



Government of
South Australia

Office for Early Childhood Development

Integrated Hubs Partnership Guide

April 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

From the heart:

We acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples as the First peoples of South Australia and as custodians of the lands, waters, skies and communities where we live, learn and raise children.

We recognise Aboriginal peoples as having the longest living culture, raising children safe and strong in their Identity, Community, Culture, and connected to Country.

We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present, and their role as the first knowledge sharers for children. We follow in their footsteps.

Aboriginal peoples, working with and for children, are central in shaping our work. Their wisdom, advice, and guidance enriches our practices, creating a more inclusive and culturally safe environment for children and families.

We respect Aboriginal peoples' ways of being, doing and wise practices guiding our continual learning.

Together we walk and build stronger, more supportive communities for all children.

Terminology

We respect preference to use the term 'Aboriginal peoples' to acknowledge in written and spoken language both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge that Torres Strait Islander people have a separate and distinct culture, identity and country to that of mainland Aboriginal peoples.

When the term 'service' is referenced, in the context of commissioning, in this document it should be read as inclusive of services, programs and systems.

Partnership Guide structure

This document has been divided into two parts. The first part provides an overview of the Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD)'s integrated hubs and how to register interest in operating an integrated hub. The second part provides detail on the Service Model, Funding Model and commissioning process.

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Part 1: The OECD's integrated hubs

A fairer and better future for all children in South Australia

The Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD) is working to create a fairer and better future for all children in South Australia.

As South Australia's early childhood development system steward, the OECD is partnering with governments and departments, Aboriginal leaders, sector and community stakeholders to provide support to families in the first 5 years of their child's life. The OECD are doing this through a range of actions including mobilising long day care, early learning centres, and government services in every community to deliver a new offer of universal 3-year-old preschool, as well as support service integration and connection for families.

The OECD is responsible for implementing the government's commitment to reducing the rate of South Australian children entering school developmentally vulnerable, as measured by the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) every 3 years.

Between now and 2032, the OECD is supporting service providers to establish integrated hubs across 20 South Australian regional and metropolitan areas. These integrated hubs will be both conversions of existing services and new builds, and will be delivered in government and non-government settings.

The OECD is opening 2 integrated hub demonstration sites in Port Pirie and Adelaide's northern suburbs by 2026. Demonstration sites will test integrated service models along with the provision of up to 30-hours of preschool per week. The OECD will evaluate the operations to inform the broader roll-out, ensuring integrated hubs meet the needs of their communities.

Integrated hubs commencing operations from 2028 onwards will be selected through the commissioning process, commencing with a Registration of Interest (ROI). The OECD are seeking to partner with organisations to establish these integrated hubs.

This guide outlines:

- The need for integrated hubs.
- The types of integrated hubs proposed between 2025 and 2032.
- The types of organisations the OECD are seeking to partner with to deliver integrated hubs.
- The ways in which the OECD will support service providers to operate integrated hubs.
- How service providers can register their interest in operating an integrated hub.
- How parties can register their interest in providing land or being an infrastructure partner for a new build integrated hub.



Purpose

The purpose of this Partnership Guide is to provide interested organisations with pertinent information about integrated hubs, including what they are and how they will operate, who is eligible to partner to deliver a hub, where the integrated hubs will be located, and the funding available.

This information will support organisations to make an informed decision to submit an ROI to establish an integrated hub. Integrated hubs will be a mix of newly built and converted services, and interested organisations can register their interest to be a service provider, a landholder, and/or to develop the infrastructure for an integrated hub (see *Who is the OECD seeking to partner with to establish integrated hubs?*).

The ROI will be open via the [OECD website](#), in line with the following dates:

ROI opens	29 April 2025
ROI closes	13 June 2025

If you have any queries about the ROI or this Partnership Guide, please reach out to the OECD's Integrated Hubs team via: OECD.hubs@sa.gov.au.

Why are the OECD establishing integrated hubs?

In 2022, the South Australian Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care (Royal Commission) was carried out by the Hon Julia Gillard AC. The Royal Commission found evidence that all children benefit from 2 years of high-quality preschool, that vulnerable children are likely to benefit the most from more hours and that children most at risk of developmental vulnerability should receive these additional preschool hours in an integrated setting.

The Royal Commission also found that the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) sector should be strengthened and ACCOs prioritised in commissioning new integrated hubs to deliver 3-year old preschool, where appropriate, for the community.

What is an integrated hub?

Integrated hubs are being established in geographical areas of concentrated developmental vulnerability to deliver up to 30-hours of preschool to children most likely to benefit. With additional hours of preschool as the core, integrated hubs will also provide families with access to health services, family support and other community services. The OECD's integrated hub principles

Integrated hubs are based on 5 key principles, as show in Figure 1.

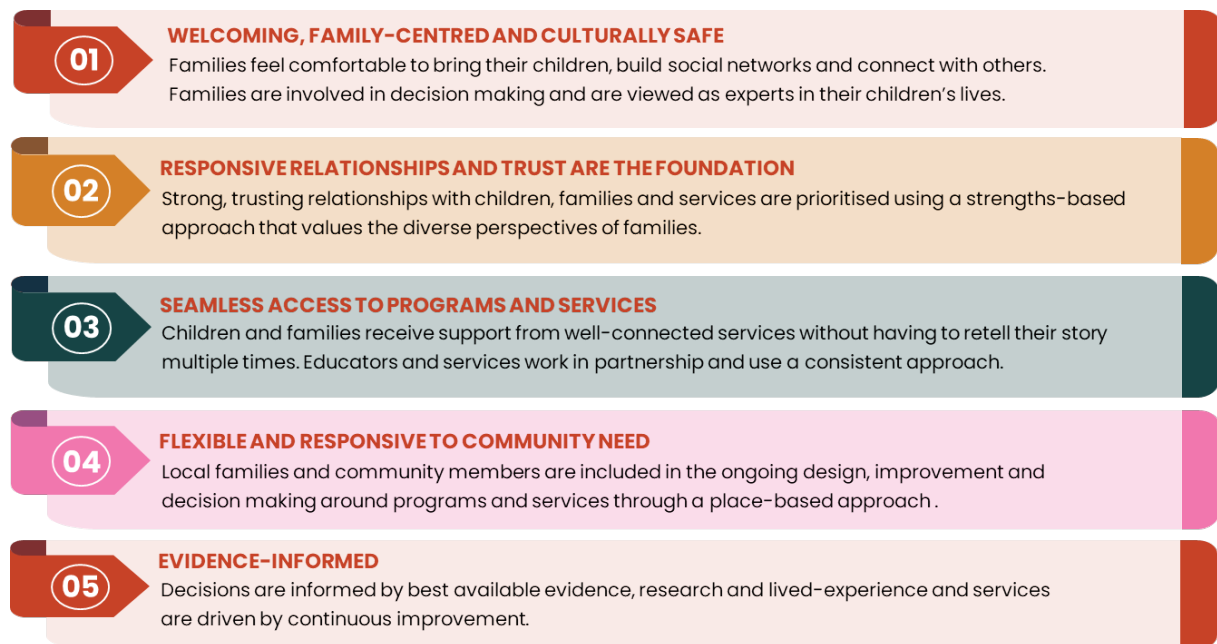


Figure 1: integrated hub principles

Integrated hubs Service Model

The integrated hubs Service Model has been developed by the OECD based on best practice evidence and in consultation with sector and government partners. It includes 6 core elements, as shown in Figure 2:

- High-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC).
- 30 hours of preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds (known as Preschool Plus).
- Resources to build educator capacity and meet the needs of children.
- Access to family and child health and development services.
- Parenting and family support programs.
- Community co-designed, place-based additional supports.



