

Victorian Racing Industry Fund Centralised Racing Marketing Program

Program Guidelines

July 2023



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Victorian Racing Industry Fund (VRIF)

The racing industry contributes \$4.7 billion to the economy and helps sustain almost 35,000 jobs across Victoria. More than 121,000 Victorians are directly involved in the racing industry, with almost half of all racing participants residing in regional Victoria.

Established in 2011, the Victorian Racing Industry Fund (VRIF) is a Victorian Government initiative that provides funding to the Victorian racing industry to support the sustainability and growth of thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing.

In 2023, the Government committed \$72 million over four years to continue the VRIF.

The VRIF provides support under five funding programs:

Regional Racing Events

Support for regional racing clubs to deliver racing events for the benefit of the industry and community

Regional Customer Facilities

Support for regional racing clubs to improve the standard of public facilities at racing event venues

Racing and Training Facilities

Support to improve the quality and safety of racing and training infrastructure across Victoria

Centralised Racing Marketing

Support to improve and centralise marketing campaigns across the racing industry

Strategic Racing Initiatives

Support for breeding programs, racing animal and participant welfare, and projects that underpin the sustainability of the racing industry

1 PROGRAM SUMMARY

Centralised Racing Marketing program

The Centralised Racing Marketing (CRM) program supports the three racing codes to conduct centralised marketing campaigns with an aim of raising the awareness of racing events and attracting patrons to race meetings across Victoria.

A sustainable racing industry needs high-quality, accessible, and well-designed promotion of racing events. Developing coordinated and targeted marketing campaigns to attract patrons to racing events is a priority.

1.1 Program objectives and outcomes

The program will support centralised marketing campaigns for Victorian racing events.

The Centralised Racing Marketing program aims to:

- attract traditional and non-traditional patrons to Victorian racing events
- develop quality marketing campaigns to reach target audiences with consistent branding, effective marketing tools, innovation, and underpinned by research
- support projects that underpin the sustainable growth and viability of the Victorian Racing Industry
- ensure that Victoria continues to be a vibrant state for racing events of every scale.

The intended outcomes of this program are:

- improved centralised racing marketing campaigns
- improved attendance at racing events
- support for the ongoing viability of racing in Victoria.



2 PROGRAM DATES

Applications are considered all year round. It is recommended that applications are submitted at least 3 months prior to the expected commencement date of the campaign.

3 FUNDING

Grants will be provided on a cash co-contribution basis of up to 50 per cent of the total eligible budget expenditure. Funds from other State Government programs cannot form part of an applicant's matching co-contribution.

Where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, applicants may request funding of up to 75 per cent of the eligible budget expenditure. It is recommended that the applicant speak with a representative of the Office of Racing prior to applying for exceptional circumstances.

The final decision on the grant and funding amount is at the discretion of the Minister.

4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

4.1 Eligible applicants

The following organisations are eligible to apply:

- Racing Victoria Limited/Country Racing Victoria
- Harness Racing Victoria
- Greyhound Racing Victoria

4.2 Ineligible applicants

All entities except those listed in Section 4.1.

4.3 Eligible campaigns

The applicant must develop a strong centralised racing marketing campaign to attract traditional and non-traditional patrons to racing events. It must be able to be demonstrated that the marketing campaign will provide timely, appropriate, local, and regional promotion of racing events across Victoria.

The campaign must:

- be coordinated across multiple events (more than a limited series)
- be within a timeframe or season (no longer than 12 months)
- have a strong marketing plan and coordinated effort with quality branding
- have a positive impact on the racing industry and racing clubs involved.



4.4 Eligible and ineligible expenditure

Funding will only be provided to meet an applicant's eligible expenditure on the approved campaign.

Applicants will be required to meet any additional and/or ineligible expenditure that is incurred in relation to the campaign.

Eligible expenses	Ineligible expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design services • campaign development • purchase of advertising (newspaper, radio, TV and social media) • printing • signage • gate entry discounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing business-as-usual race day, administrative, operating or staffing costs • purchase of alcohol or consumables • merchandise • individual club initiatives • expenses not directly related to marketing • expenses without receipts • expenses which have already occurred (retrospective funding) • standard office equipment • contingency costs • travel costs

The above list of ineligible activities is not exhaustive. Other activities or types of expenditure may be deemed ineligible by the Department if they do not support the planned outcomes for the project or are contrary to the objectives and intent of the program.

Ineligible activities listed above may be eligible under other VRIF funding programs.

Any expenses incurred prior to the execution of a funding agreement, unless specifically agreed to by the Minister as a part of the funding approval, will be at the risk of the applicant and not considered as part of the eligible expenditure under the agreement.



