# Multicultural Festivals and Events Program

Feedback on applications from 2024-25

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**Feedback document purpose**

This document highlights common issues found in applications assessed in 2024-25 and provides examples of well-explained and weak responses.

Use these examples as a guide to help you understand the program’s assessment criteria and improve your future submissions. Using the exact wording may not guarantee success.

Please make sure to tailor your response to reflect your event and your organisation’s plans, expected resources and activities.

# Feedback on responses to weighted application questions

## Alignment with MFE Program objectives

### Question: What cultures and/or traditions will your event be celebrating and why are they important?

Common issues include:

* Vague descriptions of the culture or tradition at the event.
* No explanation of the need, positive impacts or significance of the event for both your own community and the broader Victorian community.
* Lack of explanation on the historical or cultural significance of the celebration.

A clear response might look like this:

This festival celebrates [cultural event], which is one of the most significant and ancient cultural traditions for [multicultural community], dating back more than [number of] years. It is celebrated annually on [specific date or time period] and symbolises [core cultural meaning].

The event features traditional activities such as [list some examples], which represent [cultural significance]. This celebration is shared by various ethnicities, including: [list other ethnicities or groups].

This event provides an opportunity to share our heritage with the broader community. The festival’s key meaning of [theme or cultural significance] — the triumph of light over darkness—shall resonate with people from all backgrounds.

Activities like [example] will allow participants to connect with the culture in an engaging and educational way.

A weak response might look like this:

We would like to celebrate [cultural event] with our members. We believe this event is important to gather our members together. The event will include various food, dancing, music, entertainment for everyone to enjoy.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Provide historical context of celebration and explain the significance of the culture being celebrated.
* Highlight the impact of the event on both the specific cultural community and the broader Victorian community.
* List the ethnic groups or cultural backgrounds that observe this tradition.

### Question: What cultural activities will occur at your event? Provide a description of each cultural activity and how it demonstrates cultural diversity.

Common issues include:

* Listing activities without explaining their cultural meaning.
* Not demonstrating how the event will showcase diversity or cultural traditions.

**A clear response might look like this:**

This event will feature four major cultural activities:

1. Cooking demonstrations – Community members will demonstrate how to prepare traditional dishes such as [dish name], explaining their origins and significance in [cultural celebrations]. This dish symbolises [symbolic meaning of the dish] for the community members.

2. [Activity] – detail of the cultural significance of this activity

3. [Activity] – detail of the cultural significance of this activity

4. [Activity] – detail of the cultural significance of this activity

**A weak response might look like this:**

There will be activities for the families and children, including a dance and costume performance, food will be provided to all.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Clearly describe each activity and its cultural importance.
* Explain how the activities contribute to sharing your culture.

### Question: What can the broader Victorian community learn from attending your event? How will attendees be engaged and participate?

Common issues include:

* Response focuses only on members of your community.
* Unclear how the event will include the broader Victorian community.
* No clear explanation of what attendees outside of your community will learn from the event’s cultural activities.
* Response does not discuss how attendees outside of your community can take part in the event.

A clear response might look like this:

This event will help people learn about our traditions in a fun and welcoming way. Many people may not know or have the chance to learn about [community name] people. Ways people can join in include:

* Cooking demonstrations – community elders will cook traditional food and share with visitors the significance and homemade recipes. Visitors will be able to watch and get the experience to learn and recreate popular dishes.
* Dance workshops – attendees can learn simple traditional dance steps as a group, join in and understand the meaning of the dance.

This will help communities connect and learn from each other.

Engaging in group activities fosters a sense of community and belonging.

Visitors may discover new foods, crafts, and artistic techniques that they hadn’t encountered before, to support harmony and respect for different cultures.

A weak response might look like this:

People from all over Victoria will attend. They will watch the performance and learn about our history and culture through seeing the colourful costumes. There will be entertainment for the children.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Explain how people can join in, not just watch.
* Describe how the event will help people learn and connect.
* Give examples of activities that will be open to all attendees.

