

Tasmanian Community Fund Amendment Bill 2025

Fact Sheet

The Tasmanian Community Fund Amendment Bill 2025 introduces several targeted changes to improve the rigour and transparency of the statutory framework that applies to the operation of the Tasmanian Community Fund (TCF).

These changes also respond to and address the findings and recommendations of the Auditor-General's August 2024 Report – *Tasmanian Community Fund referendum support and assessment of grant funding to Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition Ltd* (the Report).

The Report found there were several areas where the TCF Board could and should improve its decision-making and grant management practices.

In summary, the Bill:

- Explicitly provides direction that any actions the TCF Board perform under the Act need to be apolitical, and it must act in a professional and impartial manner in performing its functions and exercising its powers more generally.
- The amendments further remove empowering provisions that would allow changes to the Tasmanian Community Fund's functions through regulatory processes rather than legislative change.
- Clarifies that the TCF Board must comply with the requirements of the *Archives Act 1983* and the *Audit Act 2008*, and that grants provided by the Board are considered grant expenditure for the purposes of the *Public Accounts Committee Act*, to make it clear that such grants may be scrutinised by the Public Accounts Committee, as that Committee deems appropriate.
- Requires the TCF Board to develop, publish, and comply with a grant management framework based on contemporary best practice approaches and which aligns with relevant Treasurer's Instructions as though the Board were an agency under the *Financial Management Act 2016*.
- Requires the TCF Board to conduct independent, external performance audits of its compliance with grant management frameworks every four years.
- Requires the TCF Board to publicly consult on the development of its Strategic Plan for a minimum period of 21 days prior to finalisation, and to prepare, publish, and annually report against a Strategic Plan, linking to and supporting the Board functions and powers under the Act.

These changes bring various elements of the TCF's statutory framework more into line with similar statutory Boards and will provide enhanced transparency and community confidence in both the decision-making and administrative operations of the TCF.

The amendments retain the clear independence of the TCF from the Tasmanian Government in providing grants to support a wide variety of important community activities. The TCF Board is supportive of the Tasmanian Community Fund Amendment Bill 2025.