



## **Frequently Asked Questions – FAQs**

## **Our Suburbs: Local Living Fund – Living Local – Suburban Grants Program**

**Updated 27 July 2022**

## 1. FAQs - Living Local – Suburban Grants Program

### What is the Living Local Fund?

As part of the Victorian Budget 2022/23, the Victorian Government has established the Living Local Fund through an investment of \$15 million.

The Our Suburbs: Living Local Fund will support Metropolitan Melbourne's suburbs to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and thrive. It will drive economic and social recovery in the suburbs hardest hit by the pandemic and provide funding for local community-building projects that promote social connections, enhance liveability, and revitalise suburban shopping strips.

The Our Suburbs: Living Local Fund will also provide grants to community not-for-profit organisations to help them support local communities.

The Living Local Fund comprises two streams:

- **Stream 1** – Living Local – Suburban Grants Program (\$12.5 million)
- **Stream 2** – Living Local – Community Grants Program (\$2.5 million).

### What is the Living Local – Suburban Grants Program?

The Program has been established in recognition of increased local living as more people work from home, which has created additional challenges and opportunities for Melbourne's suburbs.

Specifically, this shift creates a significant opportunity to support suburban economic growth and enhanced community connections in our suburbs.

The Program will support a range of projects including playgrounds, splash pads, outdoor gyms, community gardens, community hall upgrades, amphitheatres, paths, lighting and public art projects.

### When do applications open and close for the Suburban Grants Program?

Applications open on 11 July 2022 and close at 11.59pm on 14 August 2022. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applicants are encouraged to apply early to assist in the timely assessment of applications.



## How much funding can I apply for?

Applicants may apply from \$20,000 up to a maximum of \$200,000 (exclusive of GST).

Funding for this program will be awarded on a competitive basis.

## Can I apply for funds for project management and/or evaluation?

Yes.

Applicants can apply for up to five per cent of the total grant to be used for project management support and project evaluation costs. For example, if you apply for a grant of \$100,000 (exclusive of GST) you can seek that 5 per cent of the grant (\$5,000 exclusive of GST) be used for project management and project evaluation costs.

## What sort of financial commitment is required from applicants?

Incorporated (not-for-profit) organisations/associations will be required to contribute at least 15 per cent of the grant being sought (cash and in-kind). Total contributions may consist of up to 25 per cent of in-kind.

Local governments will be required to make a minimum matching (\$1:\$1) contribution (cash and in-kind) of the grant being sought. Total contributions may consist of up to 25 per cent of in-kind contributions.

## How many applications can I submit under the program?

There are no restrictions on the number of applications you can submit.

With limited funding available, grants will be allocated on a competitive basis.

## Can I also apply for a Living Local - Community Grant?

Incorporated (not-for profit) organisations/associations that are operating in Metropolitan Melbourne, including in the City of Melbourne, can also apply for a Living Local - Community Grant. Please refer to the Local Community Grants Program Guidelines -

Community Grants – Accessible Word and PDF versions

- [Community Grants Program - Guidelines - Accessible Word version](#)
- [Community Grants Program - Guidelines - PDF version](#)

Local Governments are ineligible to apply for a Living Local – Community Grant other than as an auspice agency for an un-incorporated community organisation.

## 2. FAQs - Eligibility

### Who is eligible for a Suburban Grant?

The Suburban Grant Program is open to applications from:

- Local governments in Metropolitan Melbourne (excluding the City of Melbourne<sup>1</sup>)
- Incorporated (not-for-profit) organisations/associations that are operating in Metropolitan Melbourne, including in the City of Melbourne.

If an applicant organisation operates as a not-for-profit organisation and does not hold a current ABN and/or fall within the above description it may apply through a legally constituted organisation with a current ABN to manage the funds as an auspice organisation.

### Why is the City of Melbourne not eligible to apply?

The Victorian Government is already providing an investment of \$100 million to the City of Melbourne through the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund.

