

# Grant guidelines and application

*Emerging Stronger: Place-based volunteering initiatives and innovation projects*

## Contents

<b>Part A: Background and overview</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Key dates.....	2
Policy context .....	2
Objectives and scope .....	2
Partnering requirements.....	3
Evaluation.....	3
Funding and costs .....	3
How to apply.....	4
<b>Part B: Evaluation and conditions</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Conditions of funding .....	4
General conditions .....	4
Evaluation of submissions.....	6

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## Part A: Background and overview

This document has been prepared to assist organisations in applying for the non-recurrent Emerging Stronger grants program.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is seeking applications from local community organisations with strong partnerships to help rebuild volunteering in local communities.

### Key dates

<b>Grant applications open</b>	Monday 6 June 2022
<b>Closing date for requests for further information</b>	9:00am, Monday 4 July 2022
<b>Closing date and time for submissions</b>	9:00am, Monday 18 July 2022
<b>All organisations to be advised of outcome</b>	From 8 August 2022
<b>Project delivery</b>	August 2022 – February 2023
<b>Progress report</b>	December 2022
<b>Final report and evaluation</b>	April 2023

### Policy context

Victoria's new Volunteer Strategy provides a five-year plan to revitalise, reimagine and strengthen volunteering in Victoria, including to promote, build, support and celebrate all forms of volunteering. It also focuses on opportunities for volunteering to be more inclusive, accessible, flexible, safe and enjoyable, so more Victorians can get involved, and stay connected.

The Strategy was developed in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and significant declines in volunteering participation. Volunteering is yet to return to pre-pandemic levels, and critical shortages continue in many sectors.

A key priority in implementing the Strategy is to encourage people who have previously volunteered to return, while growing and diversifying the pool of Victorian volunteers. The Strategy also provides a roadmap of practical improvements to strengthen volunteering into the future.

### Objectives and scope

The \$1 million Emerging Stronger grants program will support place-based initiatives and innovation projects to re-engage volunteers, broaden the volunteer base, and strengthen volunteering in local communities.

The grant program is part of a \$1.3 million investment, that also includes:

- A communications campaign to inspire Victorians to reconnect with their community through volunteering.
- A training and mentoring program and help organisations to reimagine and transform volunteering opportunities to meet modern volunteer expectations.

The program will fund grants of up to \$80,000 to enable delivery of initiatives across rural and regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne, and support critical community needs via a broad range of approaches.

## Objectives

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is seeking project proposals across three objectives. Organisations may seek funding under one or all of the objectives:

- Re-engaging volunteers
- Broadening the volunteer base
- Strengthening volunteering in the local community

Highly rated submissions will demonstrate critical community need and outline the priority sectors, organisations and communities that will be supported.

## Scope

Projects may include:

- Developing resources and supports for community organisations to:
  - Reduce barriers such as socioeconomic and structural factors, and discrimination related to age, culture, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation.
  - Use a range of inclusive engagement practices to attract, recruit and support a diverse range of people. This also includes consideration for accessibility and culturally safe and appropriate formats.
- Partnerships between organisations to build organisational capability, community connections and pathways to volunteering. Showcasing how active engagement in partnerships can assist organisations to attract volunteers and support volunteering for a broad range of people.
- Developing or enhancing volunteering programs to strengthen connections with a broad range of community members and/or to develop pathways into education, employment or retirement.
- Promoting volunteering opportunities through a broad range of networks, in accessible formats and a number of languages.

## Partnering requirements

Applicants must have an established partnership/consortium and/or relevant networks in place to support immediate commencement of project activities.

There is no minimum or maximum number of partners.

Partner organisations should all be aware of the application and provide a letter of support indicating their willingness to participate if the application is successful.

## Evaluation

Proposals must include appropriate monitoring approaches to enable robust evaluation, and strategies for disseminating good practice with the volunteering community.

## Funding and costs

Funding will be provided as a non-recurrent grant. Funds may be provided wholly or staged depending on milestones. Payment schedules will be agreed with successful grant recipients.

Submissions may include an allowance for project management and resources to deliver the project.

The detailed budget in the application must be exclusive of GST and indicate where GST is applicable for any of the cost items.

## How to apply

Organisations seeking funding must complete the application form and submit via Smarty Grants: <https://cfr.smartygrants.com.au/emerging-stronger-grants>.

Questions may be submitted via [volunteer.strategy@dfh.vic.gov.au](mailto:volunteer.strategy@dfh.vic.gov.au) until 9am Monday 4 July 2022. The answers to all questions will be made available to all potential applicants and online.

Applications close 9am Monday 18 July 2022.

## Part B: Evaluation and conditions

- By making an application in response to these Guidelines, organisations are deemed to have accepted these conditions.

### Conditions of funding

- The funded organisations must agree to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Department of Families Fairness and Housing.
- Agencies must be able to commence program delivery immediately following written confirmation from the department.
- The project activities must be delivered by 28 February 2023.
- Organisations will complete a project acquittal and submit an evaluation report at the completion of the activities.

### General conditions

#### Submitting applications

- Organisations are required to submit their application via Smarty Grants: <https://cfr.smartygrants.com.au/emerging-stronger-grants>.
- Applications must be submitted by 9:00am on Monday 18 July 2022.
- Late applications will not be accepted, except in the most extenuating circumstances. Organisations should contact the department before the closing time for a request to be considered.
- Applications must be signed and dated by an authorised officer of the organisation.

