In partnership with

Innovative Solutions Support

Application Guide

Information for Services

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Definitions and Acronyms

Coaching	Coaching describes direct "on-the-floor" support whereby the coach provides practical guidance to help educators to implement new practices. Coaching can occur at an individual or team level depending on the nature of the strategies to be implemented. Coaching may also involve "off-the-floor" reflection about what happened during a coaching session.
IA	Inclusion Agency
IDF	Inclusion Development Fund
IDFM	Inclusion Development Fund Manager
IP	Inclusion Professional
ISP	Inclusion Support Program
Mentoring	Mentoring describes advice, support and guidance that is provided. in an "off-the-floor" capacity. A mentoring session may provide an opportunity for an educator/s to debrief or reflect on a specific experience and seek advice from the mentor. Mentoring sessions may also provide opportunities for broader reflection and discussion about the progress and future direction of a project.
NQS	National Quality Standards
Support Provider	An individual or organisation with relevant skills and qualifications who is engaged to provide support to a service through an Innovative Solutions Support project.
Service	An Early Childhood Education and Care Service that is eligible to receive IDF support. Includes centre based early childhood services, family day care and outside school hours care services.
SIP	Strategic Inclusion Plan
The Department	The Australian Government Department of Education (which has responsibility for the Inclusion Support Program)

What is Innovative Solutions Support?

Innovative Solutions Support is one stream of funding available to eligible early childhood education and care services through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF). It provides funding for flexible and tailored inclusion support that goes beyond the scope of Inclusion Agencies to provide.

Unlike the other IDF funding streams (Additional Educator, Immediate/Time Limited and Family Day Care Top Up), Innovative Solutions Support projects do not provide support in the form of an additional educator (or, in the case of Family Day Care Top Up, a top up payment). Innovative Solutions Support enables services to implement other solutions to their barriers to inclusion and develop a service's capacity and capability to include children with additional needs.

While there is no national definition of "additional needs", for the purposes of Innovative Solutions Support, additional needs may arise for children who:

- have a disability or developmental delay
- are presenting with challenging behaviour
- have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health
- are presenting with trauma-related behaviours.

Meeting the needs and requirements of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children from refugee or humanitarian backgrounds

may also require specific considerations, such as cultural support, to ensure that these children are able to participate fully in ECEC services and experience positive outcomes.

Innovative Solutions Support Projects are individualised and are developed on a case-by-case basis in response to the specific inclusion barriers identified by a service.

Projects typically involve the engagement of an external support provider who has relevant skills, experience and qualifications in relation to the identified inclusion barriers and is able to support the development of the service's inclusion capacity.

Innovative Solutions Support projects typically fall into 4 broad project types:

- Bilingual Support
- Cultural Mentoring
- Specialised Training and Advice
- Guided Practice.

Other projects that do not fit within one of these categories can be applied for as Unique Projects. The Project Guide section of this application guide provides further details about the types of projects that can be considered for funding.

Services, in collaboration with their IP, should determine the most suitable project type to address their identified barriers to inclusion.

Examples of approved purposes for Innovative Solutions Support include:

- Cultural advice and mentoring from cultural experts, including specialist advice on how to include a particular child or children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentoring, cultural advice in respect to children and families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.
- Bilingual support, such as facilitating a non-English speaking child's enrolment and inclusion into the service or the provision of translating and interpreting services
- Collaboration with specialists to obtain specialist advice on how to include a child or children with a disability or additional needs, such as speech therapists.
- Networking and community engagement such as visits to other ECEC services to experience quality inclusive practices or hosting networking meetings focused on inclusion of children with additional needs with other services.
- Specialised inclusion training essential to a child's inclusion. That is, the child could not attend the service without educators having this specific knowledge and skill. For example, training required to include a child with a medical condition.

Innovative Solutions Support **cannot** be approved for projects that:

- Do not demonstrate how they will result in the genuine inclusion of child/ren with additional needs or improve the inclusion capacity of the service and educators.
- Provide one-to-one support for a child/ren. Innovative Solutions Support projects should focus on a team approach to supporting inclusion.
- Provide a therapeutic or medical intervention for a specific child or group of children.
- Provide assistance to access other services, such as one-to-one early intervention or therapy sessions.
- Include the purchase of specialist equipment or resources. Any resources included in a project budget should be essential to the implementation of the project and form a minor part of the overall cost of the project (i.e.: less than 10% of the total amount of funding requested)
- Assist the service to meet licensing requirements (for more information about the use of Innovative Solutions Support to support services to meet the requirements of the NQS see the next section of this guide – Innovative Solutions Support and the NQS)
- Provide support that is the responsibility of a state or territory government, other Australian Government programs or other body, or that is more suitably funded through other programs. For example:
    - settlement services for migrants where alternative funding is available.
    - support that would be more appropriately funded through another IDF funding stream.

Innovative Solutions Support and the National Quality Standard (NQS)

Innovative Solutions Support cannot be used to meet licensing requirements outlined in the National Regulations (or relevant state or territory regulations). These are expected minimum standards for all early childhood education and care services, and it is the service's responsibility to ensure that they are met at all times.

Innovative Solutions Support is intended to support the development of services' inclusion capacity. This may involve support that assists a service to meet the requirements of the National Quality Standard that are above the minimum standards required by the Regulations.

However, Innovative Solutions Support cannot be used for support that does not have an explicit and primary focus on inclusion. **Applications for support that aim to meet the requirements of the NQS but that do not have a primary focus on inclusion will not be approved.** This includes applications that aim to support the development of high-quality practice, and may have an incidental impact on inclusion, but that do not directly relate to the inclusion of a child or cohort of children, and the development of the service or educator's capacity to be inclusive in relation to the service's identified inclusion barriers.

Applications should clearly identify how a proposed project will lead to improved inclusion outcomes for children and improved inclusion capacity for educators and show that these outcomes are the primary aim of the project.

The Inclusion Professional's Role

Inclusion Professionals (IPs) play a vital role in supporting services to access and implement Innovative Solutions Support and successful Innovative Solutions projects typically involve close collaboration between a service, their IP and the chosen support provider for a project.

IPs are able to provide information about Innovative Solutions Support and to help services to identify barriers to inclusion. They also work with services to identify potential solutions and outcomes to these barriers and to help them articulate and document what they plan to do.

IPs play an important role in helping services to identify and work with potential support providers and in liaising with the IDFM when required.

IPs are also required to provide an endorsement of each application before it is submitted to the IDFM for assessment.

Applying for Innovative Solutions Support

Applications for Innovative Solutions Support can be made at any time.

Applications can be for an individual service (or a specific care environment within the service) or a group of services (for more information on Group Applications see below).

In order to access Innovative Solutions Support it is expected that a service will have an up to date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers. However, in the case of urgent applications for Bilingual Support or Specialised Training and Advice, this is not a requirement. In such cases it is expected that, after the assessment and outcome of the application, the service will then develop a SIP. Where an urgent application has been

approved without a SIP, any subsequent applications will not be considered until the service has developed their SIP.

Before beginning an application, services should discuss with their Inclusion Professional (IP) whether Innovative Solutions Support is the most appropriate option for their circumstances.

If it is, they should work with their IP to develop a project plan based on the information provided in this Application Guide.

Applications must be made through the Inclusion Support Portal using the relevant application form and will be assessed by the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM).

After an application has been submitted by the service it goes to the service's IP for endorsement before being forwarded to the IDFM.

For more information on the endorsement process for applications see the "Endorsement Process" section of this guide.

Is there a limit on Innovative Solutions Support funding or the number of times a service can apply?

There is no specified limit for the amount of funding for an Innovative Solutions Support application. However, applications for more than $10,000 require additional Department approval after they have been assessed by the IDFM.

There is no limit on the number of applications a service can make, or the number of times funding can be approved. However, as the annual IDF funding allocation is capped, if demand for funding exceeds what is available, funding will be prioritized to support children with a diagnosed disability and children awaiting a disability diagnosis. In this situation the IDFM will also prioritise funding to services that have not accessed Innovative Solutions Support before.

Subsequent Applications

While there is no limit to the number of times a service can apply for Innovative Solutions Support the following considerations should be taken into account when submitting subsequent applications.

The aim of Innovative Solutions Support is to increase the capacity of services and educators to be inclusive, both during the course of a project and into the future once a project has been completed. Innovative Solutions projects should therefore be carefully designed to provide ongoing solutions to a service's identified inclusion barriers. The intention is that Innovative Solutions projects will develop service/educator capacity to a point where educators are able to successfully implement new strategies and approaches independently at the conclusion of the project.

Accordingly, there is a strong focus within the assessment criteria for Innovative Solutions applications on the likely success of a project. i.e.: to be approved a project must demonstrate that its outcomes can be realistically achieved and that the project design will lead to a lasting enhancement to a service's inclusion capacity.

For this reason, **subsequent applications that propose to repeat the same project in the same service, or that address the same inclusion barriers as a previous project, will generally not be approved.**

NB: The exception to this is in relation to Bilingual Support and Specialised Training and Advice. For more information regarding applications for these project types see the relevant Project Guides.

Subsequent applications should either address new or different barriers to those identified in previous applications, or they should demonstrate how the subsequent project will build on the outcomes of the previous project to enable further capacity building.

Where further capacity building is the aim, the subsequent application should clearly state how inclusion capacity has improved as a result of the previous project, and how the subsequent project aims to build on the skills and knowledge that educators developed through the previous project. It must also clearly identify what inclusion barriers the new project will address. If the identified barriers are the same as those from the previous project, then the application must show why the new project is necessary and how the new project will lead to further capacity building in relation to the barriers, beyond what was achieved in the previous project.

When assessing subsequent applications, the IDFM will consider previous applications and the outcomes of previously approved projects in order to help determine the need for the proposed project, the service's capacity to implement the project, and its likely outcomes.

What is the timeframe for assessing applications for Innovative Solutions Support?

Applications are typically processed by the IDFM within 15 business days of being submitted.

Where an application is "urgent" the service's IP can identify it as such when providing their endorsement. If the reason for the urgency is in line with current department advice the IDFM will assess the application and the service will be notified of the outcome within 5 days.

NB: Applications should only be marked as "urgent" where a child's enrolment or continued attendance is dependent on the ability of the service to access Innovative Solutions Support. This is most often the case in relation to Bilingual Support or Specialised Training and Advice.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment of Innovative Solutions Support applications is based on the information provided in the application form and the IP's endorsement.

Assessment takes into consideration quality, risk and value for money, and the extent that the proposed project:

- leads to the genuine inclusion of a child or children with additional needs:
- leads to enhanced inclusion capacity and capability of the service and educators;
- can be realistically implemented;
- can be delivered within the current capacity of service; and
- cannot be provided by alternative or more appropriate funding sources.

Further information about Assessment Criteria can be found in Section 9 of the Inclusion Support Program Guidelines.

Group Applications

A group application is where a number of services who have identified the same, or similar, inclusion barriers work together to develop a joint project application that will lead to the genuine inclusion of children with additional needs across multiple services.

A group application must nominate one service as the "lead" for the project and this service will be responsible for submitting the application and administering the project. This includes taking responsibility for complying with the Conditions of Funding and ensuring other services in the group understand their obligations as per the Conditions of Funding.

When submitting a group application complete the separate Group Application Details form (in addition to the application form) to provide the names, SIP and CCS IDs of all the services involved in the project. You will also be asked to provide a rationale for the group project, explaining how it will lead to better inclusion outcomes for all the services involved. The IDFM will consider this, along with the cost effectiveness of the group project, when assessing the application.

Endorsement of group applications is undertaken by the IP for the lead service; however, this must only be done after consultation with any other IPs for the other participating services.

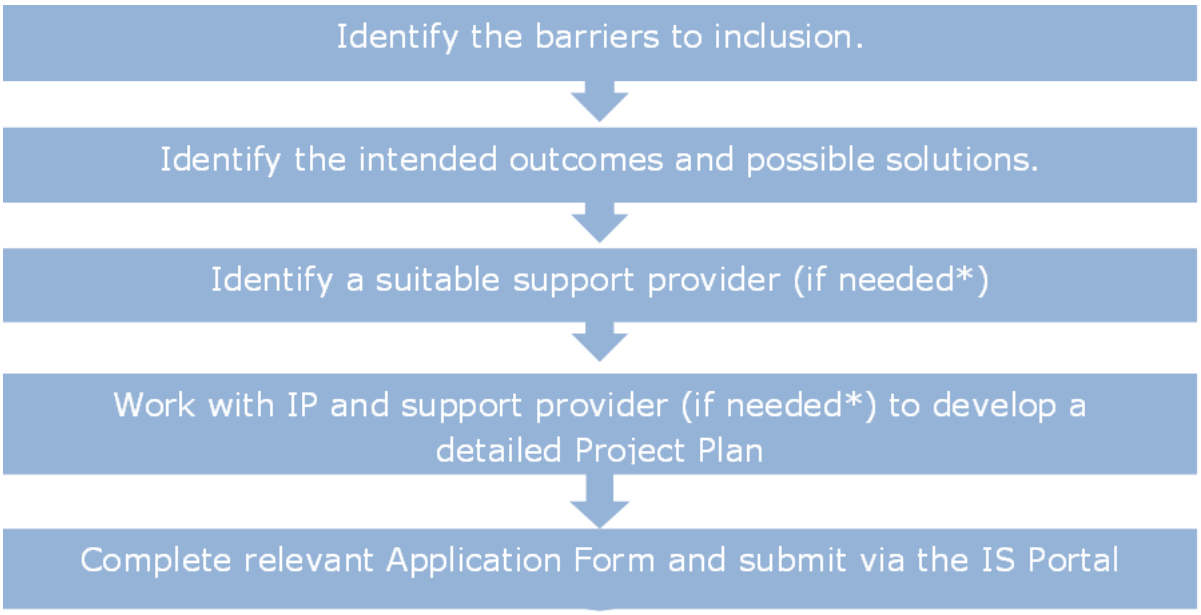
Where services are cross-jurisdictional (i.e.: where services in a group application are located in different states or territories) then this consultation must be conducted with all the relevant Inclusion Agencies from the different jurisdictions.

Developing an Innovative Solutions Support Project

Innovative Solutions Support projects are most effective when the relevant barriers to inclusion are clearly identified and the proposed solutions and outcomes are clearly aligned to, and flow from, these barriers.

When solutions are not clearly aligned to identified barriers, or when outcomes are not clear, projects are less effective.

When designing an Innovative Solutions Support Project services are supported by their Inclusion Professional, as needed. The following process outlines the steps that are taken, in collaboration, to support the development of a project and to apply for Innovative Solutions Support.



*NB: while most applications will involve a support provider, some (such as those that aim to support networking between services in relation to a particular barrier) may not.

