

Program Guidelines

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP SUPPORT

2021-22 grants program





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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.

Aboriginal self-determination and decision-making are crucial to the appropriate design and delivery of community recovery responses. BRV will continue to work closely with Aboriginal communities to ensure significant focus and support is given to community-led solutions that will achieve long-term recovery.

Program Guidelines

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Background

The June 2021 Flood and Storm was unprecedented in its scale and ferocity. Across 39 local government areas (LGAs), strong winds and heavy rainfall caused significant damage to homes, property, infrastructure, and the environment. Many individuals, families and businesses experienced significant disruption and distress during and after the event and continue to feel the impacts.

On 9 November 2021, the Victorian Government announced \$25.7 million to deliver the Integrated Early Recovery Package initiative. As part of this funding, \$2 million has been allocated to support delivery of the Community Clean-Up Support 2021-22 grants program.

Evaluation and continuous learning are central to BRVs approach to recovery and so an allocation of \$30,000 from Bushfire Recovery Victoria's (BRV) operating budget will be set aside to undertake evaluation of the Community Clean-Up Support program.

The Community Clean-Up Support 2021-22 grants program will be administered by (BRV).

About this grants program

The Community Clean-Up Support 2021-22 grants program has been designed to support communities most affected by the June 2021 Flood and Storm to play a leading role in their own recovery. The program will deliver funding to LGAs to allocate out to community groups involved in supporting private property owners to clean up sources of fuel and debris that resulted from the Flood and Storms.

Applications are invited from eligible Local Government Areas (LGAs) that were most affected by the June 2021 Flood and Storm, and who received support from the Council Support Fund.

Grants up to \$656,667 are available for regional approaches and grants up to \$218,889 are available to support eligible LGAs to provide funding directly to not-for-profit community groups who are planning and/or facilitating community recovery clean up initiatives and activities.

Applications are open between Tuesday 8 March and Tuesday 29 March 2022 to support projects taking place between May 2022 – June 2023.

Program objectives

The key objectives of funding are to:

- 1. Cover out-of-pocket expenses for Community Groups with the skills to support private property owners to reduce bushfire risk on their properties.
- 2. Build capacity and capability of Community Groups to support their communities and are enabled to take control of their recovery.
- 3. Support those most in need to have reduced financial stress and better mental health outcomes.
- 4. Reduce Occupational Health and Safety risks for communities.

Which LGAs can apply?

BRV invites applications from the following LGAs that were most directly impacted during the June 2021 Flood and Storm:

- Bass Coast Council
- Baw Baw Shire Council
- Cardinia Shire Council
- Hepburn Shire Council
- Latrobe City Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Moorabool Shire Council
- Murrindindi Council
- South Gippsland Council
- Wellington Shire Council
- Yarra Ranges Shire Council

How much funding is available for LGAs?

The total funding available under the Community Clean-Up Support grants program is \$2 million.

Grants up to \$656,667 are available for regional approaches and grants between \$131,333 and \$218,889 are available to support eligible LGAs to coordinate with local community groups with the skills to support private property owners to clean up sources of fuel and debris that resulted from the June 2021 Flood and Storm.

The program will be demand-driven, with funding of \$656,667 being available across each of the three most affected regions:

- Central and South West Gippsland
- Central Highlands
- Yarra Ranges, Murrindindi and Cardinia

Equitable distribution across regions will be reflected and be informed by the requests received, needs identified based on impacts and efficiencies of implementation.

Regional partnership applications

LGAs are strongly encouraged to consider regional approaches to facilitate clean up efficiencies across the three most affected regions. BRV will favourably view 'regional partnership applications' received from LGA consortiums (with a lead LGA identified) to assist a coordinated implementation of regional funding.

Individual LGAs can apply but will only be able to access a portion of funds available in the regions above.

What can LGAs use the funding for?

Funding support provided by LGAs through this program will help community groups working in recovery to cover out-of-pocket expenses (including expenses not yet budgeted for) and could include the rental and leasing of specialist equipment such as portable sawmills, wood splitters, mulchers, chainsaws, trailers, associated fuel and disposal costs and specialist professional support such as arborists (where required).

The Community Clean-Up Support grants program will allow LGAs to provide direct support to community groups who are leading community recovery clean up initiatives and activities.

LGAs will submit a Delivery Plan to BRV as part of the application process, outlining the proposal for delivery and implementation of funds. The Delivery Plan must provide the following:

- · financial request
- · proposed dates of delivery
- a summary of the delivery approach to support local community groups and implement funds
- whether the program is to be delivered within a single LGA or across several LGAs (regional approach).

