

Regional Worker Accommodation Fund

Round 2 – Fund Guidelines



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria, their ongoing connection to this land and we pay our respects to their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to launch the Victorian Government's Regional Worker Accommodation Fund Round 2, to support investment in key worker housing and accommodation across Victoria's rural and regional areas.

A key objective of the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund is to invest in housing, accommodation and related infrastructure that increases the supply of appropriate and affordable housing and accommodation for regional workers and their families. This will support job security, economic growth, and improved access to services across rural and regional Victoria.

The Regional Worker Accommodation Fund complements other regional initiatives which seek to increase liveability, opportunity, and prosperity across the state. The \$2 billion Regional Benefits Package also includes:

- investment in additional social and affordable housing
- investment in regional community and all abilities sport
- investment in regional tourism, marketing, and events
- support for Aboriginal economic development
- support for regional councils and tiny towns.

I very much look forward to seeing the delivery of regional worker accommodation where it is needed most across our state.



**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Regional Development**

1. Fund overview

1.1. About the Fund

The Victorian Government has established the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund and committed the first investment of \$75 million in its first round.

The Regional Worker Accommodation Fund (the Fund) will provide new housing and accommodation for regional communities where key workers and their families are struggling to find places to live. The Fund will support employers to attract and retain workers by enabling delivery of appropriate and affordable accommodation options. This will stimulate economic growth and support essential services to drive better opportunity, liveability and prosperity for those communities.

The Fund will support the delivery of infrastructure, housing, and accommodation across all Victorian rural and regional Local Government Areas.

Applicants may apply for a minimum grant of \$150,000 and up to a maximum grant of \$5,000,000 (exclusive of GST) per project.

The Fund will be delivered as a rounds-based program by Regional Development Victoria, part of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (the department). Applications for Round 2 open on Monday 18 November 2024 at 10.00am and close on **Friday 31 January 2025 at 4.00pm**.

The outcomes in relation to locations, sectors and regions supported during Round 1 of the Fund will be factored into the decision-making for Round 2 to ensure a fair distribution of funds, sectors and project locations across Victoria.

1.2. Fund objectives

The Regional Worker Accommodation Fund aims to increase prosperity, opportunity and liveability for regional communities. The Fund will invest in housing, accommodation and related infrastructure that increase the supply of appropriate and affordable housing and accommodation for key workers and their families.

1.3. Fund outcomes

The desired outcomes for the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund are:

- a net increase in appropriate and affordable regional housing and accommodation for key workers and their families
- regional businesses and services are better able to meet their immediate and future staffing needs
- regional communities have improved access to services through attraction and retention of workers in sectors critical to the prosperity of their location
- a thriving, healthy and sustainable workforce, through the provision of safe, well-designed and environmentally sustainable projects that are integrated with their community and enhance local amenity.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Fund:

Affordable – The cost to the key worker and their family does not prevent them from accessing the accommodation over the medium to long term (minimum of 5 years following project completion) and is below the local market rental rate.

Annual period of demand – Timeframe within a calendar year that key workers are required.

Appropriate – Accommodation that is safe, fit-for-purpose and suitable for the needs of workers and their families, as well as employers.

Employer led – A project where the targeted key workers for the accommodation are employees of the applicant and the employer is the lead applicant to the Fund.

Developer led – A project where a property developer is the lead applicant to the Fund and seeks to build accommodation to house the key workers of employers in industry sectors with a demonstrated, localised demand for key worker housing.

In-kind contribution – A contribution of a good or a service other than cash, for example, donated services such as professional advice from an architect.

Key workers – Private and public sector regional workers essential to local prosperity, opportunity and liveability, where their role requires a physical presence in that location to perform the work. This can include seasonal workers.

New housing options – A net gain or increase in housing or accommodation that is suitable for the needs of the key workers and their families.

3. Grant funding

Applicants may apply for **a minimum of \$150,000 and up to a maximum of \$5,000,000** in grant funding per project (exclusive of GST).

The Fund is a negotiated, contestable grant program. The Victorian Government is seeking to fund opportunities that can produce the best outcomes for the people of Victoria.

