



# Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) Program

## Grant Opportunity Guidelines

<b>Opening date:</b>	<b>3 November 2020</b>
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	11.00 PM AEDT 29 January 2021
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)
<b>Administering entity</b>	Community Grants Hub
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact the Community Grants Hub Phone: 1800 020 283 (option 1) Email: <a href="mailto:support@communitygrants.gov.au">support@communitygrants.gov.au</a> Questions should be sent no later than: 5.00 PM AEDT on 21 January 2021
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	<b>3 November 2020</b>
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Targeted competitive

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# 1. Veteran and Community Grants Program grant opportunity processes

**The Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives.**

This grant opportunity contributes to DVA's Program 2.4 *Veterans Community Care and Support*. DVA works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 \(CGRGs\)](#).



**The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on the [GrantConnect](#) and [Community Grants Hub](#) websites.



**You complete and submit a grant application**

You need to complete the application form and address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant.



**We assess all grant applications**

The Community Grants Hub will assess applications against the eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. If you are eligible, DVA will assess your application against the assessment criteria, including overall consideration of value with money and compare it to other applications.



**We make grant recommendations**

The DVA Grants Advisory Committee provides advice to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs (the decision maker) on the merits of each application.



**Grant decisions are made**

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs (the decision maker) decides which applications are successful.



**We notify you of the outcome**

We will advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



**We enter into a grant agreement**

We will enter into a grant agreement with you if successful. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature or complexity of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.



**Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



**Evaluation of the Veteran and Community Grants Program**

DVA evaluates the V&CG Program as a whole. We base this on information provided in applications and from other various sources.

## 1.1 Introduction

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

**PLEASE NOTE: There have been a number of changes to the V&CG Program for 2020–21, including changes to the eligibility criteria, maximum grant value, and considerations for grants activities in the COVID-19 environment. 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 now 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 in 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 About the Veteran and Community Grants opportunity

#### **DVA's response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and other changes to V&CG grants**

***IMPORTANT: At the time of publication, there are 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 that funding is being sought for, to ensure that 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.

**PLEASE NOTE: The V&CG program has changed in a number of key areas. Changes in 2020–21 include:**

- Eligibility is now 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), to maximise the number of organisations and communities benefiting from the program. See section 3.
- The guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure have changed from previous funding rounds with a new emphasis on practical smaller projects. See section 5.
- The program will consist of one funding opportunity (rather than the previous four batches) to reduce administrative burden and support earlier release of project funding. See section 7.
- The program is now competitive, meaning that applications will be assessed against the criteria, and then ranked against other applications (previously applications were considered through an open non-competitive grant process and assessed against the assessment criteria only). See section 8.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

#### 3.1 Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$2,407,000 (GST exclusive) for the Veterans and Community Grants Program for the 2020–21 financial year. Applications will be considered under two grant categories: Small Grants (up to a maximum of \$20,000 per grant) or Large Grants (from \$20,001 to a maximum of \$150,000).

**You may only apply for one grant (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 \$20,000 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 2020–21 will be for Small Grants.

### **Large Grants**

At the discretion of the decision maker, a small number of Large Grants of up to \$150,000 are available for projects that deliver wellbeing support services and activities of broad-scale benefit to the veteran community.

### **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 your application, it may be considered for partial funding. If you do not wish to be considered for partial funding, please mark the appropriate box on the application form.

## **3.2 Grant period**

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

However, DVA recognises the potential impact coronavirus 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 that it requires more time to complete the project due to coronavirus. 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 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 consortia arrangement with at least one ESO

AND

- one of the legal entity types listed at section 4.1.2 below
- incorporated.

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 test.



### 4.1.1 Ex-Service Organisation definition

For the purposes of the V&CG Program, an ESO is considered to be an organisation which:

- 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.

### 4.1.2 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.

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 as per the list above<sup>4</sup>.

## 4.2 Additional eligibility requirements

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

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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. Both the Trust's and Trustee's details will be collected in the application form.

<sup>4</sup> The Australian Government recognises that 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.

### 4.3 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

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

- Commonwealth Company
- 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>6</sup>
- Sole Trader
- Unincorporated Association.

**Please note:** The above list is not definitive. If your entity type is not listed in section 4.1 above, you are not eligible to apply and your application will not be assessed.

### 4.4 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 that they have the appropriate qualifications and skills to undertake the proposed activities.

It is also the responsibility of your organisation to ensure that anyone working directly with vulnerable people has the appropriate registrations under relevant state or territory legislation.

## 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.**

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 that meet the objective and intended outcomes of the V&CG Program.

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

<sup>6</sup> A person is a natural person, an individual, a human being.

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. Examples include:

- 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 etc.) 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, etc.
- 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.

## 5.2 Eligible expenditure

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

**Please note:** The guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure have changed from previous funding rounds. 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. 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 following document(s) must be attached to your application for it to be considered compliant and for it to proceed to assessment:*
    - Proof of Ownership, relevant council approval and a simple floor plan for your building works, consolidated into one document.
- 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
- assets that can be reasonably attributed to meeting agreement deliverables.
- evaluation costs – evaluation costs are only eligible for Large Grants (Such costs must not exceed 10 per cent of the grant amount sought through V&CG. A detailed quote 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.
- replacement items
- 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.