Full details on each delivery area are under the 'Attachment A - LGA guidance for funding implementation' section, including community eligibility criteria, funding ranges and eligible project types.

How to apply

Read the program guidelines carefully to make sure you understand eligibility and that your proposal is well aligned with the funding guidance.

Before you apply:

- ensure you discuss your application with BRV and have agreed on the appropriate approach.
- review the information under the 'Key selection criteria' and 'Appendix A LGA guidance for funding implementation' sections for guidance on what is required in the application and Delivery Plan.

Key Dates				
Application period	Open	8 March 2022		
	LGAs must contact BRV to discuss the approach for the LGA funding implementation before submitting their proposal and grant Delivery Plan.			
	Close	29 March 2022		
Negotiation and approval	BRV reviews full proposals and engage LGAs to confirm any additional details or changes required.	~ May 2022		
	Ministerial approval and development of Funding Agreements.			
LGA implementation of funding	Release of grant funds to LGAs: LGAs commence implementation and allocation of grant funds as outlined in the Grants Delivery Plan	~ June 2022		
Final acquittal	Delivery and activities completed: Community recovery groups must complete and fully expend allocated LGA funds by this date at the latest	30 June 2023		
	LGAs must provide the Final Report and financial acquittal to BRV	1 August 2023		

Apply online

To submit a new Community Clean-Up Support application, apply via the link provided or select 'Apply now' on the BRV Grants Portal.

Applications close: Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 5pm (Melbourne time)

Please note:

- applications must be submitted online via the BRV Grants Portal
- resume a draft application, you can visit the BRV Grants Portal directly at <u>brv.force.com</u>
- applications received after the closing date will not be considered
- only one application can be submitted per LGA (whether as part of a solo applicant or a regional partnership application).

Important information for LGAs

Contact BRV to discuss your proposal

LGAs must contact BRV to discuss the approach for the LGA funding implementation before applying. During the application period BRV staff will be available to provide support and guidance to LGAs to ensure the proposal is well aligned with this program.

Overdue reports

Applicants with previously awarded BRV funding must be up to date with all current reports and milestones under existing funding agreements to apply.

To be successful in receiving additional BRV grant funds, LGAs grant recipients must demonstrate that previous funds are being spent as agreed. An application can be submitted, but if any overdue reports have not been returned before applications close, the LGA may not be considered eligible to apply or receive further grant funds.

To check if you are up to date with current reporting, contact the BRV Central Grants Team at grants@brv.vic.gov.au or on 1800 560 760.

Application budget—Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Grant payments made by BRV to another Government Related Entity (GRE) such as a Local Government Area are not subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

LGAs must provide figures in their application budget which are GST *exclusive*, including the total grant amount requested. If successful, LGAs will receive the awarded grant as GST exclusive.

For more information about GST and payments between government related entities, visit the ATO website.

Assessment and negotiation process

Applications received from LGAs under program will be carefully reviewed during a multi-stage assessment and negotiation process.

All applications submitted will be assessed against the following:

- the strength of application's responses to the key selection criteria
- whether all funding specific requirements outlined under 'Attachment A - LGA guidance for funding implementation' have been addressed, and
- whether all mandatory documents and attachments have been provided.

BRV will conduct a detailed merit assessment of the LGA application and grant Delivery Plan against the key selection criteria before making a recommendation to the Minister for Emergency Services.

All decisions made by BRV and/or the Minister for Emergency Services are considered final. This includes decisions in relation to any aspect of the funding application and assessment process, any decision to offer or award a grant under this program, or to withdraw the offer or cancel the grant funding agreement.

Key selection criteria

All applications will be reviewed and assessed against the key selection criteria. Applications will receive a weighted score based on how well the responses provided in the attached documents demonstrate the criteria outlined below.

Selection Criteria		Weighting (%)
Purpose Criteria #1	 LGAs must provide a detailed description of how the grant will be used to: deliver direct benefits to storm and/or flood affected community members for clean up recovery demonstrate a need-based assessment approach to ensure fair and equitable outcomes for impacted communities across regions support one or more of the program objectives align to Community Recovery Plans or emerging community priorities identified by community recovery groups, Municipal Recovery Plans and/or related strategic recovery documents. 	20%
Community participation Criteria #2	 LGAs must demonstrate how the grant will be used to: support broad community group involvement in the planning and delivery of community clean up recovery activities build the capacity of community groups to support their communities and are enabled to take control of their recovery consider highest value local reuse of fallen timber material as firewood, posts, sawlogs etc. 	35%

