



# Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) Program

## Grant Opportunity Guidelines

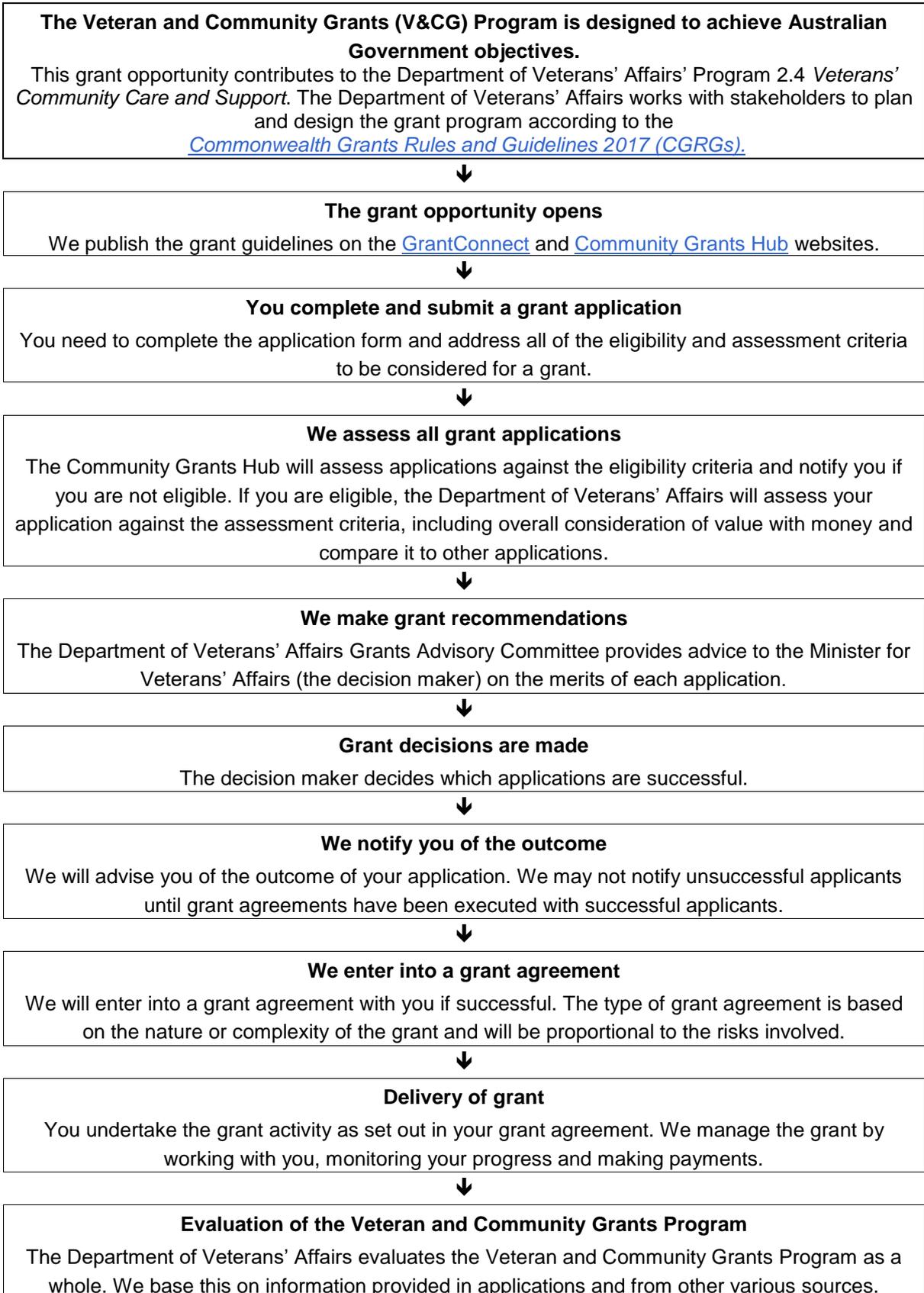
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| <b>Administering entity</b>        | Community Grants Hub  |
| <b>Enquiries:</b>                  | If you have any questions, contact the<br>Community Grants Hub<br>Phone: 1800 020 283 (option 1)<br>Email: <a href="mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au">support@communitygrants.gov.au</a><br>Questions should be sent no later than:<br>5:00 pm AEDT on 13 January 2022 |
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# 1. Veteran and Community Grants Program grant opportunity processes



## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) Program.

Please ensure you read these guidelines carefully before filling out an application form.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Community Grants Hub and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

## 2. About the grant program

The V&CG Program forms part of Program 2.4 Veterans' Community Care and Support in DVA's Portfolio Budget Statement. The V&CG Program is currently a targeted competitive program.