3.1. Co-contributions

All applicants are encouraged to make a cash co-contribution towards the total project budget of eligible activities and expenses for key worker housing. See [Section 5](#) for eligible activities and expenses.

The co-contribution may come from the applicant organisation, project partners or other sources, but must not be from other Victorian Government grants or funded programs.

In-kind contributions, such as the land proposed for the project's location, are not eligible co-contributions.

Projects with higher co-contributions are highly preferred and will be prioritised.

Private sector applicants must confirm their maximum level of contribution towards eligible activities and expenses.

Applicants must provide evidence that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the department, that the applicant has sufficient funds available for the stated co-contribution amount, if applicable. See [Section 7](#) for evidence requirements.

4. Applicant eligibility

This Fund is open to applications from private and public sector entities that operate in Victoria. See [Section 4.2](#) for eligible organisations.

Eligible applicants can submit projects that are either employer led, developer led, or submitted by a consortium of multiple employers and/or developers. Applications submitted by a consortium must have an eligible lead organisation as applicant. Applications submitted by consortia must disclose all partners/collaborators and clearly identify the targeted key workers and industry sector that will use the accommodation.

The Victorian Government will only support worker accommodation projects that comply with all relevant codes, support accessibility, and meet health and safety standards. To achieve this, the government will only work with employers, developers and operators who have a proven track record in developing high standard and compliant buildings, as well as meeting best practice in tenancy management. In participating in the application process, all applicants must agree to relevant due diligence and checks, including in relation to their previous track record in delivering construction and/or related infrastructure projects.

4.1. Eligible applicants

Applicant organisations must:

- hold an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST)
- be an eligible entity type as listed at [Section 4.2](#)
- operate an existing business or service in Victoria.

4.2. Eligible entity types

Eligible applicants include:

- private sector organisations incorporated and registered with one of the following bodies¹:
 - Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)
 - Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) or
 - Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)
- TAFE institutions and universities
- pre-school, primary and secondary schools
- hospitals or health care providers
- incorporated joint ventures
- public/private partnerships, through an incorporated entity
- a Victorian state government department, agency or service provider
- a Victorian local government authority located within the 48 municipalities in regional Victoria
- a Victorian Alpine Resort²
- a consortium of 2 or more of the above entity types (with an eligible lead organisation as applicant)
- other organisations agreed by Regional Development Victoria at its discretion.

4.3. Ineligible applicants

The following are not eligible to apply:

- unincorporated organisations
- a Commonwealth government agency or body
- an individual³
- a sole trader.

1. Such organisations can apply on behalf of a Trust, provided the Trustee:

- remains sufficiently liable for the performance of any agreement it signs
- has a right to be indemnified from the assets of the Trust
- is indemnified from the assets of the Trust
- eligible incorporated trustees exclude self-managed super funds.

2. Six alpine resorts are legally incorporated under the *Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997* and managed by [Alpine Resorts Victoria](#).

3. Includes individuals acting on behalf of a trust.

5. Eligible projects

To be eligible for funding, the project must be located in one of the 48 rural and regional Victorian local government areas, or 6 alpine resorts (refer to [Appendix 1](#) for full list).

Applications to fund cross-border projects which will benefit Victorian communities may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The specific type of accommodation can vary, but it must be safe, suitable, and affordable for the occupants.

Applicants will be asked to describe a proposed project that delivers a net increase of housing and accommodation for key workers, where there is a demonstrated and evidenced need in that location.

Projects may also service more than one employer or sector of key workers and their families in a particular location, i.e. the project will house the applicant's key workers and their families but may also provide accommodation for key workers of other employers.

6. What will be funded

Funding will be provided for housing, accommodation and related infrastructure that increases the supply of appropriate and affordable housing and accommodation for key workers and their families, to support job security, economic growth and improved access to services across rural and regional Victoria.

Applicants will be asked to describe a proposed project that delivers a net increase of housing and accommodation for key workers, where there is a demonstrated and evidenced need in that location.