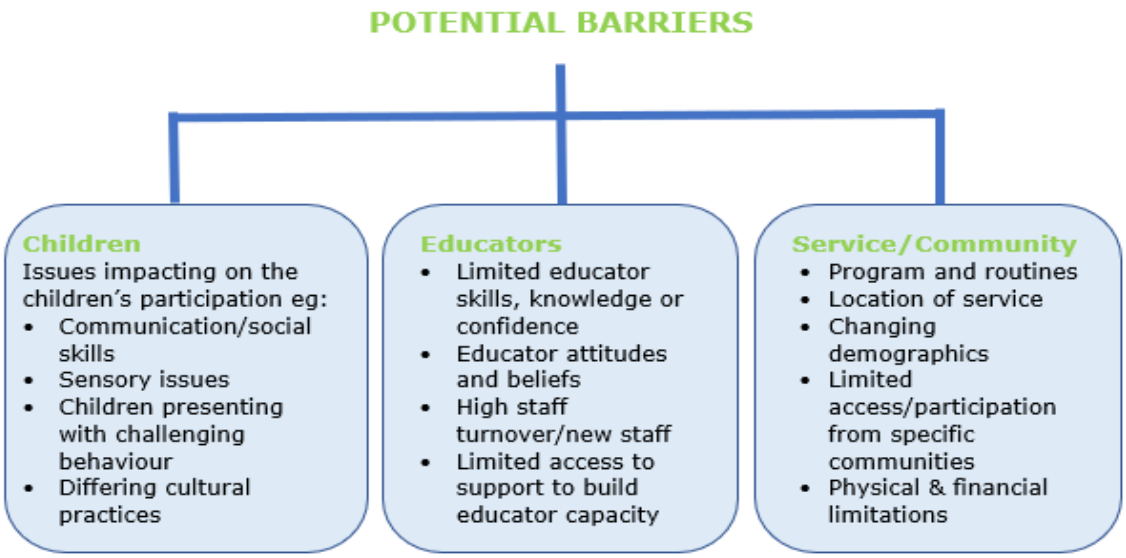
Identifying Barriers

The first step in developing an Innovative Solutions Support project is therefore the identification of the barriers to inclusion at a service. By identifying barriers and the impact that they are having on children and educators the service is better able to plan appropriate solutions that have a realistic chance of success and will lead to the genuine inclusion of children with additional needs and the development of educator capacity.

The identification of barriers benefits from a reflective and honest assessment of the service's current capacity and circumstances. This can be undertaken by educators at the service, supported by the service's IP. Consider what is occurring that concerns you about children's level of participation in the program and/or their interactions with peers and why you think this is happening.

It is important to remember that there are likely to be multiple barriers to inclusion and these will not only be related to the children at the service.

Barriers can be related to children, educators and/or the service and broader community, as indicated in the following diagram:



Developing Outcomes and Solutions

Once you have identified the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs consider what specific changes or improvements you would like to see in order to address them. These changes and improvements are your outcomes.

Be realistic in terms of what can be achieved. Targeted projects that focus on a small number of related barriers tend to be more effective than those that try to achieve everything. If you have identified a number of barriers to inclusion, consider which are most urgent to address and/or which are able to be realistically addressed via an Innovative Solutions project. Your IP will be able to help you to determine which barriers are most amenable to Innovative Solutions Support.

Next think about what actions you can take to achieve your outcomes. These actions will be the solution that will make up your project. Talk to your IP about what strategies would be most effective and what project type (see diagram on pg. 16) might be the best way to address the identified barriers. Consider the information in the Project Guides section of this document, to help determine what solutions will be most appropriate for your service.

If you require outside assistance, or expertise, consider who you could use as a support provider for your project. Talk to your IP and use the following questions to help identify an appropriate support provider.

Finding a Support Provider

Identify the skills and/or expertise you are looking for in a support provider.

Talk to your IP about who might be suitable. Also consider asking for recommendations through your own professional networks or by searching online.

You may consider more than one support provider in order to compare what support they can provide and decide who will be the best fit for your project.

- Once you have a support provider/s in mind consider what you know about them:
    - What is their experience with the barriers you have identified?

  - Do they have experience working on similar projects?
  - What are their values, philosophy, or approach?
  - How do these fit with your own?
- Do they come with a recommendation from a trustworthy source and/or can they provide references or testimonials?
- Do they have an ABN? In most cases this is required, although there are a limited number of exceptions. Contact the IDFM for more information about this.
- What is their experience with and/or understanding of Innovative Solutions Support? Sharing this guide with a potential support provider who is new to Innovative Solutions Support will help them to understand their role more clearly.
- Are they able to offer the support that you are looking for? Are they willing to be flexible and tailor their services to ensure that the project achieves its outcomes?
- How much do their services cost and does this provide value for money? To help determine this consider the Price Guide at the end of this document. If there are a number of potential support providers, consider asking for quotes in order to compare costs and the services that each support provider is able to deliver.
- Consider the availability of potential support providers and any associated costs with them working with your service (such as travel and accommodation). Refer to the Price Guide for an overview of reasonable costs in relation to this.

NB: In your application for Innovative Solutions Support you will be asked to explain why you have chosen your support provider.

Designing the Project

Together with your IP and the identified support provider develop a detailed project plan to show what will happen, who will be doing what, and when and how it will be implemented.

The plan should show each of the project sessions or actions.

It should also show the number of hours of support and the type/s of support that will be included in each project session, and for the project as a whole.

See below for a sample project plan showing how this information could be presented.

Your support provider's quote must match the project plan. For more information about quotes see the Information for Support Providers section of this guide.

You will need to submit the project plan and support provider quote with your application. For short term projects the project plan information can be included on the application form. For longer or more complex projects it should be attached as a separate document.

Considering Sustainability

One of the aims of Innovative Solutions Support is to develop ongoing inclusion capacity. In planning your project think about how the outcomes can be sustained once the project is completed.

Consider:

- How will the project support educators to implement new approaches independently and avoid them becoming dependent on the support provider for long term support and guidance?
- How will new ideas and approaches become embedded in-service practice?
- How will improved inclusion outcomes for children continue once the project is completed?
- How will the knowledge and skills gained from the project be passed onto new educators in the future?

Example Guided Practice Project Plan

Service Name	Example service
Name of service contact person	Jo Smith
Case ID	XXXXXXXX
Project Type	**Guided Practice**
Name of Inclusion Professional	Example IP

Project Component	**When**	**Who**	**What**
Use this column to describe each of the specific components of the overall project. Where multiple components occur on the same day it is helpful to break them up into the specific support types that will occur (eg: Professional Development, Coaching, Mentoring etc)	*Use this column to outline when the component will occur.* • *If known, provide dates; if specific dates are yet to be confirmed use weeks (or other description) to identify when during the project the component will occur.* • *Include the duration of the component. If known, give specific times. If specific times not known, give number of hours.*	*Use this column to identify who will participate in each component of the project (include the number of educators for each)*	*Use this column to outline what will happen in the specific project component. For PD sessions provide a brief overview of content.*
PD Session 1	Week 1 6-8pm	All staff (10)	PD session: Introduction to guiding children's behaviour, including strategies for educators to begin implementing
Coaching Session	Week 2 9am – 12pm	Koala Room educators (4)	On-the-floor coaching session to support Koala Room educators to implement strategies from PD Session 1

Coaching Session	Week 2 1pm – 4pm	Wombat Room educators (5)	On-the-floor coaching session to support Wombat Room educators to implement strategies from PD Session 1
Mentoring Session	Week 2 4-6 pm	Leadership Team (3)	Mentoring session with Director and Room Leaders to discuss follow up from coaching sessions
Team Meeting/Mentoring Session	Week 2 6-8 pm	All staff (10)	Team meeting/mentoring session to reflect on coaching sessions and plan follow up actions
Continue to outline all components of the project	*Continue to outline for all components of the project*	*Continue to outline for all components of the project*	*Continue to outline for all components of the project*

Summary *Include a summary of all support hours in the project, broken down by Project Component*	**Project Component**	**Number of sessions/hours per session**	**Total hours**
	List each type of Project Component that is included in the Project Plan above	*Tally the total number of sessions and length of each session for each*	*Tally the total number of hours for each*
	Eg: Professional Development	Eg: 1 session at 2 hours	*Eg: 2 hours*
	Continue for each Project Component	*Continue for each Project Component*	*Continue for each Project Component*

Project Types

Innovative Solutions Support projects typically fall into 4 broad project types – Bilingual Support, Cultural Mentoring, Specialised Training and Advice and Guided Practice. Other projects that do not fit within one of these categories can be applied for as Unique Projects. These project types are outlined briefly below and in more detail in the next section of this guide. Services, in collaboration with their IP, should determine the most suitable project type to address their identified barriers to inclusion.

The Project and Application Guides will then help to support a service to apply for the relevant support.

Bilingual Support	Cultural Mentoring	Specialised Training and Advice	Guided Practice	Unique Projects
Bilingual Support projects provide access to a bilingual facilitator and /or translating and interpreting services, to support the inclusion of children where language differences present a barrier to inclusion.	Cultural Mentoring projects provide services with cultural advice and mentoring in order to support the inclusion of children and families from specific cultural backgrounds. Cultural Mentoring support can be accessed in relation to all cultures, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures.	Specialised Training and Advice projects provide training and/or advice to support educators to meet the specific needs of children with a disability or medical condition.	Guided Practice projects typically engage an external support provider with expertise in relation to the particular barriers being faced by a service. The support provider works with the service over a period of time to provide tailored professional development and coaching and mentoring of educators to enable them to effectively implement new approaches.	Unique Projects include new or unique approaches to inclusion support that do not fit within any of the other existing support categories, or that combine elements from several different project types. Unique Projects are usually highly specific to the context of the service/s involved.

Project Guide – Bilingual Support

What is Bilingual Support?

Bilingual Support provides language support for children and/or families who do not speak English fluently. This is usually done through the provision of a Bilingual Facilitator who can speak the child's first language and assist educators to communicate with the child and their family. Bilingual Support can also include access to interpreter services and translation of written documents to support communication with a child's family. In most cases Bilingual Support is a short-term form of support while a child settles into a new early childhood setting.

What does a Bilingual Facilitator do?

A Bilingual Facilitator typically works directly with the child and their educators to interpret and to provide security and comfort during the child's transition into the service. They can also help educators to communicate with the child's family members and facilitate information sharing between the service and the family.

In addition to this language support, Bilingual Facilitators also provide insight into the child's culture for educators. This is often done in an informal way as the facilitator and educators work alongside each other.

When is Bilingual Support needed?

Bilingual Support is needed when language differences create a barrier to inclusion. This could be because a child becomes distressed or withdrawn because of their inability to communicate effectively with their peers and educators or because educators are unable to communicate with the child's family members in order to share important information.

Bilingual Support will not be needed in all cases where there are language differences. There may be another educator or family member who can act as an interpreter, or a child may settle happily despite the language difference.

It is important to explain in an application how language and/or communication barriers are impacting on the child and/or their family and how Bilingual Support will help to address this.

Bilingual Support and the Strategic Inclusion Plan

In general, it is expected that a service will have an up to date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers, in order to apply for Innovative Solutions Support.

However, in the case of urgent applications for Bilingual Support this is not a requirement. In such cases it is expected that, after the assessment and outcome of the application, the service will then develop a SIP. Where an urgent application has been approved without a SIP, any subsequent applications will not be considered until the service has developed their SIP.

How much support is needed?

Bilingual Support is usually short term, typically lasting between 6-12 weeks and providing up to 100 hours of support. However, each application will be different, reflecting the unique circumstances of each child, family and service. In determining the duration, frequency and intensity of support needed you should consider the following factors:

A. **Who is the support for?**
   Is the support primarily needed to support a child? Or is it also about supporting other family members? If communication with family members is important, then the Bilingual Facilitator may need to be available at pick up and drop off times as well as throughout the day. If the support is more focused on the child, then the support hours may be focused on key parts of the day.

B. **Attendance patterns**
   How often a child attends will often make a difference to how quickly they settle into a service. A child who attends full time may need more intensive support initially but will usually settle more quickly than a child who only attends one or two days a week. For example, support for a child attending full time may be needed more intensively but for a shorter number of weeks; for a child attending one day per week the support would only be needed one day per week but potentially for a greater number of weeks.

C. **Other barriers**
   Where other barriers to inclusion are present additional levels of support may be required. For example, children and families who are refugees may face language barriers but also be impacted by the trauma of their experience. It may take longer to build a trusting relationship with the child and family in such circumstances and so Bilingual Support may be needed for a longer period of time than usual.

Applications for Bilingual Support for longer than 12 weeks, or for more than 100 hours of support, will need to provide a rationale for this level of support.

What happens when Bilingual Support ends?

Bilingual Support aims to create a smooth transition into a service for children and families. In most cases this can be achieved in the time frames mentioned above. However, because of the short-term nature of bilingual support, it is important that the service and support educator work together to ensure that the child and family do not become overly dependent on the Bilingual Facilitator's presence and that there is a transition plan to ensure that the support can be successfully removed at the end of the funded period.

This transition plan should be developed by the service, bilingual facilitator/ agency and the service's Inclusion Professional. IPs will be asked to confirm that there is an appropriate transition plan in place when they provide their endorsement for the project application.

For examples of the kind of strategies a transition plan might include see below.

In exceptional circumstances, the service and educators may require further support to facilitate the child's inclusion after the initial period of Bilingual Support ends. This could be because the situation

is a challenging one with multiple barriers to the child and/or family's inclusion or because the child's transition into the service has not happened as quickly as was expected.

In such cases, the service, IP and Bilingual Support provider should discuss what support will be needed once Bilingual Support ends. If the service is unable to meet these needs themselves then they may consider applying for further support. This could be in the form of Additional Educator or Immediate Time Limited Support if there is a need for ongoing short- or long-term support from an additional educator. Alternatively, it could be further Bilingual Support. In such cases the service will need to reapply for Bilingual Support and provide details in response to Question 10 on the application form about why a further period of support is needed. In order to ensure continuity of support the service (and IP) should mark such applications as urgent and endeavor to submit them at least 2 weeks before the end of the initial support period.

Please note that additional funding for further Bilingual Support will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and where there is clear evidence that it is required. It is expected that most Bilingual Support projects will be successful within the initial funded period.

Sustainability of Bilingual Support

One focus of Innovative Solutions Support is enhancing the inclusion capacity of educators so that inclusive practices can be sustained after a project ends.

However, for Bilingual Support this is challenging as it is not reasonable to expect educators to learn to speak another language in 6-12 weeks. While educators will pick up key words and phrases during this time it is highly unlikely that they will be able to communicate fluently with children or family members in their home language. Services should provide opportunities for educators to reflect on and share any insights that they have gained as a result of working with the Bilingual Facilitator, and plan for how this information can be shared and/or utilized in the future, however additional sustainability strategies are not required for Bilingual Support applications.

For other forms of Innovative Solutions Support, projects are usually seen as "one offs" and it is expected that at the conclusion of a project new knowledge and practices will be embedded into service operations. Repeat applications for the same or similar projects are therefore unlikely to be approved.

However, for the reasons outlined above, subsequent applications for Bilingual Support *for different children* facing the same language barriers will be considered, as will additional applications for the same child/ren in exceptional circumstances.

What if more support is needed to work with children and families from particular cultural backgrounds?

Bilingual Support is usually focused on supporting specific children and their families to transition into a service. Where a service identifies a broader lack of cultural understanding amongst educators as a barrier to inclusion, they may seek to access Cultural Mentoring Support to improve educators' awareness and understanding of a particular culture.

Cultural Mentoring is different to Bilingual Support in that it aims to develop educators' cultural responsiveness in a more formal way, for example, through organized professional development

sessions or team meetings. It has a focus on building staff understanding and knowledge rather than on directly supporting an individual child and their family.

Sometimes a service may identify that they need both Bilingual and Cultural Mentoring Support. In these cases, they should use the Cultural Mentoring Support application form and check yes when asked if their project will also contain Bilingual Support.

If a service is unsure whether their application is for Bilingual or Cultural Mentoring Support, they should speak to their Inclusion Professional for guidance.

