

Advice to members on ACT Budget submissions

Introduction

The ACT Budget 2022-23 is scheduled to be handed down on 2 August 2022. Public consultations are open until 27 May 2022 via the [Your Say website](#). ACTCOSS encourages members and peaks to make submissions to the ACT Budget consultation process. Please also share your submission with ACTCOSS so we can help amplify your messages.

This document provides a template for submissions which includes advice on presenting financial information, and linking to the [ACT Wellbeing Framework](#). It is followed by brief advice on referencing the [Counting the Costs Report](#). Members and Peaks are encouraged to refer to this report and draw from the key messages given below in their own budget submissions.

Treasury officials have informed ACTCOSS that since late 2021, the wellbeing framework has been used to assess the impact business cases for investment across all sections of government. They are using a Wellbeing Impact Assessment tool, see <https://www.act.gov.au/wellbeing/wellbeing-framework/embedding-wellbeing>. If you have capacity, it may be useful for you to apply this template to each of your budget asks and attach to your submission. [Attachment 1](#) is a cheat sheet prepared by ACTCOSS which summarises the domains and indicators in the [ACT Wellbeing Framework](#).

Budget Template

We recommend you limit the length of your main submission or executive summary to three pages, and that you include up to five priorities for funding. We recommend that any further detail supporting your submission is annexed.

- Commitment from [Parliamentary and Governing Agreement](#) (for example: *Fund a dedicated housing and homelessness officer to provide advocacy and support to same sex attracted and gender diverse people*)
 - Recommended Action/s (for example: *Create dedicated housing and homelessness officer positions*)
 - Identified Need (include evidence where available, annexing the detail if available and if extensive)
 - Addressing Need (detailed breakdown of recommended action and your organisation's capacity to respond to problem)
- Funding Request
 - ✓ include your specific funding ask, annexing detail on the workings if available
 - ✓ if possible, estimate the outcomes/benefits in financial terms which will result if they are funded, referring to evidence if available
 - ✓ if possible, estimate the savings to other areas of budget expenditure

✓ ensure you reference the relevant domain/ indicators in the wellbeing framework

- Contribution to Wellbeing Framework - see Attachment 1 for a cheat sheet on the wellbeing framework indicators
 - Domain (for example: *Housing and Home*)
 - Indicators (for example: *reducing homelessness; increasing housing suitability – short paragraphs on how funding ask will operate*)

Key messages from Counting the Costs Report

ACTCOSS recommends that Members integrate some of the key issues from the Counting the Costs Report in their submissions. In doing so, please use your own examples to illustrate how the issue impacts your delivery of services¹. **Key messages:**

- The community sector are **key partners** in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic; have seen an **increase in demand** for services due to the pandemic; and need adequate funding to ensure **sustainability** and **effective service delivery**
- Encouraging the Government to **adopt** the *Counting the Costs Report's revised methodology* for the community sector **indexation** rate (see p.3 for summary; pp. 29 – 32, 37 – 39 for detail)
- **The report highlights inadequate funding** to cover:
 - **Staffing:** including adequate levels at the appropriate classification, enabling professional development, and appropriate measures for backfilling vacancies to ensure client needs are met (see p.1 for summary; pp. 18-22 for detail) **Highlight examples from your service where staffing costs are not adequately covered.**
 - **Full cost coverage:** for cost of delivering funded services for essential infrastructure and overheads such as regulatory compliance, technology (see p.2 for summary; pp. 24-26, 32-36, 40-41 for detail). **Highlight examples from your service where costs are not covered.**
 - **Engagement:** as the Government works with the sector on **commissioning** processes, ensuring grants explicitly support organisations to participate in policy and program development (see p.2 for summary; pp. 22-24 for detail). **Highlight the unfunded time spent by your services in these processes.**
 - **Monitoring and evaluation:** to enable the sector to have adaptive management of programs, with flexibility to respond to rising demand and clients with more complex needs. (see p.2 for summary; pp. 27-28 for detail). **Highlight current M&E practice that supports your program management/if possible, identify % of budget currently used to do these activities**
- **Fix ageing community facilities:** the pressures faced with addressing COVID-19 such as lack of facilities to meet increased demand for services, increased space needs to ensure physical distancing and more staff. **Highlight any significant maintenance issues including [air quality/plumbing/insufficient space/lack of accessibility of premises] that remain unaddressed by ACT Property Group and impact on your ability to meet the needs of vulnerable Canberrans**

¹ All page numbers refer to pdf version on ACTCOSS website

Attachment 1: Wellbeing Framework – Cheat sheet

Wellbeing Framework							
<i>Domain</i>	<i>Indicators</i>						
Access and connectivity	service accessibility	liveable city	transport	digital access			
Economy	employment	economic performance	business conditions and diversity	income inequality			
Education and lifelong learning	student belonging	learning for life	early childhood education	learning growth	equity of educational outcomes		
Environment and climate	healthy and resilient natural environment	connection to nature	climate resilient environment and community				
Governance and institutions	trust in government	trust in other institutions	feeling that voice and perspective matter	access to justice and restorative practice	human rights		
Health	overall health	best start to life	life expectancy	mental health	access to health services	healthy lifestyle	
Housing and home	homelessness	rental stress	housing affordability and availability	housing suitability			
Identity and belonging	sense of belonging and inclusion	support for multiculturalism	arts and culture	connection to Canberra	Valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and recognising our Traditional Custodians		
Living standards	income levels	net worth	cost of living	financial position			
Safety	feeling safe	victims of crime	domestic and family violence	road safety	workplace safety	emergency services	community resilience to emergencies
Social Connection	sense of social connection	levels of loneliness	levels of volunteering	participation in community events and activities			
Time	quality of time	work-life balance	time spent travelling within Canberra	unpaid work including caring			