



An Australian Government Initiative



YORKE AND MID NORTH

Request for Expressions of Interest

Common reference designs for childcare centres – rural and regional South Australia

September 2025

Background

Access to quality childcare is crucial for children’s development and the liveability of communities. The importance of outcomes achieved in this regard has been recognised recently through the South Australian Government’s and Australian Government’s respective commitments to universal access to minimum levels of preschool services, and funding commitments to improving access to childcare across communities.

The level of access to childcare services (including long daycare, preschool and out-of-school hours care (OSHC) services) is poor to non-existent in many parts of regional and rural South Australia, with smaller populations challenging the economics of for-profit services.

In recognition of these challenges, the South Australian Government and Australian Government are respectively making different pools of funding available for capital projects in regional and rural areas to support the development of services in these communities.

Work needs to be done to assist communities in preparing applications to access these funds, to plan facilities and services that are fit-for-purpose and cost-effective. For many communities, standardised facilities capable of accommodating smaller cohorts (between 30 and 60 children) will be suitable for meeting the needs of the community.

However, the lack of interest from for-profit providers means the cost and time required to develop capital solutions for facilities presents a barrier to establishing services locally.

Project

Regional Development Australia (RDA) has received funding from the Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD) to develop a suite of reference designs for the construction of childcare facilities to service regional and rural communities throughout South Australia.

These reference designs will be made available to local communities (through local government, childcare centres and childcare working groups) as the basis for project designs that will be adapted to suit the needs of local communities.

These communities typically have 750 - 5,000 residents and are often located in relatively remote locations across South Australia.

The purpose of these designs is to assist smaller regional and rural communities to develop viable childcare projects by simplifying project development activities and bringing down construction costs through simple, standard designs that meet the relevant statutory and regulatory standards.

Scope

Reference designs developed under this brief will need to address the following scope:

- Three (3) sets of drawings for facilities of varying sizes, accommodating:
 - 30 licensed places
 - 45 licensed places
 - 60 licenses places
- Designs must meet all relevant standards, including (but not limited to):
 - South Australia's Planning and Design Code
 - National Construction Code
 - National Quality Standard and its enabling legislation – specifically:
 - *Education and Care National Law 2010*
 - *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*
- Facilities must be capable of hosting the following types of childcare programs interchangeably:
 - Long daycare
 - Preschool
 - Out-of-school-hours programs

Deliverables

Three (3) sets of construction drawings are to be provided for facilities hosting childcare services accommodating 30, 45 and 60 licensed places in regional and rural communities across South Australia, with the following sets of designs to be provided as part of the deliverables:

- Architectural drawings
- Structural drawings
- Floor plan
- Elevation drawings
- Roof, wall, floor and framing detail
- Wet area specifications
- Section drawings
- Detail drawings
- Plumbing and drainage (including stormwater drainage design)
- Mechanical, electrical and fire safety system drawings

Respondents are invited to suggest any other documentation they think may add value, quoting the costs for any extras separately from the scope defined above.

RDA is particularly interested in seeing respondents' views on the relevance of quantity surveying and cost estimation reports for these common reference designs, noting the potential limitations in this regard.

The designs will become property of RDA upon the acceptance of the deliverables, to be licensed by RDA to third parties thereafter without restriction or subsequent payment to the provider.

Design principles

In addition to the requirements set out in the scope above, the following design principles should be observed in the preparation of the deliverables:

- Designs should be compatible with, and sympathetic to, co-located development within education precincts, including on Department for Education-owned sites.
 - Department for Education’s [Design standards for education facilities](#) should be considered in the development of the deliverables, with the standards referenced under the Scope above taking precedence.
- Designs should be amenable to affordable construction methodologies, including modular and prefabricated construction.

Timelines for the project

- 16th September 2025 – Request for EOI released
- 6th October 2025 – Responses to request for EOI due
- 10th October 2025 – Preferred provider notified
- 17th October 2025 – Contracting completed and project inception meeting
- 3rd November 2025 – Exposure draft of drawings to be provided
- 17th November 2025 – Progress meeting between RDA, OECD and provider
- 28th November 2025 – First draft of drawings to be provided
- 19th December 2025 – Final drafts of drawings to be provided for acceptance by RDA

Submitting a response

Interested parties are invited to submit a written expression of interest using the schedule attached to this request for EOI.

All responses must be received by 9:00am ACDT Monday 6th October 2025.

All responses are to be submitted via email to ceo@yorkeandmidnorth.com.au.

Interested parties are invited to register for an online briefing being held 4:00pm ACST Wednesday 24th September 2025 to ask questions regarding the Project and EOI process, with registrations to be sent to info@yorkeandmidnorth.com.au.

Assessment

Respondents’ expressions of interest will be reviewed by a panel (including representatives from RDA and the Office for Early Childhood Education) before short-listing appropriate respondents to meet with the panel to expand on their responses.

The following matrix will be relied upon by the panel in assessing responses.

Deliverables	Methodology	Price	Experience	Value add
35%	20%	20%	15%	10%