#### Legal entity

- Organisations not currently funded by the department must provide proof of their legal status.
- The department can only enter into a funding agreement with a legal entity, being either a natural person (aged 18 years or older with mental capacity to understand the agreement and not under any order or bankrupt) or an organisation/agency established under the:
  - *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (Vic)
  - *Co-operatives National Law* (Vic)

- *Corporations Act 2001* (Cwlth)
  - *Health Services Act 1988* (Vic)
  - *Trustee Act 1958* (Vic), or
  - an individual Act of Parliament.
- The department prefers to deal with organisations who have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

## Consortia, coalitions, and subcontracting

- There are three legal and management options available to consortia in making an application. Each of these types of arrangements is acceptable to the department:
  - incorporate as a single body
  - each member signs as part of a non-incorporated consortium, or
  - subcontracting by the lead agency to other members of the consortium.
- Where the organisation is a consortium, the application must indicate which parts of the project each entity is proposing to provide.
- Where subcontracting is proposed, the application must detail how the lead organisation and the subcontractor(s) would relate to each other to ensure full provision of the project.

## Reservations

- The department may withdraw from the application process described in this document for any reason, prior to signing any agreement with any organisation.

## Disclosure

- All documents provided by the organisation will be held in confidence so far as the law permits.
- Notwithstanding any copyright or other intellectual property rights, by making an application the organisation licences the department to reproduce the whole or any portion of the application and reporting documents for the purposes of evaluation.
- In making its application, the organisation accepts that the department may publish (on the internet or otherwise) the name of the successful organisations, the grant amount, high-level overview of the project and outcomes.

## Lobbying

- Organisations are reminded that they should not attempt to exert influence on the outcome of the assessment process by lobbying, directly or indirectly, the departmental staff or members of parliament.

## Evaluation of submissions

Eligibility and evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications and determine the successful partnerships. Highly rated submissions need to address all the elements within the evaluation criteria.

### Eligibility criteria

- The lead organisation must be a legal entity able to enter into contracts.
- The application must provide details on the established partnerships or consortia that is in place to deliver the project.
- The proposed activities must not duplicate activities that are being delivered through other Local, State, or Commonwealth Government funding programs.
- Outcomes of the proposed project must benefit Victorians and/or the Victorian volunteering community (volunteers and community organisations).

### Evaluation criteria

#### Criterion 1: Demonstrated experience and expertise

- The organisation/s has relevant experience, expertise and understanding of inclusive volunteering practices, local community need and place-based service delivery models.
- Responses should include, but are not limited to:
  - details of current services or programs demonstrating relevant experience and expertise
  - an understanding of the local community and the appropriate service responses
  - details on how the organisation monitors and improves the operation and performance of its programs.
- Responses should also cover relevant experience of each partner organisation.

#### Criterion 2: Demonstrated organisational capacity and capability

- The organisation/s has an efficient and sufficient organisational infrastructure, resources, and capacity to support the delivery of the project.
- Responses should include, but are not limited to:
  - how the proposed project activities relate to the organisation/s core business and how the project will be delivered alongside current operations (including those of partner organisations)
  - details of proposed resources to be used in delivery of the project, including any key staff, equipment, materials, licences, and skills.
- Responses should also cover relevant capacity and capability of each partner organisation.

#### Criterion 3: Demonstrated understanding of the project requirements

- The organisation/s has a detailed, valid, responsive and appropriate plan to deliver the proposed activities.
- Responses should include, but are not limited to:
  - an outline of the proposed delivery model, demonstrating community need and evidence of successful approaches

- details of proposed budget and costs, demonstrating a capacity to deliver the project within the allocated funding
- an implementation plan for establishing and promoting the program, demonstrating ability to deliver within the specified time frame, including evaluation
- aspects of the model that demonstrate added value, innovation or flexibility.

#### **Criterion 4: Established partnerships and networks**

- The organisation/s brings established partnerships and demonstrates an ability to strategically partner to deliver the proposed activities outlined in the application.
- Responses should include, but are not limited to:
  - an outline of existing partnerships to deliver the outlined project activities, with details of roles, responsibilities, and governance in the partnership arrangement
  - the organisations' experience and expertise in establishing and maintaining relevant partnerships to enhance program delivery
  - relevant networks and/or a plan for collaboration with the broader volunteering community, if applicable.
- Applications should include a letter of support from each partner organisation.

#### **Criterion 5: Environmental sustainability**

- The organisation demonstrates a commitment to environmental sustainability (for example, environmental policy, environmental management systems and environmental approach).

#### **Evaluation and selection process**

1. Eligible applications will be evaluated against the indicated criteria. Following short-listing, organisations may be contacted to provide any clarification or further information needed.
2. The final selection of successful projects will consider evidence of need, geographic spread across Victoria, and supporting a diverse range of approaches and cohorts.
3. The final grant amount may be negotiated with the successful organisation(s).
4. All organisations will be advised in writing of the final outcome of the submission process, including the identity of the successful organisation(s).

#### **Scoring**

Submissions will be initially scored against the following scale:

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Score</b>
Exceeds all aspects of the evaluation criterion	4
Exceeds some aspects of evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the evaluation criterion)	3
Meets the evaluation criterion	2
Fails some aspects of the evaluation criterion	1
Fails all aspects of the evaluation criterion	0