5 APPLICATION PROCESS

5.1 Prepare an application

The person submitting the application must be authorised by the organisation to make the application. Applicants must undertake the following steps to apply:

1. Carefully read the Program Guidelines
2. Compile all necessary supporting documents as detailed in the Program Guidelines
3. Apply online via the website – <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-racing-industry>
4. Check spam/junk mail if the confirmation email is not in your inbox

Applications must be submitted via the online form.

Applications still 'in draft' and have not been submitted upon program close will not be assessed.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all requested documentation is supplied to the Department. Failure to do so may result in the application being ineligible for funding.

5.2 Application requirements

Applications must include:

- a clear description of the campaign, its key components, activities, and initiatives
- statements addressing the assessment criteria in full
- previous attendance numbers and projected attendance
- funding amount requested and total project expenditure amounts
- a conflict-of-interest declaration.

5.3 Supporting documents

The following documentation is required as part of the application:

- a campaign budget (template provided)
- evidence that the applicant can undertake the campaign and meet its co-contribution costs
- campaign implementation plan
- provide quotes or cost estimates (less than 12 months old) for goods and services to be procured, which demonstrate value for money
- evidence of market research
- consultation with any relevant organisations.

Applicants required to meet the conditions of MAMS procurement must provide evidence that they have met their requirements.

5.4 Additional supporting documents for projects above \$500,000

In addition to the required documentation listed in Section 5.3, projects greater than \$500,000 must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- evidence of co-contribution including:
 - evidence that the applicant can undertake the project and meet its co-contribution costs
 - an approved loan facility (including loan amount) – where appropriate
- campaign implementation plan (where appropriate)
- marketing research documentation
- CVs of the responsible senior management team responsible for delivering the project and relevant experience in delivering similar projects
- quantity surveyor or independent qualified expert report (less than 12 months old) and a market engagement strategy or Procurement Plan.



5.5 Additional supporting documents for projects above \$1 million

In addition to the required documentation listed in Section 5.4, projects greater than \$1 million must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- a business case which includes detailed cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment (including a SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis) of the proposed project.

Projects over \$1 million may be required to comply with additional legislative requirements under the Local Jobs First Policy (refer to Section 9.3).

6 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

All applications will be evaluated against the eligibility and assessment criteria.

Applications will be assessed using the following process:

1. Applications assessed for applicant and campaign eligibility
2. Applications evaluated against the assessment criteria by Office of Racing representatives
3. Recommendations made to the Minister for Racing for final decision.

Decisions on the allocation of grant funding under this Program are at the Minister's absolute discretion.

Applications must be submitted via the online application form, along with the required documentation. Further information may be sought from applicants if required. All questions in the application need to be fully completed to proceed to assessment.

Applications may be deemed ineligible, if in the Department's opinion association with the campaign may bring the Department, a Minister, or the State of Victoria into disrepute.

6.1 Eligibility Assessment

The following eligibility criteria are considered:

- applicant eligibility
- campaign eligibility
- activity/expense eligibility
- required supporting documentation (budgets, quotes, business cases, letters of support etc.)



6.2 Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed on how well they meet the assessment criteria. All attachments and information provided as part of the application will be taken into consideration during the assessment process.

Criteria 1.

The campaign's ability to promote racing events and attract patrons to race meetings. (40%)

Considerations:

- the timing of the marketing
- the number of events likely to be impacted
- expected attendance increase
- expected increase to visitation numbers beyond the local area of racing events
- expected marketing reach; geographical, socio economic, target audiences

Criteria 2.

Economic, social or community benefits delivered by the campaign (30%)

Considerations:

- number of suppliers and contractors to be engaged
- additional internal staff employed for the purposes of the campaign
- type and quality of suppliers and contractors to be engaged
- potential economic, social and community flow on benefits to local area
- expected increase to participant numbers at each racing event

Criteria 3.

Capability to deliver the campaign (20%)

Considerations:

- staffing and resource management planning
- track record of delivering similar campaigns
- analysis of previous campaigns i.e., successful/unsuccessful elements, research, and audience feedback
- implementation plans which demonstrate an understanding of the target audiences and effective marketing methods
- innovative concepts, tools and activation plans designed to engage traditional and non-traditional racegoers
- a targeted marketing approach with value for money, underpinned by research and focused on timely delivery

Criteria 4.

Need for government support and value for money (10%)

Considerations:

- what project elements would not proceed or be reduced without government funding?
- how will the project be improved with government funding? e.g., better quality, size of project or timing
- is the project receiving other funding?
- the risks to the project without Government support



7 APPROVAL PROCESS

The Office of Racing will provide the Minister with funding recommendations following the assessment process.