The objective of the program is to maintain and improve the independence and quality of life for members of the Australian veteran community by providing funding for projects that sustain or enhance health and wellbeing.

The intended outcomes of the program are to deliver projects that:

- are sustainable and have an ongoing benefit for members of the Australian veteran community
- increase opportunities for members of the Australian veteran community to engage in social and community activities and/or improve health behaviours and support healthy places.

Under this grant opportunity, practical projects and activities that support safe, accessible environments for veterans and their families to enable social connection and positive engagement to improve wellbeing are encouraged. This includes small-scale non-capital infrastructure projects. Further information and examples are provided at section 5.

The Community Grants Hub and DVA administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 \(CGRGs\)](#).

Key terms are defined in the Glossary.

### 2.1 Key grant opportunity considerations

**Key points to consider:**

- the program will consist of one annual funding round
- eligibility is currently limited to Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs), or non-ESOs working in partnership with an ESO, to ensure a strong understanding of and connection to the veteran community (see section 4.1)
- you may only apply for one grant (small or large grant), to maximise the number of organisations and communities benefiting from the program
- the program is competitive, meaning that applications will be assessed against the criteria, and then ranked against other applications (see section 8).

There has been a change to the small and large grant funding limits. Small grants are now up to a maximum of \$50,000 per grant (previously up to a maximum of \$20,000 per grant). Large grants are now \$50,001 up to a maximum of \$150,000 per grant (previously started at \$20,001 per grant).

A small number of large grants may be available. Determination of this will be at the discretion of the decision maker for projects of scale that suitably demonstrate a high quality, detailed project, that strongly addresses the selection criteria and outcomes.

## 2.2 Important information regarding COVID-19

### DVA's response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

**IMPORTANT:** At the time of publication, there is a range of public health and other measures in place as part of Australia's response to COVID-19.

DVA's number one priority is the health and wellbeing of Australia's veteran community. COVID-19 represents a significant challenge both in Australia and internationally. Some members of the veteran community may be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. For this reason, applicants should carefully consider the activities funding is being sought for, to ensure they can be safely delivered, including adhering to COVID-19 social distancing or other public health measures.

Australian Government information and advice for limiting the spread of COVID-19 is available on the [Department of Health website](#).

Successful projects will need to comply with the relevant social distancing or other public health measures in place at the time the activity is delivered (this includes national, state and/or local government requirements).

You are strongly encouraged to adapt proposed activities in your application to allow for social distancing and ensure the safety of participants, for example by undertaking virtual (online) activities rather than face-to-face events.

Your application should include information about how your proposed activity will comply with COVID-19 requirements. This is particularly important for activities that place participants in close physical proximity, such as bus trips, or group activities and social events in confined spaces.

## 3. Grant amount and grant period

### 3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$2,505,000 (GST exclusive) for the Veterans and Community Grants Program for the 2021–22 financial year. Applications will be considered under 2 grant categories: small grants (up to a maximum of \$50,000 per grant) or large grants (from \$50,001 to a maximum of \$150,000 per grant). There are no pre-determined numbers or funding split for small or large grants applications.

You may only apply for one grant in this grant opportunity (one small grant application, or one large grant application), to maximise the number of organisations and communities benefiting from the program.

#### Small grants

Small grants of up to \$50,000 per grant are available for local, community-based projects and activities. These grants are for practical projects and activities that support safe, accessible environments for veterans and their families to enable social connection and positive engagement to improve wellbeing. The vast majority of grants offered in 2021–22 will be for small grants.

Applicants for small grants will be required to submit a succinct outline of their proposal against the nominated assessment criteria.

### **Large grants**

At the discretion of the decision maker, a small number of large grants from \$50,001 and up to a maximum of \$150,000 are available for projects that deliver wellbeing support services and activities of broad-scale benefit to the veteran community. Applicants for large grants will need to provide more detailed information (compared to small grant applicants) about their proposal against the nominated assessment criteria to justify the higher funding amount requested and enable assessment of their applications.

For small and large grants, refer to sections 12.2 and 12.3 for reporting and acquittal obligations required of successful applicants.

### **Partial funding**

Both small and large grants may be used to partially fund projects, where the applicant has, or intends to seek, funding from other sources.

If there are insufficient funds under the grant opportunity to fully fund any application, it may be considered for partial funding. Applicants that do not wish to be considered for partial funding should mark the appropriate box on the application form. Applicants that wish to be considered for partial funding should indicate on the application form the minimum amount they would be able to accept to proceed with the project.

If an application is assessed as suitable for funding but there is insufficient funding available under the program to provide the full amount requested and the applicant has indicated in their application form that they do not wish to be considered for partial funding, the application will not progress and the applicant will not receive funding.

## **3.2 Grant period**

The maximum grant period is generally one year after the start date of the grant agreement.

