

Strong Foundations Grants Round Guidelines

Introduction

Strong Foundations offers eligible community legal centres the opportunity to secure 3 to 5 years of flexible funding to enable them to harness their expertise and catalyse positive change within the legal and justice sector.

Application to this grant round is by invitation only.

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 3 to 5 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 [Grants Program Strategy](#) and directly contribute towards realising the program's three strategic goals.

Available Funding

A total of \$5 million is available through the 2026 round of Strong Foundations Grants.

Successful organisations will receive up to \$1 million over 3 to 5 years.

Strong Foundations Theory of Change



If the VLSB provide organisations with trust-based funding that provides the space, agility and opportunity to enhance their capacity, capability, and strategic effectiveness,

then they will become stronger and more effective,

thereby contributing to improved access to justice for **all Victorians**



Strong Foundations Grants Round

Guidelines

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

This funding is specific and targeted. Only a limited number of organisations will be eligible to apply. **Eligible organisations will be invited to submit an application.**

There are 2 eligibility categories for the 2026 Strong Foundations Grants Round:

1. New Strong Foundations applicants.
2. Existing Strong Foundations grantees who were initially awarded reduced funding allocations.



Eligibility requirements for new applicants

New applicants must:

- be a Victorian Community Legal Centre
- have received a VLSB Change Grant within the last 5 years
- have acquitted a VLSB Change Grant within the last 5 years
- have a clearly defined organisational strategy that aligns with ours



Eligibility requirements for existing applicants

Existing Strong Foundation grantees are eligible:

- if their initial grant was \$500,000
- to apply for an additional \$500,000



Strong Foundations selection criteria

Strategic Objectives

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

Organisational Capability

- Stable
- Fiscally responsible
- Demonstrated 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

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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?

2. If yes, email the VLSB Grants team to book in a time to discuss your application.

3. Complete the application form and submit it by **Friday 31 July 2026.**