Bilingual Support Transition Plan

Sample Strategies

When implementing Bilingual Support, services should develop a Transition Plan to ensure a smooth transition when that support ends and to avoid creating dependence on the Bilingual Facilitator. The following strategies may be useful to consider when developing a Bilingual Support Transition Plan.

- **Taper Support Over Time**

Consider gradually decreasing the level of Bilingual Support over time. Support may commence at a more intensive level for the first weeks of a project before tapering off. This helps to gradually reduce reliance on the Bilingual Facilitator over the course of the project and also enables educators to further develop their own relationships with the child/ren as the Bilingual Facilitators involvement reduces.

- **Identify a Secondary Attachment Figure**

Identify a key educator to work closely with the Bilingual Facilitator and the child/ren. While the child/ren may initially (and understandably) develop a close bond with the Bilingual Facilitator (due to their shared language and culture) the involvement of the key educator will enable that bond to be transferred over time. For the child/ren the association of the key educator with the Bilingual Facilitator helps to build a sense of trust and over time allows the educator to build a stronger bond with the child as the Bilingual Facilitator's involvement decreases.

- **Build Peer Relationships**

Plan for the Bilingual Facilitator to support the team of educators to build peer to peer relationships. The Bilingual Facilitator can help the child to successfully engage in experiences with others and begin to build peer relationships. Such relationships are often the key to a child's successful transition into a new environment. Having friends to play with reduces anxiety and distress and also helps to reduce dependence on adults for a sense of security. The sense of belonging that comes from being an accepted member of the group is valuable in its own right but also reduces the likelihood of long-term dependence on the Bilingual Facilitator.

- **Establish a Routine**

A calm and predictable routine helps to provide a sense of security for all children. This is particularly important for children requiring Bilingual Support. A predictable routine allows children to predict what will happen next and to feel a greater sense of control over their day. This is particularly helpful when they do not yet have the English language skills to understand verbal cues or directions. Familiar routines and rituals (such as looking at a book with a parent before they leave or waving goodbye from a particular

spot each day) can also help to minimise distress at drop off time. Once children are familiar with the routine the Bilingual Facilitator can take a reduced role in helping to guide them through the day.

- **Introduce Visual Cues**

Visual cues are an effective way to support the establishment of a predictable routine. They are particularly helpful while children are developing their English language skills. The Bilingual Facilitator and educators can develop visual cues for key parts of the day (if they are not already in use) and support the child/ren to understand what they mean. Again, as understanding develops, the Bilingual Facilitator can reduce their direct involvement in supporting the child's participation and allow educators to do this with the aid of the visual cues.

Application Guide – Bilingual Support

Barriers, Solutions and Outcomes

What cohort of children with additional needs does this application aim to support?

Innovative Solutions Support is available to assist educators to include children with additional needs from specific cohorts. These cohorts are explained in more detail on p.8 of the ISP Guidelines. Use the check boxes to indicate the primary cohort that your application aims to support. If a child belongs to multiple cohorts, select the cohort that the support will address most directly. Note any other cohorts in the comment box.

What are the barriers to inclusion that this project will address?

Outline the barriers to inclusion for the child/ren who require bilingual support that this project seeks to address here. These should align with the barriers to inclusion identified in your SIP and may include child-related, educator-related and/or service and community related barriers. See the Bilingual Support Project Guide for further information about relevant barriers for this project type.

What is the impact of these barriers for children and educators?

Briefly describe how these barriers are impacting on the child/ren that this project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and on educators' ability to be inclusive. Your response to this question should demonstrate the need for the support you are applying for.

What have you already done to try to address these barriers?

Briefly list other actions you have taken to address these barriers, outlining the results of these actions and why further support is now needed.

How will Bilingual Support help to address these barriers?

Briefly explain how Bilingual Support will address the barriers you have identified above. Your response to this question should help to show why Bilingual Support is the best option to address your identified barriers.

If you are applying for a Bilingual Facilitator, briefly outline what the facilitator will do in their role.

What are the intended outcomes of the project?

Describe the outcomes that you aim to achieve through this project ie: outline what will change as a result of implementing this project.

These outcomes should be specific to your service and the barriers that you have identified but must also align with the overall goals of the Inclusion Support Program ie: they should show how the project will lead to the genuine inclusion of child/ren with additional needs.

In relation to children, what will the project achieve in terms of increased participation in the program and interaction with peers?

In relation to educators, what new skills, knowledge and information will educators gain? How will educators/the service become more inclusive as a result of the project?

Details of the Project

Who is the Support Provider for this project?

For Bilingual Support provide the name of the company or agency who will provide the Bilingual Facilitator to your service. If the Bilingual Facilitator is self-employed provide their details here.

Why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability of the service, support provider experience and/or expertise.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications regarding the provision of bilingual support?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

What is the attendance pattern of the child/ren who will access Bilingual Support?

Indicate here which days the child/ren for whom you are applying for support attend or will attend your service. This will help to determine what level of support is required.

Other/additional information re: attendance pattern

If the child/ren's attendance pattern is unusual in any way (ie they do not attend for a full day, they are attending reduced hours/days during an orientation period; their days of attendance are variable) use this box to provide this information.

What level of support are you applying for?

Answer the following questions to show the level of support that you are applying for. If the pattern of support is variable or too complex to explain here, attach a project plan showing what support will be provided over the course of the project.

- **Bilingual Facilitator**

  Duration, frequency and intensity of support

  - Number of weeks support will be provided for:
  - Days per week support is required:
  - Hours per day support is required:
  - Total hours of support requested:

- **Other Support** (e.g.: translation of written material, family meetings)

  Provide details:

  Outline any other components of the project here, including how many hours of support will be required for each.

If the project includes the supply or development of resources then provide a brief overview of what the resources are and why they are necessary for the implementation of the project.

If you are applying for more than 12 weeks and/or 100 hours of please provide a rationale for the additional support:

If you are applying for more than the typical level of support provide an explanation of why that is necessary here. This rationale should clearly relate to the barriers that you identified above and show why extended or additional levels of support are needed.

Application Attachments

- **Support Provider Quote** (required)

This is required. Support providers should consult the Information for Support Providers section of this Guide to ensure that their quote includes all necessary information.

- **Support Provider Information** (if not included above)

If you have not included information about the support provider's qualifications and experience above upload it to the IS Portal as an attachment

- **Project Plan** (if not included above)

If the support you are requesting was too complex to show above upload your project plan to the IS Portal as an attachment.

Project Guide - Cultural Mentoring

What is Cultural Mentoring?

Cultural Mentoring supports early childhood services to better understand and work with specific cultural groups in their community. It aims to increase the cultural responsiveness of educators and other staff and thereby facilitate greater inclusion for children, their families and communities. Cultural Mentoring can also support services to increase enrolments from specific cultural groups.

Cultural Mentoring can focus on any culture, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

What does a cultural mentor do?

A cultural mentor works with a service (or services) to develop their understanding of the specific cultural group that they are seeking to work with. This usually involves providing information, advice and guidance to educators as well as working alongside educators to support them to implement this knowledge into everyday practice.

The cultural mentor may support educators to plan and implement culturally appropriate learning experiences for children as well as supporting them to establish and develop stronger relationships with families and the local community.

Building a service's capacity to create connections with the local community is important to ensure the outcomes of the cultural mentoring project continue after the mentor leaves.

Who can be a cultural mentor?

Cultural Mentoring is provided by a mentor who understands, and has a connection to, the specific cultural group that the service is seeking to work with. The cultural mentor may be a member of the local community or someone else with the knowledge, skills and experience to undertake the role who is acceptable to the local community.

Mentors do not require formal qualifications, but applications for Cultural Mentoring support need to provide evidence that the proposed mentor is an appropriate person to undertake the role.

For projects that provide cultural mentoring in relation to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures the mentor must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

When is Cultural Mentoring needed?

Cultural Mentoring is needed when a service identifies that a lack of cultural understanding amongst educators is creating a barrier to inclusion. This may be in relation to a child or children who are already enrolled at the service, or children and families in the community who are not engaging with the service because of the identified lack of cultural understanding.

In order to demonstrate a need for Cultural Mentoring, services must show that the barriers identified are having an impact on the inclusion of children from the specific cultural group and that the proposed mentoring project will address these barriers.

Solutions should be specific (rather than general) and demonstrate a high likelihood of success in achieving the intended outcomes.

For example, if a service aims to increase enrolments from a specific community or cultural group, their project will need to demonstrate how they will reach out to and connect with this community in order to achieve this. Building educator knowledge and understanding of the particular cultural group will be an important part of such a project but on its own increased cultural awareness will not necessarily lead to an increase in enrolments. The service will need to show how they will use their increased awareness, and the mentor's support, to build concrete connections with the target community.

If a service aims to improve inclusion outcomes for a child or children who are already enrolled then they will need to show how the proposed project elements will do this.

Cultural Mentoring and the Strategic Inclusion Plan

In order to access Innovative Solutions Support it is expected that a service will have an up to date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers.

Where a service is applying for Cultural Mentoring Support the SIP should clearly identify Barriers related to cultural inclusion and there should be a clear alignment between the barriers and strategies identified in the SIP and the proposed project.

What specific support can Cultural Mentoring provide?

Cultural mentoring support varies from project to project, and most projects include a combination of different support strategies.

The kinds of support that may be provided through cultural mentoring include:

- Cultural awareness training
- Support to create a culturally safe and respectful environment
- Support to incorporate specific cultural perspectives or elements into a service's program
- Coaching and modelling to support educators to implement new practices
- Support to establish connections with the target community
- Support to strengthen existing connections with the target community

What is important is that the proposed supports clearly address the identified barriers and will lead to increased educator capacity in working with the target cohort.

What support cannot be provided by Cultural Mentoring?

Cultural Mentoring support is intended to address specific barriers to inclusion and build educator capacity to be inclusive.

Applications that seek to provide generic "cultural awareness" training unrelated to identified barriers, or that do not show how a project will actively support changes in educator practice, will not be approved.

Similarly, applications that primarily focus on support provider-led “incursions” for children or support provider delivery of experiences for children are not able to be funded under Innovative Solutions Support.

Where a project includes delivery of particular experiences for children this must be done in such a way that it develops the educator’s ability to present such experiences independently.

Support providers should focus on how they can upskill educators in this regard, rather than on presenting such experiences themselves.

Projects involving support provider delivered experiences for children will only be considered where such experiences form a limited part of a project, and it can be clearly seen that they are part of a sequence of learning that will enable educators to observe an experience before implementing it themselves.

Applications that aim to increase enrolments from a particular cultural group need to demonstrate that the target cohort is present in the local community and that the project has a realistic chance of engaging with them in order to be approved.

Example:

Smith St Early Learning Centre identifies a lack of cultural understanding as a key barrier that is hindering the inclusion of Aboriginal children from the local community. While some Aboriginal children are enrolled in the service they are underrepresented in comparison to the number of Aboriginal children in the wider community. The service further identifies that they are not able to adequately cater to the needs of those children who are enrolled leading to a lack of meaningful participation in the program. They are also unable to attract further enrolments because of their lack of cultural understanding.

In an effort to more effectively include those Aboriginal children who are currently enrolled the service seeks to engage a local support provider to implement a series of cultural “incursions” to introduce aspects of the local Aboriginal culture into the program.

While such incursions may be valuable and have a positive short-term impact on the children’s sense of inclusion, they are, on their own, unlikely to lead to a longer term or ongoing sense of inclusion or significantly enhance the inclusion capacity of educators. An application that is focused only on incursions or activities run by the support provider would not be funded under Innovative Solutions Support. Such a project design does not provide long term benefits or increase educator’s capacity to be inclusive.

Such a project would be more likely to be funded if the cultural experiences were included as part of a program to support educators to develop and implement such elements into the program themselves.

To increase enrolments from the local Aboriginal community the service also asks the support provider to undertake a series of cultural awareness sessions with educators in the hope that increased cultural understanding will lead to the creation of a more culturally safe environment that would then lead to increased enrolments.

Example continued…

Increased cultural awareness is an important outcome and one that services should be aiming to achieve. However, without concrete strategies to help the service to engage with the local community and start to build a trusting relationship, increased awareness is unlikely, on its own, to lead to increased enrolments.

A project focused solely on increased awareness would not be funded under Innovative Solutions Support. Increased awareness with a concrete plan to engage with the local community (via a support provider who can act as a cultural broker to support such engagement) would be much more likely to be approved.

What level of support is needed?

Mentoring support is generally most successful when it occurs over time. This allows the service and mentor to develop a relationship and for the mentor to support changes to practice so that they become embedded. A series of mentoring sessions should be planned to provide information to educators and to support the incorporation of this information into daily practice. Cultural Mentoring projects typically last between 3-9 months.

The exact nature and level of support needed will depend on the specific circumstances of each service and the identified barriers to inclusion.

In developing a Cultural Mentoring project consideration should be given to the following:

- The level of change required
- The current capacity of educators
- Whether the project aims to support greater inclusion for children who are already enrolled at the service, or to increase enrolments from the local community (or both)
- Whether the project will also include Bilingual Support (see below for more information about this)
- Whether the proposed program of support is realistic in terms of its demands on educator time and participation
- Whether there is sufficient time between proposed mentoring sessions to allow educators to implement changes
- Whether there is a sufficient number of mentoring sessions to support educators to effectively incorporate new practices
- How the proposed project will help the service to form connections with the local community

How can the benefits of Cultural Mentoring be sustained?

The purpose of Cultural Mentoring support is to increase educator capacity to include children and families from a specific cultural group. While the mentor's support in achieving this is essential it is equally important that educators can sustain the project outcomes after the project has finished.

Projects should therefore be designed to be sustainable in the long term. Services should consider specific strategies to achieve this. These could include:

- Providing greater support in the initial stages of the project and tapering it off as educators become more confident in implementing new practices
- Planning implementation strategies to occur between mentoring sessions
- Appointing a specific person (or people) to be a "champion" for the project
- Collecting information from Cultural Mentoring sessions to share with new educators in future
- Including the project on meeting agendas to ensure that it is revisited on a regular basis
- Facilitating connections to key community members to enable the service to build a relationship that can continue after the project is completed

How does Cultural Mentoring link to Bilingual Support?

In some cases, services may need Bilingual Support and Cultural Mentoring at the same time. This may occur where barriers to inclusion include language barriers as well as a lack of cultural awareness. Bilingual Facilitators often provide cultural mentoring support informally through their work alongside other educators. Where this is the case the support is still classified as Bilingual Support.

When such support is provided in a more formal or planned way (e.g.: through organised team meetings or professional development sessions) and/or where it is provided by a separate cultural mentor in addition to the Bilingual Facilitator, then the project is considered to be Cultural Mentoring.

For Cultural Mentoring projects that include Bilingual Support, services should use the Cultural Mentoring including Bilingual Support application form.

Application Guide - Cultural Mentoring

Please note, there are two versions of the Cultural Mentoring Application form. One is for Cultural Mentoring including Bilingual Support, the other is for Cultural Mentoring alone.

Please ensure that you are using the correct form.

Barriers, Solutions and Outcomes

What cohort of children with additional needs does this application aim to support?

Innovative Solutions Support is available to assist educators to include children with additional needs from specific cohorts. These cohorts are explained in more detail on p.8 of the ISP Guidelines. Use the check boxes to indicate the primary cohort that your application aims to support. If other cohorts are also involved use the comment box to provide additional information.

What are the barriers this project will address?