DVA recognises the potential impact COVID-19 may have on your organisation completing the project with social distancing and other public health measures in place. The grant offer will be available for the initial 12 month period only, however DVA will consider extending the length of the agreement at a later date if your organisation can demonstrate it requires more time to complete the project due to COVID-19. This flexibility will ensure projects can be completed within a reasonable timeframe and continue to deliver great support to the veteran community.

## **4. Eligibility criteria**

The decision maker can choose to waive the eligibility criteria, however they must be made aware of the risks.

### **4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?**

To be eligible to apply you must be:

Either:

- an Ex-Service Organisation (ESO)

Or

- a non-ESO (an organisation external to the ESO community) operating as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust that includes an ESO

Or

- a non-ESO in a partnership or consortium arrangement with at least one ESO

And

- one of the legal entity types listed at section 4.1.2 below
- incorporated by the closing date and time of this grant opportunity.

Applicants that satisfy the above eligibility criteria are eligible to apply for either a small or large grant. The following provides relevant definitions for the above eligibility requirements.

## **4.2 Ex-Service Organisation definition**

For the purposes of the V&CG Program, an ESO is considered to be an organisation that satisfies *all* of the below points:

- has direct links to the ex-service community
- has membership consisting primarily of veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and/or their dependants
- is established primarily to provide pensions, advocacy and/or welfare assistance to veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants
- does not charge any fee for acting on behalf of the veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants in the provision of claims or welfare services
- has objectives that aim to benefit the welfare of its members
- is incorporated by the closing date and time of this grant opportunity.

## **4.3 Eligible legal entity types**

To be eligible you must be one of the following entity types:

- Company<sup>1</sup>
- Cooperative
- Incorporated Association
- Indigenous Corporation
- Partnership<sup>2</sup>
- Statutory Entity.

If you are applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust<sup>3</sup>, the Trustee must have an eligible entity type as listed above.

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<sup>1</sup> Company is a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).

<sup>2</sup> Partnership – the individual partners will enter into the agreement with the agency. A Partnership Agreement or a list of all individual partners of the Partnership may be requested.

<sup>3</sup> Trusts are not legal entities in their own right – to be eligible, only the Trustee for the Trust can apply by providing the signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations with the application form. Trustees must be an eligible entity type as stated in section 4.1.2. Both the Trust's and Trustee's details will be collected in the application form.

Applications from Trusts, partnerships and consortia are acceptable, as long as you have a lead applicant who is solely accountable to the Commonwealth for the delivery of grant activities and is an eligible entity type as per the list above<sup>4</sup>.

#### **4.4 Additional eligibility requirements**

Applications from organisations with overdue DVA acquittals at the closing date and time of this grant opportunity will not be funded.

#### **4.5 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?**

You are not eligible to apply if you are a/an:

- organisation, or your consortium partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- Corporate Commonwealth Entity
- Corporate State or Territory Entity
- International Entity
- Local Government<sup>5</sup>
- Non-corporate Commonwealth Entity
- Non-corporate Commonwealth Statutory Authority
- Non-corporate State or Territory Entity
- Non-corporate State or Territory Statutory Authority
- Person<sup>7</sup>
- Sole Trader
- Unincorporated Association.

Please note, the above list is not definitive. If your entity type is not listed in section 4.1.2 above, you are not eligible to apply and your application will not be assessed.

#### **4.6 What qualifications, skills or checks are required?**

Qualifications and skills are determined by the activity/s outlined in your proposal, as well as risks associated with each proposal. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they have the appropriate qualifications and skills to undertake the proposed activities.

It is also the responsibility of your organisation to ensure anyone working directly with children and/or vulnerable people has the appropriate registrations under relevant state or territory legislation, including:

- Working with Children checks
- Working with Vulnerable People registration.

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<sup>4</sup> The Australian Government recognises some organisations may seek to form consortia in order to apply for a grant under the Program. Consortia are eligible to apply and the relevant conditions applicable to consortia are at section 7.2.

<sup>5</sup> Includes New South Wales local governments created as Body Politics.

<sup>7</sup> A person is a natural person, an individual, a human being.

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

**IMPORTANT:** Applications should only be submitted for activities that can be safely undertaken in accordance with COVID-19 social distancing or other public health measures (see section 2.2).

Successful projects will need to comply with the relevant social distancing or other public health measures in place at the time the activity is delivered (this includes national, state and/or local government requirements).

You are strongly encouraged to adapt proposed activities in your application to allow for social distancing and ensure the safety of target participants, for example by undertaking virtual (online) activities rather than face-to-face events.

Funding must be used to deliver projects and activities that meet the objective and intended outcomes of the V&CG Program.

**For small grants** under this grant opportunity, practical projects and activities that support safe, accessible environments for veterans and their families to enable social connection and positive engagement to improve wellbeing are encouraged.

