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| Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) |
| 2023-24 Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund (MCIF) |
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# How should I use these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)?

Before applying, make sure you read the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) carefully.

These FAQs are intended to provide additional information and responses to common questions about the 2023-24 MCIF program.

If you cannot find what you are looking for and have a question about the program, contact the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au or on 1300 112 755.

If you are having trouble understanding the FAQs and require the assistance of an interpreter when calling the Department, please call Language Link on (03) 3280 0726 or call TTY on (03) 9658 9641.

# About the Program

## What are the key dates of the 2023-24 Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund (MCIF) Program?

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| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Opening date for applications | Wednesday, 27 September 2023 |
| Closing date for applications | 3pm, Wednesday, 6 December 2023 |
| Outcomes announced | Early 2024 |

## What is the aim of the 2023-24 MCIF grant program?

The aim of the 2023–24 MCIF program is to support Victoria’s **multicultural community organisations** to upgrade their community facilities. This will give community members a safe and secure place to celebrate and share their history and traditions, build connections and thrive. This is regardless of age, abilities, language, ethnicity or location.

The MCIF offers grants to Victoria’s culturally diverse communities to help them maintain, upgrade, and build their community infrastructure.

## What types of projects will be funded?

In the 2023-24 MCIF program, we are seeking multicultural infrastructure projects that can commence quickly and be completed within a reasonable timeframe. There must be a clear community need for your project and it must align strongly with the program objective.

Please refer to page 6 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for information on the program objective.

Priority will be given to your application if it clearly demonstrates how the project supports one or more of the following groups:

* Regional or rural multicultural communities
* new and emerging multicultural communities
* projects focused on achieving positive outcomes for women and gender diverse people.

The 2023-24 MCIF program prioritises these groups in recognition that they often have limited access to resources and networks, and less capacity to financially contribute to infrastructure projects.

Please refer to page 10 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for information on priority groups and projects.

## Will all applications receive funding?

Unfortunately, not all applications will receive funding. The MCIF program receives more applications than it is possible to fund. Successful applicants may also only be funded for part of what they request.

Please make sure you read the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) carefully to give your application the best possible chance of success.

## How much funding is available to support a project?

The 2023-24 MCIF program offers grants of up to $400,000 for construction projects and up to $75,000 for pre-construction projects.

Funding is available under the following streams:

1. All Multicultural Communities: for all multicultural community organisations which are not listed below
2. Chinese Community: for Chinese community organisations
3. Greek Community: for Greek community organisations
4. Indian Community: for Indian community organisations
5. Islamic Community: for Islamic community organisations
6. Italian Community: for Italian community organisations
7. Lebanese Community: for Lebanese community organisations
8. Multicultural Museums Feasibility studies (up to $75,000): for multicultural community organisations seeking to undertake a feasibility study on developing a cultural centre / museum for its specific multicultural community.

Please refer to page 7 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for information on the funding streams.

## Can organisations apply for more than one project?

No, there is a limit of one application per organisation.

## Will all applicants be required to match funding?

No, not all projects will be required to contribute matched funding. The different matched funding requirements are listed below.

Please refer to page 18 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for information on matched funding.

**Matched funding not required**

Projects targeting the priority groups for the 2023-24 MCIF program are **NOT** required to match the 2023-24 MCIF program grant funding. By offering reduced matched funding requirements, this prioritisation will help these groups receive more equitable access to support and funding. The following three priority groups are:

* Rural and regional Victoria projects
* Projects supporting new and emerging multicultural communities
* Projects focused on achieving positive outcomes for women and gender diverse people.

The Department will confirm if an application meets the priority group requirement during the assessment of the application.

**Matched funding required**

Successful projects that are not targeting one or more of the priority groups must match the grant funding dollar for dollar. For example, if you ask for a grant of $10,000, your organisation will need to match this contribution with $10,000. (This must be a monetary contribution as no in-kind contributions are allowed.)

## Why is it important for organisations to follow the Victorian Government values?”

The Victorian Government is committed to protecting the rights of all Victorians to be free from racism, vilification, and discrimination of any kind.

We are committed to building community harmony, and ensuring every Victorian feels safe and can participate in all aspects of Victorian life, irrespective of Aboriginality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, faith, language, culture, migration or visa status, class, ability, and age.

This commitment is reflected in the contractual relationship between funded organisations and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing that sets out the expectation that in the delivery of projects and initiatives funded by the Victorian Government, organisations will promote and uphold the government’s stated values of:

* one law for all
* freedom to be yourself
* discrimination is never acceptable
* a fair go for all
* it is up to all of us to contribute to a Victoria we can be proud of.

