

Aboriginal Culture and Healing

# **BUSHFIRE RECOVERY GRANTS**

2021–22 FUNDING GUIDELINES



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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Bushfire Recovery Victoria proudly acknowledges the First Peoples of Victoria and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

### Background

The 2019-2020 bushfire season was unprecedented in intensity and devastation. These fires directly affected Aboriginal communities across Victoria, primarily in the south eastern and northern eastern parts of the state.

Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by the impact of fires due to the higher proportion of Aboriginal people living in bushfire affected areas than elsewhere in the State (especially East Gippsland), existing structural and financial inequalities, a backdrop of historical and intergenerational trauma, and the significant impacts that bushfire and fire suppression activities can have on Country and cultural heritage.

A range of skills and expertise are required to implement recovery efforts supporting Aboriginal communities affected by fire. In supporting Aboriginal communities, it is critical that approaches are tailored, culturally informed and proficient when implemented across all aspects of the recovery services – including consultation, design and implementation.

For 2021-22, the Victorian Government has committed \$104.4 million to support the current and emerging needs of bushfire-affected communities.

### Bushfire Recovery Victoria

Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) was established in January 2020 as a dedicated and permanent Victorian Government agency to coordinate recovery from the devastating 2019–20 Eastern Victorian bushfires. BRV ensures the delivery of locally led recovery efforts that support councils and has community at the centre of their recovery.

BRV is responsible for coordinating and supporting the state's rebuilding and recovery activities in alignment with the State Recovery Plan. Bushfire recovery grants delivered by BRV focus on supporting initiatives across the five lines of recovery:

- People and wellbeing
- Aboriginal culture and healing
- Environment and biodiversity
- Business and economy
- Building and infrastructure

## What are the Aboriginal Culture and Healing Bushfire Recovery Grants?

The Aboriginal Culture and Healing Bushfire Recovery Grants were established to support Aboriginal heritage priorities, promote culturally safe recovery initiatives, and invest in projects that deliver on Aboriginal culture and healing outcomes.

This will ensure significant and appropriate focus is given to the unique needs and attributes of Aboriginal individuals, families, communities, business and Traditional Owner groups.

## Funding Objectives

BRV has expanded on previous recovery models by establishing a dedicated line of recovery for Aboriginal Culture and Healing. The objectives under this line of recovery are:

- Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma are addressed, and healing supported
- Recovery and resilience are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, and the connection between country and healing
- Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing.

## Funding Available

In 2021-22, \$4 million has been dedicated to support the Aboriginal Culture and Healing Bushfire Recovery Grants program.

Grants will be available in two streams to address the recovery needs for Aboriginal communities

- Cultural Heritage Recovery
- Aboriginal Community Support

### Funding Stream 1: Cultural Heritage Recovery (\$1.3 million available)

Grants of up to \$500,000 are available to support immediate cultural heritage management needs across bushfire affected Country.

Examples of projects that may be funded in this category are:

- Country mapping
- Protection works for Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Training and capacity building for Traditional Owner organisations
- Archaeological data collection and processing

### Funding Stream 2: Aboriginal Community Support (\$2.7 million available)

Grants of up to \$500,000 are available for projects that address the needs of Aboriginal communities throughout recovery, including:

- Events to reconnect communities
- Training and capacity building workshops
- Activities to improve community resilience in future disasters
- Community development activities.

### Activities that won't be funded.

**Under either funding stream the grants cannot be used for:**

- Offsetting of salaries, operating costs for existing staff or contractors
- Feasibility studies, business plans, cost benefit analysis and economic impact studies
- Projects that may have a negative impact on existing businesses / services
- Passing on funding to a third party in the form of a sponsorship or grant
- Retrospective funding for projects that have commenced activity or construction or are completed before the funding is approved
- The purchase of land or existing buildings. BRV has previously invested in Aboriginal community recovery. The booklet outlines examples of Aboriginal community-led recovery.

## How to Apply

Carefully read the program guidelines before you apply to ensure your organisation and your proposed activities meet the eligibility criteria.

To apply, visit the Bushfire recovery support for Aboriginal Victorians website at

[vic.gov.au/recovery-grants](https://vic.gov.au/recovery-grants)

Applications open: **24 November 2021**

Applications close: **5 January 2022**

If you have any questions or need help with online applications, you can contact the BRV Grants Administration Team at

[grants@brv.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@brv.vic.gov.au) or on **1800 560 760**.