**For large grants** under this grant opportunity, grants will be considered for projects that deliver wellbeing support services and activities of broad-scale benefit to the veteran community.

Examples of activities that may be funded include:

- small-scale non-capital infrastructure projects
- improvements to support safe and accessible environments, for example, purchase of a defibrillator, repair/replace heating and cooling, repair/replace electrical wiring, building modifications (ramps, wider doorways, and such) to improve accessibility
- purchase of minor tools and equipment, for example, wood-working/art/craft tools, tools for Men's Sheds
- activities to increase social connectedness and reduce social isolation, for example, classes to learn a new skill or hobby, online book club, and such.
- promoting and enhancing healthy lifestyles, particularly physical activity and mental wellbeing, for example, exercise classes, yoga or meditation sessions, cooking classes, development of a community garden
- building repairs and maintenance, for example, small-scale kitchen refurbishments
- addressing gaps in local services for the veteran community consistent with the program guidelines.

The V&CG program has funded a broad range of projects and activities over the past few years. Some examples include:

- camping and social inclusion activities for veterans and their families
- sports activities such as indoor rowing, rugby, dragon boating and mountain biking
- purchase of minor equipment such as defibrillators, computers, air conditioning and tools for Men's Sheds
- excursions for senior veterans such as bus trips to reduce social isolation
- transition workshops
- online healthy living programs and exercise classes

- minor renovations such as paving, decking, kitchen refurbishments and improving disabled access to venues
- video training courses on starting a small business
- mental health first aid training
- development of apps for veterans to engage with each other
- cooking and healthy eating workshops
- peer support and career coaching programs.

## **5.2 Eligible expenditure**

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure that is integral to the project and incurred for agreed project costs.

Eligible expenditure may include, but is not limited to:

- staff salaries and on costs that can be directly attributed to the provision of the project
- building works – improvements or maintenance to existing buildings may be funded. Proof of ownership, relevant council approval and a simple floor plan for your building works must be provided with the application, examples of building works that may be funded if they are integral to the project include:
  - upgrade of toilet facilities including disabled access
  - provision of disabled access to a building (for example, ramps and access doors)
  - upgrade of kitchen facilities
  - repair of roofs
  - repair of floors
  - provision of external shade areas (for example, pergolas or verandas).
- the portion of operating and administration expenses directly related to the project, such as:
  - communications (telephone/internet/captioning)
  - facility hire/rental
  - Information technology (computer/website/software)
  - insurance
  - utilities
  - postage
  - stationery and printing
  - accounting and auditing
  - domestic travel/accommodation costs (excluding quarantine costs and any medical expenditure as a result of COVID-19)
  - assets that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables.
- project evaluation costs (only eligible for large grants). Such costs must not exceed 10% of the total grant amount sought through V&CG. A detailed quote for the project evaluation costs must be provided with the application
- meals – funding for meals must be intrinsic to cooking or nutrition projects or as part of travel allowance for a project officer only. Meals/food for other activities are not eligible expenditure

- replacement items – for example, low value assets like an air conditioner, small printer, microwave, electric saw in a Men's Shed
- volunteer expenses, including expenses relating to training to ensure volunteers are appropriately qualified/accredited (for example, workplace health and safety training and first aid training)
- trainer/facilitator/presenter costs to deliver the activity and/or service
- project participant accommodation costs.

Not all the proposed expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The decision maker makes the final decision to approve a grant and the amount of funding to be awarded.

The evidence and detail required for expenses in your application must be in proportion with the amount requested.

Please note:

- If you are successful we are not responsible for any expenditure incurred until a grant agreement is executed.
- If you are unsuccessful, we are not responsible for any expenditure incurred.

### **5.3 Eligible Locations**

Grant activities must be conducted within Australia. Consideration will be given to geographic distribution of funds when awarding grants, to take into account the distribution of veterans across Australia and those communities most in need.

### **5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for**

You cannot use the grant for:

- business as usual expenses, including to subsidise the general ongoing costs of an organisation such as electricity, phone, rent and consumables
- projects that aim to produce commercial profit (either directly or indirectly)
- facilities or activities that could reasonably be expected to be provided by the applicant
- activities or events that are commemorative in nature
- activities and/or services that primarily support veterans' advocacy
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility
- activities or services which are fully funded by another agency
- activities that are not integral to the project
- small projects that have already commenced
- retrospective activity costs
- purchase of land or property
- ongoing wages or salaries that are not directly attributed to the provision of the project as per the grant agreement
- building works that are cosmetic only in nature, including landscaping
- capital works for new or replacement buildings (minor renovations directly related to the project delivery may be considered)
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation

- costs associated with hosting, arranging or attending conferences or expos
- vehicle on road costs such as fuel, delivery fees, registration and insurance
- overseas travel
- activities or items not consistent with the DVA's Social Health Strategy – for example, the upgrade and/or refurbishment of bar and gaming facilities, establishment of outdoor smoking facilities, etc. Further information on DVA's Health Promotion initiatives can be found on the [DVA website](#).
- projects that are strongly focused on delivering primarily research, medical or clinical services.