# About the application process

## When do applications open and close?

Applications will be open for 10 weeks from Wednesday, 27 September 2023; and will close at 3pm on Wednesday 6 December 2023.

An application can be lodged as soon as it is ready. It is recommended you don’t wait until the last minute to submit your application in case you miss the cut off deadline.

## What if I miss the deadline for submitting my application – can I get an extension?

Late and draft applications won’t be accepted, and extensions will not be provided.

## How do I apply?

All applications must be submitted online via the [DFFH Grants Gateway](https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2Fs%2F). We will not accept applications in other formats.

To apply, visit the Victorian Government’s website (<https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund>) and click on the ‘Apply Now’ button.

Please read the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) before submitting your application. If you wish to discuss your application or require assistance, please contact the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team prior to the closing date at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au.

## Where can I find the application questions?

You can find a list of the application form questions in the Application Form Guidance document located at <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund>.

Please note that not all questions are included in this document. For example, questions relating to contact information are not included.

## Where can I find information on how to write a grant application?

You can find information on how to write a grant application on the Victorian Government website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund>.

## What if I have technical problem when submitting my online application?

If you are having technical problems and the application form isn’t loading or submitting, please try a different internet browser as this can sometimes help. If this does not work, please contact the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au who will assist where possible.

Please provide as much information as you can about the issue in your email.

Please allow at least 3 business days for support and note that the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team is available during business hours, Monday to Friday.

## What do I need to do before I submit my application?

Please read the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) to make sure your organisation and the proposed project are eligible, and you have collected all the required information to complete the application form.

## I have submitted an application but need to make changes or add attachments – can I do this?

If the round is still open for applications (between Wednesday, 27 September 2023 and 3pm, Wednesday, 6 December 2023) and you have submitted your application, contact the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au who can assist with the process to make the required changes.

No additions or changes can be made to the application once the round is closed for applications (after 3pm on Wednesday, 6 December 2023).

# Organisational eligibility

## How do we know if our organisation is eligible to apply?

Please refer to page 16 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for information on organisation eligibility.

## How do I know if my organisation is a ‘legal entity’?

If you are unsure about your organisations ‘entity status’, you can check your organisation’s details online. Your organisation’s official status can be checked at:

* For an Incorporated Association – [www.consumer.vic.gov.au](file:///C%3A/Users/vidkg3t/Downloads/www.consumer.vic.gov.au)
* For a Company Limited by Guarantee – <https://connectonline.asic.gov.au/>
* To check your Australian Business Number (ABN) – <https://abr.business.gov.au/>

## Our organisation or group is not eligible, are there any exceptions?

There are no exceptions to the organisation eligibility requirements when applying to the MCIF program. All applicants must be an eligible organisation to apply to the MCIF program.

The only exception is organisations that are unincorporated or do not have a current ABN, and who are supporting one or more of the following priority groups.

* Rural and regional Victoria projects
* Project supporting new and emerging multicultural communities
* Projects focused on achieving positive outcomes for women and gender diverse people.

These organisations can apply to the MCIF program if supported by an eligible auspice organisation. If you are applying under an auspice arrangement, you must provide a letter of support from the auspice organisation confirming they agree to manage the grant on behalf of your organisation.

Please refer to page 16 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for further information about organisation eligibility.

Please refer to page 17 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for further information about the responsibilities of an auspice organisation.

# Eligible activities

## What type of projects and activities will be considered for funding?

Please refer to page 8 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) which lists the project activities that might be funded. Projects can include one or more eligible project activities.

If you are not sure if your project activities or costs are eligible, please email the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au.

## What will not be considered for funding?

Please refer to page 9 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) which list the project activities that are ineligible for funding.

If you are not sure if your project activities or costs are eligible, please email the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au.

## Can my organisation purchase equipment with the grant funding?

You can purchase assets with grant funding, subject to final approval by the Department. You must clearly list any assets you want to purchase in the application form and provide quotes for each item.

Please note that equipment or assets must be of a permanent nature, closely relate to the facilities use, and cannot cost more than 40 per cent of the grant amount requested.

Please refer to page 8 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for further information on purchasing assets.

## When do I need to complete my project?

Your project should be completed as soon as possible. All funded projects activities and reporting requirements must be completed by the due date listed on the contract between the Victorian Government and the funded organisation.

## Can I use in-kind contributions for grant activities?

No. In-kind contributions cannot be used for any grant funded activities or activities covered by matched funding. This includes volunteer hours contributed by organisation members.

