

Our Watch Innovation

And Impact Grants Challenge

Our Watch ABN 60 164 123 844

Date: September 2025

About this challenge

*The Innovation and Impact Grants challenge is an open call for innovative proposals from not-for-profit organisations that address the question: How might we support men and boys to build respectful, positive and gender-equal relationships and reject rigid and restrictive stereotypes of what it means to be a man?*

We are providing seed funding (up to a maximum of $40,000) for organisations to participate in a design incubator, followed by a pilot (up to $120,000) and evaluation (up to $40,000).

We are seeking applications that show how innovative ideas could help in the prevention of gender-based violence. This means we are not seeking fully formed program implementation designs. We are looking for great ideas. You will spend 3 months supported by the Lab incubator to work on your program design and prepare your implementation plan.

Application process

* **All applicants must apply by the closing date (7 November 2025, 5pm AEDT) and respond to the questions in the application form**
* **Application forms should be emailed to innovation.projects@ourwatch.org.au**
* **Attendance at the information session is not mandatory but highly recommended**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key dates | |
| **8 October** | Applicant information session held online |
| **8 October (5pm AEDT)** | Question closing date & time |
| **15 October** | FAQ document available |
| **7 November (5pm AEDT)** | **Closing date for applications** |

### Approximate dates for outcome of process:

* Preferred applicant/s informed: approx. early December 2025
* Grant agreement commencement date: approx. January 2026

### Our Watch contact:

Any questions about this opportunity should be directed to: [innovation.projects@ourwatch.org.au](mailto:innovation.projects@ourwatch.org.au) before the closing date for questions (5pm AEDT, 8 October 2025).

### Delivery dates:

Indicative dates for delivery of the project are:

* Late January 2026 – April 2026: design incubator
* May 2026 – end April 2027: project piloting and testing
* July 2027: evaluation report finalised

### Who should apply

We are looking for applications from organisations across Australia with strong community connections and the capacity to design and deliver innovative ideas in response to the challenge question:

“How might we support men and boys to build respectful, positive and gender-equal relationships and reject rigid and restrictive stereotypes of what it means to be a man?”

**Eligibility criteria**

Applicants must:

* have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
* have an account with an Australian financial institution
* be a legal entity with the capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement or contract
* be registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission

You do not have to be a primary prevention specialist organisation to apply. We encourage applications from across the community sector, with ideas that respond to the challenge question.

You are **not** eligible to apply if you are:

* an individual
* unincorporated association
* overseas resident/organisation

### How do I know if my idea responds to the challenge question?

Is it innovative? (see section *What innovations are we looking for* on pg 6 for more detail)

Does it consider the underlying drivers of gender-based violence? (for information on gendered drivers of violence see Change the Story [Our Watch | Change the story and key frameworks](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story))

Is it strengths-based?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we encourage you to read these grant guidelines and consider applying.

**Activities that are not eligible for funding in this grant round**

Proposed activities outside of Australia are **ineligible** for funding under this challenge.

Activities that centre on responding to or intervening in possible incidents of violence **are out of scope** for this grant opportunity. However, organisations that provide intervention and response services remain eligible if their proposed idea meets the selection criteria in relation to primary prevention.

In addition, the following activities are **out of scope** for this grant:

* Academic research
* Creation and maintenance of data hubs / repositories

**What if I am already running a project? Can I apply?**

If you are running a small project or program that is in its early stages, meets the design challenge criteria, and has not yet had a chance to be fully tested or implemented, we are interested in hearing from you.

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# Part A: About us

## Our Watch background

[Our Watch](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/) is a national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. We work to embed gender equality and prevent violence where Australians live, learn, work, and socialise.

Our Watch is a company with an independent Board. The company members include the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments.

## Change the story: a shared framework

*Change the story* is our evidence-based framework for a national approach to preventing violence against women.

*Changing the picture* is a resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

*Changing the landscape* is a resource to support the prevention of violence against women and girls with disabilities.

