

## South Australian Kindergartens & Early Learning Centres

Recommended Funding Pathway:

### Grants SA (Department of Human Services)

**Grant Information:** <https://dhs.sa.gov.au/how-we-help/grants/available-grants>

The **Grants SA** program is the **Recommended** pathway for SA Kindergartens, particularly those in high-growth or high-needs corridors. This government grant is built on the narrative of **equity and inclusion**. For 2026, the Department of Human Services is prioritizing projects that provide "tangible infrastructure" for children with disabilities. Applying through your **Governing Council** or **Management Committee** ensures you meet the necessary NFP requirements while addressing the specific inclusion gaps in your local community.

### Project Positioning

For this recommended pathway, the project should be positioned as an **Inclusive Infrastructure Project** that directly addresses the requirements of the **SA Inclusive Education Amendment Act 2025**. Frame the project as a "Tier 2" intervention tool that reduces sensory barriers for neurodiverse children. By providing a "Low-Arousal Zone," the kindergarten is ensuring that children who are often excluded from high-stimulus play have an equitable opportunity to develop social and emotional skills.

### Avoid positioning the project as:

Standard playground "musical toys" or a general landscaping upgrade. Do not focus on the "aesthetic" value; focus instead on the **clinical and pedagogical necessity** of acoustic engineering in a preschool environment to prevent sensory overload and emotional dysregulation.

## Project Title

[Insert Kindergarten Name] Early Years Inclusive Sensory Hub: A Dedicated Space for Regulation and Participation

## Service Overview

[Insert Kindergarten Name] is a cornerstone of our local community, providing essential early childhood education and care. Our center is committed to the "Design for All" philosophy, ensuring that every child, regardless of their sensory profile, can participate fully in outdoor learning. This application is submitted by our [Governing Council/Management Committee] to proactively address the diverse needs of our current and future cohorts.

## Project Description

This project involves the development of a dedicated "**Outdoor Sensory Hub**" within our kindergarten yard. It features 316L stainless steel, acoustic-engineered instruments specifically designed to provide a harmonious, low-decibel auditory experience. Unlike standard percussive play, these instruments allow children to engage in "**Active Resets**," using rhythmic, tactile play to soothe their nervous systems. The hub is a permanent, maintenance-free installation that provides a calm "sanctuary" within the broader outdoor environment.

## Community Need

Our center has noted a significant increase in children requiring **Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP)** funding and sensory adjustments. Traditional outdoor play areas are often high-decibel environments that can trigger "sensory shut-down" in neurodiverse children. This project addresses a critical gap by providing a specialized space that meets our obligations under the **SA Autism Strategy**, ensuring we have the infrastructure to support children with Autism, ADHD, and Global Developmental Delay during their most formative years.

## Community Benefit

The Sensory Hub provides long-term benefits by fostering **emotional resilience** and self-regulation skills before children transition to primary school. It serves as a regional benchmark for inclusive early years design and offers a resource that can be utilized during transition-to-school programs for local families. By investing in this hub, we are reducing the "inclusion gap" and ensuring our local children enter the school system with the regulation tools they need to succeed.

## Outcomes

The project aims to achieve a reduction in sensory-related distress incidents during outdoor play and increased engagement in collaborative group activities. We expect to see a measurable improvement in "**School Readiness**" for children with sensory processing challenges. Additionally, the project provides a functional, all-abilities outdoor learning space that allows educators to meet **EYLF Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing**.

## Project Delivery

The project involves the procurement of three specialized "Zero-Surfacing" instruments (2x Explorer, 1x Composer). Professional installation will be completed on existing hard-stand or garden areas, avoiding the need for expensive rubber soft-fall. Staff will participate in a professional development session on using the space for "co-regulation" strategies, ensuring the equipment is integrated into our daily pedagogical practice. All installations will comply with Australian Safety Standards.

## Budget

Item	Quantity	Total (Ex. GST)
Explorer Outdoor Musical Instrument	2	\$7,900
Composer Outdoor Musical Instrument	1	\$4,150
In-ground Post Mounts	3	\$900
Freight (indicative to SA)	1	\$650
Installation & Site Prep	1	\$1,500
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$15,100</b>
<b>Funding Requested (Grants SA)</b>		<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Kindergarten Contribution</b>		<b>\$5,100</b>

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## Pricing Note

*Costs provided are indicative to support funding applications. Final pricing, including freight and installation, may vary depending on location and site requirements. Schools are encouraged to obtain a formal quote to confirm project costs.*

## Budget Justification

This request focuses on high-durability, therapeutic assets that offer the lowest "Total Cost of Ownership." By utilizing "**Zero-Surfacing**" technology, we bypass the \$10,000+ cost of soft-fall rubber, ensuring 100% of the Grant funding is utilized for the specialized instruments themselves. The center's \$5,100 contribution reflects our commitment to meeting the high standards of inclusive education required in South Australia today.

## Sustainability

The instruments are crafted from marine-grade stainless steel with a **25-year structural warranty**. They are designed to withstand the SA climate with zero ongoing maintenance. This is a "one-off" capital investment that provides value for over two decades, making it a highly sustainable choice for a community-run kindergarten with limited recurring budgets.

## Evaluation

Success will be evaluated through educator observations of children's "regulation levels" during transition times and the inclusion of the Hub in children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We will also monitor feedback from visiting Occupational Therapists and families to ensure the space is meeting the diverse sensory needs of our cohort.

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## Application Considerations

Grants SA is highly competitive; ensure you emphasize how this hub helps the center comply with the **Inclusive Education Amendment Act 2025**. Highlighting the number of children on the **IESP register** will significantly strengthen the "Community Need" section.