

Guidance Note 3

Grants and COVID-19

April 2020

Energy Consumers Australia funds both advocacy and research projects within its Grants Program. We have published this Guidance Note to assist organisations to manage projects funded by ECA grants.

CURRENT GRANTS AND WHAT TO DO

As we all know, we are operating now in an environment that is changing quickly. Like everyone else in the community confronting the challenge of COVID-19, Energy Consumers Australia is changing the way we work.

Our first concern is that everyone looks to their health and safety as well as that of their families and co-workers. The Grants team at Energy Consumers Australia has reached out to everyone with funding for a current project from our Grants Program.

Funding agreements for ECA grants have timelines and deliverables as well as obligations such as to engage with key stakeholders. However, organisations will be taking decisions (such as asking staff to work from home or restricting travel) that impact on these projects. And we know that stakeholders and project partners are similarly affected.

That means that the timing of a grant project, or at least some of the key activities, may have to be revised or even delayed. The Grants team wants to be as supportive as we can in the current circumstances and is happy to discuss where grant recipients may need to adapt a project plan to achieve their goals.

We have asked everyone with a current grant from ECA to review their project, to see where they might need – or anticipate needing - changes to key milestones or deliverables. We have suggested that this review should look at deliverables for the next six months at least.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Grants team at ECA is working off-site and adapting our internal processes accordingly. This does not require anyone with grant funding to change what you do or how you interact with us.

However, it will assist everyone if grants recipients can make every effort to meet their timelines for submitting invoices or documentation to us. Or, alternately, please alert the Grants team as soon as possible where you will need to change those dates.

ECA is also considering how we best support you and your work, and so maintain a strong consumer voice, in the next few months, given our traditional ways of advocacy have been disrupted, and might be for some time. We'd welcome any suggestions you have on that front – those and any questions about your grant are best directed to Jim Wellsmore, at jim.wellsmore@energyconsumersaustralia.com.au

Take care of yourselves and your families, and thanks in advance.