

Grants program to support a 24-hour economy

Example Gender Impact Assessment

February 2025



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Steps 1 - 3 in the Gender Impact Assessment Process



This case study is based on a hypothetical proposal.
It is intended for guidance purposes only.

Summary of proposal

The proposal is for a grants program to support a 24-hour economy in New South Wales and to ensure safety and public amenities for night-time workers.

Grants to support the state's night-time economy will be available under the following four categories:

- To improve lighting and safety particularly for workers going to and from work after dark.
- To support collaboration between health and education campuses and businesses in identified night-time worker centres (that is, areas with high concentration of hospitals, education campuses, and manufacturing hubs).
- Open street programs to support local businesses to work together to unlock the potential of public spaces and draw more visitors to areas.
- To support live performance venues.

Question 1: How does the issue you are seeking to address affect women, men or gender diverse people differently?

Workers in the night-time economy are often paid less and have less secure work.¹ Around a fifth (21 per cent) of the overall NSW workforce work between the hours of 6pm and 6am. This includes employees in vital sectors like health, transport, freight and manufacturing.² Recent research reveals the number of people working in the NSW night-time economy is forecast to grow between 5 per cent and 13 per cent by 2031.³

There are a number of ways a grants program to support the NSW night-time economy may have different impacts for women, men and gender diverse people:

a) Gender composition of the night-time economy

The top industry by the number of night-time employees is Health Care and Social Assistance (166,000 employees), followed by Accommodation and Food Services and Arts and Recreation Services (155,200).⁴ The Health Care and Social Assistance sector in NSW is female dominated, with women making up 75.6 per cent of the workforce (as at August 2024).⁵ Accommodation and Food Services and Arts and Recreation Services sectors are more gender balanced in NSW, with 52.7 per cent and 50.7 percent female employees, respectively, as at August 2024.⁶

¹ NSW Government, 2024, *NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy: A new state of night*.

² NSW Government, 2024, *NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy: A new state of night*.

³ Research conducted in 2024 by SGS Economics & Planning cited in NSW Government, 2024, *NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy: A new state of night*.

⁴ NSW Government, 2024, *NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy: A new state of night*.

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, Table 06, released August 2024.

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, Table 06, released August 2024.

In contrast, the third largest night-time sector, Transport, Postal and Warehousing sector (which employs approximately 90,500 people in night-time hours) is male dominated with females making up only 22.4 per cent of the workforce in NSW in August 2024.⁷ The next largest sector, retail employees (87,100 night-time workers) has slightly more female employees than males (at 54.5 per cent).⁸ There is no data available on gender diverse employees in these sectors.

This data has implications for how grants to support the night-time economy recognise the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women, as a large proportion of the night-time workforce, particularly in the health care and social assistance industry. It also provides an opportunity to identify strategies to support greater male participation in healthcare services and actions to address night-time safety which may be impacting female participation in the transport, postal and warehousing sector.

b) Prevalence of sexual harassment in night-time economy workplaces

There is a high incidence of sexual harassment experienced by female workers in the night-time economy. For example, research shows that gender-based violence, particularly sexual harassment, is a serious and persistent problem for young women and gender diverse hospitality workers.⁹

A 2022 survey into sexual harassment in Australia workplaces found that a significant proportion of sexual harassment occurs across four industry groups.¹⁰ Notably, all of these industries are central to the night-time economy in NSW. Almost half the incidents (46 per cent) of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 5 years were from the following four industry groups: Health Care and Social Assistance (14 per cent), Retail Trade (14 per cent), Education and Training (9 per cent), and Accommodation and Food Services (9 per cent).¹¹

Further, the proportion of sexual harassment incidents, compared to the overall workforce, was over-represented in Retail Trade (14 per cent of incidents compared to 10 per cent of the workforce), Accommodation and Food Services (9 per cent of incidents compared to 7 per cent of the workforce), and Arts and Recreation Services (3 per cent of incidents compared to 2 per cent of the workforce).¹²

NSW businesses are required to prevent harm to workers from sexual harassment.¹³ SafeWork NSW's *Respect at Work Strategy 2023-2027: preventing sexual harassment* has identified Accommodation and Food Services (Hospitality), Healthcare and Social Assistance, and Retail as priority industries based on reported prevalence, workplace incident data, workers' compensation claims data, and the proportion of high-risk worker groups and workplace factors that pose a higher risk.¹⁴ There is scope for collaboration with these initiatives and projects to support the night-time economy.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, Table 06, released August 2024.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, Table 06, released August 2024.

