

Strong Foundations: Funding to Enhance Impact

Introduction

Strong Foundations offers eligible community legal organisations the opportunity to secure three to five years of flexible funding to enable them to harness their expertise and catalyse positive change within the legal and justice sector.

Successful applicants will have the **flexibility** to allocate resources where they are most required, allowing them to build their organisation's capacity and capability to deliver their strategic objectives. This includes being able to respond quickly to changes in the landscape and take up opportunities without applying for a new grant.

By providing funding over a period of three to five years, we aim to give organisations the **stability** they need to direct the funding in the most strategic way. We also recognise that having more certainty can help improve staff retention and allows for greater planning and improved outcomes.

Successful applicants will be selected based on their strategic ambition, leadership, and ability to deliver. Their work will align with our new Grants Program Strategy and directly contribute towards realising the program's three strategic goals.



New funding model

Our strategy sets out a new funding model for our grants program, comprising two funding streams and strategic support.

Funding Stream 1: Change Grants

- + Issue/project-based
- + Flagship Funding: themed grants aligning with specific priorities
- + Explore emerging philanthropic trends
- + On-going commitment to First Nations work
- + Capacity to provide larger grants over a longer-term/larger grants (up to 4 years)

Funding Stream 2: Strong Foundations Grants

- + Organisations who can show how their work will contribute to our Grants Program's overarching goals
- + Organisations with demonstrated capability and capacity
- + Organisations who show potential to lead, innovate and adapt
- + Organisations who could potentially fulfil a backbone or anchor role to support others' collective impact
- + Funded for longer periods of time/not tied to specific activities (5 years)

INFORMING PRIORITIES, SUPPORTING COLLABORATION AND BUILDING CAPACITY

Strategic Support: Determining priorities, supporting collaborations and building capacity

- + Consultations and workshops
- + Research
- + Capacity building
- + Exploring partnerships and building collaborations

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Available funding

A total of **\$5 million** is available through the first round of Strong Foundations Grants.

Successful organisations will receive up to \$1 million over three to five years.

Eligibility and selection criteria

This funding is specific and targeted. Only a limited number of organisations will be eligible to apply in the first round.



Eligibility

Applicants must:

- be a Victorian Community Legal Centre
- have received funding from us within the last five years
- have a clearly defined organisational strategy that aligns with ours

Selection criteria

Strategic Objectives

- Clearly defined strategy
- Ambitious
- Seeking systemic change
- Alignment (with our strategy)
- Realistic
- Measurable

Organisational Capability

- Stable
- Fiscally responsible
- Strong leadership and quality staff
- Engaged Board
- Proven track record of achieving objectives
- Appropriateness
- Relationships with key stakeholders
- Commitment to continuous learning
- Able to lead others



Our goals

We have identified three broad goals in our strategy and theory of change.

Accessible Legal
Services

1



Holistic and
Diversionary
Responses

2



Fairer Laws and
Processes

3



Application process

1. Applicants will need to complete an **online application** form via SmartyGrants.
2. **Shortlisted applicants** will be **invited to present** to our Investment and Funding Committee on **Tuesday 28 November 2023**.



How to apply

1. Consider if your organisation is well suited to this grants round

Do you have a well-defined strategy? Do you have a monitoring and evaluation framework in place? Is this the right time for your organisation to apply?

Please note: we are committed to implementing this funding stream over the years to come; this is not a one-off opportunity.

2. Complete the [application form](#) and submit it by **Monday 9 October 2023**
3. If you are invited to present to the Investment and Funding Committee, you will be asked to deliver a **10-minute presentation** outlining your strategy and what this funding will enable you to do. There will be an opportunity for you to answer questions from the Committee.

Timeline

Monday, 11 September 2023	Grant Round opens
Monday, 9 October 2023	Applications close
Friday, 3 November 2023	Applicants will be advised if they have been shortlisted and invited to present to the Victorian Legal Services Board's Investment and Funding Committee.
Tuesday, 28 November 2023	Shortlisted applicants will deliver a 10-minute presentation to the Investment and Funding Committee.
December 2023	Victorian Legal Services Board will present funding recommendations to the Attorney-General for approval.
Early 2024 (TBC)	Attorney-General approves funding decisions and applicants are notified of the outcome.