### Do I need to provide evidence that my project location is in an area most impacted by COVID-19?

You need to list the postcode/s in which your project will be located in your application.

The Department has data on the locations most impacted by COVID-19 by postcode, which it will use to assess this part of your application.

### What if I don't know who owns the land that my proposed project is on?

You will need to contact your local council to find out who owns the land or do a search on LANDATA. A title search through LANDATA shows the information held in the Victorian Register of land at the time the search is made.

Refer applicants to this website - <https://www.landata.vic.gov.au/>

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<sup>1</sup> The Victorian Government is providing an investment of \$100 million to the City of Melbourne through the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund



## **How do I demonstrate the consent of the landowner where the land is not owned or managed by our organisation?**

You can demonstrate the consent of the landowner by including a signed letter of consent from the landowner with your application. This is mandatory.

Applications submitted without demonstrating the consent of the landowner will be assessed as ineligible and will not be considered.

## **Can I apply for a Suburban Grant if my project is in suburbs that have a Suburban Revitalisation Board (Boronia, Lilydale, Reservoir, Melton, Broadmeadows, Tarneit, Frankston or Noble Park)?**

The Victorian Government is heavily invested in Suburban Revitalisation Boards in these suburbs.

Local Governments and incorporated organisations/associations located in suburbs (Boronia, Lilydale, Reservoir, Melton, Broadmeadows, Tarneit, Frankston or Noble Park) where Revitalisation Boards operate are eligible to apply for a Suburban Grant.

They can do this by contacting the Office for Suburban Development at [surburban.revitalisation@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:surburban.revitalisation@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

During the assessment process, if an application is deemed best funded through the relevant Suburban Revitalisation Board, the Department will recommend applicants apply for funding through the relevant Board.

For more information on the Suburban Revitalisation Program visit [www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation](http://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation)

## **Am I required to be registered for GST?**

A not-for-profit organisation must be registered for GST if it has a turnover of \$150,000 per year or more.<sup>2</sup>

If you aren't required to be registered for GST, you are still eligible to apply for a grant.

Applicants should note that all project costs included in the application must be exclusive of GST.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/Registering-for-GST/#:~:text=You%20must%20register%20for%20GST,the%20first%20year%20of%20operation>

### 3. FAQs - Application Process

#### How to apply?

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Business Victoria Hotline on 13 22 15 or email [livinglocalfund@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:livinglocalfund@ecodev.vic.gov.au) to discuss their idea and seek advice.

To apply, please submit an online application via the 'Apply now' button on the program webpage. Completing the application process in a Google Chrome web browser is recommended.

Before applying, please ensure that:

- you have read and understood the information on the application web page, including the program guidelines -

Suburban Grants – Accessible Word and PDF versions

- [Suburban Grants Program - Guidelines - Accessible Word version](#)
- [Suburban Grants Program - Guidelines - PDF version](#)
- you have all the required documentation on hand.
  - If required, a letter of consent from the landowner including the land, asset or spaces is/are readily accessible and available for works
  - If required, where requesting grant funding of \$50,000 or more, audited financial reports for the last three financial year and interim accounts ( Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheets) for the current financial year. (Local, State, Commonwealth Governments, Universities and Government Authorities or entities are exempt from this requirement)
  - An initial project plan outlining the approach you will take to your project including stakeholder and risk management
  - If relevant, a letter providing evidence of additional funding sources
  - Letter/s of support from other organisations named in the application clearly defining their involvement in the project and anticipated benefit from the project
  - Cost estimates/quotes if available
  - Photo/s of the sites if applicable
  - Any other supporting documentation if relevant

All questions on the application form must be completed and any requested documentation attached to ensure timely assessment.

All applications are to be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 14 August 2022.

## How are applications assessed?

All applications will be assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria and their ability to meet the program objectives, with priority given to projects in locations most impacted by COVID-19.