⁹ Coffey J, Sharp M, Molnar L, Farrugia, D, Threadgold, S, 2023, 'Gender, sexual harassment, and violence in the hospitality industry', Newcastle Youth Studies Centre Report, University of Newcastle, p.4. See also 2022 data provided by Not So Hospitable in She's A Crowd, 2023. *Safer Spaces: Gendered Safety and the Night Time Economy*.

¹⁰ Australian Human Rights Commission 2022, *Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces*.

¹¹ Australian Human Rights Commission 2022, *Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces*.

¹² Australian Human Rights Commission 2022, *Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces*.

¹³ Safe Work NSW 2023, *NSW Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment 2023-27*.

¹⁴ Safe Work NSW 2023, *NSW Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment 2023-27*.

c) The live music sector

Primary workers¹⁵ in the Australian live music sector are disproportionately male (73 per cent).¹⁶ An independent review into the contemporary Australian music sector in 2022 found that there are high rates of sexual harassment, sexual abuse and bullying across the music industry and formal reporting of harmful behaviours is infrequent.¹⁷ The review found that women do not thrive to the same extent as men in the music industry, and that young people from diverse backgrounds¹⁸ can be at particular risk of harm and poor employment conditions.¹⁹

d) Women and gender diverse people often have different perceptions of safety, particularly at night

Evidence shows that women and gender diverse people often have different perceptions of safety, compared to men, which impacts their transport choices and access to public spaces, particularly at night.²⁰ In NSW, women are twice as likely to feel unsafe after dark as men (59 per cent of women compared to 31 per cent of men).²¹ In fact, 42 per cent of women surveyed in the NSW Safer Cities Survey felt unsafe after dark 'most' or 'all of the time.' Some groups feel even less safe in public spaces compared to all women and men surveyed, including First Nations women, LGBTIQ+ women, women and men with disability, women aged under 25, and women over 75.²² Women also report feeling unsafe in areas near public transport such as pedestrian subways and bridges, stations and bike paths.²³

LGBTIQ+ people experience gender-based violence in public spaces differently and face additional transphobia and homophobia. Experiences differ by gender within the LGBTIQ+ community. LGBTIQ+ women are more likely to feel unsafe at night (64 per cent) compared to LGBTIQ+ men (28 per cent).²⁴ Initiatives that might work to make women feel safer, such as more public surveillance or additional security, can decrease LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse people's feelings of safety, with one participant in the Safer Cities Survey stating 'As an LGBTIQ+ person I feel LESS safe when there is a higher security presence'.²⁵

The planning and design of public spaces can impact on feelings of safety in public spaces at night.²⁶ For example, factors such as lighting, clear signage, opportunities for natural surveillance and landscaping which allows for clear sightlines are important design features to increase feelings of safety in public spaces at night.²⁷ Public art or murals that depict a diversity of people, including gender diverse people, women from different cultural backgrounds and women with disabilities have also been shown to increase feelings of safety.²⁸

¹⁵ Defined as jobs at the core of the live music sector.

¹⁶ Commonwealth of Australia 2023, Australia's live music sector: an occupation-based analysis Working paper, March 2023.

¹⁷ MAPN Consulting Pty Ltd 2022, Raising Their Voices: Report into Sexual Harm, Sexual Harassment and Systemic Discrimination in the Contemporary Music Industry, p.9. This finding is also supported by a recent UK inquiry conducted in the UK by the Women and Equalities Committee. 2024. Misogyny in Music, Second Report of Session 2023–24, HC 129.

¹⁸ Including First Nations people, people of colour, people with disability and LGBTIQ+ people.

¹⁹ MAPN Consulting Pty Ltd 2022, Raising Their Voices: Report into Sexual Harm, Sexual Harassment and Systemic Discrimination in the Contemporary Music Industry.

²⁰ See, for example, Women's Health East 2020, Creating safe and inclusive public spaces for women, WHE, Melbourne, p.8 and GET IT: Gender Equality Toolkit in Transport.

²¹ Transport for NSW 2023, Safe Cities Survey Report.

²² Transport for NSW 2023, Safe Cities Survey Report.

