

# Change Makers: Pitching for Prevention Grants Guidelines

Calling all community-based organisations with a suicide prevention program idea that could make a local impact.

The Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network (PHN) is seeking applications from community-based organisations, as part of the Targeted Regional Initiative for Suicide Prevention (TRISP) program to deliver community-led suicide prevention programs helping those who are at risk of suicide and to support mental wellbeing.

The PHN will be selecting and funding via a pitch event:

Three (3) programs in the Hunter region

Three (3) programs in the Central Coast region

Five (5) programs in the New England region.

This grant opportunity is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each program and requested funding amount must be responsive to community needs. The funding available per program will come from a Pitch Event held in each region, where the audience will pledge funds towards the programs that are being pitched. Funding available will be in the range from \$15,000 up to a potential \$40,000 ex GST (dependant on pitch event contributions) for suicide prevention activities that address:

1. Equity of access to suicide prevention programs.
2. Local data or evidence-based needs.
3. Priority groups – Men, First Nations people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, young people, people with psychosocial needs, as identified in the 2025-2028 [Needs Assessment](#).
4. Community and program sustainability.

Community-led suicide prevention programs could include, but are not limited to:

- A series of gatekeeper/first responder/volunteer mental health or suicide prevention specific training and resilience workshops.
- Suicide prevention resource development and supporting campaign to promote awareness.
- Target population specific resources and materials to support conversations around suicide and how to access appropriate help.
- Workshops involving local sporting clubs or businesses.
- Development of local action plans and guides supporting communities to manage suicide prevention.

## Application Details

The PHN welcomes applications for programs valued from \$15,000 (up to \$40,000 as a guide). Programs will receive a **minimum** of \$15,000 from participation in the Pitch Event but there is no guarantee of the value of additional funding that will come from audience pledges at these Pitch Events. Program activities therefore need to be scalable in consideration of the potential value of funding.

Pitch Night funding is not ongoing, and programs must be delivered from November 2025 to October 2026. Applicants should show consideration of workforce availability constraints within the grant timeframe.

## Newcastle and Central Coast

All successful **Hunter and Central Coast** programs will receive grant funding through participation in the local Pitch Events being held in the evening on the **14<sup>th</sup> October** (Newcastle) and **16<sup>th</sup> October** (Central Coast), with audiences pledging funds through live crowdfunding.

- The Pitch Events are hosted by The Funding Network (TFN) where each audience member pledges an amount of money to support one or more of the pitching programs.
- Audience funds will be provided by the PHN, with no additional monies being sought from audience members but audience members can decide which 'pitch' to support with their funds (can be split between 1 or more).

## How will the Newcastle and Central Coast Pitch Nights Work?

1. Through the application process suicide prevention programs will be assessed and three per region will be selected.
2. The successful six (3 x Hunter and 3 x Central Coast) organisations will participate in coaching workshops with our partners, The Funding Network, and further scope their pitch presentation.
3. The Pitch Night event in October will engage live audiences, to hear the presentations from each of the six suicide prevention programs.
4. Each audience member is provided with a 'pledge' card and decides which program(s) best meets their community's needs.
5. At the conclusion of the event, the pitching organisations are awarded their funds as pledged by the audience.

## Participation – Hunter and Central Coast

Successful **Hunter and Central Coast** applicants will:

- Identify one appropriate program advocate (e.g., lived experience representative, board member, or local leader) who must be available to attend the Pitch Night event and speak on behalf of the organisation
- Attend pitch coaching workshops delivered by The Funding Network (TFN) – Presenter and advocate. These are a mandatory condition.
- Attend the October Pitch Night event in their region – Newcastle or Central Coast.
- Present alongside other successful applicants to an audience of stakeholders, advocates, and funders.
- Secure all Program funding from the live audience crowd funding via pledges.
- Failure to attend and present (pitch) at the Pitch Night event in October will result in a forfeit of the grant and no funding will be paid.

**Note:** Attendance at Pitch Night with an advocate is mandatory. Reasonable travel costs for those who are travelling from out of the local vicinity may be included as part of the program budget but will be assessed on a case-to-case basis.

## New England

### How will the New England Pitch event work?

All successful **New England** programs will receive grant funding through participation in Pitch coaching workshops, and a face-to-face pitch-style event, where a local panel will award funding based on the presentation and program activity.

1. Through the application process suicide prevention programs will be assessed and five organisations will be selected.
2. The successful five organisations will participate in a two-part coaching series with our partners, The Funding Network (TFN), and further scope their pitch presentation. This includes:
  - a. **Virtual Workshop (Part 1):**
    - i. 2.5-hour online session led by experienced TFN facilitators
    - ii. Includes pre-work, coaching, and access to digital toolkits to develop your pitch presentation.
  - b. **In-Person Workshop (Part 2):**
    - i. Full-day interactive session in the New England.
    - ii. Practical exercises, pitch refinement, and presentation feedback panel
    - iii. Supported by branded resource kits and templates
3. Following the in-person workshop and refinement, the local panel will vote and allocate funding amounts to the five organisations.

Dates for the workshops are to be confirmed but expected to be late October or early November 2025.

## Pitch Night Participation – New England

Successful **New England** applicants will:

- Attend the virtual workshop delivered by The Funding Network (TFN).
- Attend the in-person Workshop: a full day interactive session in the New England.
- Present alongside other successful applicants to a local panel of stakeholders, advocates, and funders.
- Secure Program funding from the local panel of stakeholders via audience pledge.
- Failure to attend the two-part coaching series and presentation (pitch) will result in a forfeit of the grant and no funding will be paid.

