

Have an idea that could make energy work better for people?

Apply for AusNet's HOME Grant 2027

AusNet's Helping Our Mission for Equity (HOME) Grant provides **up to \$30,000** to support an idea that could deliver better outcomes for customers and communities across our electricity distribution network.

Your idea might explore an emerging customer need, test a new approach, remove a barrier or develop a practical solution.

You do not need to be an energy expert to apply. We are looking for a strong idea, a clear connection to customer or community outcomes and a practical plan to bring it to life.

At a glance

- **Funding available:** Up to \$30,000
- **Who can apply:** Individuals and organisations
- **What we support:** Research, trials, tools, services, activities and other practical initiatives
- **Applications close:** Sunday 1 November 2026 at 11:59 pm
- **Project completion:** Thursday 30 September 2027
- **How to apply:** Email your proposal to research@ausnetservices.com.au

What could your idea achieve?

It could help us better understand an overlooked need, test a promising solution or improve how people access and experience energy services and support.

We welcome ideas from researchers, businesses, community organisations and individuals. This is not limited to traditional research projects. New perspectives, practical initiatives and collaborative approaches are encouraged.

Ready to bring your idea to life?

Tell us how your idea could create better outcomes for customers and communities.

Read on for full grant details, eligibility and application requirements.

What is the HOME Grant?

The HOME Grant supports projects and initiatives that improve outcomes for customers and communities on AusNet's electricity distribution network.

We want to better understand what people need from the energy system and support ideas that can turn this understanding into practical change.

The program was previously known as the Vulnerability Research Grant. It was renamed the HOME Grant in 2025 when its eligibility and scope expanded beyond traditional research and social service organisations. The refreshed program supports equity, inclusion and improved customer and community outcomes.

HOME stands for **Helping Our Mission for Equity**.

What could your idea change?

We are interested in proposals that address a gap or opportunity affecting customers and communities.

Your project might:

- identify an emerging or overlooked customer need
- remove a barrier to accessing energy information, services or support
- test a new approach to improving customer or community outcomes
- explore the experiences of a customer or community group
- improve how people experience outages, changing technology or interactions with the energy network
- develop a practical tool, service, resource or engagement approach
- test an initiative through a pilot or trial
- generate evidence that can inform future programs, services, communications or policy
- strengthen inclusion, participation or energy equity
- improve knowledge or practice across the energy sector.

This is not a fixed list. We welcome ideas that take different approaches or address issues we have not previously considered.

The HOME Grant is **not limited to research**. Your proposal may involve a practical initiative, activity, trial, service, tool or a combination of approaches.

What makes a strong proposal?

We are looking for proposals that clearly explain:

1. The opportunity

What customer or community need, experience, barrier or opportunity will the project address?

Tell us why it matters and who could benefit.

2. The idea

What do you propose to do?

Describe the main activities, the people you will involve and how your approach responds to the identified opportunity.

3. The potential difference

What could change as a result of the project?

This may include better understanding, a tested solution, improved access or participation, practical resources, service improvements or evidence for future decisions.

4. The approach

How will you deliver the project?

Describe your proposed method, activities, project stages and any involvement from customers, communities or other stakeholders.

5. The practical application

How could AusNet, community organisations, the energy sector or other relevant organisations use the results?

Where relevant, explain whether the approach could be adapted, repeated or applied more broadly.

6. The delivery plan

What will you deliver, by when and within what budget?

We welcome ambitious ideas, but proposals should be achievable within the available funding and project period.

Who can apply?

The HOME Grant is open to:

- individuals
- researchers and academic institutions
- community organisations
- not-for-profit organisations
- social enterprises
- businesses
- consultants
- partnerships or collaborative groups

Collaborative and cross-disciplinary proposals are encouraged.

Applicants do not need to be based within AusNet's electricity distribution area. However, the proposed project must have a clear connection to customers or communities on AusNet's electricity distribution network.

AusNet's electricity distribution network covers eastern and north-eastern Victoria and Melbourne's north and east. To check the electricity distributor for a particular area, view the [Victorian Government electricity distributor map](#).

What can the funding be used for?

Funding must be used to deliver the proposed project.

Eligible costs may include:

- Project delivery and coordination
- Research or evaluation
- Specialist or consulting services
- Engagement with customers, communities or stakeholders
- Participant recruitment or participation costs
- Development of tools, resources or materials
- Events, workshops or trials
- Other direct project costs.

Funding may cover an individual's or organisation's time where that time is directly related to the project.

Applicants may request all or part of the available funding. AusNet may select more than one recipient if suitable proposals can be supported within the total funding available.

Your budget should clearly show how the requested funding will be used.

What support can AusNet provide?

Depending on the project, AusNet may be able to provide:

- Advice on the project scope or approach
- Relevant existing research or publicly available information
- Research design or delivery advice
- Introductions to relevant internal or external stakeholders
- Feedback at agreed project stages
- Support to share the final findings or outcomes

Any requested support should be clearly described in the proposal.

