

APPENDIX B:

Australian Government initiatives

Family Community Network Initiative (FCNI) and Local Answers

www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/community-fcni.htm

www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/sfsc-local_answers.htm

FCNI is an example of the practical opportunities the Australian Government provides to support families and strengthen communities. The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy gives families, their children and communities the opportunity to build a better future. The Local Answers initiative builds on the Strategy's successful first four years with funding for small-scale projects developed by communities in response to local issues. Local Answers gives communities the power to develop their own solutions to local problems and helps them help themselves.

Community Portal

www.community.gov.au

The Community Portal is a linking site for all Australians to access websites that support or facilitate involvement in general and specific community issues, concerns and activities. It covers an ever-growing range of subjects as the site allows members of the public to suggest new sites for consideration and possible linking.

Culture and recreation portal

www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au

The culture and recreation portal provides access to over 3000 websites and 1.3 million pages of relevant information for cultural institutions, including guides on creating a website and using e-business. The e-business guide is designed to help Australian cultural organisations develop and improve their use of the Internet as a business tool. The Internet Development Guides aim to help Australian culture and recreation sector workers and organisations discover why they should use the Internet, how they might use it, and how to develop an Internet presence.

Australian Government grants

www.grantslink.gov.au

The Australian Government's Grantslink portal aims to streamline the process of applying for Australian Government grants.

Volunteer Small Equipment Grants

www.facs.gov.au/vseg2004

Under the Volunteer Small Equipment Grants program organisations can apply for grants of up to \$5000 to buy small equipment that supports the work of volunteers by making it easier, safer and/or more enjoyable. The second funding round for 2004 has given \$7 million to 3400 organisations to help Australia's volunteers carry on with their vital work. Since 2001, total funding of over \$26 million has helped over 11 500 community organisations.

Disability rights policy and projects

www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights

The Australian Government disability rights policy and projects are administered by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Programs to help regional and remote Australia connect to ICT

www.dcita.gov.au and follow the link to Grants and Funding

The Australian Government has worked closely with all state and territory governments to develop the components of the National Broadband Strategy.

The Networking the Nation program has assisted the economic and social development of rural Australia by funding projects that enhanced telecommunications infrastructure and services and increased access to these services. The IT training and technical support program assists people and organisations in very remote Australia to access basic IT training and support.

The Coordinated Communications Infrastructure Fund is a \$23.7 million program to support infrastructure projects that have aggregated demand both across key sectors such as health and education and across particular geographic areas.

The \$8.3 million demand aggregation brokerage program aims to consolidate demand at regional and sectoral levels to attract broadband investment.

The Higher Bandwidth Incentive Scheme (HiBIS) is a \$107.8 million initiative providing registered Internet service providers with incentive payments to supply higher bandwidth services in regional, rural and remote areas at prices comparable to those available in metropolitan areas (see *www.telinfo.gov.au/HiBIS%20page.htm*).

The Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC) was released in May 2002. TAPRIC connects remote Indigenous communities through support for improved and sustained take-up and use of telephone, Internet and broadband services and increased awareness of telecommunications opportunities and rights (see www.dcita.gov.au/tel/indigenous_telecommunications).

Tel:info

www.telinfo.gov.au

The telinfo website provides up-to-date information about telecommunications services and entitlements for people in regional, rural and remote Australia. It keeps telecommunications stakeholders informed about telecommunications services, consumer rights, government programs and regional telecommunications.