Projects must:

- provide housing or accommodation for key workers and their families in regional locations
- deliver a net gain or increase in appropriate housing or accommodation for key workers and their families
- provide affordable housing or accommodation for key workers and their families for a minimum of 5 years following construction
- provide housing or accommodation that will be available for key workers and their families at least 70% of the time throughout the annual period of demand for key workers.

For the remaining time, the accommodation may be used for other commercial purposes. For example, if an employer requires key workers for a full calendar year, their annual period of demand is 52 weeks. Therefore, the key worker accommodation must be available for at least 36.4 weeks

- show a direct benefit to the location and its community through alignment with the Fund objectives ([Section 1.2](#)) and outcomes ([Section 1.3](#))
- identify, for larger or multi-use developments, the portion of the development that is allocated for key worker housing, along with its corresponding budget.

Projects should also show alignment with current and relevant government (local, regional, state or federal) economic and placed-based plans or strategies.

Note, all applications received for Round 2 will be assessed against a prioritisation framework (see [Section 9.1](#)).

6.1. Eligible activities and expenses

The grant amount and co-contribution may be spent on eligible activities and expenditure as listed below.

The department makes the final decision on what is an eligible activity or expenditure under the Fund.

Eligible activities and expenditure include:

- new key worker housing and accommodation design, site, construction, building, fit out and furnishing costs
 - enabling infrastructure design and construction costs, but only to the extent the infrastructure enables delivery of key worker accommodation, e.g. utilities and services such as drainage, roads, electricity and/or telecommunications infrastructure
 - upgrading, redeveloping, or expanding existing buildings where the project will provide a net gain of worker accommodation (e.g. renewal or repurposing of existing sites, including office spaces, hotels and motels)
 - consultant fees and professional services required for the delivery of the funded project.
- projects that require land to be rezoned for the proposed development or use
 - strategic planning activities or services, such as planning scheme amendments, growth area plans, precinct structure plans
 - demand or feasibility studies, business cases or masterplans
 - upgrade, redevelopment or expansion of existing buildings where no additional key worker accommodation is being provided
 - community, social or public housing and accommodation
 - student housing and accommodation
 - general business operating costs and administrative running costs, such as:
 - costs related to lease, rent and utilities
 - costs involved in the purchase or upgrade /hire of software and ICT hardware
 - capital expenses such as purchase of assets for everyday business activities
 - marketing, advertising or promotion costs
 - staff wages, salaries, training or development costs
 - skills, education or training expenses
 - GST.

6.2. Ineligible activities and expenses

Grant project funding may not be spent on:

- projects that do not meet the objectives and outcomes of the Fund
- requests for retrospective funding where projects have been completed or have commenced construction prior to receiving funding approval
- activities that are already funded or partially funded by other Victorian Government grants or funding agreements
- projects located in metropolitan areas or outside Victoria⁴
- worker housing or accommodation that is not for key workers and their families as defined under [Section 2](#)
- projects that duplicate other existing government housing initiatives
- operational, maintenance or renewal costs for the project once complete
- purchase of land

6.3. Costings of expenses and GST

The cost of the GST **must be excluded** from the proposed budget. This means if project expenses are costed at \$1,100,000 including \$100,000 GST, then the cost must reflect the amount exclusive of GST and be stated as \$1,000,000.

6.4. Project timeline

Projects must be completed by **30 June 2026**.

Applicants will be required to supply project start and end dates and proposed key deliverables as part of their application.

4. Applications to fund cross-border projects that benefit Victorian communities may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. Key dates for Round 2

Applications open:	Monday 18 November 2024, 10.00 am
Applications close:	Friday 31 January 2025, 4.00 pm
Application assessments:	February – April 2025
Announcements from:	May 2025
Project completion:	30 June 2026

8. Applications

Potential applicants are encouraged to carefully consider their ability to meet the program requirements and how they will perform against the assessment criteria before committing significant resources to developing an application.

Note, all applications received for Round 2 will be assessed against a prioritisation framework (see [Section 9.1](#)).