Projects that progress relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, local government, community organisations and communities will be considered favourably.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome by email and successful applicants will receive a letter of offer.

Applicants may be contacted to provide additional supporting documentation and confirm the performance targets and milestones.

There is no guarantee that an application will be supported for funding, or that the amount of funding requested will be offered. Approval of a lesser amount than applied for may occur if part of the expenditure is deemed ineligible.

## What criteria will my application be assessed against?

For the full assessment criteria, please refer to the Suburban Grants program guidelines – Suburban Grants – Accessible Word and PDF versions

- [Suburban Grants Program - Guidelines - Accessible Word version](#)
- [Suburban Grants Program - Guidelines - PDF version](#)

## What is the status of my application?

The status of your application will appear in the [Business Victoria Grants Portal](#) as one of the following:

- Draft – you have started an application
- Submitted – you have accepted the terms and conditions and submitted your application
- Under assessment – your application has been received and is being assessed by the Business Victoria team
- Successful – your application was successful
- Unsuccessful – your application was unsuccessful.

Please note, we cannot assess your application while it remains in 'draft'.

## **When will I be notified of an outcome?**

Applicants should expect to learn the outcome of their application within approximately eight (8) weeks from the closing date for grant applications on 14 August 2022.

## **My application was unsuccessful. Can I appeal this?**

There is no right of appeal for unsuccessful applications.

## **Will I have to sign a contract to receive the grant funding?**

Yes. Successful applicants will be sent a letter of offer inviting them to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Department. The grant agreement details all funding obligations and conditions.

Applicants will have 30 calendar days from the date of the letter of offer to accept the offer in writing and 60 calendar days from the date of acceptance to execute the grant agreement with the Department. The offer may be withdrawn if the grant agreement is not executed within the 60-day timeframe.

## **How quickly will I have to start the project?**

As part of the application process, you will need to specify the anticipated start date of the project.

## **When will my project need to be completed by?**

Successful applicants will need to deliver the project activities before 30 June 2024. All funds will need to be expended by 1 June 2024. Completion of the project within this timeframe will be a legally binding commitment in the grant agreement.

Project acquittal must not extend beyond June 2024.

## Will I be required to report on the progress of my project?

Yes. All recipients of grant funds must agree under the grant agreement to:

- report on the outcomes of the project
- complete a project final report and statutory declaration of expenditure incurred on the project (before the final milestone payment is paid)
- attend face-to-face meetings (as requested)
- participate in a formal evaluation of the program by the Department or its agents (as requested)

If your project is delayed in any way, you need to notify the Department immediately.

## Will I be required to provide an audited financial report at the end of my project?

Recipients of grant funds will be required to provide a financial report at the end of their project signed by their Chief Financial Officer (Local Government) or equivalent in incorporated (not-for-profit) organisations/associations. The financial report does not need an audit opinion.

## 4. FAQs - Eligible Project Proposals

### How much are the grant payments?

A minimum of \$20,000 up to a maximum of \$200,000 (exclusive of GST) will be granted to successful applicants.

### When and how will the grant be paid?

Payment for successful applications will be staggered at key milestones throughout the project to ensure that they are progressing in line with the grant agreement.

## I am an Incorporated Organisation/Association. What are examples of eligible projects I could propose?

For the full list of eligible projects and activities, please refer to the Suburban Grants program guidelines:

Suburban Grants – Accessible Word and PDF versions

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The eligible projects and activities as listed in the program guidelines are as follows:

- upgrades to community managed halls/Mechanics Institute facilities including kitchens, bathrooms, toilets and hand washing facilities
- enhancements to the accessibility and amenities of community managed open and accessible public spaces, including lighting and paths
- development or improvement of community managed public art projects and creative spaces development or improvement of community gathering spaces such as community gardens, amphitheatres or BBQs
- improvements to open and accessible community managed parks including playgrounds

## I am a local government in Metropolitan Melbourne (excluding the City of Melbourne). What are examples of eligible projects I could propose?