Figure 2: integrated hub core elements

Further information about the integrated hub principles and Service Model can be found in the *Integrated Hubs Service Model* section later in this guide.

How will integrated hubs be established?

Integrated hubs will be established by partnering to:

- convert or expand **existing infrastructure** (buildings and facilities which already exist), and
- deliver **new builds** (purpose-built, comprehensive facilities).

Further detail on selecting partners is in the *What is the process to become an integrated hub?* section.

Physical spaces (infrastructure)

There are 3 physical models for integrated hubs:

- An **integrated build model** is where all services are available and delivered under one roof.
- A **co-located build model** occurs where buildings for services are located closely to each other on one site.
- A **precinct model** is where services are delivered at multiple sites within short walking distance from each other (ideally less than 1km).

The OECD will provide infrastructure funding for both conversions of existing services and new builds. The preference is for integrated hubs to operate as an integrated build model, as this best facilitates integration across a service, however both co-located build models and precinct models will be considered for conversions of existing services. Services with limited experience delivering infrastructure projects may also be eligible to receive support from the OECD's Sector Supports for Infrastructure.

Detailed infrastructure requirements for these models are contained in the [Integrated hubs design brief](#).

To offer all parts of the integrated hub Service Model, physical spaces should be included for:

- a 30-hour preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds (Preschool Plus),
- child health and development checks,
- playgroup or parenting programs, and
- staff to meet and work together.

Sector Supports for Infrastructure

The OECD is offering the ECEC sector infrastructure supports as part of the Flying Start Infrastructure Grants (FIGs) program. These supports will be available to integrated hubs applicants with limited experience in delivering infrastructure projects. These supports include:

- The [South Australia's Preschool Infrastructure Guidance Pack: Quick Start Guide](#) which provides step-by-step instructions on how to plan, design and construct a new or expanded early childhood facility.
- Guidance Services, available by referral, include coaching and advice for applicants to navigate each step of an infrastructure project.

Where might integrated hubs be located?

The OECD is seeking to establish integrated hubs in 20 communities spread across the state that can most benefit from their establishment.

To ensure integrated hubs are targeted to areas with a concentration of children experiencing developmental vulnerability, the OECD has identified a list of priority locations, listed in the table below.

Location (SA2)	Integrated hub types considered
Aldinga	Existing services
Christies Beach	Existing services
Elizabeth East	Existing services
Enfield – Blair Athol	Existing services
Ingle Farm	Existing services
Mitchell Park	Existing services
Morphett Vale – East	Existing services
Morphett Vale – West	Existing services
Mount Gambier – West	Existing services
Naracoorte	Existing services
Para Hills	Existing services
Paralowie	Existing services
Port Adelaide	Existing services
Port Augusta	Existing services
Port Lincoln	Existing services
Salisbury	Existing services
Salisbury East	Existing services
Victor Harbor	Existing services
Whyalla	Existing services
Christie Downs	New or existing services
Craigmore - Blakeview	New or existing services
Davoren Park	New or existing services
Munno Para West – Angle Vale	New or existing services
Murray Bridge	New or existing services
Pooraka – Cavan	New or existing services
Smithfield – Elizabeth North	New or existing services
Virginia – Waterloo Corner	New or existing services
Elizabeth	Sites already shortlisted
Port Pirie	2025 demonstration site already selected
Hackham West – Huntfield Heights	Sites already shortlisted
Salisbury North	Sites already shortlisted
The Parks	Sites already shortlisted

The OECD uses Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2)¹ level locations, as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Maps of these *Priority Locations* are provided later in this guide.

Integrated hubs will be delivered through both government and non-government settings.

It is anticipated that at least 2 hubs will be developed in partnership with the ACCO sector. These will be considered in any SA2 location.

Non-conforming applications (applications which do not meet all of the eligibility criteria) will be considered in relation to location. More information in relation to non-conforming applications can be found on page 22.

How will services be supported to operate an integrated hub?

Services will receive once-off and ongoing funding to support the implementation of the integrated hub Service Model. As shown in Figure 3, this includes:

- infrastructure funding,
- establishment funding,
- funding for additional staffing, and
- funding to implement the Preschool Plus 30-hour preschool program.

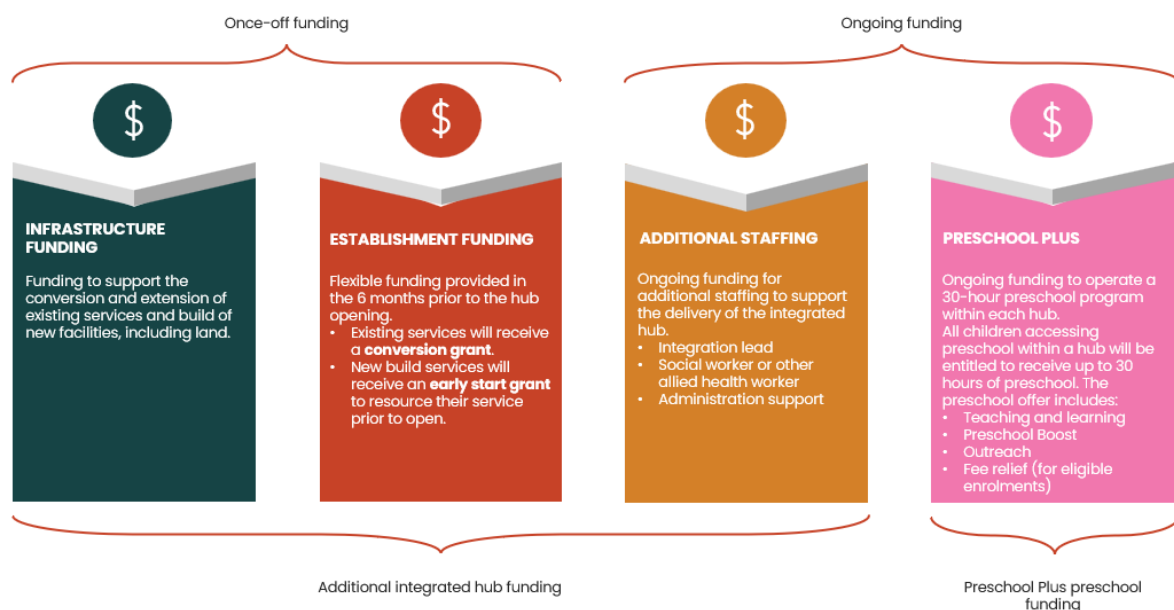


Figure 3: Funding Model for integrated hubs – South Australian Government components

Further detail is in the *Funding Model* section later in this guide.

¹ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/main-structure-and-greater-capital-city-statistical-areas/statistical-area-level-2>

Who is the OECD seeking to partner with to establish integrated hubs?

Integrated hubs service providers

The OECD is seeking to partner with organisations to fulfil the role of ECEC service providers of the integrated hubs. Eligible organisations are:

- Not-for-profit Long Day Care (LDC) providers.
- Non-government schools seeking to provide or providing LDC services.
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) seeking to provide or providing LDC services.

Consistent with the mix of integrated hub types (see How will integrated hubs be established?), these organisations may be:

- Operating an **existing** ECEC service in one of the targeted locations, proposed to convert to become an integrated hub, or
- Proposing a **new** ECEC service be built within a targeted location.