8.1. Preparing an application

Prior to submitting an application, applicants must:

- read these Program Guidelines (and 'Frequently Asked Questions' for the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund) to establish alignment of their project to the objectives of the program.
- discuss the proposed project with your local RDV Business Centre (see contact details at [Appendix 2](#)). The department will provide applicants with feedback on the project's alignment with the broad eligibility criteria of the program, prior to being provided with an emailed link to the application form. The content of and any discussions the applicant may have with a representative of the department are for the purposes of information only and do not constitute advice. It is up to potential applicants to decide whether to apply.
- read the terms and conditions for the funding offered.

Applicants should undertake the following steps to apply:

- compile necessary supporting documents to apply as detailed in the 'Documentation and information requirements' below
- submit an application via the emailed link to the application form
- ensure you receive an email confirmation of application submission by checking your nominated email account and check spam/junk mail if the confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox
- provide additional information to support your application if requested to do so by the department

Before applying for funding, applicants should seek advice from their legal, business or financial advisers to determine their eligibility and any implications to their organisation resulting from the terms and conditions of the funding if the application is successful.

Any costs or risks associated with an application are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

The department makes no representation that a grant of funds will be made to any applicant and reserves the right to amend, suspend or withdraw the program.

8.2. Documentation and information requirements

Please note:

- applicants should supply supporting documents specific to the project
- information provided should be concise, relevant and directly support the proposal
- supporting material provided through links to non-public websites or platforms where materials can be edited after submission will not be assessed (e.g. documents submitted by DropBox or Google Drive).
- there may be size restrictions on what can be attached to the application.

If required, the department may contact the applicant to obtain further information.

8.3. Documentation and information for the application

Applicants will be asked to provide supporting documents with the application.

Document Type	Description	Requirement
Project Implementation Plan	<p>The Project Implementation Plan⁵ is expected to contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a timeline for the project that includes key milestones for delivery and operation • a description of the proposed project outlining the number of key worker beds, family member beds and total number of bedrooms that will be created • a description of how the project meets the objectives and outcomes of the program • evidence of the need and suitability for the type, quantity and location of the proposed project. Evidence could include letters of support from employers, data, reports and strategies • evidence that the project is ready for implementation and that there are no significant barriers preventing its delivery and use for key worker accommodation. Evidence could include plans, permits and letters of support from the local government authority • evidence that the applicant is reputable, with a proven track record in developing and operating high standard and compliant buildings, accommodation and related infrastructure, or evidence that the applicant has engaged with reputable and capable delivery partners for the building and operation of the project • a description of any measures or elements to address environmentally sustainable design, universal design or improved accessibility beyond minimum code requirements • an outline of proposed approaches to social procurement • appropriate governance for the proposed project and details of the ongoing operational model, demonstrating affordability for key workers and their families • a risk management plan • a community and stakeholder engagement plan • masterplan/s, schematic/concept designs, plans and drawings. 	Mandatory

5. Applicants may choose to use the RWAFF Project Implementation Plan template provided by the department.

Document Type	Description	Requirement
Evidence of main budget and operational costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An itemised and detailed budget breakdown for the project including dates, activities, and outputs for the project implementation and minimum 5-year operation post-completion. Verified cost estimates from a quantity surveyor or similarly qualified source for the project delivery phase. Business or feasibility planning documents including a budgeted operating model for the minimum 5-year operational phase post-completion. Business plans shall clearly describe the proposed tenancy arrangements and include anticipated tariffs for validation against market rates. <p>See Section 6.3 for note on GST.</p>	Mandatory
Evidence of co-contribution funds	<p>Details of the funding structure and evidence confirming all funding sources, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> written confirmation from the applicant organisation's board or authorised representative that the organisation can undertake the project and meet the required co-contribution amount and/or, a bank statement showing sufficient cash in the organisation's bank account to cover the co-contribution and/or, written confirmation from another organisation confirming its contribution towards the project, including approval of any lending. 	If applicable
Letters of intent and/or support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters of intent or other evidence of commitments from employer/s that they will utilise the key worker accommodation once completed for a minimum period of 5 years for 70% of the time across an annual period of demand, and that the accommodation is affordable and appropriate for their key workers and their families. Other evidence or letters of support for the project where relevant, for example from relevant community or stakeholder organisations, regional bodies, local councils, local businesses or associations and Traditional Owner organisations. 	Mandatory
Approvals and permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of land ownership or tenure, or consent from the relevant authority or landowner if the organisation does not own the land or facility for the project. Evidence of an approved planning permit or confirmation that the project does not require a permit. Alternatively, evidence that a planning permit application has been submitted to the relevant authority or that pre-planning meetings have occurred that indicate a permit could be achieved within a timeframe that enables the project to be delivered by 30 June 2026. Evidence that all other necessary approvals and permits for the project's construction and use have been obtained or that the approval process is underway. This includes any permits already issued or proof of processes that have started. This may include, but is not limited to, Heritage Victoria Permit, Cultural Heritage Management Plan/s, Vegetation Assessments, Environmental Management Plans, and Building Permits. If such plans are not required, evidence should be provided to support this. 	Mandatory