You are unable to obtain a grant if your proposed project is entirely funded from another government source for the same purpose.

## 6. The assessment criteria

You must address all of the following assessment criteria in the application.

You are strongly encouraged to adapt proposed activities in your application to allow for social distancing and ensure the safety of participants, for example, by undertaking virtual (online) activities rather than face-to-face events. In your response to the below assessment criteria, you should include information about how your proposed activity will comply with COVID-19 requirements. This is particularly important for activities that place participants in close physical proximity, such as bus trips, or group activities and social events in confined spaces.

Each of the assessment criteria listed below has an equal weighting so you should provide an equivalent amount of information in responding to each criterion.

The application form includes character limits. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit and additional attachments will not be considered. Please note spaces are included in the character limit.

- Applications for small grants (up to a maximum of \$50,000 per grant) can provide more succinct responses of up to 1,000 characters (approximately 150 words) per criterion.
- Applications for large grants (from \$50,001 up to a maximum of \$150,000 per grant) should provide detailed responses of up to 2,000 characters (approximately 300 words) per criterion.

Note, for each criterion, the level of detail provided must reflect the value of the grant you are applying for. Applicants for large grants will need to provide more detailed information (compared to small grant applicants) about their proposal against the nominated assessment criteria to justify the higher funding amount requested and enable assessment of their applications.

## **Criterion 1: Project need and suitability**

### **Describe your project and why it is needed**

A strong response must address the following:

- what activities will you undertake, and how many people do you expect will participate in the activities (what will you do)
- who is the target group and why does your target group need this project? Provide data, research, community feedback, surveys, and such (who will it help)
- how will the activities address the particular needs of the target community (how will it help).

## **Criterion 2: Achieving outcomes**

### **Describe how the target group will benefit and how you will achieve program outcomes**

A strong response must address the following:

- describe what outcomes you expect to achieve from your project, and how these relate to the V&CG Program outcomes (why is it important and what will change). The V&CG Program outcomes are to deliver projects that:
  - are sustainable and have an ongoing benefit for members of the Australian veteran community
  - increase opportunities for members of the Australian veteran community to engage in social and community activities and/or improve health behaviours and support healthy places.
- how will you know the project has been successful (how will you evaluate).

## **Criterion 3: Ability of organisation to deliver**

### **Describe your organisation's experience delivering projects that benefit the target group**

A strong response must describe:

- your organisation's past performance or experience in delivering similar projects, including the outcomes achieved (what your organisation offers)
- your organisation's community knowledge, links, networks and partnerships and how you will leverage these capabilities to successfully deliver the project (how your organisation is connected to the community)
- how your organisation will engage suitably qualified and experienced people to undertake the project
- the project risks and how you will manage them (how your organisation plans for success).

## 7. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the terms and conditions, the sample grant agreements, and the questions and answers document.

These documents are available on the [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites. Any changes to grant documentation are published on both sites and addenda<sup>5</sup> will be published on GrantConnect. By registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

You may only apply for one grant in this grant opportunity (one small grant application or one large grant application), to maximise the number of organisations and communities benefiting from the program.

If more than one application is submitted from the same organisation, the latest accepted application received will be assessed. The earlier application/s will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding.

To apply you must:

- complete the online application form on [GrantConnect](#) or [Community Grants Hub](#)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your application to the Community Grants Hub by 9:00 pm AEDT on 20 January 2022.

We will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by post, fax or email. The application form includes help information. You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you need more help around the application process, submitting an application online, have any technical difficulties or find an error in your application after submission, but before the closing date and time, you should contact the Community Grants Hub immediately on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au). The Community Grants Hub do not have to accept any additional information, or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If we find an error or something missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents. You will receive an automated notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

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<sup>5</sup> Addenda can include changes to existing grant opportunity documentation and/or publishing additional documents. Changes include but are not limited to corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications and system outage notices.

## 7.1 Attachments to the application

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form according to the instructions provided within the application form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

If a mandatory template is not used, your application will be considered non-compliant and will not proceed to assessment.

All of the following documents must be attached to your application for it to be considered compliant and for it to proceed to assessment.

