



DIRECT AID PROGRAM (DAP) HARARE GUIDELINES 2026-27

WHAT IS THE DIRECT AID PROGRAM?

The Direct Aid Program (DAP) is a small grants program funded from Australia's Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget. It provides funding for locally led projects that deliver practical and tangible development outcomes in ODA-eligible countries consistent with Australia's development priorities.

The DAP provides funding to community and grass-roots development projects which provide direct, immediate, tangible and high-impact outcomes for beneficiary communities.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Funding is available on a not-for-profit basis to community groups, non-government organisations and other organisations engaging in development activities in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo.

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR DAP SUPPORT?

Priority thematic areas for the 2026-27 DAP year include:

- gender equality, empowerment of women and social inclusion;
- climate change and environmental protection;
- disability equity and rights;
- water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH);
- poverty alleviation and rural development;
- healthcare;
- education; and
- human rights and governance.

Applicants may apply for funding for development projects in other thematic areas.

Competitive applications will:

- address multiple thematic areas in a single project;
- support vulnerable and marginalised communities;
- clearly articulate the positive change and impact that would occur following project implementation; and
- provide strong public diplomacy opportunities for the Embassy.

Projects should be self-contained with finite timelines. Consideration will also be given to activities in which the beneficiary community makes a significant contribution in terms of:

- labour,
- materials or funds,
- act as a catalyst for additional development of the community or a model for similar development activities elsewhere and/or have direct links with Australia will also be welcomed.



There is no minimum amount a single DAP project can receive but the **maximum is AUD80,000** (or the USD equivalent).

Activities may run up to a maximum of two years of the grant agreement.

All applications must be accompanied by a fully costed project budget. **A detailed budget is required and must be supported by two quotations for any budget line item between USD700 and USD7,000 and three quotations for amounts above USD7,000.**

Two referees are required. Referees cannot be from the applicant organisation or from an organisation which stands to gain from the proposed project.

Additional documents may be attached if necessary. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to be concise. The Embassy will seek further information if required.

Proposals must be clearly defined with specific outputs. Proposals will be considered based on the:

- cost and the development benefits of the proposal;
- soundness of the project's objectives and design;
- sustainability of outcomes;
- practicality of the proposed implementation arrangements;
- applicant's consideration and approach to risk management including project implementation, governance and integrity systems, past performance, fraud and corruption controls, child protection, preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and environmental protection; and
- compatibility of the proposal with the objectives of the Direct Aid Program.

EXPENSES AND COSTS INELIGIBLE FOR DAP FUNDING

Generally, we cannot fund the following expenses and costs through the DAP:

- operating, overhead and administrative costs (staff salaries, allowances, office rent, utilities, etc.);
- workshops and associated expenses (e.g., venue hire, food/drinks, audio/video, etc.);
- cash grants or micro-credit schemes or projects that involve the return of money;
- commercial ventures or private for-profit business activities;
- purchase of major assets, e.g. vehicles or land;
- Australian or overseas study tours;
- international travel;
- sponsorship of major sporting tournaments or cultural displays that do not have a clear development benefit;
- consulting fees;
- construction projects that use asbestos or other materials that are hazardous to human health;
- direct support for governments;
- sponsorship of advocacy/fund-raising/commemoration events;
- landscaping and other cosmetic work around town squares and other public buildings;
- projects run by multilateral organisations such as UN agencies; and
- small/discrete components within a larger project managed by a multilateral organisation.

Applications that request funding for these expenses may be removed from consideration.



HOW TO APPLY

The DAP application form must be completed by the applicant online when an official application round has been opened. **Please note that the form is only accessible when there is an open application round.**

An announcement on the next DAP application round opening will be made via the [Embassy's website](#) and the Embassy's other social media handles: [Facebook](#) and [X](#). Please note that application rounds are usually open for a period of three weeks before the round closes.

For financial year 2026-27, the application round will be open from 22 June 2026 to 13 July 2026. Late applications will not be accepted. Please click the submission button in the application portal to ensure that we receive your application.

Should you experience technical difficulties in accessing the online application form during the application round or if you have any questions on the DAP, please email DAP.Harare@dfat.gov.au for assistance.

AFTER SUBMISSION OF YOUR APPLICATION

Applications for DAP funding are screened by the DAP Coordinator. Short-listed projects are then considered by the DAP Committee. Projects approved by the Committee are recommended to the Ambassador for final approval. The assessment process will begin after the closure of each round and usually takes two/three months depending on the number of applications received.

All applicants will be contacted regarding the outcome of their application. Due to the high number of applications we receive, we are unable to provide individualised feedback to unsuccessful applications.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful applicants will be required to report regularly on the progress of implementation and provide financial acquittal in accordance with the individual DAP funding agreements.