Document Type	Description	Requirement
Financial Information	<p>Applicants* must provide evidence which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the department, that the applicant is financially viable and what the expected revenue from the project will be.</p> <p>Note: If the applicant is a special purpose vehicle (i.e. a separate legal entity created to manage projects), the applicant will need to provide parent company financial statements, ownership structure details and other particulars. The parent company needs to be an organisation which has been established for a minimum of 3 years and can financially secure the grant applicant.</p> <p>All applicants will need to provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a written summary of the organisation/a background on the business • audited or account-prepared financial reports for the last 3 financial years. These should be the 'final accounts' with directors' report and declaration as well as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - profit and loss statement - balance sheet - cash flow statement - notes to the accounts (if applicable) <p>Note: We do not accept comparative figures within another Final Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the audited or account-prepared financials for the most recent reporting period is more than 6 months, the following are required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - profit and loss statement and balance sheet - in case of public listed corporations, half-yearly financial report • parent company financial statements (if applicable) • ownership structure (corporate tree) • current business plan or project proposal • evidence of funding gap – either via a bank statement(s) showing evidence of cash in the account or evidence of bank lending approval • account-prepared or verified financial projections for the next 3 financial years, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - profit and loss statement - cash flow. <p>All information provided will be subject to a financial risk assessment process.</p> <p>* Not required for Local Government Authorities, Alpine Resort Management Boards, State Government Departments and statutory agencies, and publicly funded universities and educational institutions.</p>	Mandatory

9. Assessment

Applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria ([Section 8.1](#), table 1). Financial risk assessments may also be undertaken at this stage.

Applications will be assessed in the following way:

- eligibility, project and commercial due diligence checks, including financial risk assessments where required
- criteria assessment undertaken by Victorian Government staff. Considerations will include project assessment scoring, due diligence assessments and advice from relevant Victorian Government departments and agencies (on regional area, industry or sector, or area of professional knowledge).
- via an oversight committee, with representatives from the department and other Victorian Government departments and agencies to provide advice and make recommendations regarding eligible projects for funding to the Minister for Regional Development or their delegate.

A lesser amount of funding than applied for may be offered, e.g. if part of the expenditure is deemed ineligible or not aligned to program objectives.

The relevant minister or their delegate will make a final decision on projects and funding amounts at their absolute discretion. This decision is final.

9.1. Assessment prioritisation framework

For Round 2, the following prioritisation framework will be applied to all applications received.

Incomplete applications or applications providing inadequate information may not be progressed to a full assessment.

Priority for assessment purposes will be given to applications:

- that can demonstrate a planning permit has either been obtained or formally applied for or is exempt.

In addition to meeting the above, priority will also be given to applications that can demonstrate at least **ONE** of the following:

- it is a larger scale construction project that delivers a greater number of bedrooms and/or number of beds for key workers and their families; **or**
- it is a private sector project in an industry sector with a known, localised demand for key worker housing; **or**
- it can provide a significant co-contribution ideally of at least two-thirds of the project cost (i.e. the grant value requested is no more than one third of the total project budget of eligible activities and expenses, exclusive of GST).

Please note: The outcomes of Round 1 in relation to locations and regions supported will also be considered in the assessment of Round 2 projects to provide a fair geographic distribution of funding across Victoria.