The OECD is working directly with the Department for Education (DfE) to also establish government (DfE) operated integrated hubs.

Additional land and infrastructure partners

The OECD is also seeking to partner with organisations who may be interested in supporting the establishment of a new hub through the provision of *land* and/or the development of *infrastructure*, without operating the ECEC service.

For organisations with landholdings in the list of priority locations – such as local councils – the ROI is open to nominations to supply land for a new integrated hub to be built. This requires willingness to gift the land or to lease the land (and facility, if relevant) at below commercial rates to the integrated hub service provider.

Similarly, for entities interested in managing a new integrated hub build – but not operate the ECEC service – can also register their interest. Organisations must be willing to undertake an infrastructure project to build on land located in an identified priority new build area and to lease this facility at below commercial rates to an approved provider to operate the integrated hub.

Infrastructure partners may or may not provide the land parcel on which the new facility will be built.

Depending on the mix and nature of ROIs received, the OECD may approach organisations to enter partnerships with other applicants.

Alternately, organisations with complementary assets and capabilities may form consortia to nominate interest via the ROI.

Further details on the organisation types and specific eligibility criteria are provided in the *Eligible organisations* section later in this guide.

How is the OECD empowering Aboriginal children and families?

It is anticipated that at least 2 hubs will be developed in partnership with the ACCO sector.

Interested ACCOs or Community Child Care Fund Restricted (CCCCFR) services are encouraged to respond to the ROI if they have interest in establishing an integrated hub either through the conversion of an existing service or a new build. In addition, targeted engagement with the ACCO sector will occur between April and December 2025 to explore opportunities for ACCO-led integrated hubs.

The OECD will also be exploring opportunities for ACCO-led integrated hubs and supporting organisations to access capacity and sector building initiatives. ACCOs and ACCHOs not currently delivering ECEC services will also be engaged to understand opportunities for establishing a new service for an integrated hub.

Additional opportunities

Co-design process

Aboriginal children have the right to access culturally safe early childhood education that values and respects the role of families as first teachers, Elders and Aboriginal Community members. It is recognised that ACCOs and Aboriginal peak organisations also play an important role in ensuring Aboriginal children grow strong in culture and identity.

With the introduction of universal 3-year-old preschool, the South Australian government is committed to deeply listening to the voices of Aboriginal families. In September 2024, the OECD, in formal partnership with SAACCON and with the oversight of an Aboriginal Co-Design Governance Group, engaged an Aboriginal business supplier to undertake co-design to inform the Aboriginal 3-year-old preschool strategy. The co-design findings will inform recommendations with new initiatives expected to roll-out starting from 2026. More information is available from the OECD website, on the [Empowering Aboriginal Children](#) page.

Workforce supports

The OECD has launched an [Immediate Action Plan](#) to create new pathways for Aboriginal peoples to start or advance their careers in early childhood.

Taster courses are available through Tauondi Aboriginal Community College and provide a stepping stone to formal training. Scholarships are available for Aboriginal peoples undertaking certificate III through to Masters level courses.

Statewide Aboriginal Professional Network Grant

In mid-2025, a state-wide Aboriginal Professional Network will be established through an ACCO to increase collaboration of early childhood professionals including allied health and community services across communities who work with preschool children and their families.

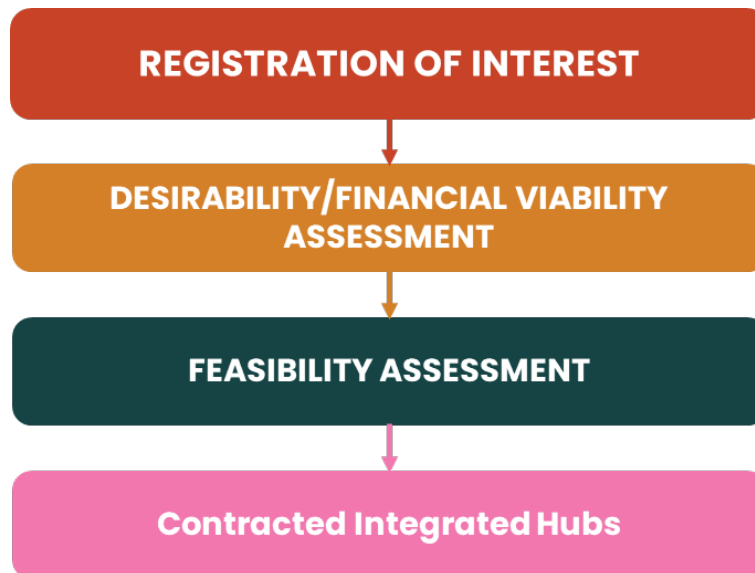
The network will support the implementation of 3-year-old preschool and provide opportunities for professionals to share insights and learnings with their peers. This includes providing opportunities for early childhood professionals to consider ways to better address child

developmental vulnerability and to collaborate and problem solve while engaging in reflective practice.

All ACCO services are welcome to join and information will be published on the OECD website.

What is the process to become an integrated hub?

Eligible organisations will be considered through a commissioning process. The first step is the ROI and then there are a series of assessment activities.



ROI

The OECD will use an ROI process to invite eligible organisations to register for consideration to establish an integrated hub from 2028 onwards.

Access the ROI at earlychildhood.sa.gov.au/for-providers/integrated-hubs

The ROI will cover two streams:

- **Stream 1** is for proposals to convert an existing service, or for new build projects already in progress, which, if necessary, could be amended to incorporate additional integrated hub infrastructure. Applications received as part of Stream 1 will be assessed with a decision made about the progression of the proposed project as part of the process.
- **Stream 2** is for organisations to register interest in different aspects of a new hub project. Services can apply to contribute to one or more of the elements of establishing a new hub, including land, managing a build and/or service delivery. Organisations can apply individually or as part of a consortium.

Eligible organisations can respond to the ROI between 29 April and 13 June 2025.

Assessment activities

All ROIs will be assessed by the OECD through a multi-stage process. The OECD will consider the physical spaces to offer integrated hub services, as well as the quality, leadership and community engagement of the service and organisation.

Detail on these assessment activities is provided in the *Commissioning Process* section of this guide.

What's next?

Interested organisations should read Part 2 of this Partnership Guide to understand the types of partners being sought, as well as the Service Model, funding model and assessment activities within the commissioning process

All organisations that submit an ROI will receive acknowledgement of their application.

All submissions will be reviewed to confirm they are eligible and then the OECD will arrange for site visits or meetings to learn more about the proposal.

An overview of the indicative *Timeframes* is included at the end of this guide.

For further information, please contact OECD.hubs@sa.gov.au.



Part 2: Detailed Program Information

Integrated hubs Service Model

The Service Model refers to the overarching outcomes, purpose, and approach to operating an integrated hub. It has been developed by the OECD based on best practice evidence and in consultation with government partners.

Integrated hubs are designed to provide families with access to a range of ECEC services, health and family support services, and other community services. The OECD has developed the principles, Service Model and Funding Model for integrated hubs using the learnings and best practice from within Australia and other jurisdictions, and findings of the Royal Commission,

The physical spaces of integrated spaces can differ. Different options have been outlined in the *Physical spaces (infrastructure)* section.

The Service Model will form part of the agreement conditions with each integrated hub provider.

Principles

There are 5 principles for the OECD's integrated hubs.