Selection Criteria		Weighting (%)
Location Criteria #3	LGAs must: demonstrate that their activities will occur in a flood or storm affected area in an eligible LGA (see below) describe how the flood and/or storm directly impacted that community. Eligible Local Government Areas: Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Cardinia, Hepburn, Latrobe, Macedon Ranges, Moorabool, Murrindindi, South Gippsland, Wellington and Yarra Ranges.	N/A
Planning, distribution and delivery Criteria #4	 LGAs must provide a clear explanation on how the grant will be distributed including that: community groups are involved in the planning, preparation and delivery of clean-up initiatives and activities related to the recovery of the broader community proposed clean-up initiatives and activities are supported by realistic delivery timeframes and have a clear anticipated completion date that any initiatives or activities resulting from the grants will be covered by a suitable level of insurance as required for the duration of funding (volunteers are covered by relevant insurances and that contractors have current and adequate insurance, licenses, permits and approvals for all services and/or works) community groups have the skills and training to operate plant and equipment in a safe manner and any skills and training gaps and/or requirements are identified as part of the project delivery any proposed initiatives or activities will identify, plan for and budget appropriately to comply with any applicable legislation (e.g., Aboriginal Heritage Act 2008 (Vic.), Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010, Native Title Act 1983 etc.), local planning laws and/or cultural and environmental considerations. the community group receiving funding will obtain all permits or approvals required to deliver any project resulting from the funding (with an understanding of the associated timeframes and costs) any initiative or activity delivered by community groups on public land will have the endorsement of the relevant land manager where required (e.g., Local Council, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning etc.) any clean-up initiatives or activities comply with Commonwealth, State or local laws and requirements, including any coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions or health directions. 	35%
Budget Criteria #5	LGAs must provide a clear and detailed budget for each area of delivery, which demonstrates that costs: • are accurate, reasonable and represent value for money • have potential to benefit recovery of the local economy and create local employment opportunities • are supported by attached evidence used to develop the budget (e.g., costings, quotes, projections etc.) • are supported by any contributions from other funding sources or in-kind support (if applicable)	10%

Mandatory documents and attachments

In addition to the selection criteria above, LGAs must provide additional mandatory documents and evidence along with their application which will contribute towards the assessment and weighted score.

Grants Delivery Plan (mandatory)	A detailed breakdown of initiatives and activities that will be undertaken to distribute the funds to community groups, including anticipated timeframes and who is responsible for administering the grants. This must be completed using the BRV template.
Financial Statement (mandatory)	All applicants must provide a Financial Statement which is either: • a profit/loss statement for the most recent financial year (FY) • an organisational bank statement including all incomings and outgoings for at least the last 12 months.
Public Liability Insurance (PLI) (mandatory)	It is a BRV requirement that all prospective funding recipients must hold PLI for the duration of funded initiatives and/or activities. PLI covers members of the public and protect the organisation from liability risks such as injury and property damage. Provide a current copy of the Certificate of Currency in the name of the LGA (or community group) that will ensure adequate cover for the delivery of project activities.
Other documents (optional)	Any other additional supporting documentation and/or attachments provided that may support the application, can also be attached. For example: quotes or costings (if available); schematics or design plans; pictures and newspaper articles etc.

Successful grant recipients

BRV will contact successful LGAs with a letter of offer, a funding agreement and other documents which must be returned to accept the funding.

Victorian Common Funding Agreement

Grant recipients are required to enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (Agreement) with BRV to receive funding. The Agreement will outline the terms and conditions of the grant, including the approved use of grant funds, the Agreement term (funding period), and the due dates of all key deliverables, grant payments and reporting requirements.

LGAs that are successful in receiving funding will have 30 days to enter into the Agreement and return all documents. If a grant offer is not accepted during this period, the grant may be withdrawn.

Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan (Plan) will form part of your Agreement. Some LGAs may receive part-funding or be approved subject to additional conditions and requirements. Successful LGAs will be given an opportunity to update the Plan to include any additional details required by BRV or to update activity dates if these have since changed. Once updated, the Agreement will be finalised and grant funds progressed.

Once the LGA has received grant funds from BRV, they may commence delivery and allocation of funds to local community groups as outlined in the Plan.

Regular reporting and acquittal

Successful LGAs are required to report on the funded activities and provide regular updates during the funding period and a final report and financial acquittal at the end of the funding period.

LGAs must provide consolidated report details to BRV outlining the progress of all funded projects on behalf of the community groups that receive LGA support.

All reporting requirements will be outlined in the Agreement, and BRV will provide all report templates.

