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

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# Introduction

This document has been prepared to assist organisations in applying for the non-recurrent Emerging Stronger grants program. It provides a summary of all questions received and the answers given.

# Eligibility

## Who can apply?

Applications are open to any legal entity that is able to enter into a contract with the Department. You do not need DGR status. Eligible applications must have an established partnership/consortium and/or relevant networks to support immediate commencement of the project activities.

Sports clubs looking for equipment, skills development or operational improvements may be interested in the [Sporting Club Grants program](https://sport.vic.gov.au/grants-and-funding/our-grants/sporting-club-grants-program). For environmental groups, the [Victorian Landcare Grants](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/vlg) program is also open.

## Is local government eligible?

Yes, Councils are eligible to submit a grant application.

Note that proposed activities must not duplicate activities that are being delivered through other Local, State, or Commonwealth Government funding programs.

## Can I apply, even if I didn’t submit an EOI?

Applications are open to any organisation. The expression of interest process was simply so that we could notify interested organisations as soon as application were open.

## Can our organisation submit multiple applications?

Multiple applications may be submitted, for example based on regions or clearly distinct projects, and there is no limit on the number of applications an organisation may submit.

Each eligible application will be assessed independently against the selection criteria. The final selection of projects will consider organisational capacity, evidence of need, geographic spread across Victoria, and supporting a diverse range of approaches and communities.

## For the key staff template, are volunteers included in the definition of staff?

Yes, volunteers are included in the definition of staff. The purpose of this template is to provide an overview of the key people who will be involved in the delivery of your project.

## Our organisation provides services nationally or internationally, can we still apply?

Outcomes of the proposed project must benefit Victorians and/or the Victorian volunteering community (volunteers and community organisations).

## Do we need to have professional indemnity insurance to apply?

To complete the application, organisations are required to provide high-level details of existing insurance coverage that is relevant to the project. If professional indemnity is not required, you may respond to this question with ‘not applicable’.

Organisations should not purchase additional insurance prior to notification of the assessment outcome.

# Project scope

## What is the purpose of the grants?

The Emerging Stronger grants program will support place-based projects for re-engaging volunteers, broadening the volunteer base, and strengthening volunteering in local communities.

The program is a response to significant declines in volunteering participation due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Key priorities are to encourage people who have previously volunteered to return, growing and diversifying the pool of Victorian volunteers and/or supporting improvements to strengthen volunteering into the future.

## What types of activities can be funded?

The Scope of activities is outlined on Page 3 of the Guidelines. Projects may include:

* + - Developing resources and supports for community organisations to help reduce barriers for volunteers and/or to use inclusive engagement practices to engage a more diverse range of people in volunteering.
		- Partnerships to build organisational capability, community connections or pathways to volunteering, 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.

Highly rated proposals will include strategies for disseminating good practice with the volunteering community.

## Why are these activities the focus?

The Emerging Stronger grant program is an initiative of the new [Victorian Volunteer Strategy](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-volunteer-strategy). The scope outlined in the Guidelines is aligned with actions in the Strategy, supporting the goals of making volunteering more inclusive and accessible, and creating volunteering connections and pathways.

## Do projects have to cover all activities, or can we choose just one from the list?

The scope of activities outlined in the Guidelines provides a range of potential activities that projects may focus on. Proposals may focus on any of the activities outlined.

## Can our project extend beyond February 2023 / start later in the year?

The timeframe for project delivery responds to the critical need to reinvigorate volunteering following significant declines due to the pandemic. Organisations are encouraged to consider projects and activity that can commence immediately and deliver outcomes within the grant period.

## Can a project involve more than one site/location?

Projects that deliver place-based activities in multiple sites or locations are appropriate. The final selection of successful projects will consider organisational capacity, evidence of need, geographic spread across Victoria, and supporting a diverse range of approaches and cohorts.

# Partnerships

## Why do I need to have a partner/consortium for this?

The Emerging Stronger grants program has been designed to support place-based initiatives and innovation projects. The focus on partnerships is intended to encourage collaboration across local community organisations and maximise impact from the investment.

## What is the criteria for a partnership? And what documentation do you need?

There is no minimum time period or preferred model for the partnership arrangement.

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.

## Can a partnership be between different parts of our organisation?

No. This is effectively an arrangement within the same organisation and does not constitute a partnership for the purposes of these grants.

# Funding, budget, and costs

## What is the maximum amount? Does this include GST?

The maximum grant amount is $80,000 plus any applicable GST.

In the application, please list all budget items at the GST exclusive amount. If GST is applicable to any item, please indicate this in the description.

For successful applications, any applicable GST will be added to the final grant amount.

## Is there a minimum amount?

There is no minimum amount specified, and the maximum grant amount is $80,000. It is anticipated that the program will fund around 12 – 15 projects across Victoria, supporting a diverse range of approaches and communities.

## What budget items can I include?

The grants are not intended to fund salaries; however, submissions may include an allowance for project management and resources to deliver the project.

Where necessary to the project, travel costs (such as fuel, public transport) may also be considered.

## What budget items are out of scope?

Grant funds cannot support operational costs (such as rent or electricity), construction or asset purchases (such uniforms or equipment).

## How detailed should our budget be?

The budget table should provide sufficient detail to help accurately describe your project and clearly outline how the grants funds will be spent. Grouped costings may be appropriate depending on the level of detail in the description.

## If we submit more than one application, is there a maximum amount per organisation?

The maximum grant amount per project is $80,000. It is anticipated that the program will fund around 12 – 15 projects across Victoria, supporting a diverse range of community needs.

## Will further funding be available to support successful programs?

The Emerging Stronger volunteering grants is a one-off program.

# Definitions

## What does ‘place-based’ mean?

Typically, place-based approaches bring together partners from across sectors to support or strengthen community-led initiatives and work towards the community’s desired local outcomes. At their core, place-based approaches are local solutions for a local community, leveraging local strengths.

## What does ‘disseminating good practice’ mean?

This may mean, for example, a deliberate approach to sharing of learnings from the project or publishing any resources and materials for use by the broader volunteering community.

## What do you mean by ‘critical community need’?

Highly rated proposals will outline the critical need their project seeks to address, and clearly demonstrate how the project is an appropriate and valid response. The identified need may focus on people, communities and/or causes.

## What do you mean by ‘priority sectors’?

The Emerging Stronger volunteering grants are designed to support projects across the full spectrum of volunteering in Victoria. Applications should clearly outline the focus of their projects and the key sectors or communities that the project will support.

## Does the question on ‘environmental sustainability’ refer to our organisation or the project?

The question regarding environmental sustainability relates to your organisations’ existing operations. Responses should provide a summary of any applicable organisational policies, systems, and/or activities.