*Men in focus* is a resource that brings together research and practice knowledge to unpack and look at how to address masculinities and work with men.

See publications [Change the story](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/), [Changing the picture](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/changing-the-picture/), [Changing the landscape](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/changing-the-landscape/) and [Men in Focus.](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/men-in-focus)

## Our values

Our Watch’s [Strategic Plan 2024 – 2029](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/about-us/key-documents/strategic-plan) describes our values as an organisation.

Following on from our [Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2020–2022, Our Watch has developed a new Stretch RAP 2025-2028](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/about-us/key-documents/reconciliation-action-plan).Our Watch shares Reconciliation Australia’s vision of a reconciled, just and equitable Australia, where the voices, experiences and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are central.

We have a dedicated [strategy to strengthen our intersectional approach](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/about-us/key-documents/intersectional-approach). An intersectional approach recognises the impacts of multiple intersecting forms of social inequality, discrimination and disadvantage.

## About the Innovation Lab

The Violence Prevention Innovation Lab (hereafter referred to as ‘the Lab’) is designed and led by Our Watch and funded by Minderoo Foundation. This collaboration between Our Watch and Minderoo will create opportunities to share knowledge and collaborate in innovative ways to create meaningful change.

This funding round is part of the Lab’s Innovation and Impact Challenge Fund, which aims to accelerate evidence-based community projects that help prevent violence against women and their children. The fund is focused on:

* Identifying and trialling promising primary prevention approaches with a focus on initiatives that are currently under-resourced or unfunded
* Supporting scalable and impactful solutions that contribute to long-term systems change in the prevention of gender-based violence
* Creating opportunities to share knowledge and collaborate in innovative ways to create meaningful change

# Part B: Challenge focus, selection criteria and implementation support

## Building connections challenge

We are asking organisations to propose ideas that answer the following question:

“How might we support men and boys to build respectful, positive and gender-equal relationships and reject rigid and restrictive stereotypes of what it means to be a man?”

We are looking for project ideas that show innovation potential. You do not need a fully formed program design to apply for funding. What we want to see is strong community connections, and the capacity to follow through on them during the design incubator and pilot phases. You will spend 3 months supported by the design lead and evaluation lead in the Lab incubator to help formulate questions and prepare your implementation plan.

Examples of these types of projects include:

* Co-design activities/approaches with young people informed by their experiences
* Novel approaches to relational skills building using online platforms
* Community volunteering programs to support and encourage men’s social inclusion
* Role modelling programs
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s cultural connection and strengths
* Migration responsive masculinity narratives that connect to experiences of racism
* Stories about men that don’t fit a traditional masculine stereotype

NOTE: The above are samples only. Applicants may bring other ideas as long as they meet the criteria. The project idea should be something that your organisation could implement within the available funding, over an 18-month timeframe, (including up to 3 months in a design phase and up to 3-months at the end of implementation to finalise evaluation).

## What sort of innovation are we looking for?

We define innovation as the creation of new knowledge, approaches, resource opportunities or partnerships that accelerate both progress and impact in ending violence against women and their children.

This may include working in contexts or settings where there has been less prevention activity to date, and/or where less is known about what is effective in addressing the drivers of violence against women.

We are particularly interested in ideas that are fundamentally innovative[[1]](#footnote-2), going beyond incremental improvements and involving new ways of exploring the challenge, with an understanding of what has come before, and how we can build on and learn from existing approaches and evidence.

We encourage you to consider these principles from the Men in Focus Practice Guide in your design (Our Watch, 2022)

Intersectional:

* how does your idea include people who experience different types of oppression or discrimination (e.g. discrimination because of race, identity, age)?

Strength-based:

* how does your idea give men the knowledge and skills to act as advocates and aspiring allies?

Gender transformative:

* how does your idea help people think about gender in new, more equal ways?

Accountability to women:

* how does your idea keep the voices of women at the centre of the work?

## What do we mean by impact and scale?

The most impactful ideas might start quite small but will have potential to scale (grow or spread) after the project has ended. Your application should include ideas about how your project could be spread, scaled or further developed after the pilot phase.