9.2. Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed on how well they meet the eligibility criteria as outlined below.

Application Criteria	Considerations	Weighting
Applicant eligibility	The applicant is an eligible entity	Mandatory
Project eligibility	The project is an eligible activity and expense as per Section 6.1	Mandatory
Location eligibility	The project is located in one of the 48 eligible local government authorities or 6 Alpine Resorts ⁶	Mandatory

6. Applications to fund cross-border projects which will benefit Victorian communities may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Application Criteria	Considerations	Weighting
Project need	<p>How well the project proposal addresses the key worker housing or accommodation shortage in the proposed location, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding the housing or accommodation shortage that is restricting job creation and/or economic growth or the provision of services to the community • details the key workers and the primary and secondary industries or sectors that the project will support • identifies, responds to and addresses a current or future need for accommodation in the project location • demonstrates demand from the applicant and other employers for the accommodation through evidence such as confirmation of support or other commitments to the project • shows appropriate consultation has been undertaken in developing the project, including with key stakeholders and project partners, other funding bodies, sponsors, other government departments and agencies, regional bodies and the community. • evidence for the demand through reference to data and reports and alignment with current and relevant government (local, regional, state or federal) economic and placed-based plans or strategies. 	25%
Project alignment	<p>How well the project aligns with the Fund outcomes as listed in Section 1.3 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well the proposed housing or accommodation will meet the needs of the employers and employees and their families • the number of key worker beds, family member beds and bedrooms that will be provided, and how this will meet demand • the appropriateness of the accommodation for the identified key workers and their families (e.g. suitable typology for the worker demographic, proximity to workplace, functionality and ease of usage) • affordability for key workers and their families for at least 5 years after completion (including rent charged) • the project provides safe accommodation for key workers and their families • the project provides environmentally sustainable and climate appropriate housing or accommodation • the project demonstrates good urban design principles, is well integrated with its local community and enhances local amenity • the proposed level of availability for identified key workers (at least 70% of the time in the annual period of demand and used by key workers for at least 5 years post-completion). 	25%

Application Criteria	Considerations	Weighting
Project feasibility and readiness	<p>Whether the project is feasible and ready for delivery and occupancy at completion, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are no significant barriers preventing the commencement of the project and completion for occupancy by 30 June 2026 • required approvals are identified and are either in place, or have an appropriate and demonstrable pathway to be achieved • the project is well planned and has identified outcomes, timelines, budget and mitigation of delivery risks • community consultation or stakeholder engagement has been undertaken in the development of the project, and there are plans for engaging stakeholders through delivery • evidence the business case for project delivery, ongoing management, and operation is feasible and sound • costings for the project are reasonable, based on verified estimates and include sufficient allowance for escalation or other anticipated cost increases. 	20%
Need for government support and value for money	<p>That there is a strong argument for government support and the project represents value for money for the Victorian community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether government funding is necessary to achieve the project outcomes or will significantly improve outcomes • any support the project may have received from the Victorian Government for previous stages of this project • the potential of the project to drive or enable strong economic growth, improved liveability, opportunity and prosperity in the local area and for Victoria • any other government or philanthropic support being sought or received for this project (e.g. additional grant funding from the Australian Government) • the potential of the project to generate social value above and beyond the value of the goods, services or construction being procured through the use of social procurement measures • for private sector projects, the outcomes of the project show sufficient public benefit. 	15%
Financial readiness, viability and capability	<p>Evidence that the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is financially viable • has sufficient funds available for the proposed cash co-contribution amount for the project (including evidence of all financial partners' contributions, if relevant) • can finance the delivery and completion of the project and its operation for the required 5-year period or longer. 	10%
Organisational capability and capacity of the applicant to implement and operate the project	<p>The extent to which the applicant can demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they possess the skills, expertise, and capabilities to deliver the project within the required timeframe and operate it upon completion • previous experience in successfully delivering and managing construction and infrastructure projects • successful application of previous funding received from the Victorian Government (if applicable) • a history of legal and statutory compliance and lawful operations including demonstrable history of ethical corporate behaviour • it is working with reputable and capable partners. 	5%

9.3. Applicant checks

Applicants will be subject to due diligence assessments to enable the department to assess financial and non-financial risks associated with the application and the applicant and partners involved in the development and delivery of the project. Outcomes from such assessments may be considered in any decision to recommend or award a grant and in contracting with successful applicants. Such checks may include:

- the potential for reputational risk to the State
- where the proposal has already been fully funded by the applicant through other means
- the delivery performance of other grants contracted with the Victorian Government and whether the applicant has failed to meet key contractual obligations
- business regulator checks.

