

VICTORIAN LEGAL SERVICES BOARD GRANTS PROGRAM

2024 Change Grants Funding Round

GUIDELINES

Closing date: Monday 4 March 2024

Applications now open

Our Grants Program aims to improve the administration of laws, increase access to justice, improve legal services, pilot innovations 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 in applying?

First book a time to discuss your proposal with us by emailing funding@lsbc.vic.gov.au before **Friday 16 February 2024**.

Then complete and submit an application using our [Online Portal](#).

The closing date is **5pm, Monday 4 March 2024**.

We welcome applications on a range of themes related to the legal system and legal services. Your success will be based on the following:

- + Your chosen project/activities aligns with the aims of the Grants Program.
- + Your chosen project/activities addresses an area of pressing need.
- + You have a strong pre-existing relationship with the people you are seeking to work with.
- + Your organisation has a long-term commitment to your initiative.

- + You have established, relevant networks within the justice and/or community sector.
- + You have undertaken user research.
- + 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 prioritised:

- + **First Nations Leadership:** initiatives led by First Nations people, supporting self-determination.
- + **Prevention:** preventative approaches that seek to address underlying issues.
- + **Early intervention and education:** effective approaches to building capacity of individuals and communities to prevent negative interaction with the legal system.
- + **Valuing lived experience:** prioritising, elevating and empowering people who have had experience with the justice system and/or are experiencing vulnerability.
- + **Systems-focused:** undertaking policy and law reform work to address systemic issues identified through evidence and case work.
- + **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.
- + **Collaboration:** organisations working with community and collaborating with the sector, drawing on the principles of human-centred design.

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.

Grants are only available for projects that will start after funding is approved – they cannot be backdated and applied to work already undertaken. Grants are also not subject to GST. This should be reflected in your budget.

We have a GST private binding ruling from the Australian Tax Office which confirms that payment of grants will not be subject to GST.

Reporting and Evaluation

Evaluation needs to be built into your project plan. 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.

Please note that additional requirements apply for larger grants and/or longer program periods. For example, if a grant runs longer than 12 months you 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.

Referees and Letters of Support

Your application must include contact details for two referees. They may be subject matter experts or partners who can strengthen the case for your approach or attest to your organisation's capacity to deliver. Please ensure you advise your referees that their details have been provided to us.

You may wish to include Letters of Support from key project stakeholders and/or partner organisations detailing the scale and nature of their support for your project. However, this is not a requirement.

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.

We may require that reports, research and other work enabled by grants be published and made publicly available. Our support should be acknowledged in all published material.



How to apply

1. Consult with the Grants Team in February 2024.
2. Complete your application using our [Online Portal](#).
3. Submit your completed application via the portal by **5pm, Monday 4 March 2024**.

Only one (1) application per organisation will be accepted. Universities may submit two (2) applications.

Timeline

Enquires Open

13 December 2023

Applications Close

Monday 4 March 2024

Outcome Notifications

You will be notified of the outcome of your application after all applications have been assessed and those recommended for funding have been approved by both the Victorian Legal Services Board and the Attorney-General of Victoria. This generally does not occur before August.

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.

Is funding limited to a specific time frame?

Yes. Grants are limited to projects ranging between 1-3 years. Our funding is not ongoing. Please specify project duration in your application.

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 funding from us in the past).

How often do you run themed grant rounds?

Themed rounds usually happen every two or three 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?

We only accept applications submitted 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, the Victorian Public Service and academia. They are selected for their specialist knowledge relating to your application.

How will I be notified of my application outcome?

We will notify you by email.

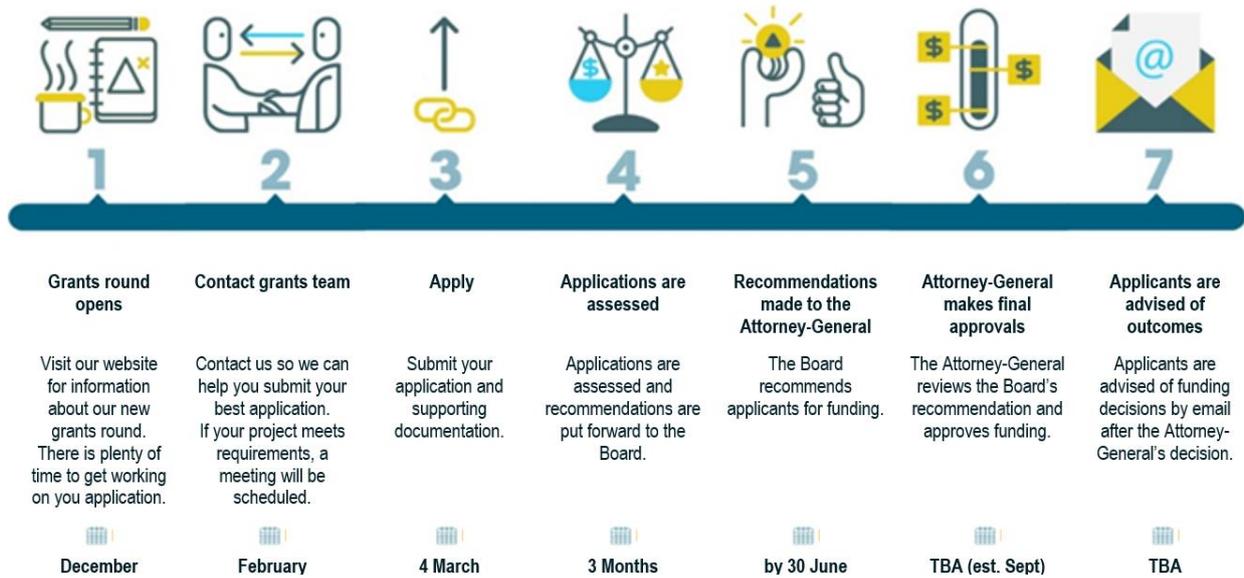
If successful, will I get all the funding I requested?

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?

October 2024

What happens next?



About the VLSB+C

The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner (VLSB+C) are independent statutory authorities responsible for the regulation of Victoria's legal profession. Originally established under the *Legal Profession Act 2004*, our roles and functions now come under the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014*. We aim to:

- + protect and empower consumers
- + enhance legal practice and ethics
- + improve access to justice.

About our Grants Program

Our Grants Program was established in 2007 to distribute funding to projects that help:

- + improve laws and their administration
- + improve access and equity
- + improve legal services
- + better inform and educate consumers of legal services

The grants are available from the 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 receive 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.