## Selection Criteria

Eligible organisations' (see Applicant Eligibility) applications for a Bushfire Recovery Grant for Aboriginal Communities will be assessed against five key selection criteria (outlined below) and if application requirements are demonstrated with supporting documentation.

In preparing an application, you are encouraged to engage with your local Community Recovery Committee (where it exists) to assist you in meeting the selection criteria.

### 1. Purpose

Applicants must provide an explanation of how their project will deliver direct benefit to a bushfire affected community and supports one or more of the objectives of this funding that:

- Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma are addressed, and healing supported
- Recovery and resilience are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, and the connection between country and healing
- Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing.

### 2. Aboriginal community participation

Applicants must demonstrate how the project will:

- be Aboriginal community or Traditional Owner led
- promote Aboriginal employment
- outline the potential for economic development initiatives.

### 3. Location

Applicants must demonstrate that their project will occur in bushfire affected area and describe how the bushfires directly impacted on their community.

As of June 2020, the following Local Government Areas and Alpine Resorts are in scope:

#### Local Government Areas

Ararat, Alpine, Ballarat, East Gippsland, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Greater Bendigo, Indigo, Mansfield, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Southern Grampians, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wellington and Wodonga.

Alpine Resorts, Falls Creek, Mount Buller, Mount Hotham and Mount Stirling.

### 4. Planning and delivery

Applicants must provide a clear explanation on how the project will be undertaken and the anticipated completion date.

If the application includes conducting Aboriginal cultural heritage works, applicants must demonstrate their projects can meet statutory obligations, including completing site registrations and place edits on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.

### 5. Budget

Applicants must provide:

- evidence that the project costs are accurate and reasonable
- details of any in-kind or co-contribution funding support

## Further mandatory requirements

Applications must outline how the proposed project(s) will comply with the Victorian COVID-19 restrictions and requirements.

Applications must include information on how the proposed project(s) will comply with legal requirements including the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2008 (Vic), any agreement or equivalent made under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic) or Native Title Act 1983 (Cth) and local planning laws.

Applications for projects on public land must be accompanied by written confirmation of support from the relevant land manager (e.g. Local Council or the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning).

Applications requiring support, input or other types of contributions from other organisations or individuals must be accompanied by written support from the organisation or individual on which the project relies.

## Assessment Criteria

Applications received will be assessed against the criteria as outlined in the table below.

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
<p>The application demonstrates the project meets the program objectives and the extent to which those objectives are met.</p> <p>The program objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal people’s unique experiences of trauma are addressed, and healing supported</li> <li>Recovery and resilience are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, and the connection between country and healing</li> <li>Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing.</li> </ul>	<b>30%</b>
<p>The application demonstrates the extent to which the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is delivery ready, supported by a clear approach and realistic timeframes;</li> <li>is financially viable, based on sound cost estimates and represents value for money</li> <li>sources materials and resources to deliver the project which strengthens Aboriginal communities.</li> </ul>	<b>30%</b>
<p>The application demonstrates the extent of Aboriginal community participation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>proposing a collaborative approach with a range of partners and indicates how they will contribute to the project, specifically the endorsement from land managers</li> <li>proposing an effective project management approach that ensures Aboriginal community participation</li> <li>identifying how Aboriginal community have been engaged in the development of application, specifically other groups and/or individuals with cultural interest in the area.</li> </ul>	<b>20%</b>
<p>The application demonstrates the extent to which the project addresses the direct impacts of the 2019–20 Victorian Bushfires on the local Aboriginal community.</p>	<b>20%</b>

## Funding Agreements and Reporting

Organisations approved for funding will enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with Bushfire Recovery Victoria.

The VCFA will outline:

- the grant's terms and conditions, including use of funds
- agreement terms
- key deliverables and due dates
- reporting requirements.

Organisations that are successful in receiving funding will have 30 days to enter into a VCFA. If a grant offer is not accepted during this period, the grant may be withdrawn.

## Reporting

Organisations will be required to report on the funded activity and can submit their final reports online and must submit their final report on time.

### Acknowledgement Guidelines

A common condition of BRV grants is that grant recipients must agree to follow BRV guidelines for acknowledging the government's funding. A breach of these guidelines is considered a breach of your funding agreement with BRV. The BRV Acknowledgement Guidelines can be found at [vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-victoria](https://vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-victoria).