The department may, at any time, remove an application from the process, if in the department's opinion, association with the applicant may bring the department, a Minister or the State of Victoria into disrepute.

9.4. Business details check

A check may be undertaken to verify business details provided by an applicant with the Australian Business Register, Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commissioner, Consumer Affairs Victoria and/or another applicable regulator.

10. Conditions of Funding

These Guidelines contain the conditions on which respondents may apply for funding for a project under the Fund.

Successful applicants will be sent a letter inviting them to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the department on its terms and conditions.

An offer of funding is not binding on the department unless and until both the department and the applicant execute the grant agreement.

The project and any expenditure of funds associated with the project must not commence until the grant agreement has been executed (signed) by both the department and the applicant.

The grant agreement details all funding obligations and conditions such as:

- payments
- funding use
- grant activity deliverables
- monitoring and milestones
- project outcomes
- reporting and acquittals
- audit
- termination and refund conditions.

Once the grant agreement has been executed, the grant recipient (successful applicant) will be required to commence and deliver the project within the agreed timeframe. If a recipient does not commence the project by the commencement date, the department may in its absolute discretion terminate the grant agreement.

10.1. Local Jobs First (LJF)

Projects with a grant amount of \$1 million or more are required to meet the Local Jobs First Policy requirements: localjobsfirst.vic.gov.au.

10.2. Publicity/acknowledgement of support

The department may require grant recipients to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support by using the Victoria State Government logo or relevant government entity logo under the title 'supported by' on promotional materials for the grant project.

Acknowledgement of the Victorian Government's support in promotional material will depend on the grant given and will be specified in the grant agreement, e.g. required representation on channels or collateral such as websites, signage, advertisements and brochures.

The department may publicise the benefits accruing to a recipient organisation associated with the provision of the grant and the State's support for a project. The department may include the name of the recipient organisation and the amount of funding granted in any publicity material and in its annual report.

Recipients must obtain written approval from the department before making public announcements about receiving the grant. The department may promote the benefits of the grant and the State's support for the project, and recipients must cooperate with the department in promoting the Fund. These requirements will form part of the Grant Agreement with successful applicants.

10.3. Program Evaluation

As a condition of funding, grant recipients will be required to participate in evaluation activities initiated by the department. This may include completing surveys throughout the delivery of the funded project and for a nominated period after project completion to measure progress towards achieving outcomes.

Evaluation is critical to the department in understanding the impact of the Fund, supporting continuous improvement in program design and delivery, and for delivering effective outcomes for Victoria.

11. Privacy Statement

Any personal information provided in an application for this program will be collected and used by the department for the purposes of assessing applications, program administration, program review and evaluation.

The department completes a range of eligibility assessments that may include data matching to clarify the accuracy and quality of information supplied. This is part of auditing and monitoring processes and ensures eligibility across this program.

In the assessment of an application or review of the program, it may be necessary to share personal information with State and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies, as well as other external experts. If personal information about a third party is included in the application, the applicant must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.

The department collects demographic information for economic reporting purposes. No personal information is used in reporting; all reports are presented with aggregated data.

Any personal information about the applicant, its contact person, or a third party 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.

For enquiries about access or correction of personal information, contact the relevant Regional Development Victoria Office ([Appendix 2](#)). Other concerns regarding the privacy of personal information can be emailed to the department's Privacy Unit at privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The department's privacy policy can also be obtained by emailing the department's Privacy Unit.

12. Terms of Applying

12.1. Probity and decision making

The Victorian Government makes every effort to ensure the grant application and assessment process is fair and undertaken in line with the published guidelines.