- If applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust, or in a partnership or consortium arrangement, you must complete the 'Letter of Declaration' on the mandatory template provided (see section 7.2 below).
- If applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust it is also mandatory to provide the Trust Deed.
- If applying for building works (improvements or maintenance to existing buildings), you must provide proof of ownership, relevant council approval and a simple floor plan for your building works, consolidated into one document.
- If applying for project evaluation costs (for large grants only), a detailed quote must be provided with the application. Note: project evaluation costs must not exceed 10% of the total grant amount sought through the V&CG Program.

Please note there is a 2 MB limit for each attachment.

## 7.2 Joint (Consortia) applications

We recognise some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a grant project.

In these circumstances, you must appoint a 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The lead organisation must also be an eligible entity type as outlined in section 4.1.2. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group. Organisations included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' will not be eligible to be members of a consortium arrangement.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the agreement and you must attach a Letter of Declaration (on the mandatory template provided) signed by all parties and identifying the lead organisation.

## 7.3 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates.

### Late applications

We will not accept late applications unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable
- beyond the applicant's control
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

## How to lodge a late application

Applicants seeking to submit a late application will be required to submit a late application request to the Community Grants Hub. The request should include a detailed explanation of the circumstances that prevented the application being submitted prior to the closing time. Supporting evidence may need to be provided to verify the claim of exceptional circumstances.

The late application request form and instructions for how to submit it can be found on the [Community Grants Hub website](#).

Written requests to lodge a late application will only be accepted within 3 days after the grant opportunity has closed.

The delegate or their appointed representative<sup>6</sup> will determine whether a late application will be accepted. The decision of the delegate will be final and not be subject to a review or appeals process.

Once the outcome is determined, the Community Grants Hub will advise the applicant if their request is accepted or declined.

The V&CG Program will have one funding round in 2021–22.

## Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

| Project   | Timeframe  |
|---|--|
| Application period  | Open: 9 December 2021<br>Close: 9:00 pm AEDT 20 January 2022 |
| Assessment of applications  | Within 7 weeks from the closing date                         |
| Approval of outcomes of selection process                           | Within 13 weeks from the closing date                        |
| Notification of outcomes to applicants                              | Within 15 weeks from the closing date                        |
| Negotiations and award of grant agreements to successful applicants | Within 18 weeks from the closing date                        |
| Earliest start date of grant project                                | June 2022  |
| End date of grant project   | June 2023  |

## 7.4 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, contact the Community Grants Hub on 1800 020 283 (option 1) or email [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au).

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days. Answers to questions are posted on the [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.

The question period will close at 5:00 pm AEDT on 13 January 2022. Following this time, only questions relating to using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

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<sup>6</sup> This may be the Department of Veterans' Affairs Delegate or nominated staff member at the EL2 level or above.

## 8. The grant selection process

### 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

Applications will be assessed based on the eligibility and assessment criteria as set out in these Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

The Community Grants Hub will review your application against the eligibility and compliance. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage.

Eligible applications will then be assessed by DVA through a targeted competitive grant process.

### 8.2 Financial viability

Applicants may be subject to a financial viability assessment. The financial viability assessment forms part of the risk mitigation strategy and can include:

- establishing whether relevant persons within the organisation have any adverse business history (for example current or past bankruptcy)
- assessment of the financial health of an entity.

### 8.3 Who will assess and select applications?

DVA Grants Operations will assess all eligible applications against the assessment criteria (see section 6), and against other applications. We will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money<sup>7</sup>.

DVA Grants Operations will assess whether the application represents value for money by taking into account:

- relevant value of the grant sought
- the geographic distribution of funds when awarding grants, to take into account the distribution of veterans across Australia and those communities most in need
- the quality of the project proposal and activities
- if the proposal is fit for purpose in contributing to government objectives
- whether the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and Government's outcomes being achieved
- the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.

DVA assessors will provide an initial ranking of applications to inform the deliberations of the DVA Grants Advisory Committee. The Grants Advisory Committee comprises senior DVA officials and recommends to the decision maker which applications to approve for a grant. Any expert/advisor who is not a Commonwealth official will be required/expected to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

DVA may seek additional information about you or your application and this may delay completion of the selection process. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if the sources are

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<sup>7</sup> Please refer to the Glossary within this document for the definition of "value with relevant money".

not nominated by you as referees. DVA may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

A strategy for any potential conflict of interest that could be identified between DVA officials and applicants is in place.

#### **8.4 Who will approve grants?**

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs (the decision maker) decides which of the project grants to approve, taking into account the recommendations of the DVA Grants Advisory Committee and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

The decision maker's decision is final in all matters, including the:

- approval of the grant
- grant funding amount to be awarded
- terms and conditions of the grant.

Please note there is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

### **9. Notification of application outcomes**

We will write to you about the outcome of your application. If you are successful, you will be advised of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

#### **9.1 Feedback on your application**

A general feedback summary will be published on the Community Grants Hub website to provide all organisations with easy to access information about the grant selection process and the main strengths and areas for improving applications.