²³ Transport for NSW 2023, Safe Cities Survey Report

²⁴ Transport for NSW 2023, Safe Cities Survey Report.

²⁵ Transport for NSW 2023, Safe Cities Survey Report.

²⁶ Transport NSW 2024, Great Places Toolkit.

²⁷ City of Whittlesea 2017, Gender Equity in Design Guidelines, City of Whittlesea.

²⁸ Women's Health East, 2020, Creating safe and inclusive public spaces for women, Melbourne.

e) Women and gender diverse people experience increased risk of gender-based violence in public spaces, particularly at night

The [Free To Be](#) online mapping tool indicated that sexual harassment was the main problem experienced by women in Sydney at night (69 per cent of location pins for those commuting at night for work and a significantly higher 80 per cent for those women in the city at night for recreation).²⁹ also found that women and LGBTIQ+ people regularly experience sexual harassment and sexual violence in and around licensed venues at night.³⁰ Public transport is also frequently cited as a location for sexual violence and harassment.³¹

LGBTIQ+ people face compounded forms of violence and harassment due to the intersection of gender-based discrimination with homophobia and transphobia. These overlapping prejudices contribute to heightened rates of violence and harassment experienced by LGBTIQ+ people.³²

Other additional identities can lead to different experiences of safety within the LGBTIQ+ community. For example, one study found that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) transgender women experienced more frequent sexual harassment than non-CALD transgender women and cisgender women. Specifically, 70 per cent of CALD transgender women were harassed 10 or more times, compared to 40 per cent of non-CALD transgender women and 56 per cent of cisgender women.³³

f) Access to transport and amenities at night

Safety impacts the way women and gender diverse people travel. For example, 78 per cent of women change their route and 76 per cent of women use multiple forms of transport to enhance safety.³⁴ However, a study showed that women commuting for work at night were less likely to avoid locations where they had experienced harassment or violence. This likely reflects the fact that when commuting at night, women often have fewer transport options.³⁵

Transportation options are more limited at night. For example, night train services often stop by midnight. The consultation to inform the [NSW 24 Hour Economy Strategy](#) revealed that the lack of reliable and late-running public transport and access to rideshare and taxis outside Sydney is a barrier to people going out at night.³⁶ There are also fewer places for night-time workers to eat, shop, exercise and seek recreation at or after work.³⁷

g) Night-time activities

In addition to safety concerns, the night-time activities which are supported in local areas will also impact those benefitting from grants to support the night-time economy. For example, women are more likely to attend cultural venues and events compared to men (68 per cent compared to 59 per cent).³⁸

²⁹ Committee for Sydney 2019, [Safety after dark: Creating a city for women living and working in Sydney](#).

³⁰ Bucirde et al. 2024, [Not So Hospitable Sexual Harassment in the Adelaide Hospitality Industry](#). Melbourne Centre for Cities, University of Melbourne.

³¹ Loukaitou-Sideris A, & Ceccato V, 2020, [Sexual harassment on transit: Evidence from the literature](#). In V. Ceccato and A. Loukaitou-Sideris (Eds.), [Transit crime and sexual violence in cities: International evidence and prevention](#) pp. 12–23; Ison J, Forsdike K, Henry N, Hooker L, Taft A. 2023. "You're just constantly on alert": Women and Gender-Diverse People's Experiences of Sexual Violence on Public Transport. [J Interpers Violence](#). 2023 Nov;38(21-22), pp. 11617-1164.

³² OurWatch, [Preventing violence against LGBTIQ+ people](#)

³³ Ussher et al. 2020, [Crossing the line: Lived experience of sexual violence among trans women of colour from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in Australia](#).

³⁴ She's A Crowd and Transport for NSW, [Concept Validation Report: Safety After Dark, 2020](#) cited in Transport for NSW. [Future Transport Strategy](#).

³⁵ Committee for Sydney. 2019. [Safety after dark: Creating a city for women living and working in Sydney](#).

³⁶ NSW Government 2024, [NSW 24-Hour Economy Strategy: A new state of night](#).

³⁷ Business Sydney and Urbis 2023, [Improving Women's Engagement in the Night time Economy: 10 point plan](#).

³⁸ Park S, Lee J, Curl S and Brook S 2024, [Social Factors in Cultural Participation: Factsheet 2 – Gender and Social Status](#). Creative Australia, University of Canberra, RMIT University.

