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| Investing in Women Grassroots Grants Program |
| Program guidelines |
| OFFICIAL |



To receive this document in another format, [email the Office for Women](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au) <women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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# Message from the Minister for Women

I am very proud to announce the opening of the Investing in Women Grassroots Grants Program.

Women, girls and gender diverse people continue to face major barriers to gender equality. From stereotypes and unequal pay to violence and discrimination, these barriers are many and varied.

But there are ways to combat this, to empower women and girls and to address the unique challenges they face in their communities.

Grassroots organisations play a vital role in breaking down these barriers. These local groups know the women in their communities – their lives, their challenges and what they need to thrive. They can be the first to respond with solutions tailored to their unique circumstances.

That’s where these grants come in. This funding will support organisations to host activities to further gender equality. This includes community engagement events, leadership and training programs and community projects and advocacy efforts.

They can help groups build their capacity, strengthen their networks and reach a wider audience.

Experiences of gender inequality can build and change over a lifetime. They are profoundly shaped by the other forms of disadvantage and discrimination many women face.

In recognition of this, it is my hope that the grants will deliver projects that support women from a diverse group of ages, backgrounds and identities. I hope they continue to drive progress towards gender equality in Victoria.

Investing in grassroots grants is not only a smart investment in gender equality but also an investment in our communities. When women and girls are empowered, they are better able to contribute to their families, their communities and the economy as a whole.

I encourage you to apply for our program. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of women across our state.

The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Women

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# About the grants program

The Victorian Government recognises the valuable contribution grassroots women’s organisations make to Victorian women and the broader community. The government has set up this grants program to:

* support and empower Victorian women
* celebrate and promote their contributions to their communities
* improve gender equality across Victoria.

Our vision is that Victorians of all genders:

* live in a safe and equal society
* have access to equal power, resources and opportunities
* are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

We want to see progress in key facets of the lives of women and girls, with a focus on improving whole-of-community outcomes including:

* **Cultural change:** Victoria is free from gender stereotypes, gender roles and prejudices.
* **Health and wellbeing:** The health and wellbeing of Victorians is not limited by gender.
* **Safety and respect:** All Victorians are safe and treated with respect.
* **Economic and material security:** Victorians have equal access to economic and material security.

This program will fund activities across Victoria that contribute to the above goals.

This grants program plays a role in achieving the government’s vision of building a fairer, safer future for women and girls. This group disproportionately experiences the most negative impacts of gender inequality.

Our approach to gender equality must always be trans and gender diverse inclusive, including those who are sistergirl or non-binary. We celebrate the critical role of trans and gender diverse women in the fight for gender equality for all women. A woman’s gender identity is her own concept of being female. When we say ‘women’, that word always includes trans and gender diverse women.

# Funding objectives

## Overarching considerations

Everyone should be able to:

* engage fully and meaningfully in community life
* feel empowered, supported, safe and equal.

Gender inequalities accumulate over a lifetime. We need action to support **women at all stages of their lives** – from childhood to youth, adulthood and throughout older age.

The government recognises that **many women experience** **overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage**. This could be based on attributes such as:

* Aboriginality
* age
* disability
* ethnicity and race
* religion
* gender identity and sexual orientation
* where they live.

We strongly encourage applicants to consider the **intersectional impacts** of these factors when designing projects.

## Specific objectives

These grants will support community organisations to:

* foster community engagement in celebrating and supporting Victorian women
* model, celebrate and promote gender equality by challenging gender stereotypes, gender roles and prejudice
* support women to achieve good physical and mental health
* advocate and campaign for equitable participation of women in education and the economy.

Examples of how to support these objectives include:

* hosting events that engage the community to celebrate and support women
* developing initiatives that support women’s progression into leadership and decision-making roles in workplaces and the community (this could include mentoring programs or upskilling existing leadership within women’s organisations)
* partnering with organisations, workplaces, community leaders or sporting clubs to promote gender equality and collaborate on initiatives in community settings
* fostering community engagement and involving community members in designing and implementing health and wellbeing initiatives, especially people who are often marginalised
* developing initiatives that support women and girls’ mental health, wellbeing and sense of belonging, including hosting local events
* developing initiatives that educate, improve access to and reduce stigma around women’s health issues at different stages of their lives, including periods, sexual and reproductive health and menopause
* promoting and supporting initiatives that enable young women to build the financial literacy skills and confidence they need to be independent
* supporting community initiatives to increase the digital literacy of older women, in particular those from multicultural communities and women with disability
* delivering workshops or community events that support women facing complex barriers to taking part in the labour market and those who are at increased risk of falling through the cracks in support
* developing initiatives to support women-led businesses and entrepreneurs.

# Available funding

The total available funding is $200,000. Organisations may apply for up to a maximum of $10,000.

Applications must be submitted online by **3:00 pm on Monday, 22 May 2023**.