Decisions on allocation of grant funding under this Program are at the Minister's absolute discretion.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of their application outcome in writing.

The successful applicant's name, campaign name and the funding amount may be made publicly available, including publication on the Department's website and media releases.

8 GRANT AGREEMENTS

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding Grant Agreement with the Department on its standard terms and conditions.

The Grant Agreement details all funding obligations and conditions. Grant Agreements must be signed by an authorised representative with the authority to bind the organisation.

Successful applicants will be required to accept the Department's payment schedule noting payments will be made according to set milestone deliverables detailed in the Grant Agreement.

Successful applicants will have 15 calendar days from the date of the Letter of Offer to accept and to sign the Grant Agreement with the Department. The offer may be withdrawn if the Grant Agreement is not executed within the timeframe.

The campaign must not commence until a Grant Agreement has been executed by both the successful applicant and the Department.

8.1 Payment conditions

The approved grant amount or the pro rata per cent of eligible campaign expenditure (if the total campaign expenditure is less than budgeted) will be provided upon successful delivery of the project and completion of reporting requirements.

Funding will not be provided for retrospective expenses (costs incurred prior to the signing of the Grant Agreement).

The department reserves the right to withhold funding, if the grant recipient fails to comply with the obligations outlined in the funding agreement. The department will not be responsible for shortfalls in campaign budgets if the grant recipient is unable to meet any campaign costs.

Grant recipients will need to meet the cost of any ineligible expenditure associated with their campaign.

The Department will pay the grant recipient once the following has been received:

- a valid tax invoice
- a progress or completion report
- signed and executed grant agreement
- evidence of the applicant's recognition of the government's contribution to the campaign
- documentary evidence attesting to the total cost of the project, this may be in the form of a statutory declaration as specified in the grant agreement
- evidence of the expenses i.e. (invoices, receipts)
- documentary evidence as specified in the grant agreement and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence as the Department may reasonably require.



9 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

9.1 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which someone in a position of trust or influence has competing professional or personal interests.

For example, in the context of VRIF funded projects, a conflict of interest may arise where a committee member or employee of a club has a personal interest, owns shares in or controls a business that is selected by the club to supply goods or services for one or more project components. A conflict may also exist where spouses or family members of committee members or club employees have any of these interests.

Applicants must advise the Office of Racing of any actual or perceived conflict of interest relating to a project for which it has applied for VRIF funding. Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the proposed project costs represent value for money and detail how the conflict will be managed. This may include obtaining additional quotes to confirm that the quotes provided by conflicted businesses demonstrate value for money.

Should the applicant be unable to satisfy the Office of Racing that a conflict has been appropriately managed, the Office of Racing may require the applicant to choose another supplier or withdraw its application until the matter has been resolved.

9.2 Reporting for Program Evaluation

As a condition of funding, successful applicants will be required to participate in any program monitoring and evaluation activities initiated by the Department. This may include completing surveys to measure progress to achieving outcomes, and for up to three years after project completion.

Reporting is critical to the Department in understanding program impact, supporting continuous improvement in program design and delivery, and delivering more effective grant programs to the people of Victoria.

9.3 Privacy and Confidentiality

Any personal information provided by the applicant or a third party in an application will be collected by the Department for the purpose of program administration. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purposes of assessing applications. If confidential personal information about third parties is included in an application, applicants must ensure that the third party is aware of the contents of this Privacy Statement.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2000* (Vic) and other applicable laws.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. The Department's Privacy Policy can be found online at <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/your-rights/privacy/information-privacy-policy>. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department's Privacy Unit by phone on (03) 8684 0178 or email privacy@justice.vic.gov.au.



9.4 Publicity/Acknowledgement

Recipients must:

- agree to cooperate with the Department in the preparation of materials used to promote the benefits of the program to industry, such as a media release or case study of the project
- consult with the Department prior to the publication of any project promotion materials
- not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a grant without prior approval by the Department
- comply with any additional requirements as specified in the Grant Agreement
- include the State Government insignia on all advertising, race books and promotional material for any approved VRIF campaign project.

The Department may request Recipients and Service Providers to fact check any text and seek approval to use any owned imagery associated with the activity prior to the publication of any such promotional materials.

Further information on the Victorian Government Branding Guidelines can be obtained via the [Department of Premier and Cabinet website \(External link\)](#).

9.5 Contact information

For more information about the Victorian Racing Industry Fund, or to discuss any specific queries, please contact the Office of Racing.

Email: VRIF@justice.vic.gov.au

These guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Minister for Racing.