

# Victorian Legal Services **BOARD + COMMISSIONER**

Grants Program Newsletter  
Edition 18, December 2019

## 2020 Grant Round Now Open

We are excited to announce our 2020 Grant Round is now open. There is no theme requirement this year and we welcome any ideas for projects that improve access to justice and meet our grant criteria.

Interested? Then take a look at the Grant Round Application Guidelines below and give us a call to discuss your proposal prior to 14 February 2020.

**Applications close at 5pm on Monday 2 March 2020.**

[2020 Grant Round Application Guidelines](#)

[2020 Grant Round Application Form](#)

[More Resources](#)

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## 2019 Grants Round Successful Applicants

The 2019 Grants round prioritised funding around the theme of *Designing Justice Differently: Using human-centred design and technology*, requiring applicants to use technological and/or human-centred design interventions to interrupt, streamline or change legal services and the justice system to improve access to justice. Two streams ran for this grant round — *Build* and *Explore*.

Congratulations to the successful 2019 Grants Round applicants who were announced by the Attorney-General of Victoria at the grants launch in October.



Top: The Hon. Jill Hennessy, Attorney-General of Victoria. Bottom (from left): Fiona Bennett, Victorian Legal Services Board

## Successful Build Stream Applicants

Build Stream was for applicants who had used human-centred design principals in their project design and were ready to **build** and scale.

### ***Read-Along Dads/Mums: the current program, research and technological development***

Friends of Castlemaine Library

\$62,000 over 3 years

Build Stream

Introducing an audio book program to Port Phillip Prison which helps keep prisoners in touch with their children.

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### ***The Living Free Project***

Taskforce Community Agency

\$518,000 over 2 years

Build Stream

A place based multi-faceted response for girls at risk of, and women in contact with, the justice system.

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### ***Reducing barriers to employment for Aboriginal people: rethinking the role of criminal record checks***

RMIT University

\$300,000 over 3 years

Build Stream

Finding effective ways to inform Aboriginal job seekers and employers about the requirements of criminal record checking, reducing discrimination and facilitating access to employment.

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### ***The Legal Technology and Design Clearinghouse***

University of Melbourne

\$130,000 over 2 years

## Build Stream

Establishing an interactive website resource to connect the Legal Assistance Sector with legal technology applications, app building resources, information on human-centred design processes and software and tech providers.

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### ***Spotting the problem: scaling a smart legal problem diagnosis system***

Justice Connect

\$300,000 over 2 years

Build Stream

Scaling a dataset to train a natural language processor to spot legal issues in help-seekers' description of their problem.

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### ***Temporary Protection Visa – Stage 2 Clinic Project***

Refugee Legal

\$230,000 over 1 year

Build Stream

Increasing access to free legal assistance for people seeking asylum who are subject to the Fast Track Assessment (FTA) process.

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### ***Policing Family Violence: Changing the Story***

Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre

\$380,000 over 2 years

Build Stream

Providing specialist client-centred legal assistance, casework and other support to survivors of high-risk family violence who experience police duty failures, and driving collaborative, sector-based strategic advocacy for systemic law reform.

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### ***Youth Law – Breaking Cycles of Disadvantage for Young People***

WEstJustice

\$480,000 over 3 years

Build Stream

Spotlighting inadequacies within the justice system and provision of legal

services for vulnerable young people. This project aims to influence change on a larger scale.

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***Women Transforming Justice***

Darebin Community Legal Centre

\$800,000 over 2 years

Build Stream

Providing a women-specific and community-based support program for criminalised women, with a view to reducing the number of women on remand. Also promoting systemic change to improve outcomes for criminalised women by raising awareness, influencing policy and law reform and delivering training and education.

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***Out: Alive***

Regional Arts Victoria

\$110,000 over 1 year

Build Stream

Supporting the social reintegration of prisoners into regional Victorian communities through establishing a grass-roots reintegration program in three regional locations. The program builds on the research and methodology of The Chat project, which aligns strongly with the principles of Human-Centred design.

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## Successful Explore Stream Applicants

The Explore Stream was for applicants wanting to learn how to use the concept of human-centred design to **explore** practical ways of achieving the impact sought by their projects.

***Early family violence support options for young people to improve outcomes at court***

Young People's Legal Rights Centre

\$356,000 over 2 years

Explore Stream

Ensuring that the court experience for young people using (and/or

experiencing) violence in the home promotes safety, a voice for young people and connects them to appropriate supports.

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***Making SPACE: Transforming a service to put the needs of parents and children at the centre***

Banyule Community Health (West Heidelberg Community Legal Service)

\$257,000 over 2 years

[Explore Stream](#)

Transforming a legal centre to better welcome children and see their attendance as an opportunity so that families' engagement with the centre is a safe, nurturing and a positive experience.

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***Haven Connect***

Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre

\$360,000 over 2 years

[Explore Stream](#)

Helping young people in contact with the criminal justice system tell their story, and connect and communicate with lawyers and support workers, so that they feel seen, heard and understood, to achieve more appropriate justice outcomes.

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***Supporting women experiencing family violence during pregnancy***

Women's Legal Service Victoria

\$338,000 over 1 year

[Explore Stream](#)

An early intervention health justice partnership (HJP) between Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) and Monash Health (MH) so that women experiencing family violence and at risk of intervention are supported throughout pregnancy and prior to hospital discharge so that mother and baby can remain united after birth.

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***The "DSP Help" Project***

Social Security Rights Victoria

\$400,000 over 2 years

[Explore Stream](#)

A user-centred information, advice and advocacy service to help Disability Support Pension (DSP) applicants and their support workers surmount the complicated evidentiary burden of DSP eligibility.

[View Online](#)

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## New Reports

***“It’s healing to hear another person’s story and also to tell your own story”***

**RMIT Centre for Innovative Justice**

This project sought to better meet the needs of victims of crime and improve the criminal justice system by developing a restorative justice model focused on those affected by driving incidents resulting in death or serious injury.

Research findings show that restorative justice processes (RJP) deliver a range of benefits to victims who take part in them. At the time of receiving the grant, the only existing RJP program in Victoria that responded to criminal offences operated solely within the youth jurisdiction. This project was the first to focus on adult offending and was motivated by the potential benefit to the victim.

The project also brought to light a pre-existing demand for restorative justice processes in Victoria and responded to this demand by providing a robust model for future replication and expansion.

[Read Report](#)

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## Upcoming Events

***The Indian Women’s Family Violence Forum***  
**Northern Community Legal Centre**

This forum will provide interactive learning opportunities for those who work directly with Indian women experiencing family violence, separation, and associated family law and immigration legal issues.

Participants will gain knowledge of cross-cultural issues that impact on safety and wellbeing, including arranged vs love marriages, dowry abuse, community expectations of Indian women before and after marriage, and the impact of inter-caste marriages.

The forum will also explore best practice approaches that address the barriers Indian women experience when accessing services and participating in legal processes. A key outcome of the forum will be strengthened referral pathways and agency collaboration to ensure an integrated and effective response.

All event profits will be used to support Indian women who are experiencing family violence and/or participating in the Northern Community Centre's Indian Women's Family Violence Project.

**When:** 1.30pm to 4.30pm, 5 December 2019

**Where:** Hume Global Learning Centre - Broadmeadows

[Tickets](#)

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As we approach the end of 2019 we would like to acknowledge the often difficult but always inspiring work of the projects funded through the VLSBC Grants Program. It is a pleasure to collaborate with organisations and individuals so committed to improving access to justice for everyone.

From all of us here in the Grants team, and at the Victorian Legal Services Board + Commission, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season.





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