For the full list of eligible projects and activities, please refer to the Suburban Grants program guidelines –

Suburban Grants – Accessible Word and PDF versions

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The eligible projects and activities as listed in the program guidelines are as follows:

### Local Governments

- upgrades to community halls/Mechanics Institute facilities including kitchens, bathrooms, toilets and hand washing facilities

- enhancements to the accessibility and amenities of open and accessible public spaces, including lighting and paths
- development or improvement of public art projects and creative spaces development or improvement of community gathering spaces such as community gardens, amphitheatres, or BBQs
- improvements to open and accessible parks including playgrounds
- streetscape improvements, such as the installation of outdoor furniture, greenery and drinking fountains in shopping strips and activity centres
- enhancements to safety, accessibility and connections into and within shopping strips and activity centres to enable access for all including accessible paths and lighting
- activations as a part a project to encourage visitation to shopping strips and activity centres
- improvements to public parks and other open spaces
- landscaping and beautification works of shopping strips and activity centres
- public art installations and 'creative spaces' in suburban neighbourhoods, shopping strips and activity centres
- pilot initiatives that seek to achieve long-term improvements aligned with any of the above initiatives, and/or that may be replicated in other suburban shopping strips and activity centres.

### **Related Activities**

Applicants can apply for funds associated with the projects above as follows:

- Applicants can apply for up to 10 per cent of the total project grant to be used for community capacity building activations.
- Applicants can apply for up to 10 per cent of the total project grant to be used on educating local communities about the Aboriginal and cultural significance of the area/project site
- Applicants can apply for up to five per cent of the total grant to be used for project management support and project evaluation costs.

## How can I use the grant funds?

Funding received through the Suburban Grants Program can be used for the following:

- Eligible project expenditure includes the following activities relating to the proposed project:
  - Purchase and commission capital equipment (recorded as fixed assets in the applicant's accounts) and associated project expenditure
  - other project-related non-capitalised expenditure (e.g. related to consultation, design, and evaluation)
  - building alterations and fit-out costs
  - labour and contractors (but does not include internal salaries).

Eligible project expenditure must be:

- incurred by the grant recipient after the execution date of the grant agreement;
- a direct cost of the project; and
- exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

## What do you mean about working with Traditional Owners?

Applicants should contact local Traditional Owner groups to seek input into their applications, particularly when they propose to include works acknowledging the local traditional owners.

## Can I receive funding for activations and promotions?

Yes, activations as part of a project to encourage visitation to shopping strips and activity centres would be supported. Applicants can apply for up to 10 per cent of the total project grant to be used for community capacity building activations.

## What do you mean by activations relating to an infrastructure project?

Events and activities to encourage people to use the upgraded community facilities and spaces. These could include smoking ceremonies, welcomes to country, music, street markets and activities for all ages.

## Are shopfront upgrades eligible for funding?

No. Funding cannot be used for shopfront upgrades.

## Can I receive funding for a pop-up or temporary project?

Funding received through the Living Local – Suburban Grants Program can only be used for:

- permanent works in suburban shopping strips and activity centres
- permanent works in projects proposed by community (not-for profit) organisations/associations.

If you are a local government, you can include pilot initiatives that seek to achieve long-term improvements as part of your application. Pilot initiatives must align with one or more of the eligible projects and activities listed in the Suburban Grants guidelines and/or that may be replicated in other suburban shopping strips and activity centres.

## When do I need to expend the funds?

All funds must be expended prior to 1 June 2024.

## Can I apply for funding for works undertaken prior to the program launch date?

No. Funding will not be provided for retrospective activities, for example, where project expenditure is incurred prior to receipt and acceptance of a letter of offer.

Applicants that commence their projects prior to execution of a grant agreement do so at their own risk, and the offer of the grant may be withdrawn.