Scaling, spreading or growing a project might include:

* Impacting policy and legislation to enable and sustain initiatives (Scaling Up)
* Impacting greater numbers by expanding the scope of an initiative or spreading to new contexts (Scaling Out, or breadth)
* Producing deep and transformative cultural shifts within individuals, relationships, organisations, or communities (Scaling Deep, or depth).

## Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Innovation potential (35% weighting) | Shows potential for innovation addressing violence against women and their children in response to the challenge question  See ‘What sort of innovation are we looking for’ on pg 6  **Challenge question**  How might we support men and boys to build respectful, positive and gender-equal relationships and reject rigid and restrictive stereotypes of what it means to be a man? |
| Connection to community (25% weighting) | The application demonstrates existing connections and relationships with the target cohorts/community. The idea is tailored and relevant to the context. Projects that are led by and for diverse and/or marginalised communities will be highly regarded. |
| Scalability / sustainability (10% weighting) | The application shows how the idea may be scaled / sustained beyond the life of the pilot. |
| Feasibility (20% weighting) | The application demonstrates how the activity will be delivered within the timeline and available resources. |
| Evaluation approach (10% weighting) | The application shows capacity and willingness to collect learnings about the pilot project including indicators of success and failure. |

## Funding and support package

We are providing seed funding (up to a maximum of $40,000) for organisations to participate in a design incubator, followed by implementation funding (up to $120,000) and evaluation funding, for grantees to manage their own evaluations (up to $40,000).

**What is involved in the design incubator?**

The Lab will work with grantees in a collaborative, adaptive process that values experimentation and learning.

Successful applicants will spend 3-months working with the Innovation Lab’s skilled designer using a Human Centred Design approach to further develop their ideas into an implementation plan. During the incubator period, Our Watch will also support successful applicants to develop a plan for evaluating their project.

The incubator will be available to applicants from around Australia, and participants will be able to access all components remotely, including online interactive sessions.

***Design support:*** We will support you with resources and mini design workshops to support your program design. The design incubator will run from late January to end April 2026. The incubator will involve an optional weekly online workshop (approx. 2 hours per week), plus self-guided design planning, using a human centered design approach for program design, and support to develop your theory of change and evaluation plan.  Online workshops will offer an opportunity for networking and learning with other grantees. However, you will work to design your own project.

***Evaluation support:*** During the design incubator, the Lab’s evaluator can provide evaluation support to grantees. This includes support to develop a theory of change and evaluation plan.

At the beginning of the design window grantees will be asked to share if they would like evaluation support (and the kind of support that would be helpful).

## Applicant contributions and delivery requirements

The successful applicant/s will be required to:

1. Supply a dedicated staff member to coordinate the project and be a point of contact for the Lab periodically throughout the pilot.
   1. Applicants should determine the appropriate full time equivalent load (FTE) for this staff member, allowing for design incubator attendance, pilot implementation and evaluation coordination.
2. Submit a project implementation plan and evaluation plan at the end of the design incubator period, and participate in a one hour de-brief with the evaluation lead.
3. Pilot their activity over a 12-month period following the completion of the design phase.
4. Participate in a 6 month check in with Our Watch Evaluation Lead.
5. Submit a final evaluation report to Our Watch in an agreed format.
6. Participate in a face-to-face learning event following completion of the evaluation (note: costs for this event including travel are covered by the Lab, separate to the individual grants).

**Evaluation overview**

Successful applicants will determine what data collection and analysis methods are most appropriate and useful to evaluate their project, and will deliver their own evaluations.

Some grantees may choose to engage an external evaluator for their activity. If so, this should be included in the evaluation budget and is included (not in addition to), the 20% of overall budget allocation (up to $40,000).

After all evaluations have been completed, the Lab will host a **learning event/forum**, which will be an opportunity for grantees to connect and share their evaluation findings with one another.

