

VICTORIAN LEGAL SERVICES BOARD GRANTS PROGRAM

2020 Grants Funding Round

GRANT GUIDELINES

Closing date: 5pm Monday 2 March 2020

The Victorian Legal Services Boards Grants Program aims to improve the administration of laws, increase access to justice, improve legal services, pilot innovative initiatives and inform and educate the wider community about legal services.

What's on offer? Successful applicants will receive tailored funding and support. Multi-year funding is possible. Funding is time limited.

Interested? Please talk to us **prior to 14 February 2020** about your proposal then complete the application form. You will need to submit your application **by 5pm Monday 2 March 2020**.

Application forms are [available to download here](#)

Applications

Selection Criteria

Applications may be submitted on a range of themes pertaining to the legal system and legal services, and your success will be based on the following:

- + Alignment with the aims of the Grants Program.
- + Your chosen project/activities should address an area of pressing need.
- + You have a strong, pre-existing relationship with the people you are seeking to work with.
- + You have undertaken user research.
- + Your organisation has a long-term commitment to your initiative.
- + You have established, relevant networks within the justice and/or community sector.
- + Your organisation is financially and operationally sustainable.

- + You have a proven track-record of successfully achieving your strategic outcomes
- + You are committed to monitoring and evaluating your work to support project success and to inform the broader dialogue regarding best practice approaches to improving access to justice.
- + Beneficiaries should be those who are currently disadvantaged in the justice system.

The following guiding principles are also encouraged:

- + **Partnerships** – Building partnerships between legal and non-legal services to address the clustering of complex social issues such as health, housing, family violence, and their intersection with the law.
- + **Early Intervention/Education** – Effective approaches to building capacity of individuals and communities to prevent negative interaction with the legal system. Undertaking preventative approaches and addressing underlying issues.
- + **Systemic Change/Advocacy** – Undertaking policy and law reform work to address systemic issues identified through evidence and case work.
- + **Human Centred Design & Technology** – We continue to seek grant applications informed by Human Centred Design principles and exploring the use of technology to increase access to justice.

Application Process



Requirements

Budget

The level of funding available for individual projects will vary depending on the nature of the initiative. Your budget should be realistic and suit the scale and complexity of the initiative being proposed.

Please note that funding is not available for activities that start before the commencement of the funding date and payment of grants are not subject to GST. This should be reflected in your budget.

The Victorian Legal Services Board has a GST private binding ruling from the ATO which confirms that payment of Grants will not be subject to GST.

Reporting and Evaluation

Evaluation needs to be built into your project plan and you may be required to participate in evaluation workshops.

Details on all monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements for successful grantees will be included in the Letter of Offer.

Applicants should note that additional requirements are applicable for greater grant values and/or longer program periods. For example, successful applicants for grants of longer than 12 months will be required to submit an annual work plan and 12-monthly checks against the work plan. All grantees will be required to provide interim reports and an evaluation of completed projects.

Letters of Support

You must include two Letters of Support with your application. Letters of Support should be from key project stakeholders and/or partner organisations. They may provide detail regarding the scale and nature of support an organisation will provide you in the project or they may strengthen the case for the need for your approach.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Applications will be accepted from not-for-profit, non-government organisations (incorporated under the

Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001, as applied in Victoria), that:

- + are based in Victoria and whose activities take place in Victoria
- + have satisfactorily acquitted all previous grants
- + submit applications in accordance with specified timelines and processes.

The following will not be funded

- + activities not relevant to Victoria
- + studies to obtain a degree or diploma
- + litigation costs
- + government organisations/statutory authorities (unless for exceptional work that is not part of their primary responsibility)
- + the delivery of practical legal training courses
- + school and TAFE-based educational programs that are normally part of the curriculum
- + recurrent costs or core operational costs
- + commercial or fundraising activities
- + international travel costs
- + prizes, awards, competitions or conferences

Conditions of applying

Successful applicants must adhere to all State and Commonwealth regulations, statutes and policies regarding equal opportunity, employment laws, standards of conduct, health and safety requirements, privacy, and freedom of information.

The Victorian Legal Services Board may require that reports, research and other work enabled by grants be published and made publicly available. The Victorian Legal Services Board's support should be acknowledged in all published material.

Applying

[Application Form](#)

[Letter of Support Example](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you want me to contact you to discuss my application?

We want to give your application every chance of success. Having a conversation allows us to identify any potential issues with your project and gives you the opportunity to fine tune your application before submission.

Are there any preferential beneficiary groups or priority funding themes?

This year there is no priority-funding theme however priority will generally be given to projects that improve access to justice and equity and are specific and finite.

Preference may be given to applicants who do not have any other access to the Public Purpose Fund (i.e. projects in rural and regional Victoria and projects that have not received Board funding in the past).

We also continue to support projects that are informed by Human Centred Design & Technology.

Is funding limited to a specific time frame?

Yes. Grants are limited to projects ranging between 1-5 years. VSLBC funding is not long term or ongoing. Please specify project duration in your application.

How often do you run themed grant rounds?

Themed rounds usually happen every 2 or 3 years with themes emerging from the work of funded projects or developments in the broader community.

Can funding be backdated on a project that begins before grants are approved?

Funding is not available for activities that start before the approval of funding date.

Do you accept late applications?

Applications will only be accepted by the closing time and date.

Can I change my application after the closing date?

No you cannot change your application after the closing date.

What is the process of assessing grants?

Please see the timeline on page 4 for details of the steps involved in approval of the grants

Who are the independent assessors?

Our pool of independent assessors are experts and professionals working in Community Legal Centres, community organisations and academia and are selected for their specialist knowledge relating to your application.

How will I be notified of my application outcome?

Applicants are notified by email or letter.

If successful will I get all the funding I requested?

The amount of funding you receive may be less than requested due to budget constraints and / or a willingness to only provide part funding.

What is likely to be the earliest start date of my project?

November 2020

About the Victorian Legal Services Board

The Victorian Legal Services Board is an independent statutory authority, responsible for regulation of the legal profession in Victoria. Originally established under the *Legal Profession Act 2004*, the Board's role and functions now come under the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014*. The Board's aims are to:

- + protect consumers and the public by effective regulation of lawyers and legal practice;
- + assist the profession to achieve the highest standards of ethics and legal practice; and
- + manage our funds to support effective regulation and promote confidence in the administration of justice.

About the Grants Program

The Grants Program was established in 2007 to distribute funding to projects that will create outcomes leading to:

- + improved laws and their administration
- + improved access and equity
- + improved legal services
- + better informed and educated consumers of legal services

The grants are available from the Board administered Public Purpose Fund, which includes funds from a number of sources including the interest on solicitors' trust accounts and income from investments. With the

approval of the Attorney General, the grants can be used for:

- + law reform
- + legal and judicial education
- + legal research
- + innovative improvements to access to justice
- + any other purpose relating to the legal profession or the law that the Board considers appropriate.

Organisations that are recipients of a Grant will be delivering programs/research that have a wide impact, create long-term positive change in the Victorian legal environment, and have a strong public benefit.

What happens next?