Outline the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs that this project seeks to address here. These should align with the barriers to inclusion identified in your SIP and may include child-related, educator- related and/or service and community related barriers. See the Cultural Mentoring Project Guide for further information about relevant barriers for this project type.

What is the impact of these barriers for children and educators?

Briefly describe how these barriers are impacting on the child/ren that this project aims to support in relation to their ability to participate in the service program and to interact with peers and on educators' ability to be inclusive. Your response to this question should demonstrate the need for the support you are applying for.

What have you already done to try to address these barriers?

Briefly list other actions you have taken to address these barriers, outlining the results of these actions and why further support is now needed.

How will Cultural Mentoring help to address these barriers?

Briefly explain how Cultural Mentoring will address the barriers you have identified above. Your response to this question should help to show why Cultural Mentoring is the best option to address your identified barriers.

Does this project also include Bilingual Support? Yes/No

What are the intended outcomes of the project?

Describe the outcomes that you aim to achieve through this project i.e.: outline what will change as a result of implementing this project.

These outcomes should be specific to your service and the barriers that you have identified but must also align with the overall goals of the Inclusion Support Program i.e.: they should show how the project will lead to the genuine inclusion of child/ren with additional needs.

In relation to children, what will the project achieve in terms of increased participation in the program and interaction with peers?

In relation to educators, what new skills, knowledge and information will educators gain? How will educators/the service become more inclusive as a result of the project?

Details of the Project

Who is the Support Provider for this project?

Provide the name of your chosen support provider here. If the support provider is an organisation provide the name of the organisation and the name of the specific individual/s from the organisation who you will be working with (if known)

Why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability of the service, support provider experience and/or expertise.

See the Cultural Mentoring Project Guide for additional information about who can be an effective Cultural Mentor.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications in relation to the identified barriers?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

NB: Cultural mentors do not require formal qualifications, but their statement should show that they have relevant cultural knowledge, and the skills and experience to mentor adults.

What is their connection to the specific cultural group that is the focus of the project?

Your response to this question should show that the support provider is able to provide effective mentoring in relation to the specific cultural group that is the focus of the project.

For projects that focus on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures the proposed mentor must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

How many care environments will be involved in the project?

Innovative Solutions projects can be developed for a whole service or some care environments within a service. Use this question to tell us how many care environments will be participating in the project.

How many educators will participate in the project?

Use this question to tell us how many educators will participate in the project. This is the total number of educators across the entire length of the project. Use the project plan (see next question) to identify the anticipated number of educators who will participate in each component of the project.

Provide a Project Plan including an overview of project sessions

See pp 14-15 of this Guide for a sample Project Plan. Your plan should show when each project session or activity will occur, the hours of support to be provided on each occasion, and who will participate in each session. It should also include a summary of the content to be delivered or support to be provided at each session and an indication of whether each session is Professional Development (i.e.: formal content delivery), Mentoring, Coaching or another form of support. If a session combines these forms of support, then an indication of the hours for each should be included.

The Project Plan should provide a clear picture of the overall project and how it will be delivered.

Your support provider may be able to provide a plan based on your discussions with them or help you to write it. If the required information will not easily fit here, please attach it to you application as a separate document. There is a blank Project Plan Template available on the IDFM website for you to use.

NB: the activities outlined in the Project Plan must match the activities included in the support provider's quote.

Does the Project include the supply or development of resources?

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to be used for the purchase of resources. However, sometimes there may be resources that are necessary for the successful implementation of a project. In these cases, the supply or development of resources can be approved provided they amount to less than 10% of the total project cost. If the project includes the supply or development of resources tick yes here and then provide a brief overview of what the resources are and why they are necessary for the implementation of the project.

How will you sustain the project outcomes once the project is completed?

Innovative Solutions Support aims to generate lasting outcomes. It is expected that services will be able to maintain project outcomes without the need for high levels of ongoing support. This means that you should have a plan for how your project will lead to embedded and sustainable changes to your practice that will continue after the project finishes. This question is asking how you will do this. Your answer may refer to the project design and how it is designed to create sustainable change. It may also refer to actions you will take once a project is completed to ensure outcomes can be maintained.

Bilingual Support component (if applicable)

Does this project also include Bilingual Support?

Yes/No

Will you be using the same support provider for the Bilingual Support component of the project? Yes/No

If No, who is the support provider for the Bilingual Support component of the project?

For Bilingual Support provide the name of the company or agency who will provide the Bilingual Facilitator to your service. If the Bilingual Facilitator is self-employed provide their details here.

Why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability of the service, support provider experience and/or expertise.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications regarding the provision of bilingual support?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

What level of support are you applying for?

Answer the following questions to show the level of support that you are applying for.

If the pattern of support is variable or too complex to explain here attach a project plan showing what support will be provided over the course of the project.

Bilingual Facilitator

Duration, frequency and intensity of support

- Number of weeks support will be provided for:
- Days per week support is required:
- Hours per day support is required:
- Total hours of support requested:

Other Support (e.g.: translation of written material, family meetings)

Provide details

Outline any other components of the project here, including how many hours of support will be required for each.

If you are applying for more than 12 weeks and/or 100 hours of support (see project guide for details re: typical levels of support) please provide a rationale for the additional support:

If you are applying for more than the typical level of support provide an explanation of why that is necessary here. This rationale should clearly relate to the barriers that you identified above and show why extended or additional levels of support are needed.

How will the Bilingual Support and Cultural Mentoring components of the project be coordinated so that they work together to achieve the intended outcomes?

Explain how the two components of the project will work to complement each other and ensure that intended outcomes are reached.

If the project involves separate support providers for the different components of the project provide additional explanation of how you will support the support providers to work effectively together.

Attachments

- **Support Provider quote** (required)

This is required. Support providers should consult the Information for Support Providers section of this Guide to ensure that their quote includes all necessary information.

- **Support Provider Information** (if not included above)

If you have not included information about the support provider's qualifications and experience above upload it to the IS Portal as an attachment

- **Project Plan** (if not included above)

If the support you are requesting was too complex to show above upload your project plan to the IS Portal as an attachment.

Project Guide - Specialised Training and Advice

What is Specialised Training and Advice?

Specialised Training and Advice projects provide training or advice to enable services to meet the specific needs of a particular child or children. Specialised Training and Advice projects may focus on training regarding specific medical and/or care procedures (e.g.: PEG feeding; administration of medication) or providing advice regarding management of a specific condition.

Specialised training and advice is a short-term form of support and usually involves a small number of sessions in a short period of time. It is often required prior to a child commencing at a service in order to ensure that educators can appropriately meet the child's needs.

If a service requires ongoing support to meet the inclusion needs of a child or children then Guided Practice support may be more appropriate.

Specialised Training and Advice and the Strategic Inclusion Plan

In general, it is expected that a service will have an up to date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers, in order to apply for Innovative Solutions Support.

However, in the case of urgent applications for Specialised Training and Advice this is not a requirement. In such cases it is expected that, after the assessment and outcome of the application, the service will then develop a SIP. Where an urgent application has been approved without a SIP, any subsequent applications will not be considered until the service has developed their SIP.

When can a service apply for Specialised Training and Advice?

Specialised Training and Advice supports services to upskill their educators in regard to specific medical conditions and/or disabilities. It should be applied for where there is a need for specific training in order to implement a particular procedure or where educators do not have experience working with a particular condition that requires substantial changes to practice.

It is not available to provide training or advice in relation to conditions for which services are expected to have already undertaken training under the National Regulations and for which there should be existing policies and procedures in place. e.g.: Asthma, allergies or anaphylaxis; routine administration of medication. For more information about this see *The ISP Guideline Series: No. 3 Including Children with Serious Medical and Health Conditions*.

In some cases, the medical and/or other professionals working with a child may be able to provide suitable training, instruction or advice to educators free of charge (or through a NDIS plan), as part of their work with the child and their family. This option should be explored prior to applying for funding to provide Specialised Training and Advice in order to meet the requirement that funding for proposed Innovative Solutions Support projects is not available elsewhere.

Who can provide Specialised Training and Advice?

Support providers of Specialised Training and Advice should have specific qualifications and/or experience re: the condition/s for which the service is applying for support. Where applicable they should be appropriately accredited to deliver the training or advice required.

How can the value of Specialised Training and Advice be sustained?

While Specialised Training and Advice is short term and focused on the needs of a specific child or children, services should also consider how they will embed this knowledge into their practice so that it is sustained in case it is needed again in future.

Where specialised training is provided it may be valuable to train a number of staff to ensure that expertise is retained in case of staff turnover. It may also be worthwhile to consider training that can be "refreshed" as needed in the future, or to incorporate any "advice" provided into policies and procedures so that it becomes embedded in practice.

In most cases Specialised Training and Advice is seen as a one-off form of support. After initial training it is expected that the service will be responsible for refresher training (if this is required). It is not expected that a service would need to re-apply for Specialised Training and Advice in relation to the same condition or medical procedure unless there has been a change to the child's medical treatment or their condition that require new training, or unless there have been significant changes at the service that mean there are no longer staff at the service with the relevant training.

Application Guide - Specialised Training and Advice

Barriers, Solutions and Outcomes

What cohort of children with additional needs does this application aim to support?

Innovative Solutions Support is available to assist educators to include children with additional needs from specific cohorts. These cohorts are explained in more detail on p.8 of the ISP Guidelines. Use the check boxes to indicate the primary cohort that your application aims to support. If a child belongs to multiple cohorts select the cohort that the support will address most directly. Note any other cohorts in the comment box.

What are the barriers this project will address?

Outline the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs that this project seeks to address here. These should align with the barriers to inclusion identified in your SIP and may include child-related, educator- related and/or service and community related barriers. See the Specialised Training and Advice Project Guide for further information about relevant barriers for this project type.

What is the impact of these barriers for children and educators?

Briefly describe how these barriers are impacting on the child/ren that this project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and on educators' ability to be inclusive. Your response to this question should demonstrate the need for the support you are applying for.

What have you already done to try to address these barriers?

Briefly list other actions you have taken to address these barriers, outlining the results of these actions and why further support is now needed.

Is relevant training or advice available from professionals who are already working with the child (e.g.: through a NDIS plan)?

Yes/No

If the answer to this question is "yes" then you should pursue this avenue of support rather than applying for Specialised Training and Advice.

How will Specialised Training and Advice help to address these barriers?

Briefly explain how Specialised Training and Advice will address the barriers you have identified above. Your response to this question should help to show why Specialised Training and Advice is the best option to address your identified barriers.

What are the intended outcomes of the project?

List the outcomes that you aim to achieve through this project i.e.: outline what will change as a result of implementing this project.

These outcomes should be specific to your service and the barriers that you have identified but must also align with the overall goals of the Inclusion Support Program i.e.: they should show how the project will lead to the genuine inclusion of child/ren with additional needs.

In relation to children, what will the project achieve in terms of increased participation in the program and interaction with peers?

In relation to educators, what new skills, knowledge and information will educators gain? How will educators/the service become more inclusive as a result of the project?

Details of the Project

Who is the support provider for this project?

Provide the name of your chosen support provider here. If the support provider is an organisation provide the name of the organisation and the name of the specific individual/s from the organisation who you will be working with (if known)

Why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability, support provider experience and/or expertise.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications in relation to the identified barriers?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

Provide a brief description of content to be delivered during this project (including information re: the evidence base for the project content)

Your support provider should be able to provide this information or help you to write it. Your Inclusion Professional will also be able to advise regarding the suitability of a particular approach or specific content.

The aim of this question is to find out whether the proposed information to be provided to educators is reputable and whether it is compatible with inclusive practice. Your answer should briefly outline the theory and/or evidence that supports the content to be provided through the project. You should also outline how this content aligns with an inclusive approach.

For training regarding specific medical procedures, it is sufficient to show that the training to be provided is being conducted by a qualified support provider in accordance with recognised or accredited methods.

How many care environments will be involved in the project?

Innovative Solutions projects can be developed for a whole service or some care environments within a service. Use this question to tell us how many care environments will be participating in the project.

How many educators will participate in the project?

Use this question to tell us how many educators will participate in the project. This is the total number of educators across the entire length of the project. Use the project plan (see next question) to identify the anticipated number of educators who will participate in each component of the project.

Provide a Project Plan including an overview of project sessions

See pp.14-15 of this Guide for a sample Project Plan. Your plan should show when each project session or activity will occur, the hours of support to be provided on each occasion, and who will participate in each session. It should also include a summary of the content to be delivered or support to be provided at each session and an indication of whether each session is Professional Development (i.e.: formal content delivery), Mentoring, Coaching or another form of support. If a session combines these forms of support, then an indication of the hours for each should be included.

The Project Plan should provide a clear picture of the overall project and how it will be delivered.

Your support provider may be able to provide a plan based on your discussions with them or help you to write it. If the required information will not easily fit here, please attach it to your application as a separate document .There is a blank Project Plan Template available on the IDFM website for you to use.

NB: the activities outlined in the Project Plan must match the activities included in the support provider's quote.

For projects that involve a single session of training or advice simply note when and for how long this session will last and who will be involved.

Does the Project include the supply or development of resources?

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to be used for the purchase of resources. However, sometimes there may be resources that are necessary for the successful implementation of a project. In these cases, the supply or development of resources can be approved provided they amount to less than 10% of the total project cost. If the project includes the supply or development of resources tick yes here and then provide a brief overview of what the resources are and why they are necessary for the implementation of the project.

How will you sustain the project outcomes once the project is completed?

Innovative Solutions Support aims to generate lasting outcomes. It is expected that services will be able to maintain project outcomes without the need for high levels of ongoing support. This means that you should have a plan for how your project will lead to embedded and sustainable changes to your practice that will continue after the project finishes. This question is asking how you will do this. Your answer may refer to the project design and how it is designed to create sustainable change. It may also refer to actions you will take once a project is completed to ensure outcomes can be maintained.

Attachments

- **Support Provider quote** (required)

This is required. Support providers should consult the Information for Support Providers section of this Guide to ensure that their quote includes all necessary information.

- **Support provider Information** (if not included above)

If you have not included information about the support provider's qualifications and experience above upload it to the IS Portal as an attachment

- **Project Plan** (if not included above)

If the support you are requesting was too complex to show above upload your project plan to the IS Portal as an attachment.

Project Guide - Guided Practice

What is Guided Practice?

Guided Practice projects support services to implement changes to their practice through a combination of content delivery and practical support to implement new approaches. Guided Practice projects typically involve professional development sessions to provide information to educators followed by coaching and/or mentoring support to assist educators to incorporate the information provided into their practice.

Guided Practice projects are defined by this methodology rather than by the specific focus of the project. That is, Guided Practice projects can address a wide range of inclusion barriers, including, for example, those related to challenging behaviour, trauma, speech and language development or specific conditions such as autism.

Guided Practice and the Strategic Inclusion Plan

In order to access Innovative Solutions Support it is expected that a service will have an up-to-date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers.

Where a service is applying for a Guided Practice project there should be a clear alignment between the barriers and strategies identified in the SIP and the proposed project.

How does Guided Practice work?

Guided Practice projects reflect current understandings of effective professional development that emphasize the importance of practical learning delivered over a period of time. In the context of Innovative Solutions Support this means the provision of direct coaching and/or mentoring support for educators in addition to content delivery.