Individual feedback will be available if requested by the applicant. The process for requesting individual feedback will be included in the general feedback summary.

### **10. Successful grant applications**

#### **10.1 The grant agreement**

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We will offer successful applicants a Letter of Agreement or a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement for this grant opportunity. Our selection will depend on the associated risks, value and complexity of your grant activity.

##### **1. Letter of Agreement**

We may send you a Letter of Agreement providing you with an offer. You accept the offer by signing and returning the Letter of Agreement to us by the date stipulated in the Letter of Agreement. We consider the agreement to be executed from the date the grant agreement has been signed by both parties.

##### **2. Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement**

Alternatively, we may use a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement.

You will have 10 business days from the date of a written offer to sign and return this grant agreement. The agreement is not considered to be executed until both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

Each agreement has general grant conditions that cannot be changed. Sample grant agreements are available on [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites as part of the grant documentation. We will use a Grant Schedule to outline the specific grant requirements.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the decision maker. These will be identified in the agreement.

We may manage the grant agreement through our Grant Recipient Portal. Accepting the agreement through the Grant Recipient Portal is the equivalent of signing a grant agreement. After you have accepted it, we will execute the agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have entered into the grant agreement. We will notify you when this happens and a copy of the executed agreement will be available through the portal. The agreement will not become binding until it is executed.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

You may request changes to the grant agreement. However, we will review any changes to make sure they do not affect the grant as approved by the decision maker.

## **10.2 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework**

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for organisations to adopt child safe practices including appropriate screening of staff, mandatory reporting and adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Australian Government committed to a new Commonwealth-wide framework to protect children and young people it is responsible for – the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF).

A child safety clause will be included in a grant agreement where the Commonwealth considers the grant is for:

- services directly to children
- activities that involve contact with children that is a usual part of, and more than incidental to, the grant activity.

A child safety clause will also be included in the grant agreement if the Commonwealth considers the grant activity involves children more broadly.

The successful applicant will be required to comply with all child safety obligations included in the grant agreement published with this grant opportunity or notified to the successful applicant prior to execution of the grant agreement. Irrespective of the child safety obligations in the grant agreement you must always comply with state and territory legislative requirements for working with children and mandatory reporting.

## **10.3 How we pay the grant**

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid. We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will pay 100% of the grant at the commencement of the grant agreement.

Grantees will be required to report how they spent the grant funds at the completion of the project.

## 10.4 Grant payments and GST

The Australian Taxation Office advises DVA grants are considered a Financial Assistance Payment and so they are not subject to GST. In accordance with that advice:

Organisations registered for GST

- are required to calculate the GST exclusive component of the cost of any item or service purchased for their proposed project
- must provide the final total GST exclusive amount in their grant application
- can claim an input tax credit through their business activity statement to the Australian Taxation Office, for the GST component of purchased items or services.

Organisations NOT registered for GST

- are not able to request an input tax credit from the Australian Taxation Office for the GST component of purchased items or services
- are required to provide the final GST inclusive amount in their grant application.

If you have any queries in relation to the transactions you enter into with third parties as a result of a grant received under the V&CG program, you may wish to speak with the Australian Tax Office or your financial advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the Australian Taxation Office website for more information.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

## 11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website no later than 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](#).

## 12. How we monitor your grant project

### 12.1 Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform your Funding Arrangement Manager at the Community Grants Hub of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact your Funding Arrangement Manager immediately.

## **12.2 Reporting**

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size and complexity of the project and the grant amount.

You must discuss any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

### **Final report**

When we use a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement, you must submit a final report on the template provided once you complete the grant project.

Final reports must:

- identify if and how outcomes have been achieved
- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred
- be submitted by the due date outlined in the grant agreement.

## **12.3 Financial declaration**

We may ask you to provide a financial declaration that the grant money has been spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

Underspent funding must be returned to DVA.

## **12.4 Grant agreement variations**

We recognise social distancing and other public health measures in place due to COVID-19 may affect your progress. If your organisation can demonstrate it requires more time to complete the project due to COVID-19, DVA will consider extending the length of the agreement at a later date. This flexibility will ensure projects can be completed within a reasonable timeframe and continue to deliver great support to the veteran community. You can request a variation by contacting your Funding Arrangement Manager in the Community Grants Hub.

You should not assume a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

## **12.5 Record keeping**

DVA may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. DVA reserves the right to undertake audit checks as required to ensure compliance.

## **12.6 Evaluation**

DVA will evaluate the grant program to see how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

## 12.7 Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, we require you to acknowledge the grant by using the following:

'This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

## 13. Probity

The Australian Government will make sure the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

These guidelines may be changed by DVA. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#) and the [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.

