.

All applications must meet at least one of the following criteria to be eligible for funding:

E8 Support energy advocacy activities in Western Australia;

E9 Build knowledge and capacity of energy consumer advocates in Western Australia; or

E10 Promote solution-focused consumer-centric research in the energy sector.

The application must highlight which of these criteria are being met and will be assessed against the following:

- The project proposal demonstrates:

E0.1 How the proposed research or solution (change to policy, regulation or practices) will benefit consumers; and/or

E0.2 How the project will build the capacity of household and small business consumers and/or consumer advocates; and/or

E0.3 How the project may empower household and small business consumers; and/or

E0.4 How the project will influence decision makers; and/or

E0.5 How the project will inform/support advocacy.

- The project proposal presents benefits to consumers by outlining:

E0.6 The size of the consumer class impacted; and

E0.7 The potential to improve situation of those consumers; and

E0.8 The potential reach of information or findings.

4.2 Selection criteria

Set out below are the selection criteria against which all applications for WA ACE Grants will be assessed.

For a project proposal to be considered for a grant, it must meet most of the criteria. The criteria are not ranked, for example, compliance with criterion 4 is as important as compliance with criterion 1.

Criteria	Measures for assessment against the criteria	
S1. Alignment with WA ACE Grants priority areas OR for other areas of research, outline why the work is a priority and its material impact on household and small business consumers.	S1.1	Clarity of objectives of planned project
	S1.2	Alignment with grant priority areas
	S1.3	If not aligned, the strength of the rationale made by applicant that the work is a priority
	S1.3.1	Has the applicant adequately explained the extent of the problem and/or consumer detriment?
	S1.3.2	Has the applicant provided information on the material impact of the project on the targeted consumers?
	S1.3.3	Has the applicant demonstrated that a need to address the issue has been reinforced by other consumer organisations?
S2. Building capacity for future advocacy a) Demonstrating value to consumer organisations b) Demonstrating value to the sector	S2.1	Capacity of the organisation to deliver project outcome(s)
	S2.2	Organisation's expertise (or potential to acquire)
	S2.3	Organisation's network – capacity to build new and/or leverage existing partnerships/coalitions with advocates/decision-makers
	S2.4	Project methodology and proposed outputs will deliver/contribute to achievement of outcomes
	S2.5	Capacity and mechanisms to share project findings/learnings with WA ACE Forum and other advocates
S3. Relevance to the WA energy sector	S3.1	Correct identification of potential influencers and decision-makers, as well as the forums/opportunities to disseminate project findings or partnerships with advocates to facilitate dissemination of project findings
	S3.2	Extent to which the proposal seeks to work within the Western Australian context
	S3.3	Solution-focused nature of the project
	S3.3.1	Has the applicant proposed to investigate a solution?
	S3.3.2	If the applicant has sought to investigate an issue, has the applicant demonstrated that other research has not addressed the issue in the Western Australian context?
	S3.3.3	If building on earlier research in the Western Australian context, has the applicant strongly justified that additional research is required before a solution can be developed?

Criteria	Measures for assessment against the criteria	
S4. Offer value for money: the benefits should outweigh the costs, and costs should be prudent and minimised	S4.1	Budget demonstrates consideration of most effective and efficient way to achieve outcome
	S4.1.1	Methodology and budget appropriately aligned
	S4.2	Demonstrate that the grant funding does not constitute the entire financial base of the organisation
S5. Offer partnership opportunities with other organisations where possible	S5.1	Extent to which the applicant plans to build new and/or leverage existing partnerships/coalitions with advocates/decision-makers
S6. Provide a viable project plan, outlining the intended outcomes and success indicators	S6.1	Soundness of organisation/project governance, management and organisational structures
	S6.2	Clarity of proposal outcomes
	S6.3	Clarity of proposal timeframes
	S6.4	Quality of self-evaluation framework
	S6.5	Calibre and experience of key staff members
	S6.6	Quality of consultants (if applicable)
	S6.7	Applicant's track record

4.3 Application support

Applications should be concise and supporting information may be attached to the application form where relevant.

Applicants may be contacted for further information about an application to support its assessment.

Applicants seeking further information about the WA ACE Grants application process can contact EPWA via email at epwa-grants@energy.wa.gov.au. A three-day response time to queries is maintained.

Applicants seeking input on the relevance of their proposed works to Western Australian energy consumer advocacy can contact the Senior Advisor – Consumer Policy & Advocacy at EPWA for input. Please note that EPWA does not inform the grants decision process and cannot provide any guidance as to the potential success of an application.

5. Grant Management

5.1 Grant Approval Process

EPWA will appoint an independent, three-member panel to consider grant applications with reference to these Guidelines. That panel will make a recommendation to the Western Australian Minister for Energy with secretariat support from EPWA. The Minister for Energy will make the final determination prior to announcement on the decision date.

All applications are to be submitted to EPWA via epwa-grants@energy.wa.gov.au. An email confirmation will be provided. If a confirmation email is not received, please contact EPWA via phone to confirm that your application has been received.

All organisations that apply for funding will be notified via email of the outcome of their submission. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

Successful application forms will become part of the funding agreement. Grant conditions and management protocols will apply to successful projects.

5.2 Grants Management

EPWA is committed to a transparent, accountable and robust grants management framework.

To guarantee transparency and integrity, the WA ACE Grants program is developed on the Australian National Audit Office's key principles of best practice grants administration guidance.¹

EPWA will publish all written reports and materials arising from a grant on its website, to ensure that all consumers can benefit from the work.

Funding agreements will require all publications relating to the project to carry the following disclaimer:

"This project was funded by the State Government of Western Australia (Energy Policy WA) as part of its grants process for consumer advocacy projects and research projects for the benefit of consumers of electricity and gas.

The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the State Government of Western Australia or Energy Policy WA."

Confidential information or information impacting privacy will be removed prior to publication.

EPWA reserves the right to have a third party assist with the administration of the WA ACE Grants Program.

6. Review

The WA ACE Grants Guidelines will be reviewed annually by EPWA reflecting the feedback of the WA ACE Forum, consumers, the independent decision panel and the energy sector. The review will consider the objectives of the program, the effectiveness of the outcomes and the value to consumers of energy. The review will reflect the principles outlined in the Australian National Audit Office's best practice grants administration guidance.

The Minister for Energy may revise the Guidelines on the recommendation of EPWA.

The ongoing funding of the WA ACE Forum will be subject to future State Budget deliberations. EPWA will provide advice into the budget process based on the reviews undertaken.

¹ *Implementing Better Practice Grants Administration, Better Practice Guide*, ANAO December 2013 <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-494730694/view>