## Budget information

The budget available for each project is up to $200,000. This includes up to $40,000 for the design incubator phase (3 months) and up to $120,000 for the pilot phase, inclusive of staffing costs. Applicants should set aside 20% of their total project costs for evaluation (i.e. $40,000 if applicants budget for $200,000 total project costs).

Applicants should provide an indicative budget using the format set out in the application form as a guide. Amounts should be stated exclusive of GST. The price is all-inclusive and covers expenses, unless otherwise stated.

Please see below for figures showing budget phases and an example budget table for this grant opportunity.

**Figure #1 Budget phases**

**Evaluation**

(up to $40,000)

**Design incubator 3 months**

Human Centred project design

(late Jan-April 2026)

**Program delivery 12 months**

(From May 2026)

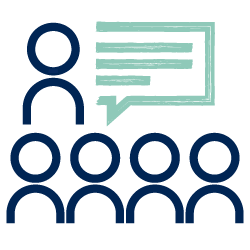
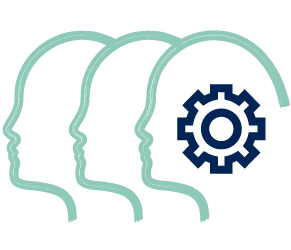
**Evaluation report**

(3 months)

**Pilot**

(up to $120,00)

**Seed funding (**up to a maximum of $40,000)

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| **Figure # 2 Example budget template** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item number** | **Item description** | **Rate ($)** | **Number of items or Time estimate** | **Subtotal excl. GST** |
| Design incubator phase – 3 months (up to $40,000) | | | | |
|  | E.g. Project Coordinator, for the incubator phase | $ per hour or flat rate |  | $ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Pilot phase – 12 months (up to $120,000) | | | | |
|  | E.g. Project Coordinator, for the pilot phase |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluation costs (up to 20% of total costs i.e. up to $40,000) | | | | |
|  | E.g. Evaluator | $ per hour or flat rate |  |  |
| **Total price for proposal (excl GST)** | | | | $ |

# Part C: Challenge terms and conditions

1. Our Watch may amend this challenge at any time before the Closing Date.
2. Our Watch, acting in good faith, may stop or pause this challenge process, decline to accept a response, or decline to award a grant under this challenge round.
3. At any time before execution of the grant agreement, Our Watch may seek information from, and enter discussions with, any Potential Grantees in relation to their responses. But Our Watch will not allow any Potential Grantee to substantially tailor or amend their response.
4. No agreement will be formed until executed by Our Watch.
5. The successful grantee will:
   1. Ensure that all persons engaged to work on the project obtain and maintain relevant licences, insurances, registrations or approvals required by applicable laws, or as directed by Our Watch.
   2. Work with Our Watch to apply relevant ethical principles and procedures.

Assessment of applications

1. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.
2. Our Watch will assess the extent to which the application meets the challenge requirements and will determine the best value outcome for Our Watch.
3. Our Watch will notify all Applicants of the final decision.

Use of information and confidentiality

1. Our Watch may publicly disclose the Grantee’s name and other details about the challenge fund grant, including grant value.
2. Potential Grantees acknowledge that Our Watch has reporting and transparency requirements, including responsibilities to its funders, and company members (“reporting requirements”). Our Watch may disclose information to its funders or company members, where this is reasonably necessary.
3. Potential Grantees must identify any of their information they consider confidential or sensitive. Our Watch will treat information as confidential, subject to any laws and Our Watch’s reporting requirements.

Conflict of interest & proper conduct

1. Potential Grantees must notify Our Watch immediately if an actual or perceived conflict of interest arises.
2. Potential Grantees and their officers, employees, agents and advisors must not engage in fraudulent, anti-competitive, or similar improper conduct, in connection with this challenge.
3. Our Watch is required to note that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is an offence (Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)).

1. ‘Fundamental innovation’ refers to extremely novel approaches, including those that leverage unanticipated resources or partnerships. See further, UN Women Practice Brief: Innovation and Prevention of Violence Against Women (2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)