Welcoming, family-centred and culturally safe

The environment is designed as a place where families can feel comfortable to bring their children, to build social networks and connect with other families. Where possible, families should be involved in the design of the integrated hub, ensuring it is welcoming and inclusive of all community members.

Cultural safety is supported through practices such as developing positive and respectful partnerships, actively creating opportunities for the sharing of diverse voices and involvement in planning, policies and activities of the hub. Integrated hubs should ensure the right of Aboriginal children and their families to access culturally safe early childhood education that values and respect the role of families as first teachers, Elders and Aboriginal Community members. It is recognised that partnerships developed with ACCOs and Aboriginal peak organisations play an important role in ensuring Aboriginal children grow strong in culture and identity.

Staff will be supported to work in a child and family-centred manner, the principles of which are relational practices (behaviours associated with effective help-giving), participatory practices (parents involved in decision-making and building their capacity) and technical quality (professional knowledge, skills and competencies). Parents are viewed as experts in their children's lives with their knowledge and expertise recognised and respected.

Responsive relationships and trust are the foundation

Developing high-quality relationships is foundational in developing partnerships with families. Respect, warmth, reciprocity and open communication are crucial. Staff understand the importance of developing warm, responsive relationships with children to support learning and development.

These relationships are critical, not only with children and families, but also between the service providers working within the integrated hub to allow families to experience a seamless response.

Staff understand these relationships take time to develop, as do relationships amongst integrated hub staff and community service providers. All staff and providers take a strengths-based approach, acknowledging and valuing the diverse perspectives of families, their cultural and life experiences and valuing the knowledge they hold about their children and family.

Staff also acknowledge and address the power imbalance families can feel with service providers. Important ways of ensuring success include providing opportunities for families to have a voice and actively contribute to decisions about their child, family and the service.

Seamless Access to Programs and Services

Integrated hubs are places where multi-disciplinary staff teams work in partnership to provide integrated holistic support for families and their children. Integrated hub infrastructure is welcoming, family friendly and easy to navigate. It provides social spaces for families to connect with other families and service providers. It is designed for the provision of multiple services and includes spaces for private consultation, a group space with the close-by provision of an outdoor play space, offices and communal spaces for collaborative staff work.

Families are supported to engage with the services they need both within the integrated hub and in the community. When families are referred to a new service provider it is with a 'warm referral' where they are introduced to a point of contact with follow up to ensure they have received an appropriate service.

Staff are supported to work collaboratively and to develop a consistent approach to working with children and families which is strength-based, child and family centred, culturally responsive and culturally safe. Services are tailored to meet the needs of families rather than families needing to fit the service.

Service integration and collaboration is supported by:

- a shared vision,
- dedicated time for shared planning and professional learning,
- working agreements (defining an agreed and consistent approach to integration and working with children and families),
- development and implementation of integrated and relational practice frameworks to support staff to adopt child-centred, holistic and integrated practices,
- unscheduled time built into roles (allowing staff time to engage with and support families outside of formal service provision), and
- agreed referral pathways.

Flexible and Responsive to Community Need

Working with the community and understanding who the community is, its strengths, challenges, assets, and needs is critical to developing a responsive integrated hub.

A place-based approach is used to co-design and improve program and service delivery ensuring services are flexible, and responsive to emerging needs and not be ‘...tied to particular forms of delivery and location.’² Roles such as the Integration Lead will provide leadership and support with community engagement not just as hubs are established but as an ongoing feature of the integrated service.

Governance structures that are inclusive of families and community members will be critical in ensuring that diverse voices are heard, that emerging needs are acknowledged, and to enable the ongoing processes of co-design and decision-making.

Active outreach is essential to reaching families who are not engaging with the service and to also better understand why, enabling services to design different approaches in response.

Evidence-Informed

Service providers at integrated hubs will access, collect and analyse a range of data to assist them to understand the impact of their work, understand service usage and determine if services and programs are meeting the needs of children and their families. The use of data will enable a better understanding of impact, and the adjustment of service provision and ways of working, and the identification of any operational issues.

Data will be critical in informing the understanding of the local community

The use of an outcomes framework will support quality and identify and measure the impact of the integrated hub.

Core Elements

01 - High-quality early childhood education and care

The base for the integrated hub Service Model is high-quality early childhood education and care, which will include the preschool program, as well as potentially including long day care, occasional care, and/or out-of-hours care. Any new services established as an integrated hub will be required to provide both LDC and the 30-hour preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds.

For ACCOs and CCCFR sites, while early childhood education and care and preschool program delivery for 3- and 4-year-olds are essential elements of the integrated hubs Service Model, the OECD is developing a tailored ACCO commissioning approach which is culturally responsive to the needs of community and informed by best practice.

02 - High-quality 30-hour preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds

Preschool Plus (30-hour preschool program) is a targeted early intervention program that provides additional hours of preschool to 3- and 4-year-old children.

² Moore, T., McDonald, M., McHugh-Dillon, H., & West, S. (2016). *Community engagement: A key strategy for improving outcomes for Australian families* (CFCA Paper No. 39). Melbourne: Child Family Community Australia information exchange, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Evidence has shown that children benefit from an additional year of preschool and children at risk of being developmentally vulnerable are likely to benefit from additional hours.

Integrated hubs will manage new local enrolments into the 30-hour preschool program through a priority of access approach. The same priority of access criteria as universal 3-year-old preschool will be applied in integrated hubs.

Priority category 1
Aboriginal children
Children in out of home care
Children referred to the 30 hour preschool program (Preschool Plus)
Priority category 2
Children with active child protection involvement or active involvement with the child and family support system
Children with additional needs
Asylum seeker and refugee children
Children who do not speak English
Children of families experiencing or at risk of domestic, family violence
Children of healthcare card, concession card or Veteran Gold Card holders
Other extenuating factors that increase a child's developmental vulnerability as determined through site level leadership discretion

03 - Resources to build educator capacity to meet the needs of the child

Preschool Boost is a funded program designed to support partner services to do more to address children's developmental vulnerability.

This additional funding can be used to purchase quality, evidence informed services, programs and supports from the Preschool Boost Menu, such as allied health services, to support groups of children, to upskill teachers and educators and to provide capacity-building supports for parents/guardians. See Figure 4 for the components of Preschool Boost.

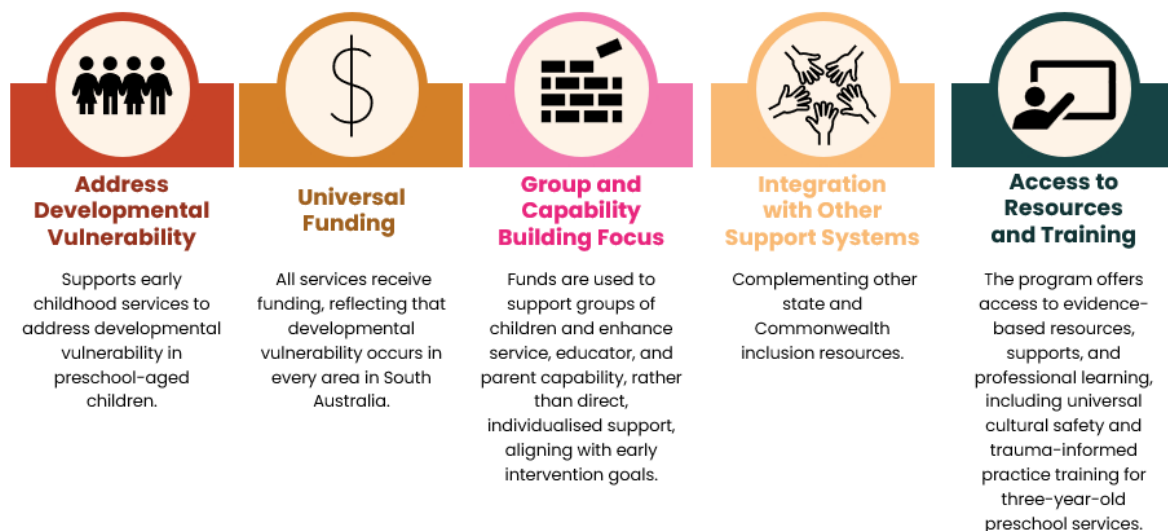


Figure 4: Preschool Boost components

04 - Access to family and child health and development services

Both universal and targeted health and development advice and support for children and families will be offered in integrated hubs. This may include health nurses (CaFHS or other providers), antenatal and prenatal services, immunisation services and feeding support.