While each Guided Practice project will be different, they should all incorporate the following elements:

- **Clear, evidence-based content.** That is, the content that will be delivered through the project should be able to be clearly described and should be reputable, based on accepted theory or evidence and align with the principles of inclusive practice.
- Delivery by a support provider with sufficient knowledge, expertise and experience to provide effective support to educators
- **A combination of content delivery and practical support** (i.e.: professional development supported by coaching and/or mentoring)
- **Multiple opportunities for educators to engage with content** and receive direct feedback on their implementation of the content into their practice
- **Multiple coaching opportunities for each content session** to allow for practice and improvement and the incorporation of feedback. The exact ratio of coaching:content will vary depending on the complexity of the content and the level of change required. Simple or small-scale changes will generally require less coaching support that complex or larger scale changes.

As a general rule however, there should be more coaching than content delivery in a Guided Practice project.

- **Opportunities for Reflection.** Successful coaching and mentoring require uninterrupted time for educators to talk with the coach/mentor. Projects should demonstrate how time will be provided for this to occur (e.g.: how will educators be released to participate in mentoring sessions/reflective discussions?)

Can Guided Practice projects include professional development?

Yes, professional development is an important part of Guided Practice. Professional development sessions provide educators with the content knowledge that will underpin changes to practice. However, professional development alone is unlikely to be effective in supporting ongoing or sustained changes. Projects that only (or predominantly) focus on professional development will not be approved. The Guided Practice model is dependent on professional development supported by coaching and/or mentoring to guide educators as they implement new approaches.

What is the difference between coaching and mentoring?

There are many definitions of coaching and mentoring.

For the purposes of Guided Practice projects:

Coaching describes direct "on-the-floor" support whereby the coach provides practical guidance to help educators to implement new practices. Such support may range from "passive" (e.g.: observing the educator's practice and providing feedback) to "active" engagement by the coach (e.g.: direct modelling of specific techniques, providing real time directions or guidance to an educator as they work).

In general, the purpose of such coaching is to develop the educator's skills to a point where they are able to implement the new techniques on their own. As such, the coach should aim to "taper" their support, moving from an active to passive role over the course of a project.

Coaching can occur at an individual or team level depending on the nature of the strategies to be implemented.

Coaching may also involve "off-the-floor" reflection about what happened during a coaching session.

Coaching is most effective when it is carried out in-person. Remote coaching sessions may be offered in exceptional circumstances where the coach is unable to attend the service in person, however face-to-face support is preferred whenever possible.

Mentoring describes advice, support and guidance that is provided in an "off-the-floor" capacity. A mentoring session may provide an opportunity for an educator/s to debrief or reflect on a specific experience and seek advice from the mentor. Mentoring sessions may also provide opportunities for broader reflection and discussion about the progress and future direction of a project.

Mentoring sessions may be for individuals and/or for teams.

Mentoring sessions may allow educators in leadership roles to discuss and plan with the mentor regarding the next steps in implementing a project effectively. They may also provide opportunities for team reflection on progress.

Mentoring may also be an appropriate way to "taper" support after a period of more intensive coaching.

Unlike coaching, mentoring sessions are less dependent on in-person contact. Effective mentoring can often be carried out remotely, by phone, video-call or even email.

In general, coaching is most likely to support changes in educator practice, while mentoring is more likely to support reflection, either by individual educators about their practice, or about the progress of a project as a whole. Both are important but coaching will typically make up a greater proportion of a project in order to most effectively guide and support changes to practice.

In most cases the ratio of content: mentoring: coaching will look like:

Some Content: Some Mentoring: Mostly Coaching

What is the role of the support provider in a Guided Practice project?

The support provider's role is to guide and support changes to practice within the service that address the identified barriers to inclusion. This will be through a combination of professional development sessions, coaching and mentoring.

The support provider should have demonstrated knowledge and expertise in relation to the specific barriers to be addressed. They also need to have the ability to work effectively with adults to guide and support changes to practice.

Because the aim of Innovative Solutions Support is to increase the inclusion capacity of services the support provider's role is to support the development of educator capacity in a way that leads to sustainable and ongoing change.

When planning a project, the service, support provider and IP should discuss how the planned changes will be sustained once the project ends.

In general, it is not the role of the support provider to work directly with children – however, in the context of providing coaching to educators, support providers may, when appropriate, demonstrate or role-model specific techniques. Such direct support should be scaled back as the project progresses to allow educators the opportunity to practice using such techniques themselves.

Support providers should also aim to "taper" their support over the course of a project so that educators are able to implement new approaches with increasing independence. For example, support provider involvement may become less frequent as a project progress and/or direct coaching may transition to mentoring as educators become more skilled and confident in using new approaches.

Ultimately educators should be able to implement the new approaches without the support provider's support.

Incursions and curriculum-based interventions

For the reasons outlined above, projects that primarily focus on support provider "incursions" for children or support provider delivery of experiences for children are not able to be funded under Innovative Solutions Support.

Where a project focuses on new approaches to curriculum or the delivery of particular experiences this must be done in such a way that it develops the educator's ability to present such experiences independently. Support providers should focus on how they can upskill educators in this regard, rather than on presenting such experiences themselves.

Projects involving support provider delivered experiences for children will only be considered where such experiences form a limited part of a project, and it can be clearly seen that they are part of a sequence of learning that will enable educators to observe an experience before implementing it themselves.

Application Guide - Guided Practice

Barriers, Solutions and Outcomes

What cohort of children with additional needs does this application aim to support?

Innovative Solutions Support is available to assist educators to include children with additional needs from specific cohorts. These cohorts are explained in more detail on p.8 of the ISP Guidelines. Use the check boxes to indicate the primary cohort that your application aims to support. If other cohorts are also involved use the comment box to provide additional information.

What are the barriers this project will address?

Outline the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs that this project seeks to address here. These should align with the barriers to inclusion identified in your SIP and may include child-related, educator- related and/or service and community related barriers. See the Guided Practice Project Guide for further information about relevant barriers for this project type.

What is the impact of these barriers for children and educators?

Briefly describe how these barriers are impacting on the children and educators that this project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and on educators' ability to be inclusive. Your response to this question should demonstrate the need for the support you are applying for.

What have you already done to try to address these barriers?

Briefly list other actions you have taken to address these barriers, outlining the results of these actions and why further support is now needed.

How will Guided Practice help to address these barriers?

Briefly explain how Guided Practice specifically will address the barriers you have identified above. Your response to this question should help to show why Guided Practice is the best option to address your identified barriers.

What are the intended outcomes of the project?

List the outcomes that you aim to achieve through this project i.e.: outline what will change as a result of implementing this project.

These outcomes should be specific to your service but must also align with the overall goals of the Inclusion Support Program i.e.: they should show how the project will increase inclusion outcomes for the specific child/children who the project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and how the project will increase the capacity of educators at the service to be inclusive.

Details of the Project

Who is the support provider for this project?

Provide the name of your chosen support provider here. If the support provider is an organisation provide the name of the organisation and the name of the specific individual/s from the organisation who you will be working with (if known)

Why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability, support provider experience and/or expertise.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications in relation to the identified barriers?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

Provide a brief description of content to be delivered during this project **(including information re: the evidence base for the project content and how it aligns with the aims of the ISP)**

Your support provider should be able to provide this information or help you to write it. Your Inclusion Professional will also be able to advise regarding the suitability of a particular approach or specific content.

The aim of this question is to find out whether the proposed information to be provided to educators is reputable and whether it is compatible with inclusive practice. Your answer should briefly outline the theory and/or evidence that supports the content to be provided through the project. You should also outline how this content aligns with an inclusive approach.

How many care environments will be involved in the project?

Innovative Solutions projects can be developed for a whole service or some care environments within a service. Use this question to tell us how many care environments will be participating in the project.

How many educators will participate in the project?

Use this question to tell us how many educators will participate in the project. This is the total number of educators across the entire length of the project. Use the project plan (see next question) to identify the anticipated number of educators who will participate in each component of the project.

Provide a Project Plan including an overview of project sessions

See pp. 14-15 of this Guide for a sample Project Plan. Your plan should show when each project session or activity will occur, the hours of support to be provided on each occasion, and who will participate in each session. It should also include a summary of the content to be delivered or support to be provided at each session and an indication of whether each session is Professional Development (i.e.: formal content delivery), Mentoring, Coaching or another form of support. If a session combines these forms of support, then an indication of the hours for each should be included.

The Project Plan should provide a clear picture of the overall project and how it will be delivered.

Your support provider may be able to provide a plan based on your discussions with them or help you to write it. If the required information will not easily fit here, please attach it to your application as a separate document. There is a blank Project Plan Template available on the IDFM website for you to use.

NB: the activities outlined in the Project Plan must match the activities included in the support provider's quote.

Does the Project include the supply or development of resources?

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to be used for the purchase of resources. However, sometimes there may be resources that are necessary for the successful implementation of a project. In these cases, the supply or development of resources can be approved provided they amount to less than 10% of the total project cost. If the project includes the supply or development of resources tick yes here and then provide a brief overview of what the resources are and why they are necessary for the implementation of the project.

How will you sustain the project outcomes once the project is completed?

Innovative Solutions Support aims to generate lasting outcomes. It is expected that services will be able to maintain project outcomes without the need for high levels of ongoing support. This means that you should have a plan for how your project will lead to embedded and sustainable changes to your practice that will continue after the project finishes. This question is asking how you will do this. Your answer may refer to the project design and how it is designed to create sustainable change. It may also refer to actions you will take once a project is completed to ensure outcomes can be maintained.

Attachments

- **Support Provider Quote** (required)

This is required. Support providers should consult the Information for Support Providers section of this Guide to ensure that their quote includes all necessary information.

- **Support Provider Information** (if not included above)

If you have not included information about the support provider's qualifications and experience above upload it to the IS Portal as an attachment

- **Project Plan** (if not included above)

If the support you are requesting was too complex to show above upload your project plan to the IS Portal as an attachment.

Project Guide - Unique Projects

What are Unique Projects?

Unique Projects are projects that meet the criteria for Innovative Solutions Support (i.e.: lead to the genuine inclusion of a child/ren with additional needs and/or enhance the inclusion capacity of educators in relation to a particular cohort) but do not fit into one of the other four Project Types (Bilingual Support, Cultural Mentoring, Specialised Training and Advice, Guided Practice).

The Unique Projects project type is designed to allow services to be innovative and flexible in designing a support solution that meets their own specific needs. Unique Projects may include new or unique approaches to inclusion or combine elements from several different project types. They are usually highly specific to the context of the service/s involved.

Developing a Unique Project

In developing a Unique Project, services should work closely with their Inclusion Professional and their chosen support provider. Their IP will be able to provide guidance about what kinds of projects are possible under Innovative Solutions Support.

In developing the project all parties should keep the ISP Guidelines in mind in order to ensure that the proposed project leads to clear inclusion outcomes for children and/or increased inclusion capacity for educators.

Unique Projects and the Strategic Inclusion Plan

In order to access Innovative Solutions Support it is expected that a service will have an up to date Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), with current Barriers to inclusion identified and Strategies and Actions developed to address the Barriers.

Where a service is applying for a Unique Project, there should be a clear alignment between the barriers and strategies identified in the SIP and the proposed project.

Applying for a Unique Project

The Unique Project application process is similar to that for the other project types but does require some additional information. This is because each Unique Project will be different and may not have been implemented previously. The application processes for the other Project Types are based on the common features of these projects that have a proven record of success and are able to be more streamlined as a result.

For Unique Projects services will need to provide an explanation of, and rationale for, what they plan to do. This should show how the project will meet the guidelines for Innovative Solutions Support. It should also demonstrate that the project represents value for money and show that it has a likely chance of success.

Application Guide - Unique Projects

Barriers, Solutions and Outcomes

What cohort of children with additional needs does this application aim to support?

Innovative Solutions Support is available to assist educators to include children with additional needs from specific cohorts. These cohorts are explained in more detail on p.8 of the ISP Guidelines. Use the check boxes to indicate the primary cohort that your application aims to support. If other cohorts are also involved use the comment box to provide additional information.

What are the barriers this project will address?

Outline the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs that this project seeks to address here. These should align with the barriers to inclusion identified in your SIP and may include child-related, educator- related and/or service and community related barriers. See the Unique Projects Project Guide for further information about relevant barriers for this project type.

What is the impact of these barriers for children and educators?

Briefly describe how these barriers are impacting on the child/ren that this project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and on educators' ability to be inclusive. Your response to this question should demonstrate the need for the support you are applying for.

What have you already done to try to address these barriers?

Briefly list other actions you have taken to address these barriers, outlining the results of these actions and why further support is now needed.

How will your Unique Project help to address these barriers?

Briefly explain how your Unique Project will address the barriers you have identified above. Your response to this question should help to show why your Unique Project is the best option to address your identified barriers and provide a rationale for the particular approach your project will take.

What are the intended outcomes of the project?

List the outcomes that you aim to achieve through this project i.e.: outline what will change as a result of implementing this project.

These outcomes should be specific to your service but must also align with the overall goals of the Inclusion Support Program i.e.: they should show how the project will increase inclusion outcomes for the specific child/children who the project aims to support in relation to their participation in the program and interaction with peers and how the project will increase the capacity of educators at the service to be inclusive.

Details of the Project

What will this project do?

Provide an overview of what the project will involve. This should consolidate the information you have provided above to briefly explain what will happen during the project and what outcomes this will lead to.

Is there an external support provider for this project? yes/no

If yes, who is the Support Provider?

Provide the name of your chosen support provider here. If the support provider is an organisation provide the name of the organisation and the name of the specific individual/s from the organisation who you will be working with (if known)

If yes, why have you chosen them?

Briefly explain your rationale for choosing this support provider. This may include factors such as value for money, availability of the service, support provider experience and/or expertise.

What are their skills/expertise/qualifications in relation to the identified barriers?

Ask your support provider for a statement outlining this information to accompany their quote. Include here or attach as a separate document.

(If relevant) Provide a brief description of content to be delivered during this project (including information re: the evidence base for the project content and how it aligns with the aims of the ISP)

Your support provider (if you are using one) should be able to provide this information or help you to write it. Your Inclusion Professional will also be able to advise regarding the suitability of a particular approach or specific content.

The aim of this question is to find out whether the proposed information to be provided to educators is reputable and whether it is compatible with inclusive practice. Your answer should briefly outline the theory and/or evidence that supports the content to be provided through the project. You should also outline how this content aligns with an inclusive approach.

How many care environments will be involved in the project?

Innovative Solutions projects can be developed for a whole service or some care environments within a service. Use this question to tell us how many care environments will be participating in the project.

How many educators will participate in the project?

Use this question to tell us how many educators will participate in the project. This is the total number of educators across the entire length of the project. Use the project plan (see next question) to identify the anticipated number of educators who will participate in each component of the project.

Provide a Project Plan including an overview of project sessions

See pp. 14-15 of this Guide for a sample Project Plan. Your plan should show when each project session or activity will occur, the hours of support to be provided on each occasion, and who will participate in each session. It should also include a summary of the content to be delivered or support to be provided at each session and an indication of whether each session is Professional Development (i.e.: formal content delivery), Mentoring, Coaching or another form of support. If a session combines these forms of support, then an indication of the hours for each should be included.

The Project Plan should provide a clear picture of the overall project and how it will be delivered.

Your support provider may be able to provide a plan based on your discussions with them or help you to write it. If the required information will not easily fit here, please attach it to your application as a separate document. There is a blank Project Plan Template available on the IDFM website for you to use.

NB: the activities outlined in the Project Plan must match the activities included in the Support Provider's quote.

Does the Project include the supply or development of resources?