### Question: How will you promote this event to encourage all Victorians to attend?

Common issues include:

* Promotion strategies are only focused on your own community.
* Not explaining how the event will reach a wider audience.
* Limited or vague promotion strategies.
* Missing example of draft flyer of upcoming or previous event.

A clear response might look like this:

The event will be promoted through:

* Social media and websites such as [list social media examples or name of website]. By promoting the event on social media platforms and collaborating with [local influencers, other communities or groups] this will help reach a diverse audience.
* Community partners such as [name of] partner organisation and community/cultural organisations. We will use our strong connection with [organisation/partner name] to feature the event on their newsletters and share on noticeboard.
* Media such as newspapers or radio stations. Using community leaders to discuss about our event on these platforms to further promote our event.

In addition, we will also include direct invitations to other community groups, schools, distributing flyers at local libraries and shops, and installing community banners.

A weak response might look like this:

We will invite people from all over Victoria. We will send our newsletter to all members on our subscriber list, and using word-of-mouth they will tell their friends. We will use Facebook.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Use various ways to promote the event instead of relying on one-form of promotion (e.g. only flyers will be used).
* Consider how you will promote to people outside of your own community. Ensure your promotion material is accessible and in English.
* Consider working with local influencers, local councils, multicultural peak bodies, or media outlets.

## Demonstrated Capacity

### Question: Provide a detailed list of previous events and the resources(experience/equipment) your organisation has - this should demonstrate your organisations capacity to deliver this event?

Common issues include:

* Response mentions they are experienced without showing capability to deliver the event within expected timeframe and budget.
* Examples of past events, resources and/or similar experiences are not provided.
* Unclear how the organisation will manage the event preparation, delivery and close.

**A clear response might look like this:**

We have successfully organised [event name or outline another event with similar attendee numbers] for the past [number] years, with over [number] attendees each year. We have experience managing [list of other cultural events], working with volunteers and coordinating activities.

Our team of dedicated and skilled committee members with experience in [list the key skills to support event delivery] who will help with managing the event delivery.

We have received interest from local businesses and sponsors. Last year, we worked with [partner organisation] to organise a [previous event], which was attended by [number] people. The [partner organisation] contributed to event by providing assistance on [activity to support event delivery].

We also have strong connections with [local business or supplier names] to help us to secure necessary support and resources for the event including [resources].

A weak response might look like this:

We have run this event for several years and always have a good attendance. We will have access to supplies and a public venue with kitchen access, like last year. A copy of previous event promotion is attached.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Give examples of similar events your group has organised.
* List the key people/partner involved and their experience, skills and resources to help with the event delivery.
* Show how you will manage planning, promotion, and logistics.

### Document: Project Plan (template available on our website)

This is a mandatory requirement for all medium and large stream applications.

Common issues include:

* Only providing minimal items and descriptions in the project plan.
* Items do not cover the entire event lifecycle including pre-event, at-event and post-event phase.
* Timeframes are not reasonable.

An example of a project plan:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Items to be done | How long will it take/date to be done | How will you do it? | Who will be responsible |
| Pre-event | Create event schedule | 1 day | Meet with all committee to discuss responsibilities | Event planner |
| Marketing | 3-6 weeks/01/01/2026 | Establish relationship with radio stations | Marketing manager |
| Day of Event | Hand out staff lanyards | 1 hour | Ensure all staff are in X location by Y time | Staff coordinator |
| Cleaning of all toilets | Throughout the day | Schedule organised and shared | Toilet hire company and staff |
| Post-event | Pay all invoices | 1 week | Invoice payment system | Finance officer |
| Submit MFE final report | 2 days | Complete online portal report template | Grants officer |

## Engagement with priority groups

### Question: Provide an overview on how your event will primarily target this selected priority group.

Priority groups include: new and emerging, rural and regional, women, young people and LGBTIQA+ communities.

