

Request for quotes

Carers + Employers evaluation

23 February 2026

Carers NSW is seeking quotes for an evaluation of the Carers + Employers (C+E) program.

1. Program description

The Carers + Employers program is an accreditation program and a Network that brings together organisations interested in learning ways to develop carer friendly workplaces. Workplaces that meet the Carers + Employers Standards can be nationally recognised as Accredited Carer Friendly Employers. The program commenced in 2017. A program logic is provided in Tab A.

2. Program objectives

The key objectives of the Carers + Employers program are to:

1. Increase awareness of carers within workplaces, including NSW Public Services
2. Define best practice standards for supporting staff with caring responsibilities
3. Provide formal recognition of carer friendly employers through a tiered accreditation program
4. Provide Carers + Employers Network members with information and resources to support carer-friendly practice

Long term impact:

5. Increase the number of carers supported in employment by growing the number and diversity of employers accredited through the Carers + Employers program

3. Evaluation questions

Carers NSW is seeking quotes for an impact evaluation, guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent has the Carers + Employers program achieved its objectives in the past three years of delivery?
2. What has been the overall reach of the program (e.g. size of employers, industries)?
3. What are the value and main benefits of the program to:
 - a. Employers?
 - b. Carers?
 - c. NSW Government?
 - i. Specifically, how does the C+E program support NSW government agencies to meet their obligations under the Carers Recognition Act?
4. How does the Carers + Employers program compare to other similar initiatives including the Carer Inclusive Workplace Initiative? How can they work together to achieve greater impact?
5. What have been the challenges in the design and implementation of the Carers + Employers program?
6. How have these challenges been addressed? What improvement measures have been implemented, and what were the outcomes of these?
7. How can the impact of the program be strengthened?

4. Evaluation scope

Carers NSW proposes that the evaluation examine the following data sources from the last three years of Carers + Employers program delivery (2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years):

- Program guidelines, accreditation framework and process documentation outlining the objectives of the program and how it is delivered. A draft program logic is at TAB A.
- Aggregated administrative records indicating total number of employers engaged in the program, including those who have submitted an EOI, accredited employers and C+E Network Members
- Quantitative and qualitative data from Carers + Employers accredited employers and their employees where appropriate to understand their experience and the impacts for them
- Interviews with key Carers NSW staff to understand implementation of processes and procedures and actual hours of support required through accreditation
- Interviews with DCJ staff with knowledge of the program to understand their perspectives as funding agency.
- Interviews with other state/territory Carer organisations who have worked with Carers NSW – Carers WA, Carers Tas and Carers Vic - to implement Carers + Employers in their respective states about opportunities for program improvement based on their experience.
- Interviews with other state/territory organisations who have not yet engaged with the program, to understand how the program can meet their needs.
- Interview with Carer Australia about the alignment of the program with CIWI

5. Deliverables

- Inception report with evaluation plan and methodology
- Interim progress report
- Final evaluation report (including executive summary and presentation) including suggested amendments to the program logic to guide evaluation in future
- Infographic for public dissemination

6. Timeline

In line with the Carers NSW Procurement Policy and our standard practice in procuring external evaluators, Carers NSW conducts an open, competitive procurement process with the following timeline:

- February 2026: Request for quotes issued
- 13 March 2026: Proposal submission deadline
- By end of March 2026: Review and assessment of proposals by Carers NSW and vendor recommendation provided to DCJ
- By 2 April 2026: Successful and unsuccessful vendors notified and establishment meeting scheduled with successful vendor

- April 2026: Scoping phase conducted with successful vendor, including provision of key documents and data and confirmation of approach
- April – June 2026: Data collection and analysis conducted
- June 2026: Preliminary report and accompanying presentation for Carers NSW and DCJ feedback
- July 2026: Final report and recommendations deadline

Contact:

Please submit a quote by 13 March 2026 to:

Melissa Docker

Executive Manager Policy Research and Development

Carers NSW

melissad@carersnsw.org.au

TAB A –Program logic

Context / Need

- Growing proportion of the workforce are carers.
- Lack of carer-friendly workplaces drives stress, absenteeism, and workforce exit.
- Employers face avoidable productivity loss, turnover, and recruitment costs.

Assumptions

- Executive sponsor and HR lead have authority to implement policy/culture changes.
- Genuine co-design/consultation with employees who are carers occurs and informs decisions.
- Accreditation (public recognition, listing, certificate/logo) creates an incentive for sustained change and ongoing renewal.

External factors

- Industrial relations settings, award conditions, and agency-wide HR directives (especially relevant for government).
- Labour market tightness and competition for talent (influences value of “employer of choice”).
- Wider demographic trends increasing caring responsibilities across the workforce.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes (0–6 months)	Medium-term Outcomes (6–24 months)	Long-term Impact (2+ years)
<p>Carers NSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation framework & assessment criteria • Training, consultation & expert support • Tools, templates & resources • Promotion, recognition & community of practice • Program administration & quality assurance <p>Employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive sponsor & HR lead • Internal working group (incl. employees who are carers) • Time & organisational commitment • Accreditation fee 	<p>Employer Journey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrol & access member platform • Establish governance & working group • Review policies, practices & culture • Consult employees who are carers • Identify and address gaps • Submit evidence for assessment <p>Carers NSW Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training & tailored consultations • Guidance on evidence & standards • Assessment & accreditation decision • Promotion, recognition & network engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers enrolled and supported • Working groups established • Policies and practices reviewed and strengthened • Evidence submissions assessed • Accreditation awarded (Activate / Commit / Excel) • Accredited employers promoted and listed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger leadership accountability for carer support within employer organisations • Clearer, more consistent carer-friendly policies • Improved awareness of support options among staff • Increased confidence for carers to request flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved wellbeing and engagement of working carers • Reduced absenteeism and stress-related impacts • Higher retention of skilled employees • Improved employer reputation and workforce stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable, inclusive workplaces where caring and employment coexist • Increased workforce participation of carers • Sector-wide uplift in leading practice • Stronger social and economic outcomes for carers, employers, and NSW