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to be used for the purchase of resources. However, sometimes there may be resources that are necessary for the successful implementation of a project. In these cases, the supply or development of resources can be approved provided they amount to less than 10% of the total project cost. If the project includes the supply or development of resources tick yes here and then provide a brief overview of what the resources are and why they are necessary for the implementation of the project.

How will you sustain the project outcomes once the project is completed?

Innovative Solutions Support aims to generate lasting outcomes. It is expected that services will be able to maintain project outcomes without the need for high levels of ongoing support. This means that you should have a plan for how your project will lead to embedded and sustainable changes to your practice that will continue after the project finishes. This question is asking how you will do this. Your answer may refer to the project design and how it is designed to create sustainable change. It may also refer to actions you will take once a project is completed to ensure outcomes can be maintained.

Attachments

- **Support Provider quote** (required)

This is required if your project will involve a support provider. Support providers should consult the Information for Support Providers section of this Guide to ensure that their quote includes all necessary information. If your project does not involve a support provider you should include a detailed budget outlining the costs involved in the project.

- **Support Provider Information** (if not included above)

If you have not included information about the support provider's qualifications and experience above upload it to the IS Portal as an attachment

- **Project Plan** (if not included above)

I f the support you are requesting was too complex to show above upload your project plan to the IS Portal as an attachment.

Innovative Solutions Support

Information, Tools and Resources for Support Providers

In the context of Innovative Solutions Support, a support provider is an individual or organisation with relevant skills and qualifications who is engaged to provide support to a service through an Innovative Solutions Support project.

The Support Provider's Role

Support providers play an essential role in most Innovative Solutions Support projects. They use their knowledge, skills and expertise to help services to address the barriers to inclusion that they have identified as the focus of their project.

The support provider's role is to build a service's capacity to be inclusive. This typically involves upskilling staff in a way that can be sustained after a project is completed.

Support providers generally are not engaged to work directly with children but rather to work with educators to support their work with children. In some cases, support providers may work alongside educator's and demonstrate or role model specific techniques as they coach them in the use of new approaches, however this should be limited with the end goal of a project being the ability of educators to use such approaches independently.

Each project will be different and should be tailored to the specific circumstances of the relevant service, however support providers typically engage in a number of broadly defined activities.

These include:

Delivery of professional development for educators

Most projects involve the delivery of specific content by the support provider to improve educators' knowledge and understanding of the barriers that they have identified.

Coaching of educators

Coaching involves directly supporting educators as they implement new practices. It is typically delivered "on-the-floor" as educators are working with children and can include a range of actions from the support provider -ranging from observing educator practice and providing feedback to direct modelling of specific techniques.

(See the Guided Practice Project Guide for more information about coaching in the context of Innovative Solutions Support).

Mentoring of educators

Mentoring describes advice, support and guidance that is delivered in an off-the-floor capacity. It can include opportunities for educators to "debrief" about specific experiences with the support provider, reflective discussions (including staff meetings) facilitated by the support provider and planning for future stages of the project.

(See the Guided Practice Project Guide for more information about mentoring in the context of Innovative Solutions Support).

Provision/Development of Resources

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to fund the purchase of resources. However, in some cases, the provision or development of specific resources may be essential to the successful implementation of a project. In these cases, the cost of resources should not be more than 10% of the total cost of a project. Services will be asked to provide details of any

resources to be included as part of a project and to provide a rationale for their inclusion, outlining how and why the resources are essential to meeting the project outcomes.

Developing an Innovative Solutions Support project

ECEC services are responsible for approaching potential support providers to be involved in a proposed Innovative Solutions Support project.

At this stage of project development, the service (and probably the IP) will discuss the project with the potential support provider/s.

These three-way discussions are often a key step in the development of a detailed project design, with each party offering their distinct perspectives and ideas.

Based on their experience and professional knowledge the support provider may make suggestions or advise on what is likely to be most effective in relation to the design and delivery of the project.

Support providers should be aware that services may choose to speak to more than one support provider at this point in order to determine who is the best support provider to work with.

If the support provider feels comfortable with the project plan and their ability to deliver the required components of that plan, then they should give the service a detailed quote.

Information from Support Providers

When quoting on an Innovative Solutions Support project support providers should supply the following information:

- a **detailed, itemised quote**, including:
  - the support provider's registered business name and contact details
  - the support provider's ABN
  - the date of the quote
  - an itemised listing of each component of the support to be provided, including the type of activity to be undertaken by the support provider (i.e.: professional development, coaching, mentoring or other – please specify), the number of hours and the hourly rate for each. This should be based on the project plan that the service submits in their application.

    Do not include additional time for contingencies or unanticipated developments. All activities to be undertaken as part of the project need to be clearly identified in the project plan and quote. If changes or modifications to the Project Plan are required once a Project is underway these must be discussed with, and approved by, the service and the service's IP and, for major changes, the IDFM.

    NB: the support provider quote must match the Project Plan in relation to activities undertaken by the support provider and the hours to be delivered in order for a project to be approved.
  - An itemised listing of any additional costs, such as travel and accommodation.
  - An overall summary of project hours and project duration

  - An overall total cost for the project, with GST shown as a separate component.

- a short **statement of expertise** outlining the support provider's qualifications, skills and experience in relation to the proposed project. This can be a standard statement that is used for multiple projects (provided that the statement is relevant to each). Where the support provider is an organisation, the statement should outline the organisation's expertise as well as the specific expertise of the individual/s who will be working with the service.
- where a project involves the delivery of Professional Development, services are asked to provide a brief **overview of the content to be delivered** and the theory/evidence that supports its use. This is to ensure that projects delivered via Innovative Solutions Support are based on reputable and accepted content that aligns with an inclusive approach. Support providers are often best placed to provide this information and may be able to give this directly to the service to include in their application or help to write this section of the application.
- Similarly, where a project includes the provision or development of resources services are asked to provide an **explanation of, and rationale for, the proposed resources**. Support providers may also contribute to/provide this section of the application.

Support Provider Responsibilities

Support providers for Innovative Solutions Support projects have the following responsibilities:

During the Application Process

- Support providers will accurately represent their qualifications, skills and experience in discussion with services about potential projects.
- Support providers will read the relevant information in the Innovative Solutions Support Application relating to a potential project to ensure they understand the expectations re: the project type and the support provider's role.
- Where a support provider is able to deliver the services required for a potential project and is interested in participating in the project, they will provide a detailed, itemised quote as outlined in the Information for Support Providers section of this guide
- Support providers will provide a Statement of Expertise outlining their qualifications, skills and experience relevant to the proposed project for inclusion in the service's Application

During Service Delivery

- Support providers will act in good faith and make every effort to deliver services as outlined in the project plan and the support provider's quote. Where this is not possible due to unforeseen and/or unavoidable circumstances the support provider will work with the service to amend the project plan in a mutually satisfactory way. NB: any changes to a project plan (including, where the support provider is an organisation, changes to who will be delivering support to the service) must be approved by the service and the service's Inclusion Professional. Where major changes are proposed these may also require approval by the IDFM.
- Support providers will work within the Innovative Solutions Support guidelines to support the development of educator capacity and the sustainability of project outcomes. In this regard

support providers will only work directly with children in the context of supporting educator capacity building, and this will not form a significant component of a project. Support providers will not provide therapeutic interventions (including undertaking assessment of children or developing Individual Education Plans) as part of an Innovative Solutions Support project.

- Support providers will not use their work on a project to advertise or solicit for business from families attending the service.
- Where a conflict arises between the support provider and the service, educators at the service or families at the service the support provider will act to resolve the conflict in a professional manner.

In regard to Confidentiality and Child Safety

- Support providers will respect the confidentiality of information about services, children and families gained through their work on Innovative Solutions Support projects.
- Support providers will comply with all relevant child protection requirements (including service policies) for the State or Territory in which they are working and will ensure that their work aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and supports children's safety and wellbeing.

Price Guide

Price Guide Overview

The Innovative Solutions Support Price Guide sets out price ranges for the provision of support and other costs (e.g.: travel, accommodation etc.) associated with the delivery of Innovative Solutions projects. In doing so it aims to ensure that services delivered via Innovative Solutions Support provide value for money as required by the Inclusion Support Program Guidelines.

Reference Points

The Price Guide draws on a number of elements from existing and accepted price guides. These include the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and the Australian Tax Office Taxation Determination (ATO TD) in relation to Reasonable Travel and Accommodation Costs.

NDIS Pricing Arrangements

In relation to the NDIS Pricing Arrangements, the Price Guide draws on the following specific elements:

- Prices for the provision of Specialist Behavioural Intervention Support and Early Childhood Support provided by Early Childhood Professionals (including Allied Health Professionals) and Psychologists
- Payment of different rates dependent on provider qualifications (in the NDIS the distinction is made between psychologist rates and Early Childhood Professional or Allied Health rates)
- Payment for travel time, including use of the Modified Monash Model (MMM) to determine geographical remoteness for travel purposes.

Australian Tax Office Taxation Determinations (ATO TD)

The Price Guide uses the ATO TD, as the basis for setting reasonable travel and accommodation rates. This does not automatically imply that such costs are tax deductible for support providers. Each support provider's circumstances will be different and as such they should seek their own specific tax advice as to the deductibility of any expenses.

Value for Money

Value for money does not simply mean preferencing the cheapest option. It is about determining the balance between cost and quality of deliverables. The lowest cost option may not necessarily be the best option in terms of value for money if it does not provide high quality results. Similarly, a more expensive option may be value for money if it is likely to provide better outcomes or has a greater probability of being successfully implemented.

The Price Guide therefore forms only one part of decision making about value for money and needs to be considered in relation to the information contained in the Project Guides about how projects should be delivered, and the particular skills, qualifications and expertise of a given provider.

While the Pricing Guide aims to give clarity around acceptable prices for different aspects of a project, the prices listed assume that:

- the project is being delivered in accordance with the guidance provided in the Innovative Solutions Support Project Guides, and

- the provider has the appropriate expertise and experience to deliver the project at the expected standard.

Professional Services

The role of a Support Provider is to build a service's capacity to be inclusive. This typically involves upskilling staff in a way that can be sustained after a project is completed. Each project will therefore be different, and the type of support activities provided tailored to the specific circumstances of the relevant service.

Support Activities
Prices outlined in this Guide, apply to the type of **Support Activity** being provided rather than to the specific Innovative Solutions Project type.

Types of Support Activities
Professional Development
Mentoring
Coaching
Bilingual Support
Provision/Development of Resources

Innovative Solution Project Types
Bilingual Support
Cultural Mentoring
Specialised Training and Advice
Guided Practice
Unique Projects

For example:

The provision of **Coaching Support** of educators has a set price range regardless of whether the coaching occurs as part of a **Guided Practice** or **Cultural Mentoring project**.

Similarly, the same rates apply for **Professional Development** sessions regardless of whether they are provided as part of a **Specialised Training and Advice, Cultural Mentoring or Guided Practice project.**

Professional Development
Professional development involves the more formal presentation of specific information to a group of educators, which requires the provider to have expertise in relation to both the content and the delivery.

Professional development is tailored for each service to help address the Barriers to inclusion identified in the service's Strategic Inclusion Plan and Innovative Solutions Project Plan. It typically involves a greater degree of preparation than coaching or mentoring.

Mentoring

Mentoring describes advice, support and guidance that is delivered in an off-the-floor capacity. It can include opportunities for educators to "debrief" about specific experiences with the Support Provider, reflective discussions (including staff meetings) facilitated by the Support Provider and planning for future stages of the project and may occur as group sessions or as 1:1 discussions.

(See the Guided Practice Project Guide for more information about mentoring in the context of Innovative Solutions Support).

Coaching

Coaching involves directly supporting educators as they implement new practices. It is typically delivered "on-the-floor" as educators are working with children and can include a range of actions from the provider, ranging from observing educator practice and providing feedback to direct role modelling of specific techniques. It may also involve additional reflective discussions after the direct coaching session.

(See the Guided Practice Project Guide for more information about coaching in the context of Innovative Solutions Support).

Bilingual Support

Bilingual Support involves providing language support for children and/or families, who do not speak English fluently, as they settle into a new early childhood setting. A Bilingual Facilitator, who can speak the child's first language, assist educators to communicate with the child and their family.

Bilingual Support can also include access to interpreter services and translation of written documents to support communication with a child's family.

(See the Bilingual Support Project Guide for more information about Bilingual Support in the context of Innovative Solutions Support).

Resources

Innovative Solutions Support does not provide funding for the purchase of major resources or equipment. However, in some cases, a small number of resources may be necessary to support the implementation of a project. Any resources required should be minor and be essential to the implementation of the project. The cost for each item should be reasonable when compared to the market rate.

Pricing Ranges

Pricing ranges allow for variations in provider qualifications, expertise and experience, and the type of Support Activity being provided.

As providers for Innovative Solutions support come from a range of backgrounds, and because the nature of the Support Activities provided can vary from project to project, a range of rates have been included for each support activity.

Hourly Base Rates

Hourly base rates have been designed to include administration and organisational overhead costs. Administration and organisational overhead costs should not be listed as separate items in a Support Providers quote.

Additional Loadings

There are two different types of additional loadings, one for support being provided in Remote Areas the other to acknowledge the level of preparation required to facilitate Professional Development sessions. Depending on the activities being provided, a service provider may be eligible to access one or both additional loading options.

Additional loadings for Professional Development are not usually applied to Coaching, Mentoring and Bicultural Support activities as these activities typically involves a lesser degree of preparation than Professional Development sessions.

Determining the Appropriate Price Range

Support Providers should use the information provided in the Price Matrix, located on pages 21-22, to determine their Hourly Base Rate for all Professional Development, Coaching and Mentoring support activities.

For Bilingual Support Activities, Support Providers can charge an hourly rate of up to $80 per hour.

Table - Price Ranges by Type of Support Activity

Support Type	Pricing Range
Bilingual Support	Up to $80 per hour
Coaching	From $110 - $225 per hour
Mentoring	From $110 - $225 per hour
Professional Development	Base rate from $110-$225 per hour Professional Development Loading – 25% - 100% of the base rate Refer to the Price Matrix tool located on pages 21 & 22
Resources	No more than 10% of the total project cost.

Travel and Accommodation

Travel and accommodation costs are set in accordance with current ATO Taxation Determinations (ATO TD) . The relevant ATO TD as of November 2023 is TD 2023/3.

This determination sets rates based on an individual's income. For the purposes of Innovative Solutions Support Activities, the relevant prices for accommodation and other expenses are based on the middle-income range and are listed in Table 2 of the Taxation Determination.

Accommodation and Meal Costs

When support providers are required to travel to support a service, they may need overnight accommodation. The cost of accommodation and associated meal expenses are a legitimate cost of providing Support Activities as part of Innovative Solutions Support Project.

In determining whether accommodation is required, consideration will be given to the distance that a Support Provider has to travel, the availability of travel options and the advisability of travelling in the circumstances.

Support Providers should have their own policies in place regarding safe travel, however in general it will be accepted that where a provider has to drive more than one hour after the conclusion of an evening support session with a service, or where transport is not available until the next day, then it is reasonable for accommodation to be included in the support provider's quote.

Table - Accommodation and Meal Costs

Item	Description	Price Range
Accommodation	Per current ATO Determination (for 2023 refer to TD 2023/3)	Table 2 rates **Note:** Depending on location – Table 4 rates may also be applicable.
Meal Expenses	Per current ATO Determination (for 2023 refer to TD 2023/3)	Table 2 rates **Note:** Depending on location – Table 4 rates may also be applicable.