# Mandatory requirements

## What documents will I have to provide to support my application?

Please refer to pages 14 and 15 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) which list the mandatory documents required to be submitted as part of your application to make is eligible.

Note: If attachments exceed the maximum allowable limit, you can forward an electronic copy via email to multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au along with your Organisation and Project name. You will receive a reference number when you apply online. Please quote this number in all correspondence relating to your application, including supporting documentation.

## Why do you want to see our organisation’s Financial Statements?

The Department must ensure that all funded projects are financially viable. Well maintained Financial Statements help demonstrate to us that your organisation is well managed and sustainable. The review of Financial Statements is an important factor in the Department’s risk management practices.

## Can funds from another grant be used for matched funding?

Grants from other sources can be used to meet the matched funding requirements. This includes grants from state government departments other than DFFH, commonwealth government departments, and local councils.

Any applications to use grants funds from another source will be reviewed and approved by the department on a case-by-case basis.

# The assessment process

## How will my application be assessed?

Your application will be assessed and scored against the MCIF program eligibility and assessment criteria.

Following these assessments, your application will be reviewed by an expert assessment panel that includes representatives from the Department, the Victorian Multicultural Commission and other relevant independent experts.

The final decision is made by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Once a decision has been made, you will be advised if your application has been successful.

Please note that the Department can decide to change the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) at any time.

Please refer to page 19 and 20 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for further information on the assessment criteria.

Please refer to pages 13 to 18 of the [2023-24 MCIF Program Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund) for further information on the eligibility criteria.

## When will successful applicants be announced?

We anticipate applicants will be notified in writing about the outcome of their grant application in **early 2024**.

Successful applicants will also be published on <https://www.vic.gov.au/multicultural-community-infrastructure-fund>.

## Can I ask for a reassessment?

No, all decisions in relation to funding are considered final.

If your application is unsuccessful, your organisation can request feedback by emailing the Multicultural Affairs Programs and Grants Team at multicultural.infrastructure@dffh.vic.gov.au.

Please note that it may take up to 4 weeks to provide feedback given the volume of grant applications received under this program.

# Successful applications

## How do I accept my grant?

Successful grant recipients will be notified via email that their application has been successful, the grant funding they will receive, and how to accept the grants funds.

## Do I need to sign a contract to get my grant?

Yes, successful grant recipients must enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with the Victorian Government to receive their grant. The VCFA will be between the successful organisation or auspice organisation, and the Victorian Government.

The VCFA will detail the terms and conditions of the grant including the payment schedule, use of grant funds, terms of the agreement, and reporting requirements. The payment schedule and reporting requirements will be different for each project.

The VCFA must be signed and returned within 30 days of notification, or the offer of funding may be withdrawn.

## When will we receive the grant funding?

Grant payments are made on the completion of milestones listed in the VCFA. The milestones may include the signing of the VCFA, completion of progress reports, and at the completion of the project.

The amount paid for each milestone will vary depending on the type, complexity, and value of the project.

Please note that grant payments may take up to 30 days to process from the date the milestone is completed.

## When can we start our grant funded activities?

You can start your grant activities as soon as your organisation receives a copy of the VCFA which has been signed by all parties (both DFFH and your organisation). You do not need to wait for your first grant payment.

## When do grant funded and matched funding activities need to be completed?

Successful grant recipients must deliver all grant funded activities in accordance with the milestones in their VCFA. The completion date will be determined by the department based on the grant activities.

To be eligible for funding in future, all final reporting must be up to date.

## What reporting needs to be completed?

Successful grant recipients must complete reporting requirements in accordance with the milestones in their VCFA. This includes:

* regular updates to the department via phone or email on the progress of their project
* Final Report, Photos and a Financial acquittal at the completion of all grant funded and matched funding activities.

Projects mays also be required to complete progress reports and undergo site visits by department representatives.

To be eligible for funding in future, all final reporting must be up to date.

## Do we need to acknowledge the Victorian Government for the funding?

The Victorian Government must be acknowledged in speeches and presentations, and mentioned in any media releases, flyers, programs, or other documents relating to your funded event.

Suggested acknowledgements include:

* Made possible by the Victorian Government through the Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund
* With thanks to the Victorian Government and the Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund
* Funding provided by the Victorian Government through the Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund

## Do we need to notify the Department of the project opening / launch?

Yes, it is mandatory for all successful organisations to notify the Department of any planned communications throughout the life cycle of the project or the final project opening/launch.

An Acknowledgment and Publicity Guidelines document will be shared with all successful organisations, which will have more information on this requirement.