The decisions on all matters on recommending and awarding of the grant funding is at the absolute discretion of the relevant minister and department. This includes recommending for approval a lesser amount than that applied for.

As a negotiated grant program, the department does not provide detailed feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

These guidelines and the application terms may be changed from time to time, as the department deems appropriate, without advance notice.

The department may request an applicant provide further information should it be necessary to assess an application against the Fund's policy objectives.

Victorian Government staff work to the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Service Employees (Section 61) of the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic), including processes set out to avoid conflicts of interest.

12.2. Complaints and feedback

Any complaints or feedback you have about this grant opportunity may be made in relation to:

- the timeliness of the process
- communication provided by the department
- adherence to the published program guidelines.

You can send your written feedback to your relevant Regional Development Victoria office ([Appendix 2](#)). The department aims to respond and resolve complaints and feedback within 28 days.

12.3. 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.

Applicants must advise the department of any real or perceived conflict of interest relating to a project for which it has applied for funding.

12.4. Information only

These guidelines and any discussions you may have with a Regional Development Victoria Office representative are for information only, and do not constitute advice.

Applicants should seek independent advice before making an application or entering into a grant agreement.

Appendix 1

The project must be located in one of the Victorian council areas or alpine resorts below.

Interface Councils are not eligible to apply for the Fund and are encouraged to investigate alternative suitable grant programs.

Regional city councils

Ballarat
Greater Bendigo
Greater Geelong
Greater Shepparton
Horsham
Latrobe
Mildura
Wangaratta
Warrnambool
Wodonga

Rural councils and alpine resorts

Alpine
Ararat
Bass Coast
Baw Baw
Benalla
Buloke
Campaspe
Central Goldfields
Colac-Otway
Corangamite
East Gippsland
Falls Creek
Gannawarra
Glenelg
Golden Plains
Hepburn
Hindmarsh
Indigo
Lake Mountain
Loddon
Macedon Ranges
Mansfield
Mitchell
Moirra
Moorabool
Mount Alexander
Moyne
Mt Baw Baw
Mt Buller
Mt Hotham
Mt Stirling
Murrindindi
Northern Grampians
Pyrenees
Queenscliff
South Gippsland
Southern Grampians
Strathbogie
Surf Coast
Swan Hill
Towong
Wellington
West Wimmera
Yarriambiack

Appendix 2

Contact details of Regional Development Victoria

Note: Some regional offices may be operating different opening hours. The preferred method of contact is via telephone or email.

Ballarat

300–304 Mair Street
Ballarat VIC 3350
1800 878 981

information.ballarat@rdv.vic.gov.au

Bendigo

Level 2, Galkangu
189–229 Lyttleton Tce
Bendigo VIC 3550
1800 950 146

information.loddonmallee@rdv.vic.gov.au

Geelong

Federal Mills
33 Mackey Street
North Geelong VIC 3215
1800 950 145

information.geelong@rdv.vic.gov.au

Horsham

110 Natimuk Road
Horsham VIC 3400
1800 878 981

information.horsham@rdv.vic.gov.au

Mildura

Cnr. Koorlong Ave and 11th Street
308–390 Koorlong Ave
Irymple VIC 3498
1800 950 146

information.loddonmallee@rdv.vic.gov.au

Morwell

Latrobe Valley GovHub
65 Church Street
Morwell VIC 3840
1800 325 217

information.gippsland@rdv.vic.gov.au

Portland

13A Richmond Street
Portland VIC 3305
03 9623 1300

information.portland@rdv.vic.gov.au

Shepparton

409–415 Wyndham Street
Shepparton VIC 3630
1800 878 963

information.hume@rdv.vic.gov.au

Wangaratta

Wangaratta Government Centre
1st Floor 62 Ovens Street
Wangaratta VIC 3677
1800 878 963

information.hume@rdv.vic.gov.au

Warrnambool

703–709 Raglan Parade
Warrnambool VIC 3280
1800 950 145

information.warrnambool@rdv.vic.gov.au

Wodonga

111–113 Hume Street
Wodonga VIC 3690
1800 878 963

information.hume@rdv.vic.gov.au