To score for this criteria, you must identify one of the priority groups and show how you will support them in your event.

Common issues include:

* Broad responses with no clear plan on how or why your organisation will target the chosen priority group.
* Unclear how the event will support the identified priority group.

Some ways to support your chosen priority group in your event include:

* Engagement and participation – the need to promote the voices of the priority group and their participation in decision making.
* Development – support the priority group to build new skills through training and mentoring.
* Celebration – recognition of the priority group’s contribution to the community and to showcase this to the wider community.

**A clear response might look like this:**

We have chosen [priority group] to engage and support this community in our event because we want to assist them through providing [specific activities or resources]. We understand many of our members are from this [priority group].

The event will feature activities and performances that highlight [priority group]. Our [priority group] will be able to connect and feel sense of belonging through engaging with these [specific activities] at the event.

We will partner with [partner organisation] who has experience with working with this [priority group]. This will help us understand their needs. The [partner organisation] will also help to promote the event to this [priority group] and ensure participation from this community.

A weak response might look like this:

We will target [priority group] at our event. We will ask the [priority group] in our community to encourage their friends to come to the event.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* Clearly explain how you will include the chosen priority group in your event.
* Give specific examples of how you will target and engage your chosen priority group.
* Describe how you will promote the event to ensure these groups feel welcome.

## Budget

Common issues include:

* Budget expenses are inconsistent or unreasonable with unsupported expense/s listed.
* Not providing clear details of budget expenses including description and amount.
* Listing one or two broad costs without a break down.
* Missing quotes for items $10,000 and over or quotes obtained more than 24 months before application deadline. Note - Quotes for all costs are encouraged.
* Large stream only: Budget items and amounts in the application form and Total Event Budget document do not match.

**An example of a clear budget:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Description | Total Amount | MFE funding used |
| Catering | Free catering for all $20 p/p x 100 attendees | $2,000 | $1,000 |
| Promotion | Via paid ads on Facebook ($2,500) and design cost and printing of flyers ($2,500) | $5,000 | $3,000 – quote included |
| Temporary Staffing | Short-term staffing x 2 event co-ordinators commencing Jun – Aug before event ($4,000 each) | $8,000 | $5,000 |
| Stage hire | Stage, stands for 4-day event including pack down – all hired | $12,000 | $10,000 – quote included |
| Costume hire | 5 sets of hired costumes ($1,600 each) | $8,000 | $8,000 |
| Total |  | $50,000 | $35,000 |

**An example of a weak budget:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Total Amount | MFE funding used |
| Catering | $200 | $200 |
| Equipment, costume and lighting | $10,000 | $10,000 (missing quote and breakdown) |
| Public liability insurance | $2,000 | $2,000 |
| Raffles | $8,000 | $4,000 |
| Total | $16,200 | $16,200 |

**Suggestions for improvement:**

* provide a quote or breakdown for items $10,000 and over.
* exclude any unsupported expenses (e.g. public liability insurance).
* provide clear description of expenses (for example is ‘equipment, costume and lighting’ a purchased or hired expense? And explain what raffles are for).
* ensure you have a breakdown when bundling multiple items in one line (e.g. $5,000 for equipment and lighting and $5,000 for costume).

### Document: Total Event Budget (template available on our website)

This is a mandatory requirement for all large stream applications.

The first section of this template is for your overall event budget, you will need to indicate how much income you have to deliver the event, including your matched funding contributions (through cash and/or in-kind sources), and the total planned expenditure for the event.

Common issues include:

* No reference to income sources to deliver the event (this includes your matched funding contributions through cash and/or in-kind sources).
* Expenditure allocated to MFE funding does not match with budget items in your application form.
* Expenditure item provides lack of descriptive information or breakdown of budget items $10,000 and over.
* Budget includes unsupported expenses.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay our respect to them, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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