05 - Parenting and family support programs

Parenting and family support programs will be provided to increase parenting capacity and support for a child's health, development, learning and wellbeing. In addition, these programs will allow opportunity for parents and families to develop community connections with other families and the services they need to support them and their children.

06 - Community co-designed, place-based additional supports

Community co-designed, place-based approaches may provide even greater opportunity to increase the attendance or participation of children experiencing disadvantage.³ These principles will be used to develop a Service Offer, unique to each integrated hub, reflecting the needs of the community, and regularly reviewed to respond to changes.

Roll-out of integrated hubs

The South Australian Government will establish 20 integrated hubs between 2025 and 2032.

³ Potential of 'stacking' early childhood interventions to reduce inequities in learning outcomes, <https://jech.bmj.com/content/73/12/1078>

Priority Areas

The OECD has identified priority areas for hub establishment. These areas experience high and sustained developmental vulnerability (as shown by the [Australian Early Development Census or AEDC](#)) and greater need (as shown on the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, or SEIFA, [Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage](#)).

Types of hubs being established

The OECD will establish 20 integrated hubs across South Australia, through conversions of existing services and new builds, with a goal that at least 2 of these be led by ACCOs. Integrated hubs will be established by partnering with existing government and non-government ECEC services.

Funding Model

The elements of the integrated hub Funding Model are detailed below.

Infrastructure Funding

A grant will be provided to support the conversion and expansion of existing services and to build new facilities. This grant will be up to the full cost of the project, subject to available budget. Land acquisition costs may be supported as part of project costs for new builds. The OECD encourages co-contributions (including land and funding from the organisation or other sources) from applicant organisations and will view this favourably during the assessment activities.

Establishment Funding

Establishment funding is a once off flexible grant for items, activities and services that are required for the establishment of the integrated hub. This may include:

- Place-based community consultation activities.
- IT equipment, software and installation which supports the provision of community programs for children, and families or the OECD funded staff.
- Staffing backfill to release existing staff to undertake integrated hub specific duties.
- Staff training with a focus on community engagement and integrated hub approaches.
- Furnishings for community spaces.
- Marketing / signage of the integrated hub service.

Out-of-scope activities for the establishment grant include:

- Preschool education or play resources (child-related resources such as paint, paper, books, puzzles etc.).
- Employment of staff to work directly with children or to undertake preschool related duties.
- IT equipment, software and installation which exclusively supports the preschool or LDC staff.

- Undertaking works associated with a National Quality Standard (NQS) Assessment and Rating visit.
- Capital works and general maintenance.

Additional Staffing

Each integrated hub will receive ongoing funding for roles to implement the Service Model. This will include the following roles:

- **Integration Lead** to support service integration within the integrated hub.
- **Allied Health** professional to support families and children and build the capacity of educators.
- **Administrative support** to assist with expected workload for 30-hour preschool places, outreach, Preschool Boost and integration activities.

If an existing service already has some of these staff members employed, a tailored approach to staffing may be agreed.

30-hour Preschool Program (Preschool Plus)

Ongoing funding will be provided to each integrated hub for the 30-hour preschool program, Preschool Plus. The preschool offer also includes:

- Teaching and Learning, to uplift an existing program to be a preschool program led by an early childhood teacher.
- Preschool Boost, to support early childhood education services to do more to address developmental vulnerability.
- Outreach, to improve the enrolment and attendance of preschool children by providing partner preschool services, in areas of high vulnerability, with access to additional resources and targeted supports.
- Fee Relief, to provide a reduction in out-of-pocket costs to eligible families.

Funding Agreement

Each provider will have a head agreement with the OECD for the new model of preschool.

Individual sites will be listed on an attachment to the head agreement as they are approved to deliver the preschool program.

Sites that are also approved as an integrated hub will be listed on a separate attachment with relevant details and payment details.

The Policy and Funding Guide will be an attachment to the Funding Agreement, and will detail all core partnership requirements for all elements of the new model of preschool, including integrated hubs. The draft Policy and Funding Guide can be found [here](#).

Commissioning Process

Integrated hubs to commence operations from 2028 onwards will be selected through the commissioning process, commencing with an ROI.

In considering eligibility, the following terms and definitions are used.

- **Organisation** means a single registered business submitting an ROI.
- **Consortia** means more than one organisation partnering to submit an ROI.
- **Service** means an individual non-government long day care or sessional preschool.
Services are identified with an SE-00000000 style of number.
- **Provider** means the organisation that operates the service.
Providers are identified with a PR-00000000 style of number.

For independent organisations, the Provider and Service may be the same entity.

Eligible organisations

Integrated hubs require high-quality service delivery, and suitable infrastructure to support this service delivery. Organisations may apply as:

- The provider of an **existing ECEC service** that wishes to convert to an integrated hub.
- An **organisation with an existing infrastructure project** that believes it could be a suitable integrated hub project.
- An organisation wishing to **operate a new integrated hub service**, which may or may not include providing and/or managing a new build and/or contributing land.
- An organisation wishing to act as an **infrastructure partner**, to provide and manage a new build for a new service to operate from, which may or may not include providing land.
- An organisation wishing to act as a **land partner**, to provide land for the development of a new integrated hub.

Organisations may seek to apply to be an integrated hub independently or as part of a consortium.

Organisations may also submit multiple proposals across different locations (for example, as an existing ECEC service in location 1 and to operate a new integrated hub service in location 2).

The following eligibility criteria will apply for the commissioning of integrated hubs.

Integrated hub operators and infrastructure partners

Potential integrated hub operators and infrastructure must be:

1. A legal entity, holding an Australian Business Number (ABN), registered for goods and services tax (GST), and
2. One of the following types of organisations:
 - 2.1. Not-for-profit (NFP) organisations that are registered or incorporated in Australia,
 - 2.2. ACCO,
 - 2.3. ACCHO,

- 2.4. South Australian local government entities, OR
- 2.5. South Australian non-government schools that are registered with the Education Standards Board (ESB) and in receipt of state government funding.

Existing ECEC services

Existing ECEC services are eligible to apply if they meet criteria 1 and 2, as well as the following:

- 3. One of the following types of ECEC providers:
 - 3.1. an approved provider under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations); OR
 - 3.2. A CCCFR ACCO-operated service not regulated under the National Law.
- 4. Operate or be willing to operate a Child Care Subsidy (CCS) eligible LDC model.
- 5. Operate a service that would support a 30-hour, 3- and 4-year-old preschool program for a minimum of 40 children.
- 6. Have a rating of Meeting or Exceeding against the NQS at the time of application and assessment. (The OECD will also consider providers who are not yet assessed.)
- 7. Located in an area of concentrated developmental vulnerability (as identified by the OECD).