Travel

Travel costs relating to the provision of Bilingual Support activities are outlined on pages 10-11.

Travel costs relating to the provision of Professional Development, Coaching and Mentoring support activities are outlined below.

Car Travel

Distance

Kilometers for car travel can be quoted at the relevant ATO approved amount. As of November 2023 this is $.85c per KM.

Time

Labour costs for travel time can be charged at the Support Provider's base hourly rate. This is based on the geographic location of the service where support is being delivered (as determined by the Modified Monash Model 2019.)

For locations in MMM regions 1-3 (metro and regional centres) travel time of up to ½ hr each way may be charged.

For locations in MMM regions 4-5 (regional areas) travel time of up to 1 hr each way may be charged.

Where support providers are required to travel to remote or very remote locations (MMM Regions 6 and 7) travel may be costed at 1 hr. per 2hrs of travel undertaken. A remote area loading also applies to the support provider's normal hourly rate to cover additional costs incurred. The loading is 40% for remote areas (Region 6) and 50% for very remote areas (Region 7).

Where a support provider is travelling interstate, or a substantial distance (i.e.: greater than 4 hours return) within a state, then reasonable additional travel costs may be approved, provided that the service can demonstrate in their application that there was no suitable alternative provider available in their location. In these cases, one hour of paid time (at the support provider's Base Rate) may be charged for every 2 hours travelled.

Airfares

Airfares should be economy class or equivalent. Flexible fares with checked luggage and appropriate travel insurance are reasonable given the nature of Innovative Solutions Support and the possibility that visits to services may occasionally have to be rescheduled at short notice.

Other transport options

Car hire, public transport, taxis, airport transfers etc. should be charged at a reasonable rate for the location to be visited.

Table - Travel Costs

Item	Description	Price Range
Car travel	Per current ATO Determination	85c/km (as at July 2023)
Car hire/taxi/transfers	Taxi/transfers equivalent to local rates; car hire for mid-range vehicle	Case by case
Airfares	Equivalent to economy class fare (including luggage and travel insurance)	Case by case
Travel Time (Bilingual Support)	Payment for time spent travelling to and from a service (in excess of 30 minutes each way)	Hourly rate for time in excess of 30 minutes each way
Travel Time (Other Support)	Payment for time spent travelling to and from a service. Based on Modified Monash Model and NDIS travel allowances, paid at Support Provider's base rate.	• For MMM regions 1-3 (metro and regional centre): Up to ½ hr. each way • For MMM regions 4-5 (regional areas): Up to 1 hr. each way • For MMM regions 6-7: Remote area loadings apply, 1 hr. per 2hrs travel • Where extensive travel is undertaken with good reason (i.e.: more than 4 hrs. return): 1 hr. per 2 hrs. travel

Travel - Bilingual Support

For Bilingual Support, the following guidelines apply to travel costs.

Where a Bilingual Facilitator is required to travel more than 30 minutes each way to a service to provide Bilingual Support Activities, travel costs may be quoted.

This can include the costs of travel at the relevant ATO approved amount for car travel or the estimated cost of public transport, and/or payment for travel time beyond 1 hour in total (i.e. the first hour of travel time for each day is not paid, but time beyond that is).

Table – Travel Costs Bilingual Support

Item	Description	Price Range
Travel Time	Payment for time spent travelling to and from a service (in excess of 30 minutes each way)	Hourly rate for time in excess of 30 minutes each way

Example Scenario

Farhana works for an organisation that provides Bilingual Support. She is engaged to provide support to a service that is located at Penrith, one-hour drive (72m) away from her home at Rosebery.

There is no other Bilingual Facilitator within her organisation who have the required language skills and who lives closer. It will take her 2 hours to make the return journey to the service and back home again.

When quoting for the project, Farhana's organisation is able to include an additional hour for each visit to the service to cover the cost of her travel time. (½ hr. each way, driving to and from) They can also include payment for her distance travelled at 85c/km.

The organisation charges $70 per hour for Bilingual Support.

The project is for 2 x 4 hour visits to the service per week for 10 weeks.

The services uses the Quote Builder tool to develop the following quote.

Example Quote

Professional Services

Type of Support Activity	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Cost (excluding GST)	GST (if applicable)
Professional Development				
Mentoring				
Coaching				
Bilingual Support	80	$70	$5,600	$560.00
Resources				
Subtotal			**$5,600**	**$560**

Travel and Accommodation

Type of Expense	Quantity	Details	Cost (Excluding GST)	GST
Car Travel – From/To	Number of Trips	Kms per trip (@85c/km)	Total	GST
Rosebery – Penrith	20	144	$2,448	$244.80
Travel Time – From/To	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total	GST
2 trips per week x 1 hr. x 10 weeks	20	$70	$1,400	$140.00
Car hire/Taxis/Transfers – From/To	Number of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Airfares – From/To	Numbers of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Accommodation – Location	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Meals/expenses	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Subtotal			**$3,848**	**$384.80**

Subtotal of Professional Services + Travel/Accommodation (Excluding GST)	**$9,448**	
GST		**$944.80**
Total	**$10,392.80**	

Additional Information

Additional Information

Provision of Resources

Innovative Solutions Support is not intended to provide funding for the purchase of resources. However, in some cases, a small number of resources may be necessary to support the implementation of a project.

In these cases, the provision or development of necessary resources may be included as a component of the project. Such resources must not cost more than 10% of the total project cost and must represent value for money.

For example, commercially available resources should not cost substantially more than the current market rate. Other resources should be costed at a reasonable rate for the nature of the resource. Where the project aims to develop/produce custom resources the reasonable costs of materials and/or production may be included.

In their application, services will be asked to provide a rationale explaining why the proposed resources are necessary to the implementation of the project.

Resources that may be funded include:

- Minor equipment purchases that are directly related to the implementation of the project (e.g.: sensory toys or materials to support specific behaviour guidance strategies; specific cultural resources to support a cultural mentoring or bilingual support project)
- Books and/or other reference material (including participant handouts or workbooks, online resources) that are directly relevant to the strategies being implemented as part of the project (e.g.: if a project is implementing a specific approach to behaviour guidance, then the project may include reference material to help implement and sustain this approach after the project concludes).
- Development/production of resources (e.g.: the cost of developing and/or producing service specific visuals for a project that includes the introduction of visual communication systems)

Resources that cannot be funded include:

- Resources that are not required for the successful implementation of the project
- Major equipment purchases

Reduced need for multiple quotes

In most cases, use of the Price Guide and Quote Builder will remove the need for services to provide multiple quotes to support their application for Innovative Solutions Support.

Where a support provider has the qualifications and experience to deliver the proposed support activities in accordance with the guidance outlined in the relevant Project Guides, and they are charging within the range of prices outlined in the Price Guide, then they will generally be considered to provide value for money.

Services may still approach multiple support providers in relation to a project in order to determine who will be best able to provide the support that they require, however they will not usually be required to seek or submit formal quotes from multiple providers as part of their application.

NB: where the IDFM has concerns about the costs, or the quality of deliverables, of a specific project they retain the right to ask for an alternative quote/s.

Change of Presenter/Facilitator

When developing a quote Support Providers should indicate the qualifications and experience of the presenter/facilitator who will be working on a project. This will enable the calculation of the appropriate hourly rate for the support to be delivered. If, between developing the quote and the project being delivered or during the project, it is necessary to change the presenter/facilitator then the Support Provider should notify the service and Inclusion Professional of the proposed change and review their quote.

If the new presenter/facilitator has equivalent qualifications and experience to the original presenter/facilitator then there is no need to alter the quote. If, however, the new presenter/facilitator has different qualifications or level of experience then the Support Provider should revise the quote to reflect the appropriate hourly rate/s for the new presenter/facilitator.

Where the revised quote is similar to but less than the original (i.e., less than $500) then the Support Provider should discuss with the service and IP how to use the small amount of excess funds to support the implementation of the project.

Where there is a larger difference (i.e.: greater than $500) then the Support Provider should discuss with the service and IP. The IP will contact the IDFM to discuss how the excess funds should be used.

Multiple Presenters/Facilitators

The hourly rates contained in the Price Guide are intended to represent the total hourly cost of the project. In general, it is assumed each session/component of a project will be delivered by a single person.

Where a Support Provider opts to use multiple presenters/facilitators for a session/component of the project then they should only charge the hourly rate contained in the price guide, unless there are exceptional circumstances that make the use of multiple presenters/facilitators necessary.

Examples of when multiple presenters/facilitators may be needed include:

- in a very large service where there are more educators than a single person can reasonably work with
- where a project requires providers with different but complementary expertise in order to address the service's barriers
- where coaching and/or mentoring is required to be delivered in more than one care environment simultaneously.

Where a project requires more than one person to deliver a session/component then the application will need to clearly explain why this is essential to the success of the project. The added cost of any additional presenters/facilitators will be considered when determining whether the project offers value for money.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 1:
XYZ Consulting is asked to participate in an Innovative Solutions project. They have an experienced consultant who is allocated to the project, as well as a new consultant who also participates in the project as part of their orientation to the organisation. In this case, because the use of two consultants is not necessary to the delivery of support to the service but rather is part of XYZ's internal staff induction and training process, the ECEC service is only charged the normal hourly rate for one consultant. XYZ absorbs the cost of the second consultant as it is their business decision to include them in the project.

Scenario 2:
On another project that XYZ Consulting is involved in, they are providing cultural mentoring support to a service where there are a number of children from refugee backgrounds. This is a complex situation, and the service requires support to better understand the children's cultural backgrounds as well as to support them in dealing with the trauma of their experience.

It is challenging to find a single consultant with the necessary cultural knowledge and expertise in childhood trauma. XYZ Consulting propose running the project with two consultants working together – one who can provide mentoring in relation to the children's culture and another who can support educators to respond to the children's trauma related behaviour. In this case, because the use of two consultants with complementary expertise is essential to the success of the project, it would be appropriate to charge for both consultants' work.

How to Determine the Relevant Price Range – Price Matrix

Step 1: Identify the Support Provider's Highest Relevant Qualification

Use this tool to determine a Support Provider's Hourly Base Rate and applicable loadings.

Step 1: Using the left hand column in the matrix below to identify the Support Provider's Highest Relevant Qualification

Step 2: Using the top row in the matrix to identify the Support Provider's Level of Relevant Experience

NB: Relevant experience refers to experience in providing support to ECEC services in relation to inclusive practice

The applicable Base Hourly Rate Level is identify where the Relevant Qualification and Level of Experience meet.

Experience / Qualification	Limited Experience	Medium Experience	Extensive Experience
Diploma	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1
Degree	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2
Higher Degree/Specialisation	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3
* Specialised Knowledge (applies to Cultural Mentoring projects only)	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3

* **NB:** The Specialised Knowledge qualification applies to Cultural Mentoring providers who may not have formal qualifications but have specialised cultural knowledge that enables them to undertake the role of a support provider e.g.: a local Aboriginal Elder

Step 3: Refer to the hourly rate table below to identify the applicable Base Houry Rate.

Hourly Base Rate Range table

Level 1: $110-$150 per hour	Level 2: $150-$200 per hour	Level 3: $200 - $225 per hour

Step 4: Apply Relevant Loadings

Apply any relevant loadings to the Hourly Base Rate for Support Activities being provided to educators in Remote Areas or for the delivery of Professional Development sessions.

Remote Area Loading

Geographic Location determined by MMM	Loading
Region 6	40% of base rate
Region 7	50% of base rate

Professional Development Loading

Preparation Required	Loading
Minimal preparation time Applicable when a Support Provider uses an existing Professional Development package that does not require substantial changes but may require the Support Provider to re-familiarise themselves with the content and/or update some minor details without making major changes to content or requiring additional research.	25% of base rate
Medium preparation time Applicable when a Support Provider adapts an existing Professional Development package and makes moderate adjustments to the content, customises details to the specific context of the service and/or develops some new materials (e.g.: a new handout).	50% of base rate
Extensive preparation time when a Support Provider develops a new package or makes major changes to an existing package to suit the specific context of the service.	100% of base rate

Notes: Application of Loadings

- In the case of Professional Development delivered in remote locations both loadings apply.
- For Professional Development delivered online to remote locations only the Professional Development loading applies.
- For travel to remote locations the Remote Area Loading applies to travel time.

Using the Price Matrix

Support Provider Qualifications and Experience

The appropriate hourly rate for Innovative Solutions Support Projects is dependent on a support provider's relevant qualification/s and experience, as well as on the type of support activities being provided.

Relevant Qualifications

A qualification is considered relevant when it directly relates to the support activities being provided.

Relevant qualifications may include the following:

- Diploma
- Degree (Education, Psychology or Allied Health e.g.: Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy)
- Higher Degree/Specialisation (including AHPRA Registered Psychologist; Honours or Postgraduate Study with a specific focus that is relevant to the support to be provided; recognised certification in a specific evidence-based approach e.g.: Circle of Security, Marte Meo, Conscious Discipline)

Note: It is anticipated that a Support Provider with an Early Childhood degree would also hold an additional qualification or certification.

- Specialist Knowledge- no formal qualifications are required. (Applies to Cultural Mentoring only)

Specialised Knowledge providers should be able to substantiate their knowledge and demonstrate that they are an appropriate/approved person to share this knowledge with ECEC services. This may be through their position in the community (e.g.: a local Aboriginal Elder or respected community leader) or via references from such members of the local community. They should outline their expertise in a Provider Statement of Expertise. Their specialised knowledge should be relevant to the specific barriers to be addressed by a proposed project and also relevant to the ECEC service's work with children and/or families.

Example Scenarios

Scenario 1:

Jamila works as an Educational Consultant providing professional development, coaching and mentoring to ECEC services. She is a qualified Early Childhood Teacher who has also completed a Master of Education.

In relation to Innovative Solutions Support Projects, it is unlikely that her master's degree will be directly relevant to the support activities that she is able to provide an ECEC service. Her highest relevant qualification would most likely be her Early Childhood Degree.

Scenario 2:

Anthea is also an Educational Consultant who has an early childhood teaching degree and a master's degree in Inclusive Education. Because her master's degree is focused specifically on Inclusive Education it is more likely to be relevant to the support activities, she is able to provide. It will depend on the exact nature of the specific project, but her highest relevant qualification is likely to be her master's degree.

Level of Experience

For the purposes of Innovative Solutions Support, support provider experience is divided into three different levels:

- Limited Experience: 0-2 years
- Medium Experience: 2-4 years
- Extensive Experience: 5 years or more

Experience refers to the delivery of the kind of support to be provided through the project. For example, if a Support Provider is providing coaching and mentoring support in relation to behaviour guidance then they should count experience in delivering this kind of support, not other experience.

Example Scenarios – Determining Relevant Experience

Scenario 1:

Ruth has 20 years' experience as an early childhood teacher working in early childhood education and care services. She has been a registered Circle of Security Classroom Coach (COSC) for the past year. Ruth now works as a Behaviour Guidance Consultant with an organisation that provides support to ECEC services. While her experience as a teacher is relevant to and will strongly inform her work in her new role it is not directly related to the coaching and mentoring support she will be providing ECEC educators. Her level of experience would therefore be considered as limited (0-2 years).