**Note:** Attendance at the in-person Workshop is mandatory. Reasonable travel costs for those who are travelling from out of the local vicinity may be included as part of the program budget but will be assessed on a case-to-case basis.

## Eligibility Criteria

Organisations must:

- Operate by having a **local existing service and community connections** within the region they are applying for:
  - **Hunter:** defined as LGAs inclusive of (Greater Newcastle and Lower Hunter): *Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens, Maitland, Cessnock and Dungog.*
  - **Central Coast:** defined as all LGAs within the Central Coast.
  - **New England:** defined as LGAs inclusive of Peel, Mehi and Tablelands: Tamworth, Gunnedah, Walcha and Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Narrabri and Gwydir, Inverell, Tenterfield, Uralla, Armidale and Glen Innes.
- Have a valid ABN and appropriate insurance coverage for the type of activities, they will be undertaking
- If activities involve working with those under 18 years of age, a valid Working with Children's Check will be required.
- Demonstrate organisational capability, strong community ties, and a history of safe, inclusive engagement.
- Provide written endorsement from a community advocate. (e.g., lived experience representative, board member, or local leader).
- If successful, participate in all activities related to the Pitch Events for their region.
- **Focus on suicide prevention** and address the **four key areas** outlined in the criteria.

## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for the successful programs will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Program activity - vision, innovation, and relevance to local community needs.
- Outcomes and impact
- Equity of access and priority target population
- Evaluation measures
- Costs and financial management
- Implementation capacity and sustainability

## What can be funded?

1. Suitable organisations must submit a program with an indicative budget between \$15,000 and \$40,000 ex GST. There are no guarantees on the total amount of funding that will be awarded as this will be based on audience pledges.
2. All funds will be dispersed through the Pitch Events. It is paramount to outline how you will utilise funding, with consideration of sustainability and capacity building opportunities in the community through the indicative budget. i.e. Once the awarded funds have been spent and after October 2026, what will happen to the program and the impact be on the community once funding ends.
3. Applications are accepted from any organisation with a primary focus and program that clearly addresses local suicide prevention and the criteria of the grant.
4. Organisations applying must have a strong understanding of the priority groups identified as having high rates of mental illness, intentional self-harm and suicide within the [PHN Core Needs Assessment](#) and how the program contributes to suicide prevention awareness and support.
5. Only three (3) programs in the Hunter region, three (3) programs in the Central Coast region and five (5) programs in the New England region will be successful. You may submit a separate application for each region (if meeting the criteria) but only one application per organisation can be successful.
6. All activities must fund suicide prevention awareness and capacity building programs, rather than traditional service delivery.
7. Organisations applying must be familiar with the [Mindframe](#) guidelines ensuring safe communication, reporting and portrayal of suicide in all materials.
8. Each applicant must be endorsed by an advocate, who is willing to provide a letter of support on the application form. If the organisation is selected, that advocate will also speak briefly in support of the organisation at the Hunter and Central Coast Pitch Night events and make the first pledge amount to the program.
9. Reasonable travel costs (based on distance from the pitch locations) associated with the organisation representative(s) and advocate attending the Pitch Night event can be included in the project budget for review on a case-to-case basis, as this is a mandatory requirement of the grant.

## What cannot be funded?

1. Activities and programs not carried out in the funding period (funding period is once the grant agreement is executed and signed in November 2025 – October 2026, or retrospective costs.
2. Capital items, assets and works and costs not directly associated with the program.
3. Applications that include advocacy campaigns, religious or political campaigns, crisis appeals, overseas aid, or health research applications from organisations or individuals.
4. An organisation that does not hold appropriate insurances and an ABN.
5. An organisation that does not demonstrate capability via qualified staff, contractors, or partners.
6. Programs or activities not being undertaken in the LGAs as noted.
7. Programs or activities deemed business as usual.
8. Program or activities deemed not eligible by HNECC PHN, judged to not meet the selection criteria or that do not address the four key areas.
9. Program or activities that are primarily service delivery or expansion of existing services.
10. Recruitment activities and costs.

## How to apply

Applications open **Monday, 7 July 2025** and close **5:00pm, Friday, 8 August 2025** through the PHN Grants Portal - Smarty Grants.

Applicants may be contacted to discuss their eligibility and ability to meet the selection criteria. This will constitute part of the assessment.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a HNECC PHN agreement outlining payments and milestones, terms and conditions and evidence or reporting required at each stage. A copy of relevant insurances will be required if successful, dependent on the nature of the activity.

## Terms and conditions

The following terms and conditions will apply to all successful applicants:

HNECC PHN Terms and Conditions will apply.

- Applicants must have a valid ABN number.
- Only one grant submission per organisation per region will be accepted.
- Partnerships are highly encouraged but only one lead organisation (the applicant) is permitted.
- Applications that do not meet the criteria will not be eligible.
- Funding will be paid to the applicant as per their agreement and will include reporting requirements that may be linked to split payments.
- Successful applicants will receive funding from the Pitch Night event/s through audience voting and live crowd funding for Hunter and Central Coast, and through a local panel for New England applicants.
- Payments will be made as a Recipient Created Tax Invoice.
- All conflicts of interest are to be declared.

- Previous funding recipients are eligible only if they have fully complied with any previous PHN funding contract commitments including reporting and acquittal requirements.
- The PHN reserves the right to extend the grant opening timeframe or close the grant earlier if fully subscribed.

### Questions or enquiries

If you have any questions regarding please contact the PHN Grants Team on [grants@thephn.com.au](mailto:grants@thephn.com.au)