Access to customer data, customer contact details, internal systems or confidential business information cannot be assumed. Proposals should remain practical and deliverable if some requested support is unavailable.

Ideas we have supported

Previous grants demonstrate the range of projects the program can support.

2026: Energy upgrades for rental properties (in progress)

Mycelia received the 2026 HOME Grant for a research and pilot project examining barriers and practical pathways for energy-efficiency and electrification upgrades in rental properties. The project involves renters, rental providers and property managers and aims to produce practical recommendations, a policy brief and a stakeholder toolkit.

These examples are provided as inspiration. Applicants do not need to focus on the same customer groups, topics or methods.

2025: Inclusive communication

RMIT University investigated how energy information and support could better reach culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities experiencing digital exclusion.

The work identified priority audiences, communication barriers and more inclusive engagement approaches.

2024: Older Victorians and the energy transition

Council on the Ageing Victoria (COTA) examined how older Victorians navigate energy information, services and support.

The project identified barriers, communication needs and opportunities to improve support for older customers.

2023: Electricity services and disability

The Yarra Energy Foundation explored the experiences and risks faced by customers living with disability or chronic health conditions, including the effects of outages and loss of communication services.

The project provided practical recommendations to support more inclusive services and reduce risks for customers.

Grant details

Funding

Up to **\$30,000** is available.

Applicants may request the full amount or a smaller amount that reflects the proposed scope and budget.

Project period

The successful applicant or applicants will have approximately **9 months** to complete the project.

Final outputs must be delivered by **30 September 2027**.

Collaboration

The successful applicant will work with an AusNet contact throughout the project.

The final project scope, deliverables, schedule, payment arrangements and support from AusNet will be agreed before the project begins.

Sharing the outcomes

Recipients will be expected to help share the project's findings, outputs or outcomes with relevant audiences.

This may include:

- Presenting to AusNet and its customer representatives
- Participating in a webinar or other public event
- Contributing to public communications about the project
- Supporting publication of an accessible summary or final output

Any public communications will be discussed with the recipient before publication.

Final outputs

The format should suit the project and its intended audience. Outputs may include:

- A report or evidence summary
- A practical guide, toolkit or resource
- A policy or program brief
- An evaluation
- A presentation or webinar
- Materials developed through a pilot
- Another agreed format

We value outputs that are accessible, practical and useful beyond the immediate project team.

How to apply

Please send a proposal of approximately **one to three pages**.

Your proposal should include:

- Project title
- Applicant details, including the lead contact and participating organisations
- The opportunity or need the project will address
- Who will benefit and how they will be involved
- The proposed approach and activities
- Expected outcomes and practical benefits
- Proposed deliverables
- Project timing and key milestones
- A breakdown of the requested budget
- Support requested from AusNet, if any

- Relevant experience or capability to deliver the project
- Any key risks or dependencies
- How you will assess whether the project has been successful
- Anything else that supports your application

You may use headings, diagrams or other formats that help explain your idea clearly.

We may contact applicants to request further information or clarify parts of a proposal.

How proposals will be assessed

Proposals will be assessed against four equally weighted criteria.

Customer insight and understanding

The extent to which the project will improve understanding of customer or community needs, experiences or outcomes related to electricity distribution.

Potential customer or community benefit

The potential for the project to deliver practical benefits, improvements or useful evidence for customers and communities.

Novelty and originality

The extent to which the project offers a new idea, approach, application or perspective.

Practicality and feasibility

Whether the proposed approach, budget, project plan and deliverables are practical and achievable within the available timeframe.

A proposal does not need to use a particular method or project format to be competitive.

AusNet will shortlist proposals. The final selection will be made in collaboration with members of AusNet's Customer Consultative Committee, continuing the approach used for the previous round.

Key dates

- **Applications open:** Thursday 1 October 2026
- **Applications close:** Sunday 1 November 2026 at 11:59 pm
- **Shortlisting and assessment:** Monday 2 November to Friday 4 December 2026
- **Applicants notified:** Week commencing Monday 7 December 2026
- **Project commencement:** Week commencing Monday 4 January 2027
- **Final outputs due:** Thursday 30 September 2027

Dates may change. AusNet will advise affected applicants if this occurs.

Submit your proposal

Send your proposal to research@ausnetservices.com.au with "HOME Grant 2027" and your project title in the subject line.

Terms and conditions

The successful applicant or applicants will enter into a formal partnership agreement with AusNet before the project begins.

The agreement will cover matters including:

- The agreed project scope and schedule
- Payment arrangements
- Project costs
- Intellectual property
- Branding and public communications
- Confidentiality
- Privacy
- Legal and regulatory responsibilities
- Liability
- Termination

AusNet's standard agreement terms will apply. Any proposed changes must be agreed in writing by both parties.

Have a question about your idea or the application process?

Contact the AusNet Research team at research@ausnetservices.com.au.