All approved projects must be completed and funds spent by **Saturday, 31 March 2024**.

Due to the competitive nature of this program, we may allocate less than the requested amount to successful applicants.

You should plan for contingencies and consider other funding sources and options in case your application is unsuccessful (either in full or in part).

Avoid assuming you are successful or entering into financial or other commitments until you are formally notified of the outcome of your application.

# How to apply

Organisations are invited to complete an application by visiting the government’s Grants Gateway <https://www.vic.gov.au/investing-womens-grassroots-grant-program>

Submit your application online by **3:00 pm on Monday, 22 May 2023**.

You can make arrangements to submit your application in an alternative format. Please [contact the Office for Women](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au) <women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au> to discuss options.

**Applicants must ensure each element of their application meets the program guidelines. If any aspect of an application falls outside the guidelines, the whole application could be ineligible.**

## Privacy

Your personal information will be handled in line with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic).

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. If you have questions about personal information that the department holds, you can [email the department’s Privacy Unit](mailto:privacy@dffh.vic.gov.au) <privacy@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

## Summary of application process

| Applications open  Monday, 24 April 2023 | Submit application  24 April – 22 May 2023 | Applications close  3:00 pm Monday, 22 May 2023 |
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| * Read the program guidelines. * Make sure your organisation meets the eligibility criteria. * Attend an information session <https://www.vic.gov.au/investing-women-grassroots-grant-program> * [Contact the Office for Women](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au) <women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au> if you have questions. | * Register to log in to the Grants Gateway to complete an application. * Complete the online application form [Login (dffh.vic.gov.au)](https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2Fs%2Fform%3Fid%3DMSS2021). * Answer all questions. (Incomplete applications will not be accepted.) * Attach relevant or mandatory documents with the application. * Submit the application by the due date and time. | * Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. |

## Survey on gender equality

As part of your application, you will need to watch a short video and complete a related survey on gender equality.

De-identified information collected here may be shared with other branches of the department. Only the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector will be able to access individual survey responses.

Data collection will help build an evidence base for how the government, agencies and community organisations can improve gender equality through funding reform. It will also help decide where future efforts should be focused for maximum impact. The data collected through this survey will inform funding guidelines that could be rolled out across the government and its agencies.

The data collected **will not** have any impact on current or future grant funding that the government may award to your organisation.

# Eligibility criteria

## Eligibility overview

Your organisation must meet the following eligibility criteria.

**You must be either:**

* an organisation incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) or equivalent law, or
* a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and registered as not-for-profit through the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

**You must have:**

* a current Australian Business Number (ABN)
* at least $10 million in public liability insurance to cover all aspects of funded activity for the term of the funding agreement – or an auspice arrangement with this insurance cover
* no outstanding final reports from other departmental grants.

**How to check your Australian Business Number (ABN)**

* To check your ABN, visit the [Australian Business Register (ABR)](file:///C:/Users/vidwqsp/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/MNL55PB0/arb.business.gov.au) <arb.business.gov.au>.

**How to check your organisation type**

* For incorporated associations, co-operatives or organisations incorporated through other means, go to the Consumer Affairs website <www.consumer.vic.gov.au>.
* For a Company Limited by Guarantee, go to the [ASIC website](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au) <www.connectonline.asic.gov.au>.
* For registered charities, go to the ACNC website <www.acnc.gov.au/charity>.
* For Aboriginal corporations, go to the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations website <www.oric.gov.au>.

## Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

The following cannot apply for these grants:

* state and federal government departments and agencies
* commercial enterprises
* local government authorities (LGAs) including LGA-managed, operated, administered and regulated trusts
* registered primary and secondary schools, preschools, TAFEs and universities
* applicants with overdue or outstanding final reports from previous or current departmental grants
* applicants based outside Victoria.

## What can the grant money be used for?

The program is for organisations that support women in Victorian communities. Examples of activities that the program could fund are outlined under ‘Funding objectives’ above.

## What cannot the grant money be used for?

The following activities will **not** be eligible for funding:

* activities that do not align with the program’s principles and objectives
* research activities
* commercial or fundraising activities
* activities that promote or are held for politically partisan purposes
* activities taking place outside Victoria
* activities occurring outside the funding period
* salaries for staff (not including event-specific staff contracted for the project period)
* buying alcohol
* building works
* interstate and international travel
* items not clearly described or are labelled ‘miscellaneous’ in the application
* retrospective funding for projects or programs that have already started or are complete
* applications from organisations that have not met the terms and conditions of other departmental grants.

## Can I use an auspice?

If your organisation is not eligible, you may nominate an auspice organisation to apply for a grant on your behalf.

Any organisation that meets the eligibility criteria may act as an auspice.

If the application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive the funds. They will be responsible for overseeing the project, including reporting on and acquitting funds. Make sure you understand your obligations to your auspicing body.