ACCOs and ACCHOs

The OECD welcomes interest from ACCOs and ACCHOs and is seeking to establish at least 2 integrated hubs with Aboriginal providers.

ACCOs and ACCHOs may register interest to establish a hub in any part of the state and are not restricted to the outlined list of priority areas.

Recognising the different regulatory settings in place for some ACCO services, the NQS quality rating as described for other applicants does not apply. A commitment to quality and continuous improvement will be expected, as for all proponents.

The above-described criteria 1 to 4 are applicable to ACCO and ACCHO applicants.

New services

Organisations interested in operating a new service will be eligible to register their interest if they meet the criteria 1 to 4, as well as the following:

- 8. Willing to operate a service that would support a 30-hour, 3- and 4-year-old preschool program for a minimum of 60 children.
- 9. Willing to establish the service in a new build area (as identified by the OECD).

Non-conforming applications

Applications for existing ECEC services may also be considered if they can demonstrate exceptional circumstances for not meeting the eligibility criteria.

Examples of non-conforming applications are provided below and are indicative only.

Minimum Capacity:

- Service “A” will only be able to accommodate 38 individual 3- and 4-year-old children per week undertaking the 30-hour preschool program, but otherwise has very strong alignment with the integrated hubs Service Model and other eligibility requirements of integrated hubs.
- Service “B” would not be able to accommodate 40 individual 3- and 4-year-old children per week undertaking the 30-hour preschool program based on its current 6 hour per day teacher-led preschool program that does not operate during school holidays, however, is open to moving to a 7.5 hour a day program that runs 48-50 weeks of the year. Applied to its current enrolment patterns, this would allow it to provide a 30-hour preschool program for at least 40 children.

Quality Rating

- Service “C” is currently rated as Working Towards but has recently gone through the ratings process and will shortly receive the results, The service provider would like to commence the process of being considered to become an integrated hub. The rating result, once known, will be considered as part the assessment of their application.
- Service “D” has a history of being a Meeting or Exceeding service but was assessed several years ago as Working Towards. The provider can show that it has invested substantially in lifting quality and has a track record of being successful in improving the ratings of its services. The service is currently pending a re-assessment.

Location

- Service “E” falls outside the identified priority SA2 areas, but they are closely adjacent to those areas (i.e. just over the SA2 boundary) and can provide data to show they largely serve communities within the identified priority SA2.
- Service “F” operates in an SA2 that has a somewhat lower level of developmental vulnerability and does not appear on the priority list but can show they consistently serve a more vulnerable cohort within that SA2 through their enrolment data.

Infrastructure partners

Organisations interested in establishing a new building for a new service will be eligible to register their interest if they meet the criteria 1 to 2, as well as the following:

10. Willing to undertake an infrastructure project to build on land located in a priority new build area as identified by the OECD.
11. Willing to lease the facility at below commercial rates to an approved provider to operate a CCS eligible LDC model.

Infrastructure partners may or may not provide the land parcel on which the new facility will be built.

Land partners

Organisations wishing to provide land for the purpose of developing an integrated hub may do so independently or as part of a consortium.

Land partners must own, or be willing to source, a suitably sized parcel of land in an identified priority area for a new hub and be:

12. Willing to gift or sell the land; or

13. Willing to lease the land on a long-term basis (and facility if applicable) at below commercial rates to an approved provider to operate a CCS eligible LDC model.

Registration of Interest

The ROI will be publicly available on the OECD's website and broadcast through the OECD's communication channels, to support fair and transparent opportunities to express interest. Additionally, services anticipated to be eligible within the priority locations, and possible new market entrants, will receive direct communication to inform them of the ROI.

The ROI will be open for 6 weeks, from 29 April to 13 June, and will seek basic information from applicants about their proposed existing or new service that may be considered for further assessment. Where possible, information already captured by the OECD for the purposes of considering 3-year-old preschool partnerships and Flying Start Infrastructure Grants will be accessed internally.

The ROI is intended to allow applicants to provide the OECD with an indication of the feasibility of their proposed site as a hub, without creating a large administrative burden.

Assessment activities

All ROIs will be assessed through a multi-stage assessment process. Figure 4 shows the stages of the assessment process, detailed further below.

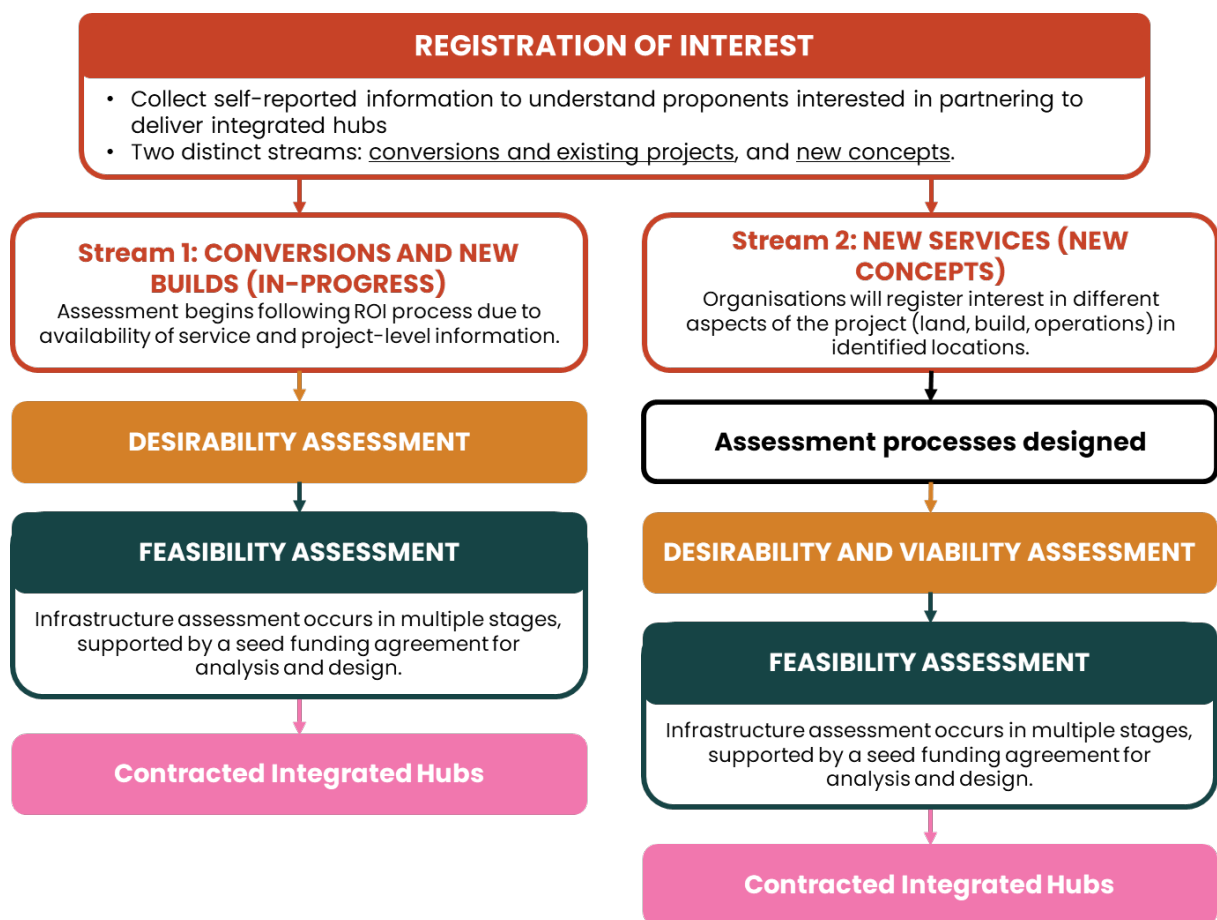


Figure 5: commissioning approach overview

Eligibility Confirmation

All nominations will be reviewed for alignment with the eligibility criteria, as detailed in *Eligible organisations*, and consideration of any non-conforming applications presenting exceptional circumstances.