Question 2: What are the expected positive impacts of the proposal on women, men or gender diverse people?

Grant categories 1 and 2 are focused on improving safety and amenities for workers in the night-time economy

Grant category 1 (to improve lighting and safety, particularly for workers going to and from work after dark) and category 2 (to support collaboration between health and education campuses and businesses in identified night-time worker centres) are focused on improving safety and amenities for night-time workers. These grants are expected to have positive impacts on:

1. Economic opportunity and advancement:

- These grants will provide funding for projects to improve perceptions of safety in NSW cities and towns, and support safe and reliable transport and amenities, particularly for women and gender diverse people travelling to and from work. It is anticipated this will contribute to greater opportunity for women and gender diverse people to take part in the night-time workforce and generate income for local businesses and transport operators.
- Improving the safety of night-time venues and activities will encourage people of all genders to enjoy night-time precincts across NSW which will contribute to supporting the State's night-time economy.

2. Health and wellbeing

- Safe movement to workplaces and night-time venues for people of all genders will contribute to increased wellbeing of workers and patrons in the 24-hour economy.
- Projects funded through these grants will contribute to a welcoming, clean and safe night-time environment, improving the wellbeing of local communities.

3. Participation and empowerment

- These grants will promote the involvement of women and gender diverse people in design and implementation. This will include meaningful engagement with stakeholders such as women-led businesses, local community organisations and employees of diverse backgrounds.
- It is anticipated that projects funded through these grants will help increase women's freedom of movement and opportunity to participate in the night-time economy.

Grant categories 3 and 4 focused on generating night-time activity

Grant category 3 (open street programs to support local businesses) and category 4 (to support live music venues) are focused on increasing visitation and activity in the night-time economy. These grants are expected to have positive impacts on:

1. Economic opportunity and advancement

- Creating safe and inclusive public spaces for people of all genders will increase visitation and generate income for local businesses.
- It is expected that assessment criteria for venues to be supported under this grant will take into account support for women artists and increased representation of women in the music venue workforce.

2. Health and wellbeing

- It is anticipated that projects funded through these grants will support community engagement in safe and inclusive ways which will generate a sense of community and individual wellbeing.
- It is expected that initiatives under these grants, including action by local businesses and institutions to prevent gender-based violence, will increase women's freedom of movement and opportunity to participate in the night-time economy.

3. Participation and empowerment

- An emphasis on a range of night-time activities which cater to all members of the community, including families, will increase the participation of people of all genders in the night-time economy.
- Projects which create safe, vibrant and welcoming places for all at night will support women's full participation in community life and access to public spaces and amenities.

Question 3: How will you mitigate any risks, barriers or limitations of the proposal on women, men or gender diverse people?

Grant categories 1 and 2 focused on improving safety and amenities for workers in the night-time economy

Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
<p>The assessment process for how the grants will be awarded is not yet determined and may not take into account gendered impacts.</p> <p>If the grant projects do not recognise the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women working in the night-time economy, investment may actually increase gender inequality (including the workforce participation gap between women and men).</p>	<p>The grant application form will require applicants to consider how their projects take into account the different needs, interests and experiences of night workers of different genders.³⁹ The assessment criteria will also consider these factors.</p> <p>Grantees will be required to report on steps taken to prevent gender-based violence, promote flexible work practices, and employment and promotion opportunities for female employees.</p>
<p>Initiatives developed by public transport providers and public space planners do not always reflect what women actually perceive to increase their safety. For example, research has suggested that CCTV and technologically supported reporting applications may not increase feelings of safety for women.⁴⁰</p>	<p>This funding will prioritise projects that take a participatory approach to understanding women and gender diverse people's safety needs in public spaces and travelling around cities and regions.</p>

³⁹ See the Australian Women's Donors Network 2015, *The Gender-wise toolkit for Grant-makers*.

⁴⁰ Forsdike K, Ison J, Hooker L, Henry N, Taft A 2024, "*God, whatever you do, don't tell people it's unsafe*": Public transport service providers' perspectives on women's safety from sexual violence on public transport, *Transport Policy*, Volume 150, 14-23.

Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
	Initiatives funded under the grant program will be expected to draw on the resources of <u>Transport NSW's Safer Cities program</u> .
Gender inclusive design of public spaces, transport and workplaces will not in itself prevent sexual harassment and discrimination, or challenge the harmful gender norms that lead to violence against women in these spaces.	<p>Initiatives will be required to demonstrate how they are implementing policy, training and campaigns to prevent gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence in accordance with <u>Respect @ Work Legislation (2022)</u> across local businesses and institutions.</p> <p>Grantees will receive training on SafeWork NSW's <u>Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment</u>.</p>

Grant categories 3 and 4 focused on generating night-time activity

Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
<p>The process for how the grants will be awarded is not yet determined and may not take into account gendered impacts.</p> <p>If the grants projects do not recognise the unique challenges and opportunities faced by visitors and patrons of all genders accessing night-time activities, the projects may reinforce gender inequality.</p>	<p>The grant application form will require applicants to consider how their projects take into account the different needs, interests and experiences of people of all gender accessing the night-time economy. The assessment criteria will also consider these factors.</p> <p>Relevant initiatives will be expected to work towards <u>Purple Flag accreditation</u> standards in relation to vibrancy, diversity and safety at night. This includes good access to public transport, street lighting and dining amenities.</p> <p>Where practical, initiatives funded under the grant program will be expected to implement the NSW Government's <u>Great Places Toolkit</u>, which aims to create safe, vibrant and welcoming places for all, regardless of their gender.</p>
Night-time activities funded under the grants program lack diversity, and do not appeal to people of all genders.	<p>Local councils, local businesses, live music venues, health and education campuses and community organisations will be eligible for support under the grants.</p> <p>The diversity of recipients or people participating in the activities will be considered; for example, music venues that support female artists in the male-dominated Australian</p>

Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
	<p>contemporary music industry. The description of 'projects which may be funded under the grant' will also include examples which promote gender equality, such as open street programs which consider gender in the design and planning of these spaces, or collaborations to promote the prevention of gender-based violence in night-time worker centres.</p> <p>Opening hours of cultural venues and family-friendly spaces will be extended to improve women's engagement in the night-time economy, and increase the participation of families.⁴¹</p>
<p>Gender inclusive design of public spaces will not in itself prevent sexual harassment and discrimination or challenge the harmful gender norms that lead to violence against women in these spaces.</p>	<p>Grantees will receive training on NSW Transport's '<u><i>Street harassment has No Grey Area</i></u>' safety campaign, the wider NSW's <u><i>Safer Cities program</i></u>, and SafeWork NSW's <u><i>Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment</i></u>.</p>
<p>Increased support for music venues may not result in economic benefits for people of all genders in the music industry.</p>	<p>This grants program to support music venues will collaborate with other initiatives involved with identifying, funding and supporting female entrepreneurs to create access and opportunity for women in the music industry.</p>

All grant categories

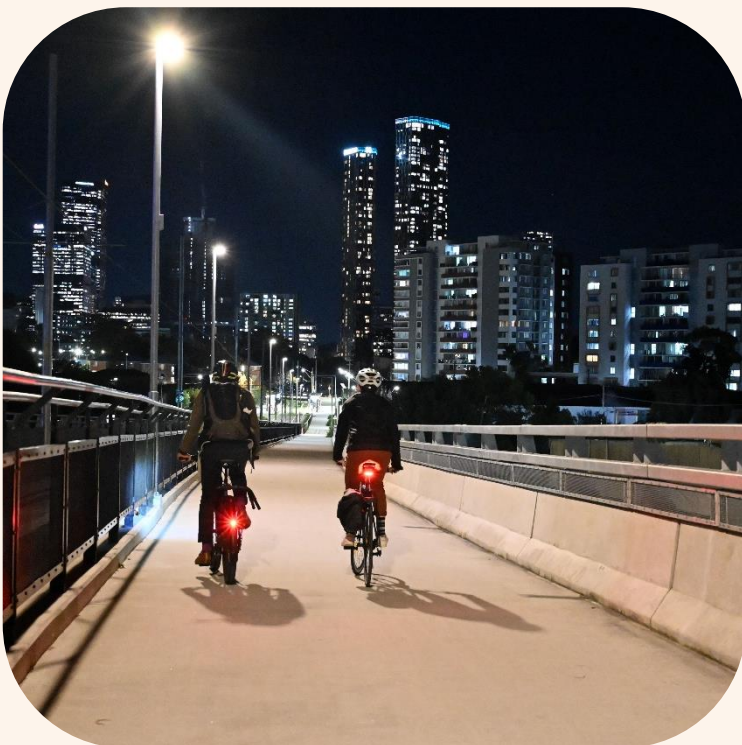
Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
<p>The assessment process for how the grants will be awarded is not yet determined and may not take into account gendered impacts.</p>	<p>Eligible applications will be reviewed by an independent assessment panel, and targets will be set to ensure members of this panel will ideally comprise people of different genders and from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Guidance on considering gendered impacts will be included in the brief for decision makers and in the grant guidelines.</p> <p>A commitment to creating a safe and inclusive night-time economy will be highlighted as part of communications and the application process.</p> <p>Funding recipients will be required to report outcomes by gender, where applicable.</p>