**Please note:**

- 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
- projects that substantially replicate activities and/or services you received funding for under a DVA grant program in the previous two financial years
- 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
- 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 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.

## 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 Large Grants (up to \$150,000) should provide detailed responses [up to 2,000 characters (approx. 300 words)].
- Applications for Small Grants (up to \$20,000) can provide more succinct responses [up to 1,000 characters (approx. 150 words)].

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

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

A strong response will address:

- 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 etc. (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 will address:

- What outcomes do you expect to achieve from your project, and how do these relate to the V&CG Program outcomes below? (Why is it important and what will change?)
  - 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 will address:

- Describe your organisation's experience in delivering similar projects, including the outcomes achieved (what your organisation offers).
- Describe your organisation's community knowledge, links, networks and partnerships and outline how you will use these to successfully deliver the project (how your organisation is connected to the community).
- Outline 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 agreement, 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>7</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 (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.

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<sup>7</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.

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 11:00PM AEDT on **29 January 2021**.

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.

## 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 applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust, or in a partnership or consortium arrangement, it is mandatory to complete the Letter of Declaration template provided (see section 7.2 below).
- If you are applying for Building Works the following document/s must be attached to your application for it to be considered compliant and for it to proceed to assessment:
  - Proof of Ownership, relevant council approval and a simple floor plan for your building works, consolidated into one document.
- If you are applying for Evaluation costs (for Large Grants only), a detailed quote must be provided with the application.

**Please note:** There is a 2mb limit for each attachment.

## 7.2 Joint applications

We recognise that 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 application must identify all other members of the proposed group.

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 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. Where appropriate, supporting evidence can 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 three days after the grant opportunity has closed.

The delegate or their appointed representative<sup>8</sup> will determine whether a late application is 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.

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<sup>8</sup> This may be the Department of Veterans' Affairs delegate or nominated staff member at the EL2 level or above.



## Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Project	Timeframe
Application period	Open: 3 November 2020 Close: 11.00 PM AEDT 29 January 2021
Assessment of applications	Within 8 weeks from the closing date
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Within 4 weeks from completed assessment
Notification of outcomes to applicants	Within 1-2 week from approval
Negotiations and award of grant agreements to successful applicants	Within 6 weeks from approval
Earliest start date of grant project	As stated in your grant agreement, if successful
End date of grant project	As stated in your grant agreement, if successful

### 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 five 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 21 January 2021. Following this time, only questions relating to using and/or submitting the application form will be answered.

## 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 criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage.

Eligible applications will be considered and 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 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 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>9</sup>.

DVA will assess whether the application represents value with relevant money by taking into account:

- 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.

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 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.

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<sup>9</sup> Please refer to the Glossary within this document for the definition of "value with money".

## 9.1 Feedback on your application

A 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 letter advising of the outcome of your application.

# 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 Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement or a Letter of Agreement for this grant opportunity.

We have introduced streamlined grant agreements and grantee obligations to reduce the administrative impost on grantees.

We will use two types of grant agreements for this grant opportunity. Our selection will depend on the associated risks and complexity of your project.

Each agreement has standard 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.

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

### **Letter of Agreement**

This grant agreement comprises the Letter of Agreement and the corresponding grant conditions.

We will 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.

### **Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement**

You will have fifteen (15) business days from the date of a written offer to sign and return this grant agreement. The agreement is considered to be executed once both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application.

## 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 may 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 may 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 your 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 on execution of the grant agreement. In some instances grantees may 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 (ATO) advises that 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 BAS Statement to the ATO, 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 ATO 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 Veteran and Community Grants program, you may wish to speak with

the ATO 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 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 us 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 us immediately.

### 12.2 Reporting

When we use a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement, you must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. You may be required to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- expenditure of the grant.

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 you complete the grant project, you must submit a final report, if requested.

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 or non-audited financial acquittal**

Depending on the grant agreement in place, 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.

Alternatively, we may ask you to provide a non-audited financial acquittal report. A financial acquittal report will verify that you spent the grant 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 that social distancing and other public health measures in place due to COVID-19 may affect your progress. DVA will consider extending the length of the agreement at a later date if your organisation can demonstrate that 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. You can request a variation by contacting your Funding Arrangement Manager in the Community Grants Hub.

You should not assume that 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 Compliance visits**

DVA may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. DVA will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

### **12.6 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.

### **12.7 Evaluation**

We 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.

## 12.8 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 that 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 that, 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](#) (the Act) and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that 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 non-disclosure 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 that it meets all of the three 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 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 that 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 that 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 (ESO)	<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> </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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>10</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>11</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth</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> </ol>
grant activity	refers to the project that 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.
<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.
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 [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
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.

<sup>10</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>11</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
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>