### 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

#### Complaints about this grant opportunity

The [Department of Veterans' Affairs Feedback Management Policy](#) applies to complaints about this grant opportunity. All complaints about this grant opportunity, including grant decisions, must be provided in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to [support@communitygrants.gov.au](mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au)

#### Complaints about the selection process

Applicants can contact the complaints service with complaints about the Community Grants Hub's service/s or the selection process.

Details of what makes an eligible complaint can be provided by asking the Community Grants Hub. Applicants can lodge complaints using the complaints form on the Department of Social Services website, by phone or mail.

Phone: 1800 634 035

Email: [complaints@dss.gov.au](mailto:complaints@dss.gov.au)

Mail: DSS Feedback, Complaints  
GPO Box 9820  
Canberra ACT 2601

#### Complaints to the Ombudsman

If you do not agree with the way the Community Grants Hub or the Department of Veterans' Affairs has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Community Grants Hub or the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

## 13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a [conflict of interest](#), or perceived conflict of interest, if the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Community Grants Hub staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Community Grants Hub in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the [Community Grants Hub](#) website.

## 13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- whom we give your personal information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and give out information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors you engage to assist with the project, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the project. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Department of Veterans' Affairs would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

## 13.4 Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent it meets all of the 3 conditions below:

1. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential.
2. The information is commercially sensitive.
3. Revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the DVA Grants Advisory Committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### 13.5 Freedom of information

All documents the Australian Government has, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give people the ability to get information held by the Australian Government and its organisations. Under the FOI Act, people can ask for documents the Australian Government has. People may not be able to get these documents if these documents need to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail:           Freedom of Information Team  
                      Government and Executive Services Branch  
                      Department of Social Services (DSS)  
                      GPO Box 9820  
                      Canberra ACT 2601

By email:         [foi@dss.gov.au](mailto:foi@dss.gov.au)

## 14. Glossary

| Term   | Definition   |
|--|--|
| accountable authority  | see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a> .   |
| administering entity   | when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.   |
| assessment criteria  | are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.   |
| Australian veteran community                                     | <p>For the purposes of the Veteran and Community Grants Program, an Australian veteran is any current or former member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) with at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS), including Reservists who have rendered any period of CFTS and national servicemen.</p> <p>For the purposes of the Veteran and Community Grants Program the term ‘veterans’ family’ includes any person a veteran considers is a member of his/her family.</p> <p>Together these groups form the Australian veteran community.</p> |
| commencement date  | the expected start date for the grant project.   |
| Commonwealth entity  | a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act.  |
| <a href="#">Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)</a> | establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.  |
| completion date  | the expected date the grant project must be completed and the grant spent by.  |
| co-sponsoring entity   | when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it.  |

| Term                          | Definition   |
|-------------------------------|--|
| date of effect                | can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.   |
| decision maker                | the person who makes a decision to award a grant.  |
| DVA Grants Advisory Committee | provides strategic oversight, advice and recommendations to the decision maker on assessed applications from the program specific, service provider composition and service location perspectives.   |
| eligibility criteria          | refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.   |
| Ex-Service Organisation       | <p>For the purposes of the V&amp;CG Program, an ESO is considered to be an organisation which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ has direct links to the ex-service community</li> <li>▪ has membership consisting primarily of veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants</li> <li>▪ is established primarily to provide pensions, advocacy and/or welfare assistance to veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants</li> <li>▪ does not charge any fee for acting on behalf of the veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants in the provision of claims or welfare services</li> <li>▪ has objectives that aim to benefit the welfare of its members</li> <li>▪ is incorporated by the closing date and time of this grant opportunity.</li> </ul> |
| Funding Arrangement Manager   | is the officer responsible for the ongoing management of the grantee and their compliance with the grant agreement.  |

| Term                         | Definition  |
|------------------------------|---|
| grant                        | <p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>8</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>9</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.</li> </ul> |
| grant activity               | refers to the project the grantee is required to undertake.   |
| grant agreement              | sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant.   |
| grant opportunity            | refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.   |
| grant program                | a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Department of Veterans' Affairs Portfolio Budget Statement Program.   |
| <a href="#">GrantConnect</a> | is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.  |
| grantee                      | the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.   |
| National Redress legislation | means the <a href="#">National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018</a> .   |

<sup>8</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>9</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

| Term                                     | Definition   |
|--|--|
| Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Program | described within the entity's <a href="#">Portfolio Budget Statement</a> , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be grant programs. A PBS program may have more than one grant program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.  |
| selection criteria                       | comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.   |
| selection process                        | the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.   |
| value with relevant money                | <p>refers to 'value with relevant money' which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the quality of the project proposal and activities</li> <li>▪ if the proposal is fit for purpose in contributing to government objectives</li> <li>▪ whether the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved</li> <li>▪ the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul> |