⁴¹ Business Sydney and Urbis 2023, *Improving Women's Engagement in the Night time Economy: 10 point plan*.

Risks / barriers / limitations	Mitigating strategies
<p>The programs funded under the grants do not align with existing NSW Government initiatives to support gender equality through the night-time economy.</p>	<p>The Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner will consult with other relevant agencies such as Women NSW, the Office of the Women’s Safety Commissioner, SafeWork NSW (Respect at Work Taskforce), NSW Police Force, and Transport for NSW Safer Cities in the design and delivery of the grants programs</p>

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Steps 4 - 6 in the Gender Impact Assessment Process



Question 4: Does the proposal support any gender equality indicators?

Economic opportunity and advancement

- Promotes economic security of women and/or gender diverse people.

Participation and empowerment

- Increases safety in workplaces and/or public spaces.

Question 5: What are the knowledge gaps about the gendered impacts of this issue?

There is a lack of data on the intersectional gendered impacts of grants programs such as the benefits for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, First Nations peoples and LGBTIQ+ people and communities.

The NSW Government's Data after Dark is a new data platform which will assist with measuring the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at revitalising night-time economies in Greater Sydney and across NSW. Where possible, the team working on the grants program will collaborate with the Data after Dark team to break down data by gender to enable further insights into and reporting on the effectiveness of the grant programs.

Participatory research will be conducted to gather comprehensive insights into the experiences, challenges, needs and demographics of night-time workers of all genders. Analysis of gaps in services and amenities across different times of the night will also be conducted.

Data will be also collected to further document the experiences of women and young people from diverse backgrounds working in the music industry.

Question 6: How will you collect data to monitor and/or evaluate the gendered impacts of the proposal?

The monitoring and evaluation of the proposal will:

- Collect gender disaggregated data
- Source case studies from participants of different genders
- Ensure diverse gender representation in consultation and analysis.

Summary of the gender impact assessment

The proposal is for a grants program to support a 24-hour economy in New South Wales and to ensure safety and public amenities for night-time workers. It aims to have a positive impact on gender equality by considering how the grants program can respond to the different challenges and opportunities experienced by people of all genders in the night-time economy.

It will do this by:

- Providing grants for projects that improve perceptions of safety and contribute to a safe and inclusive night-time environment in NSW cities and regions, particularly for women, girls and gender diverse people travelling to and from work.
- Prioritising projects which take a participatory approach to understanding women and gender diverse people's needs and experiences in the night-time economy, including women-led businesses and female employees.
- Requiring initiatives under the grants program to demonstrate how they will take into account the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women and gender diverse employees in the night-time economy, including access to safe and secure employment.
- Requiring grantees to report on steps taken to prevent gender-based violence, promote flexible work practices, and employment and promotion opportunities for female employees.
- Supporting women artists and representation of women in the music venue workforce.
- Supporting amenities and transport to enable safe and reliable travel in and around night-time workers' centres and night-time activities, which caters to people of all genders.
- Aligning the proposal with other NSW Government initiatives including Purple Flag accreditation standards, NSW Government's Great Places Toolkit, NSW Transport's 'Street harassment has No Grey Area' safety campaign, Transport for NSW's Safer Cities program, and SafeWork NSW's Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment.

In addition, the process of awarding the grants will be supported by:

- Including guidance on considering gendered impacts in the brief for decision makers and in the grant guidelines.
- Highlighting a commitment to gender equality and creating a safe and inclusive night-time economy as part of communications and the application process.
- Establishing an independent assessment panel, with membership comprised of people of different genders and from diverse backgrounds.

Grant recipients will also be required to report outcomes by gender, where applicable.

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