Proposal Prioritisation

All eligible nominations will be considered for feasibility to prioritise further assessment activities. This will involve desktop review of infrastructure related items submitted by the organisation.

Desirability Assessment

All eligible proposals will be invited to coordinate a site visit, or meeting for new services, with members of the OECD. This site visit will be used to consider the provider's capability to align with the elements of the Service Model, including:

- **Preschool capacity:** Sufficient preschool capacity to offer a minimum of 40 places in a 30-hour preschool program.
- **Staff readiness:** Assessment of the existing workforce's capacity to manage the transition to an integrated hub Service Model, including experience working with vulnerable populations.
- **Leadership commitment:** Evaluation of the leadership at potential sites, particularly their commitment to community development, service integration, and the ability to lead the change management required to transition to a hub.
- **Community engagement:** Assessment of the community's readiness and willingness to engage with the hub, including attendance patterns at local community centres and relationships with service providers.
- **Family relationships:** Evidence that the services have relationships with families in their service, are connected to their community and have an understanding about their community and its specific needs.
- **Aboriginal cultural considerations:** Incorporating community co-design, especially with Aboriginal communities, to ensure that the hubs are culturally appropriate and safe.
- **Consultation with local stakeholders:** Engaging local government, non-government organisations, and community leaders in the planning and establishment of hubs.

Feasibility (Infrastructure) Assessments

If assessed as desirable, potential hub projects will be assessed at various stages to determine that:

- the proposed site is suitable,
- the required infrastructure works can be completed within appropriate time and cost parameters,
- the design aligns with requirements, and
- the project is progressing as planned.

Significant site assessment and design work is required to progress a project to the point where feasibility can be appropriately assessed. Applicants may be offered a grant to support with these activities.

Program Considerations and Recommendations

Desirability and feasibility assessments will be conducted at an individual hub project level. At a program level, consideration of the mixed market approach and geographical spread of hubs will inform decision-making.

Contract

Service providers chosen to partner to operate a hub will enter into a Preschool Funding Agreement, or variation of any such existing agreement, with the South Australian Government to formalise their commitment and operations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Infrastructure work

Applicants funded to deliver hub infrastructure projects must provide regular updates to the OECD to ensure alignment with the scope and timeframes for the commencement of the hub.

Operationalisation

The OECD and the service provider will establish project governance for the monitoring of the infrastructure, human resource and communications activities required to implement the Service Model.

The OECD will support the service provider to establish, or adjust any existing, place-based mechanisms to co-design the Service Offer for the site. This will include consideration of:

1. Targeted population: Clearly define the specific group that the service is designed to support, alongside priority of access criteria.
2. Expected outcomes: Define the core requirements the service is expected to deliver, the measurable outcomes that the service is expected to achieve and ensure alignment with the overall goals of the program.
3. Roles and responsibilities: Documentation that clearly outlines and delineates the roles and responsibilities for the OECD versus providers. This should include workforce planning and hiring, infrastructure site identification, build and maintenance, assessing community needs, and determining in-demand service provision.
4. Service constraints: Identify any statutory requirements, legal considerations, or established processes and systems that may affect service delivery.
5. Activities and outputs: Specify the services or outputs that must be delivered, with a clear delineation of what is determined by the provider and what is governed by the OECD.
6. Performance indicators: Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) for tracking the impact of the service over time. These should include short, medium, and long-term indicators, detailing how they will be monitored, by whom, and the frequency of monitoring.

Governance

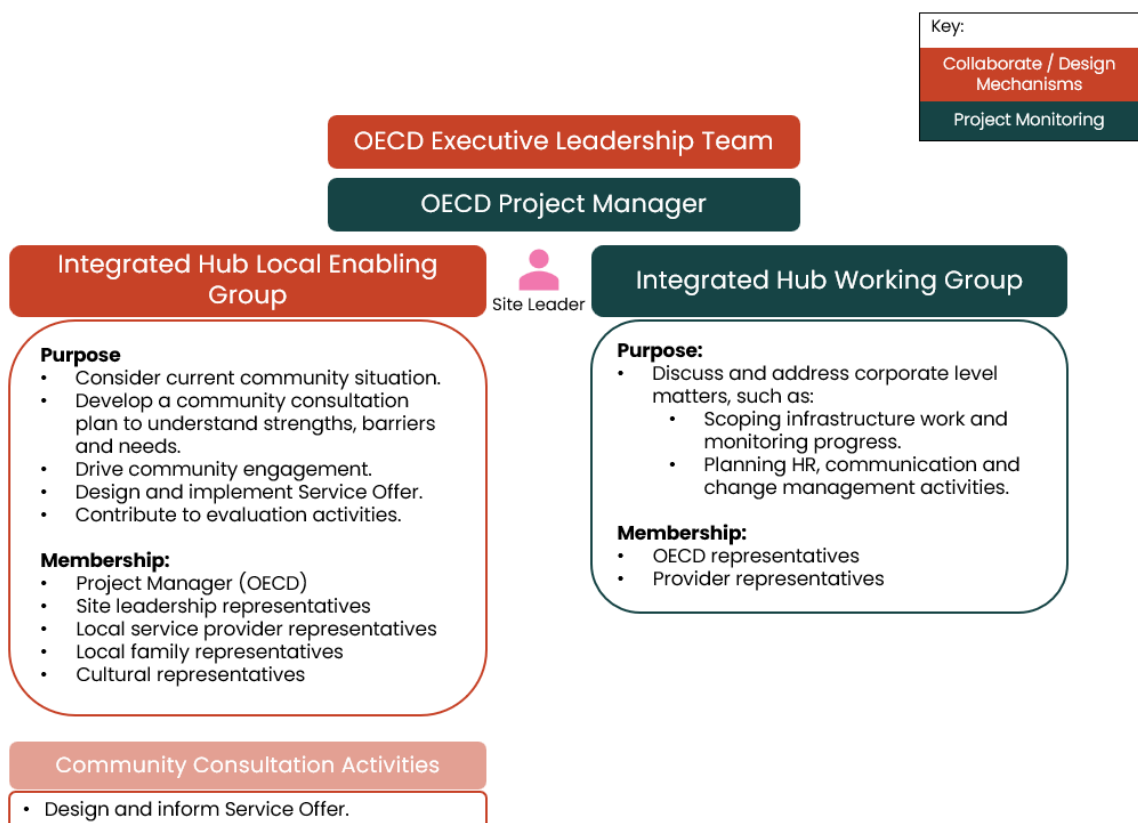
The governance for integrated hubs involves collaboration/design mechanisms and traditional project monitoring aspects.

