



Australian Government

Community
Grants Hub
Improving your grant experience



Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) 2022–23

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has provided the following general feedback for applicants of the BEST grant opportunity.

Overview

The objective of the Building Excellence in Support and Training program (the program) is to assist ex-service organisations (ESO) to improve the quality of claims received by DVA at the primary determining level, reduce the rate of appeals to the Veterans' Review Board (VRB) and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) and promote the provision of welfare services to the veteran and defence community.

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

- the veteran and defence communities are able to benefit from having better informed ESO practitioners who can ensure claims lodged with DVA are of a high standard and contain all required information to enable timely and quality decisions
- ESO practitioners will assist in improving claims assessment efficiency
- the veteran and defence communities will have access to appropriate compensation and wellbeing advocacy services.

The grant opportunity application period opened on 6 April 2022 and closed on 11 May 2022.

The grant opportunity received 125 applications. Following the decision maker's decision, 119 applications were selected for funding, to a value of \$4.448 million.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand the eligibility criteria and application requirements for this grant opportunity.

Selection process

The Community Grants Hub (the Hub) undertook the screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. This information was then provided to DVA, who then provided the final decision on whether an application did not meet the eligibility and/or compliance criteria. DVA also undertook the formal assessment of all applications using a demand driven model to select the successful providers to deliver the program.

For applications that did not meet the requirements within the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, applicants were notified of this outcome in writing.

The grant amount offered to each eligible applicant was calculated using a formula which has been determined in conjunction with the ESO community. The formula was applied uniformly to all eligible applicants. If an organisation met the eligibility criteria, they were considered for a grant.

The formula took into account:

- the amount of salary and administrative grant funding requested
- compensation and welfare workload information provided in the completed grant application
- the total amount of funding available for the grant funding round
- the total number of eligible applicants.

Following preliminary assessment by DVA using the above formula, all outcomes were referred to a DVA Grants Advisory Committee (GAC), who made funding recommendations to the decision maker. The GAC made recommendations in regards to:

- overall objectives for the program
- conformance with eligibility criteria
- outcome of the application of the grant calculation formula.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs approved the funding to the successful grant recipients.

Selection results

DVA selected 119 organisations to deliver the BEST grant.

The selected organisations demonstrated their ability to meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

General feedback

The successful applicants were eligible and met the objectives of the program. As per section 7.2 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, the grant amount offered to eligible applicants is calculated based on:

- an applicant's requested grant amount and workload information provided in the completed grant application
- the total amount of funding available
- the BEST grant calculation formula.

Guidance for future BEST grant applications

The following guidance may assist applicants in completing applications for BEST grant funding.

Read the supporting information before applying

- It is important to read all available information provided about BEST grants when applying for funding, especially the grant opportunity documentation provided on the GrantConnect website.
- The grant opportunity documentation is specific to each BEST round and contains important information about the purpose of the program, eligibility and compliance requirements, timeframes, and how to apply.
- The application form includes helpful information and details on questions relating to mandatory information required by the Hub and DVA for the selection process.
- When recording advocate workloads, ensure each claim is counted as a single claim regardless of the number of conditions. For example, if a claim is submitted for six conditions, record it as one claim only. It is important all applicants use this method to ensure consistency in workload reporting. Please note, the formula takes into consideration the volume and complexity of the work through workload ratings.
- Do not include VRB and AAT appeals referred to other organisations to process.
- When considering your Welfare Support hours, the DVA website – [Workload Definitions | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#) provides a Welfare Activity Workload Definition.

Eligibility and compliance

To be considered for a grant, you must meet the following:

- The amount requested must be for eligible grant activities and items.
- All identified workload is undertaken by practitioners with up-to-date ATDP or Training and Information Program (TIP) training. From January 2022, TIP trained advocates are no longer able to be insured.
- Possess professional indemnity insurance available through the Veterans' Indemnity and Training Association Inc., or a similar insurance provider
- Check the ATDP register to ensure that advocates recorded on your application are listed in the register with the correct qualification.
- All previous DVA grants have been acquitted (if applicable). We cannot fund applications from an organisation that has overdue acquittals for any previous DVA grant funding at the closing date and time for this grant opportunity.
- An organisation must complete at least 30 compensation or welfare workload units. Please see the Grant Opportunity Guidelines for more information.

Eligible entity types

To be eligible, an ESO must have an eligible entity type. If your organisation is not listed as an eligible entity type you may still be eligible to apply under a sponsorship arrangement with another ESO who is an eligible entity type. If you are applying as a sponsored organisation, you must ensure the sponsor completes the application form on your behalf.

Definition of an ESO

To be eligible for the purposes of BEST grants, an ESO is considered to be an organisation:

- whose membership consists primarily of Australian veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and/or their dependants
- which is established primarily to provide pensions, advocacy and/or welfare assistance to Australian veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants
- which does not operate as a business or charge any fee for acting on behalf of the Australian veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants in the provision of claims or welfare services.

Applicant types

ESOs can choose to apply as one of 2 applicant types:

1. an ESO applying in their own right for funding for their own organisation, or
2. an ESO applying for funding as a sponsoring applicant on behalf of one or more ESOs that may or may not be an eligible entity type.

Applying in your own right

To be eligible to apply in your own right, you must be an ESO and one of the following eligible entity types:

- Company
- Cooperative
- Corporate State or Territory Entity
- Incorporated Association
- Indigenous Corporation
- Partnership
- Statutory Entity.

If you applied as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust, the Trustee must have an eligible entity type as listed above.

Applying as a sponsoring applicant

Whether or not an ESO has an eligible entity type, another eligible ESO may apply as a sponsor on their behalf. Funding is managed by the sponsoring applicant but any recommended grant amount will be assessed on the basis of the sponsored organisation's activity as provided in the application. A sponsoring applicant may apply on behalf of more than one ESO. The sponsoring applicant must submit a separate grant application for each sponsored organisation.

To be eligible, a sponsoring applicant must be an ESO and one of the following eligible entity types:

- Company
 - Cooperative
 - Corporate State or Territory Entity
 - Incorporated Association
 - Indigenous Corporation
 - Partnership
 - Statutory Entity.
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Responsibilities of a sponsoring applicant

The sponsoring applicant's responsibilities agree to:

- bear executive management responsibility and be accountable to DVA for the appropriate use of grant funds by the sponsored organisation in accordance with the terms of the grant
- take responsibility for the receipt and distribution of grant funds
- take responsibility for the collection, collation and provision of all audit, reporting and acquittal documentation for the grant.