Reporting requirements may differ for each area of delivery, but successful LGAs should anticipate the following reporting requirements for the duration of the Agreement:

- Financial Reports—At the end of each financial year
- **Progress Reports**—Every six-months
- Final Report and Financial Acquittal—One month after completion of project activities

BRV Acknowledgement Guidelines

Recipients of BRV grant funding must agree to follow BRV Acknowledgement Guidelines, which outlines how to acknowledge the government's funding in speeches, written materials, and other forms of presentations (e.g., using the Victorian Government logo).

The Guidelines also outline the requirement that successful grant recipients keep their successful funding confidential until a public announcement has been made by the relevant Minister or their representative.

A breach of these Guidelines will be considered a breach of the funding agreement with BRV. The BRV Acknowledgement Guidelines can be found at: www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-victoria

Appendix A - LGA guidance for funding implementation

When preparing an application, LGAs must consider the details below regarding requirements and limitations for implementation of funding support to community groups. This includes details of community eligibility, funding ranges (and maximums) available per group, and details of the kinds of eligible activities that can or cannot be funded using BRV funds under this program.

This section contains all information needed for LGAs to prepare the grant Delivery Plan as part of the application (using the BRV template) for implementation of the BRV grant.

Delivery model and guidance for LGAs

The preference is for LGAs to deliver funds via direct allocation of funding support (e.g., non-competitive grant or direct payment) to community recovery groups identified as requiring support.

However, LGAs may elect to deliver funds via competitive grants process to allocate funds to community groups involved in clean up initiatives and activities if this approach is more suited to the local community.

Funding available to community groups (through the respective LGA)

Not-for-profit organisations, community recovery groups and volunteer groups involved in clean up initiatives are eligible to receive support through their respective LGA. Funding provided by LGAs will support community groups who are planning and or facilitating community recovery clean up initiatives and activities.

The LGA can determine the amount of funding allocated based on the number of eligible not-for-profit organisations and community groups in their local area or region, their relevant specialist skills and/or their capacity to effectively and efficiently deliver clean-up activities and initiatives.

Eligibility for support

Who is eligible for LGAs support through this grant program?

Funding support through LGAs are available for community clean-up activities undertaken by not-for-profit and volunteer groups who are actively involved in supporting community clean-up activities.

To be eligible for support from an LGA through this grant, a community group must be:

- a not-for-profit community organisation or group undertaking activity related to supporting private property owners to clean up sources of fuel and debris that resulted from the June 2021 Flood and Storm.
- supporting or delivering storm or flood recovery initiatives and activities for communities (impacted by the June 2021 Flood and Storm) in the LGAs of Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Cardinia, Hepburn, Latrobe, Macedon Ranges, Moorabool, Murrindindi, South Gippsland, Wellington and Yarra Ranges.

Who is not eligible for direct LGA support?

The following cannot be granted support by the LGA under the program:

- Victorian and Commonwealth government agencies
- groups not involved in community recovery clean-up planning and delivery activities
- individuals and sole traders
- unincorporated community organisations (unless an auspice arrangement is in place)
- commercial enterprises, for-profit entities and fixed trusts
- political parties and organisations
- registered primary and secondary schools, pre-schools, TAFE institutions and universities (though they can act at auspices).

Sole traders and commercial enterprises cannot be directly supported by the LGA as a funding recipient.

However, an eligible not-for-profit can use BRV funds to engage labour and services from accredited contractors or commercial enterprises to assist with clean-up activities where specialist skills are required for clean-up activities.

What types of expenses will be supported?

LGAs will support local not-for-profit organisations and community groups who are currently using their own resources and/or equipment to coordinate, facilitate and deliver clean-up activities and initiatives across the community.

Funding will support eligible community groups to become better resourced, skilled and capable of continuing and broadening the delivery of their clean-up activities that benefit the community and local landholders. Please note, funding is not intended to support private landholders (individuals) or clean-up on private lands directly.

Examples of eligible expenses include:

- clean-up activities and initiatives delivered by community not-for-profit groups that benefit the community and local landholders (e.g., private land clean-up support)
- hire of specialised equipment (rental and leasing)
 necessary for the safe removal of debris that
 resulted from the storm or flood (e.g., Lucas Mills, wood
 splitters, trailers)
- engaging contractors, external labour and services to undertake clean up works or aspects of delivery which require specialist expertise, tickets and/or training (e.g., arborists, stump removers or heavy plant operators)
- purchase of small-scale equipment less than
 a combined total of \$5,000, where this builds capacity
 of the not-for-profit to responded to community
 clean up needs in the future (e.g., a chainsaw, tools,
 safety equipment)
- OH&S and other training to support volunteers to undertake clean up activity in a safe manner
- the management and removal of debris that resulted from the flood or storm, including the payment of fees associated with the disposal of debris
- payment of fees associated with the disposal of debris that resulted from the flood or storm