Collaboration/design mechanisms are achieved through:

- a South Australian Government cross-agency forum which will contribute to the refinement and realisation of the overarching Service Model, and
- Local Enabling Groups, to design and implement the site-specific Service Offer.

The OECD is responsible for the final overarching Service Model and monitoring the project schedule for each integrated hub, and the service provider (with the Infrastructure Partner, if relevant) is responsible for undertaking the infrastructure, human resources (HR), communication and operational activities of their site.

A Working Group will be formed for the OECD and the service provider to define and monitor these activities, with roles and responsibilities agreed between the two organisations. The Service Operator is responsible for delivering the Service Offer at their integrated hub, including how they will operationalise the OECD's policies for priority of access or programming. This may be considered by the Working Group, or internally by the Service Operator.



The Working Group is expected to exist to support the implementation of the Service Model, terminating approximately 3 to 6 months after the integrated hub commences operations.

The Local Enabling Group is expected to exist in perpetuity, with the OECD membership changing at the conclusion of the project stage and ownership transitioning completely to the local integrated hub team to continue the place-based approach for their site. It is also expected the membership will evolve through the project stages to include the most relevant representatives and organisations for each site.

Evaluation

Monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement are essential to ensure the integrated hubs operate effectively and meet the intended goals and outcomes. This may include activities of:

- Performance Monitoring: Regular performance assessments of integrated hubs based on service delivery outcomes, community engagement, and staff satisfaction.
- Evaluation: Periodic reviews to assess the effectiveness of the integrated hub model and the outcomes for children and families, with adjustments made as necessary.
- Continuous Improvement: Ongoing learning and adaptation, including feedback from families, communities, and service provide.



Appendix 1: Timeframes

Further communication is expected to be in line with the following table.

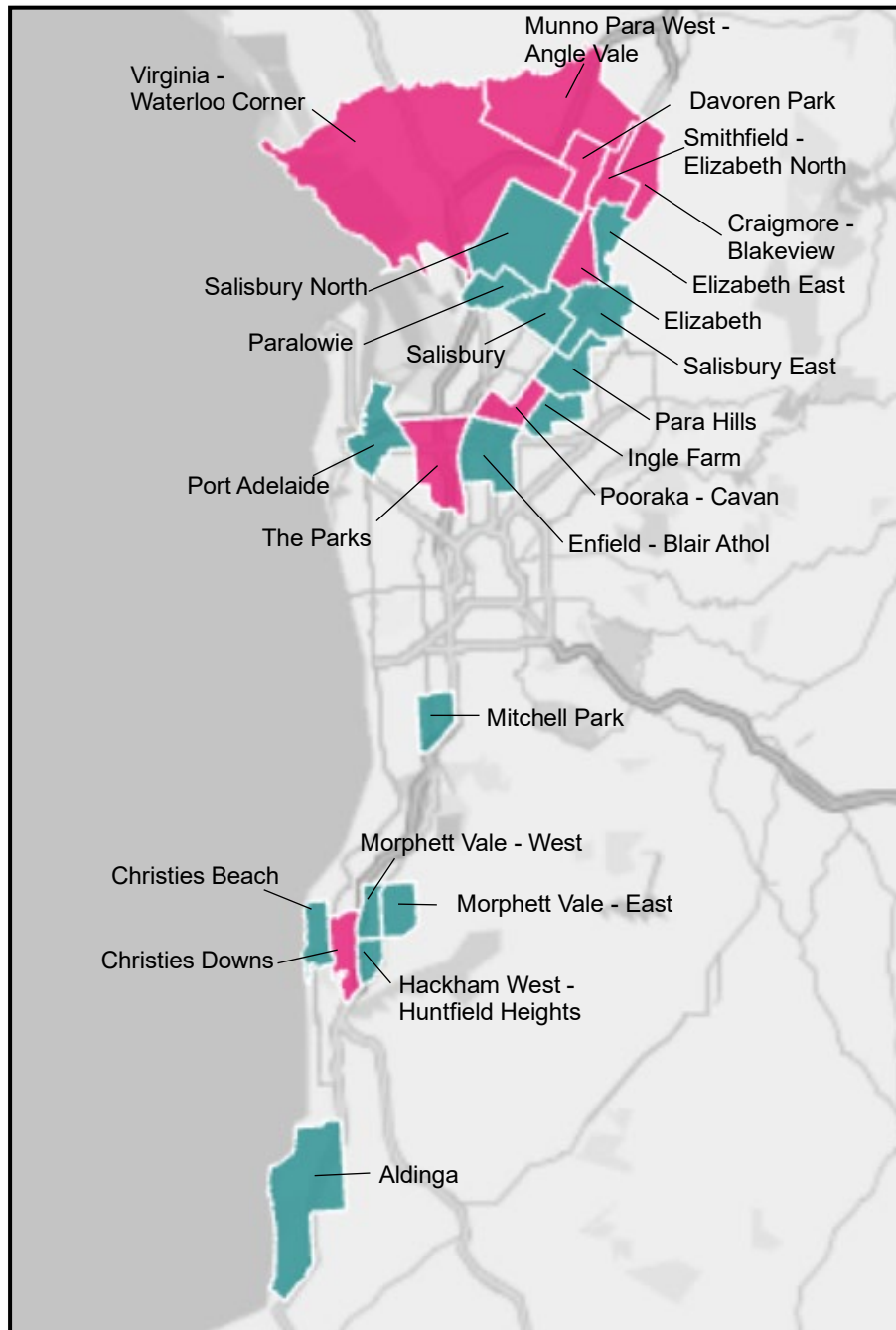
Stage	Dates	Detailed Activity
Registration of Interest	29 April to 13 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt of submission.
Stream 1 Proposals		
Assessment stage 1 (first tranche)	June to July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to participate in a site visit and interview for proposals considered able to be ready for a 2028 service commencement (first tranche).
Assessment stage 1 (first tranche): Approval	Late July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal outcome of assessment for proposals considered in the first tranche, with successful services invited to participate in stage 2.
Assessment stage 2 (first tranche)	<i>July / August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-site assessment by an external architect for proposals that progress in the first tranche.
Stream 1 assessment stage 2 (first tranche): Approval	<i>August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal outcome of on-site assessment for proposals in the first tranche, with successful services invited to proceed to concept design.
Assessment stage 1 (second tranche)	<i>August to October</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to participate in a site visit and interview for proposals considered able to be ready for a 2029 or later service commencement (second tranche).
Assessment stage 1 (second tranche): Approval	<i>Late October</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal outcome of assessment for proposals considered in the second tranche.
Assessment stage 2 (second tranche)	<i>October / November</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-site assessment by an external architect for proposals that progress in the second tranche.
Assessment stage 2 (second tranche): Approval	<i>December / January</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal outcome of on-site assessment for proposals in the second tranche to proceed to concept design.
Stream 2 Proposals		
Assessment invitation	<i>July to August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to participate in assessment process.
Assessment	<i>To be advised</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of new service proposals.

Indicative dates are in *italics*.

Appendix 2: Priority Locations

The priority SA2 locations identified by the OECD are shown in the maps, distinguished by the type of integrated hub which will be considered. ACCO/ACCHO-led integrated hubs will be considered in any SA2 location across South Australia.

Metropolitan Integrated Hubs





Key

- Priority locations for existing services
- Priority locations for new or existing services

Regional and Metropolitan Integrated Hubs



Key

-  Priority locations for existing services
-  Priority locations for new or existing services