Scenario 2:

Jane is a registered psychologist who has, for the past four years, worked with young children presenting with challenging behaviours and with the ECEC services that they attend. This experience is directly relevant to her work providing behaviour guidance support to ECEC services through Innovative Solutions Support projects. Her level of experience would therefore be

When calculating years of experience , it is assumed that the relevant experience is the predominant activity undertaken by the Support Provider on a full-time basis. If this is not the case then experience should be calculated proportionally to reflect the actual amount of experience gained on a full-time basis.

For example, if a Support Provider has worked part-time (2.5 days per week) for three years providing support to ECEC services this would count as 1.5 years equivalent full-time experience.

Similarly, if a Support Provider only occasionally undertakes relevant experience, in the course of other work, then they should only count the time spent on the relevant activities toward their level of experience.

Please refer to the example Scenario on the next page.

Example Scenario – Determining Years of Experience

Scenario:

Lily works as a counsellor for a large counselling organization and predominantly provides trauma support to adults. Occasionally she also works on projects that involve children . She has been in her current role for 6 years , and in that time she has worked on two projects supporting children who were attending ECEC services and/or educators working with children who have experienced trauma. The total time spent on these projects is 6 months. When calculating her experience for an Innovative Solutions Project she would count it as limited (on the basis of the six months directly relevant work with children and ECEC services) rather than extensive (based on her six years in the current role).

Quote Builder (use this tool to work out what to include in your quote)

Professional Services

- The Hourly Base rate for Bicultural Support activities is up to $80 per hour
- For all other types of Support Activities, use the Price Matrix to determine the Hourly Base Rate and any applicable loadings (e.g.: Remote Area or Professional Development)
- Hours quoted must match hours indicated in the services Project Plan
- Resources quoted, must be essential to the project and less than 10% of total cost of the quote

Type of Support Activity	**Number of Hours**	**Hourly Rate**	**Cost** (excluding GST)	**GST** (if applicable)
Professional Development				
Mentoring				
Coaching				
Bilingual Support				
Resources				
Subtotal				

Travel and Accommodation

- For Reasonable Accommodation and Expenses rates refer to the ATO Tax Determination 2023/3
- For Airfares and Taxis/Transfers estimates should be based on average available rates for the relevant location
- For Travel Time use Modified Monash Model to determine location category and Price Guide to determine relevant amount of travel time to be claimed. The hourly rate for travel time is the Base Rate + any applicable Remote Area Loading.

Type of Expense	**Quantity**	**Details**	**Cost** (Excluding GST)	**GST**
Car Travel – From/To	Number of Trips	Kms per trip (@85c/km)	Total	GST
Travel Time – From/To	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total	GST
Car hire/Taxis/Transfers – From/To	Number of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Airfares – From/To	Numbers of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Accommodation – Location	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Meals/expenses	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Subtotal				

Subtotal of Professional Services + Travel/Accommodation (Excluding GST)		
GST		
Total		

Checklist of Requirements

Make sure that your quote includes the following:

- ☐ Your registered business name and contact details
- ☐ Your ABN*
- ☐ The date of the quote
- ☐ The quote is addressed to the service
- ☐ An itemised listing of each component of the support to be provided

  This section of the quote must match the details outlined in the services Innovative Solutions Support project plan. This plan, along with your quote, will be submitted to the IDFM with the service's Project application.

  Include:
  - ○ The types of support activities to be undertaken (e.g.: Professional Development, Coaching, Mentoring, Bilingual Support, Provision/Development of Resources)
  - ○ The number of hours and the hourly rate for each support activity
  - ○ The details and cost of any relevant resources.

  Using the Quote Builder tool will help you to ensure you have included all the relevant information
- ☐ An itemised listing of any additional costs, such as travel and accommodation (The Quote Builder tool will help to ensure you have included all the relevant information)
- ☐ An overall summary of project hours and project duration
- ☐ An overall total cost for the project, with GST shown as a separate component.

*** If do not have an ABN, contact the IDFM at IDFMInnovative@ku.com.au for more information about how to submit a quote.**

Example Scenarios and Quotes

Example 1 – Regional Location

Scenario

Janice is a registered psychologist with over 10 years' experience in private practice. She provides support to early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in relation to guiding children's behaviour. She is approached by XYZ Early Learning Centre to be the provider for an Innovative Solutions Support project. Janice agrees to provide the following support over a six month period:

- 5 x 2 hr Professional Development (PD) Sessions
- 5 x 6 hr Coaching Sessions
- 5 x 4 hr Mentoring Sessions

To facilitate each of the PD sessions Janice will need to tailor the content of some PD sessions she has already developed to suit the service's context.

XYZ Early Learning Centre is located in Shepparton (regional Victoria) while Janice is based in Melbourne. There is no suitable provider in Shepparton who is able to provide the support that the service require, so it is reasonable for the service to use Janice as a provider for the project. The project design combines coaching and mentoring sessions for each of the different care environments at the service together on the same days, to minimize the number of times that Janice needs to travel to the service.

Janice will travel to the service to provide the first PD session in person in order to meet educators, view the care environments and begin to establish relationships with the educator team. She will follow this up with a combined day of in person coaching and mentoring the following week. Subsequent PD sessions will be undertaken remotely via Zoom, with in person coaching and mentoring occurring in the week after each session.

Janice will therefore visit the service 6 times over the course of the project (for 1 PD session and 5 days of coaching and mentoring).

Each round trip will involve 380km car travel and 4 hours travel time. Janice will stay in Shepparton overnight during each trip at a motel that costs $150 per night and will incur costs for meals/incidentals at $173.55 per trip.

To determine her Professional Development hourly rate, Janice uses the Price Matrix.

As a registered psychologist with 10 years' relevant experience, the base rate that she is able to charge is Level 3 ($200-$225 per hour). She is also able to include a 50% Professional Development Loading Rate for medium preparation time.

Janice is charging a PD hourly rate of $225 + a PD loading rate of $112.50 = $337.50

To determine her Travel and Accommodation rates, Janice uses the ATO TD 2023/3 rates. She refers to both tables 2 and 4. She also applies the ATO Kilometer rate for distance travelled.

Using the Monash Modified Model 2019 she determines her travel time allowances, which for travel to Shepparton aligns with MMM regions 1-3 (metro and regional centre): Up to ½ hr. each way.

GST

Janice is registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) and applies GST to her quote where applicable.

Example Quote Builder

Professional Services

Type of Support Activity	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Cost (excluding GST)	GST (if applicable)
Professional Development	10	$337.50	$3375.00	$337.50
Mentoring	30	$225	$6750	$675.00
Coaching	20	$225	$4500	$450.00
Bilingual Support	0	0	0	0
Resources			0	0
Subtotal			**$14,625**	**$1462.50**

Travel and Accommodation

Type of Expense	Quantity	Details	Cost (Excluding GST)	GST
Car Travel – From/To	Number of Trips	Kms per trip (@85c/km)	*Total*	GST
Melbourne CBD - Shepparton	6	380	$1938	N/A
Travel Time – From/To	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total	GST
1 hour per return trip	6	$225	$1350	$135
Car hire/Taxis/Transfers – From/To	Number of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Airfares – From/To	Numbers of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Accommodation – Location	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Shepparton Region 3 (Regional Centre)	6	$150	$900	$90
Meals/expenses	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
1 x Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner + incidentals	6	$173.55	1041.30	$104.13
Subtotal			**$5229.30**	**$329.13**

Subtotal of Professional Services + Travel/Accommodation (Excluding GST)	$19,854.30	
GST		$1791.63
Total	**$21,645.93**	

Example 2 – Metropolitan Location

Marta works for a Brisbane based organisation that provides support to families and ECEC services in relation to children with additional needs. Marta is a newly qualified speech pathologist and has been assigned to work on a Specialised Training and Advice Innovative Solutions Support Project with QRS Child Care Centre. The project focuses on supporting educators to include children with delayed speech and language. This support will make use of the organisation's existing training materials with some minor customisation to meet the specific needs of the service.

The service is located 10kms away in a neighbouring suburb to Marta's organisation. Travel time between the two locations is only 10 minutes each way.

Marta will provide educators at the service with Professional Development, Mentoring and Coaching support activities as a part of the project in the follow ways:

- 4 x 1.5 hrs. Professional Development Sessions
- 8 x 2 hrs. Coaching Sessions
- 4 x 1 hrs. Mentoring Sessions (telephone support)

To determine her Professional Development Hourly Base rate and additional Professional Development Loading, Martha's organisation uses the Price Matrix.

As a new Speech Pathologist, Martha's Hourly Base Rate can be charged at Level 1 ($110 -$150 per hour). As minimal preparation time is required to tailor an existing professional development package, they can charge and additional 25% of the Hourly Base rate.

For the Professional Development component of this Project, Martha's organisation is charging a PD hourly base rate of $150 + a PD loading rate of $37.50 = $187.50

For the Coaching and Mentoring components of this Project, Martha's organisation is charging an hourly base rate of $150

To determine her Travel rates, Martha's organisation uses the ATO TD 2023/3 rates.

They apply the ATO Kilometer rate of $.85c per km travelled. In this instance, 20kms per round trip.

Using the Monash Modified Model 2019 they determines Martha's **travel time allowances**. Travel undertaken in the Brisbane area aligns with MMM Region 1 (Metropolitan Area). Marta's organisation can claim 10 minutes of travel time each way at her Hourly Base Rate of $150.

GST

Martha's organisation is registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) and applies GST to their quote where applicable.

Example Quote Builder

Professional Services

Type of Support Activity	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Cost (excluding GST)	GST (if applicable)
Professional Development	6	$187.50	$1125	$112.50
Mentoring	16	$150	$2400	$240.00
Coaching	4	$150	$600	$60.00
Bilingual Support	0	0	0	0
Resources			0	0
Subtotal			**$4,125**	**$412.50**

Travel and Accommodation

Type of Expense	Quantity	Details	Cost (Excluding GST)	GST
Car Travel – From/To	Number of Trips	Kms (@85c/km)	*Total*	GST
Brisbane based workplace/Brisbane based ECEC service	6	20kms	$102	$10.20
Travel Time – From/To	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total	GST
20 mins per return trip x 6	2	$150	$300	$30
Car hire/Taxis/Transfers – From/To	Number of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Airfares – From/To	Numbers of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Accommodation – Location	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Meals/expenses	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Subtotal			**$402**	**$40.20**

Subtotal of Professional Services + Travel/Accommodation (Excluding GST)	$4,527.00	
GST		$452.70
Total	**$4979.70**	

Example 3 – Remote Location

Emma is a behaviour guidance specialist with a Master's degree in Inclusive Education and 8 years' experience working with ECEC services. She is based in Perth and is approached to participate in an Innovative Solutions Support project by a service located near Port Hedland, WA. There is no local support provider who can deliver the support that the service is seeking so it is reasonable for the service to access support from further afield. Emma has an existing Professional Development package that she will need to moderately tailor to meet the needs of the service.

In discussion with the service and their Inclusion Professional, Emma agrees to provide the following support over a 4 month period:

- 4 x 2 hr. tailored PD sessions
- 8 x 2 hr. coaching sessions
- 8 x 2 hr. online mentoring sessions

In order to reduce the need for extensive travel, the PD and coaching sessions are planned to occur in 2 day blocks. Emma will deliver a PD session in the evening and then undertake the coaching sessions with educators the following day. Over the course of the project Emma will need to visit the service in person four times. Between visits she will maintain contact with educators via 8 online mentoring sessions.

Emma will fly from Perth to Port Headland return, four times. She will require one night's accommodation per trip and incur associated meal costs. She will use taxis to travel to and from Perth and Port Hedland airports, and also for travel within Port Hedland from her accommodation to the service.

Emma's travel time (door to door) will be approximately 4 hrs. each way, totaling 8 hrs. per trip.

Determining Rates

Emma uses the Quote Builder to help document her quote. She uses the Price Matrix to determine her Hourly Base Rate and Additional Loadings along with the Modified Monash Model to determine Port Headlands geographical location for travel time and Remote Area loading purposes.

Rates for Professional Services

As a specialist with 8 years' relevant experience, Emma can:

- Charge a level 2 Hourly Base rate ($150-$200)
- Apply a Professional Development Loading rate for Medium Preparation Time to tailor PD materials/content to the identified needs of the service, calculated at 50% of her Hourly Base Rate
- As Port Hedland is classified as a remote area (Category 6 on the Modified Monash Model) Emma can also apply a Remote Area Loading rate, calculated at 40% of her Hourly Base Rate + gst for work that she undertakes in Port Hedland.

Hourly Base Rate
Emma charges an Hourly Base Rate of $194

Additional Loadings

For tailored **Professional Development activities** provided at the service, Emma is charging:

Hourly Base Rate	+	Professional Development Loading (50% of base rate)	+	Remote Area Loading (40% of base rate)	= Total
$194	+	$97	+	$77.60	**$368.60 per hour**

For face to face **Coaching** sessions provided at the service Emma is charging:

Hourly Base Rate	+	Remote Area Loading (40% of base rate)	= Total
$194	+	$77.60	**$271.60 per hour**

For online **Mentoring** session Emma is charging:

Hourly Base Rate
$194

Travel and Accommodation

Flights

Emma charges for a flexible economy class fare to allow for any changes of dates, which may occur, at a cost of $1350 per trip.

Taxi fares

- To/from Emma's base in Perth to the Perth airport $50
- To/from the Perth Airport to Emma's accommodation $50
- To/from Emma's accommodation to the ECEC service $25

Travel time

Based on the Modified Monash Model and NDIS travel allowances, Emma can charge 1 hr. travel time for every 2 hrs. she spends travelling. Emma travel time is 8 hrs. per trip. She is charging 4hrs per trip at her base rate (+ 40% remote area loading) for her travel time on each trip.

Hourly Base Rate	+	Remote Area Loading	= Total
$194	+	$77.60	$271.60 per hour

Accommodation and Meals

Emma stays at a Hotel in Port Headland at a cost of $163.65 inclusive of gst per night. She will also incur meals costs at $153.50 inclusive of gst each visit.

GST

Emma is registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) and applies GST to her quote where applicable.

Example Quote Builder

Professional Services

Type of Support Activity	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Cost (excluding GST)	GST (if applicable)
Professional Development	8	$368.60	$2,948.80	$294.88
Mentoring	16	$194	$3,104	$310.40
Coaching	16	$271.60	$4,345.60	$434.56
Bilingual Support	0	0	0	0
Resources			0	0
Subtotal			**$10,398.40**	**$1039.84**

Travel and Accommodation

Type of Expense	Quantity	Details	Cost (Excluding GST)	GST (if applicable)
Car Travel – From/To	Number of Trips	Kms per trip (@85c/km)	Total	
Travel Time – From/To	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total	
½ of total 8 hr. travel time per trip	16	$271.60	$4,345.60	$434.56
Car hire/Taxis/Transfers – From/To	Number of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Perth base - Perth airport Port Headland airport – Port Headland accommodation	16	$50	$800	$80
Port Headland accommodation - ECEC service	8	$25	$200	$20
Airfares – From/To	Numbers of Trips	Est. Cost per Trip	Total	GST
Perth – Port Hedland	4 return flights	$1350	$5,400	$540
Accommodation – Location	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
Port Headland	4	$163.65	$654.60	$65.46
Meals/expenses	Number of Nights	Est. Cost per Night	Total	GST
1 x breakfast, lunch, dinner	4	$153.50	$614	$61.40
Subtotal			**$12,014.20**	**$1201.42**

Subtotal of Professional Services + Travel/Accommodation (Excluding GST)	$22,412.6	
GST		$2241.26
Total	**$24,653.86**	