- OH&S and other training to support volunteers to undertake clean up activity in a safe manner
- fuel costs associated with the running of equipment and/or machinery required for clean-up activity
- costs associated with the repurposing of timber or other reusable waste left by the flood or storm
- reasonable costs associated with travel for volunteers to undertake clean-up or other activities associated with clean up (e.g. training)
- administrative support and overheads which are additional to the normal day-to-day running costs of the organisation, including project management or project co-ordination (up to 15 per cent of total funding, e.g., administration and coordination costs associated with engaging contractors)

Activities and initiatives not listed above may still be eligible, provided they are strongly aligned with the program objectives (and not listed as ineligible). If unsure about the eligibility of an activity proposed by a community group, contact BRV for advice before allocating funds.

What types of community activities and initiatives are ineligible?

Funds provided by BRV under this program cannot be used by the LGA and/or funded community groups for:

- day-to-day operating costs of the not-for-profit (e.g., running costs of a business, rent, utilities, insurance, maintenance)
- offsetting of salaries or costs for existing staff
- purchase lease or rent of property, land or existing infrastructure, including the costs associated with the sub-division of land
- purchase of assets or equipment greater than a combined total of \$5,000 (large equipment can only be hired)
- set-up or establishment costs for a new not-for-profit group
- activities that are already receiving funds from BRV for the same application
- asset purchases which primarily benefit individuals or private landholders (as opposed to those owned by a community organisation for broader community benefit)
- the cost of native vegetation and threatened species offsets or offsetting activities (such as a condition of a permit) and non-indigenous vegetation
- projects that may have a negative impact on the environment, heritage, existing businesses, services and/or communities
- passing on funding to a third party in the form of a sponsorship or donation
- repair works or activities that are otherwise covered by insurance

- political and/or fundraising activities
- purchase of alcohol, gifts, prizes, or incentives (e.g., thank you gifts, gift cards or similar rewards)
- asset purchases benefiting individuals
 (as opposed to those owned by an organisation for community benefit)
- purchase of land, buildings or existing infrastructure, including the costs associated with the sub-division of land
- project management, project co-ordination or administration costs that are more than 15% of total funding requested.
- activities outside of the funded period, including retrospective funding for projects that have commenced or are completed before funding is approved
- projects that require ongoing or recurrent funding to succeed or deliver benefit
- projects that are within the responsibility of another Victorian, Commonwealth or Local Government program and/or are more suitably funded (or have already been funded) under another program
- activities that will break any Commonwealth, Victorian, or local laws, including any current coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions or health directions.

Bushfire Recovery Victoria

Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) was established as a dedicated Victorian Government agency working directly with local communities to listen, help and deliver what they need to recover. Following the June 2021 Flood and Storm, BRV was delegated responsibility for coordinating the recovery and clean-up on behalf of the Victorian Government soon after the event.

In response, BRV established regional teams in the most affected areas and began consulting with councils, community groups, residents and other government agencies to understand community priorities.

Regional teams, led by a Regional Director, are now based in the Central Highlands (supporting the LGAs of Hepburn, Macedon Ranges and Moorabool), the Yarra Ranges (supporting LGAs of Cardinia, Murrindindi and Yarra Ranges) and Central and South West Gippsland (supporting LGAs of Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Latrobe, South Gippsland and Wellington).

BRV delivers a range of grant programs and initiatives to support individuals, families, communities, businesses, and regions to rebuild and recover from the impact of June 2021 Flood and Storm.

For more information about support available outside this grant program to individuals, families and businesses affected by the Storm and Flood event, vist:

vic.gov.au/storm-and-flood-recovery

Privacy

Bushfire Recover Victoria (BRV) is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. Any personal information about an applicant or a third party provided in an application or in correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government agencies for the purpose of grant assessment and/or administration. For more information about the BRV Privacy Policy, visit vic.gov.au/privacy-policy-bushfire-recovery or contact the BRV Privacy Officer at: privacy@brv.vic.gov.au

Contact the BRV Central Grants Team

If you have questions about the program, how to apply or need assistance with your online application, contact the BRV Central Grants Team for assistance.

EMAIL

grants@brv.vic.gov.au

Phone

1800 560 760

Hearing impairments

If you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or speech impaired please call BRV via the National Relay Service:

Teletypewriter (TTY)

Call 133 677 then ask for 1300 112 755

Voice Relay

Speak and listen users call **1300 555 727** then ask for **1300 112 755**

Interpreters

If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450** then ask for **1800 560 760**.

Disclaimer

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