If your application is auspiced by an organisation, you can include any associated auspice fees in your funding request. Included auspice fees must not exceed **10 per cent** of your total funding request.

# How are applications assessed?

All grant applications will undergo the following assessment process:

* **Eligibility assessment:** All applications will be checked against the eligibility criteria. The eligibility assessment determines whether the application should proceed for merit assessment.
* **Merit assessment:** Eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria based on responses provided in the application form.
* **Assessment panel:** All applications will be reviewed by a panel, which includes experts in gender equality policy.
* **Ministerial approval:** The Minister for Women will make the final decision based on the recommendations from the assessment panel.
* **Application outcome:** All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email.

All decisions are final. This includes decisions about eligibility and the assessment process. The government reserves the right to offer or award a grant under the program or to withdraw the offer or cancel the grant funding agreement.

## Merit assessment

A panel will assess applications against the following weighted assessment criteria:

* program objectives (25 per cent)
* project delivery (25 per cent)
* project outcomes (25 per cent)
* project impact (25 per cent).

You can upload relevant supporting material to improve the panel’s understanding of your proposed project. Note: This is not essential. We will not penalise you for not doing so.

**Program objectives (25 per cent)**

* How does this project align with the program objectives?
* Which objective(s) does your project address?

**Project delivery (25 per cent)**

* What are you going to do? Explain what your project involves.
* What planning have you done so far for your project?

**Project outcomes (25 per cent)**

* What will the project achieve?

**Project impact (25 per cent)**

* How will the project help address gender inequality?

# Notification of application outcomes

All applicants will receive written notification of the outcome. If you are successful, we will tell you about any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback within two weeks of being advised of the outcome. We will give written feedback within one month of your request.

# Conditions of funding

## Funding agreements

Successful organisations and auspice bodies must enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with the department.

The VCFA outlines the terms and conditions of the grant including the:

* use of funds
* term of the agreement
* reporting requirements.

The VCFA is a contract that outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the department and the funded organisation.

If you would like more information about entering into a VCFA with the department, [**email the Office for Women**](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au)<women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au> to request a call back.

## Payment of grant funds and reporting requirements

Successful organisations will be paid when they complete agreed project milestones and deliverables outlined in the VCFA.

Milestone payments are made via electronic funds transfer (EFT) once deliverables are met.

**Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

* GST will be paid if the grant is funding a good or service, and if the recipient organisation is registered for GST.
* GST will not be paid if the recipient organisation is not registered for GST.
* GST will not be paid if the recipient organisation is a government entity (for example, public library).
* GST will not be paid if the grant is not funding a good or service.

## Funding acknowledgement

Successful applicants must acknowledge funding from the Victorian Government. Promotional guidelines form part of the VCFA. They include the requirement that all activities must acknowledge Victorian Government support through logo presentation on any activity-related publications, media releases and promotional material. Details of the requirements for funded projects will be sent to all successful grant recipients.

## Legal responsibilities

If you apply for a grant, you must ensure the project activity follows relevant laws, regulations, by-laws and codes. It must also meet requirements of Commonwealth, state, territory or local authorities. It is your responsibility to be aware of laws and protocols that regulate the way you conduct your work.

## Insurance requirements

You must have public liability insurance and any other insurance that is relevant to the activities of your project. The department will ask for proof of insurance that covers the project period.

Non-government organisations that are funded to deliver services for children must be:

* incorporated separate legal entities that can be sued in child abuse proceedings
* appropriately insured against child abuse.

More information is on the [**Department of Justice and Community** **Safety website**](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/organisations-providing-services-to-children-new)<https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/organisations-providing-services-to-children-new>.

# More information and help

## Information sessions

To help with the application process, the Office for Women will host two online information sessions. These will include an overview of the program and information on how to apply. Information sessions are free to attend.

Visit the Victorian Government’s Website <https://www.vic.gov.au/investing-women-grassroots-grant-program> for more information on the sessions including dates, and how to book.

## Contact the Office for Women

[**Email the Office for Women**](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au)<women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au>to request a call back:

* for more information
* for help with your application
* to check if you have any outstanding final reports.

## Useful resources

More information and resources are available on the Victorian Government’s Website <https://www.vic.gov.au/investing-women-grassroots-grant-program>.

Supporting information includes:

* frequently asked questions
* information session times (including booking information).

Other useful resources:

* [*Safe and Strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy*](https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality) <https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality>
* [Inquiry into Economic Equity for Victorian Women](https://www.vic.gov.au/economic-equity-victorian-women-inquiry) <https://www.vic.gov.au/economic-equity-victorian-women-inquiry>
* Victoria’s ‘[Coronavirus and staying safe webpage](https://www.police.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-and-staying-safe)’ <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-and-staying-safe>.