Community Harmony Program 2018-19

Guidance for applicants

General advice for a strong application

- This guidance document is to be read in conjunction with the 2018-19 Community Harmony Program Guidelines (the Guidelines).

- Ensure your organisation is eligible to apply and your project is aligned with the Guidelines prior to starting an application.

- Give yourself sufficient time to complete the application. You may need to refer back to the Guidelines or this document to complete your application. Late applications will not be accepted.

- Be clear about the nature of your project, don't assume the assessor knows what you're referring to – if the assessor cannot form a clear picture of what you plan to achieve and the outcomes, it will reduce your chance of success.

Guidance on responding to application questions

What is a program priority?

The four program priorities outlined in the Guidelines are new for 2018-19 (refer to page 5-6 of the Guidelines for a full description).

The four priorities complement the program objectives and in your application you will need to indicate the priority (or priorities - you can select more than one) your proposed activity responds to.

Throughout your application you should demonstrate how your activity will respond to the selected priority.

For example, if you propose an activity focused on a priority audience, for example LGBTI people in cultural diverse communities, in your responses to all questions in the application you should demonstrate how your proposed activity will focus on and respond to the needs of this audience.

Why do I need to submit a separate project plan and budget when there are questions in the application form requesting both a project overview and budget?

The application form only provides for short responses in the Project Description and Project Budget sections.

Therefore when you apply you must also submit a detailed project plan and budget, which should be attached in the Supporting Documentation section of your application. This is a requirement and any delay in providing this required documentation will impact the assessment of your application.

The project plan and budget can be provided in one document or more and in any format (Word, Excel, PDF, etc).

Use the application form to provide a brief overview of your project in the Project Description section and income and expenditure in the Project Budget section.

The project plan you submit should then include:

- a more fulsome description of the project overall and proposed activities
- key dates for implementation and/or milestones
- other information you think may assist the assessor to understand your proposal.

The budget you submit should then include:

- detail on each line item entered in the Project Budget including a breakdown of individual aspects of your activities
- for example, including a budget item of "$3,000 for delivery of the forum on intersectionality" provides insufficient detail
- a strong response will include the costs for all aspects of the $3,000 forum, for example, the cost of the facilitator, room rental, publications, catering, etc
- It is also important to identify other financial and in kind contributions to your project as there is only a very small chance of receiving sufficient grant funding to cover the total cost of an activity.

How do I demonstrate why the initiative is needed?

Your application should refer to the needs or issues in the community that your proposal is seeking to address.

You may wish to identify:

- Victoria-wide needs, for example, increasing racial and religious tensions in Victoria
- regionally specific needs, for example, a particular issue in a specific community
- target groups, or inter-groups, for example, a particular need facing youth or women in a community or in relationships between communities.

Be sure to clearly link the need to the proposed initiative. Evidence does not need to be attached but can be described.

A strong response will cite evidence to support the identified need, which could be:

- anecdotal evidence
- consultations held within the target communities
- local government reports
- Australian Bureau of Statistics data
- external reports.
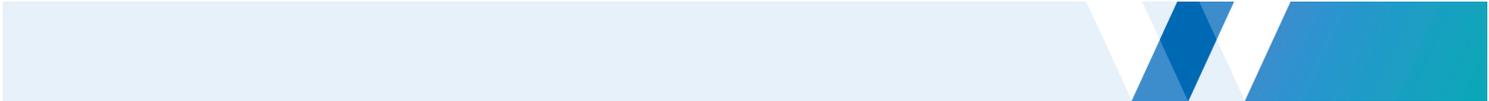
How do I demonstrate the project aligns with the Community Harmony Grants Program objectives?

Your application should align with one or more of the overall program objectives (refer to page 4 of the Guidelines). Focus on the program objectives that are most relevant to your project.

Applications will need more detail and specificity than just noting a project "contributes to community harmony" or "supports social cohesion".

A strong response will identify the impact the proposal intends to have and how the proposal will achieve its goals.

Try to be specific and demonstrate the clear link between the activity and the program objective(s).

You may wish to include references or name any evidence cited in your response.

How do I demonstrate the target audience and communities for my project and the ways in which they will be engaged?

This question relates to understanding the groups of people who will benefit or be positively impacted by your proposal and how you plan to reach them (engagement).

It is also important to demonstrate the capability of your organisation to target and engage a cohort. For example, you could outline how your organisation conducted past activities targeting a specific group and how successful were you with the activity and the outcome.

A strong response will:

- Clearly identify the anticipated demographics of your target audience. If relevant you may wish to identify the age range, gender, cultural, ethnic or faith background, etc, of those targeted. You may also identify the geographic locations of your target audience.
- Outline methods, strategies or approaches to reach your target audience. For example: detail how will you reach culturally diverse students in regional schools if you have indicated this cohort as your audience. Clearly state the pathways (local schools, local community organisations, etc) and ways (in person, social media, etc) you intend to utilise to connect with your audience.

How do I demonstrate the partnerships or relationships between organisations required to deliver my proposed activity?

This question relates to the partners you will be working with on this project. Agreements with partners need to be reached prior to the application being submitted.

A strong application will include the name of all partner organisations and demonstrate:

- the commitment from partners and how will you work together to achieve outcomes
- the level or type of partnership (e.g. financial, in kind support, volunteer hours, venue, resources, etc)
- the expertise the partners bring which is relevant to the activity/proposal.
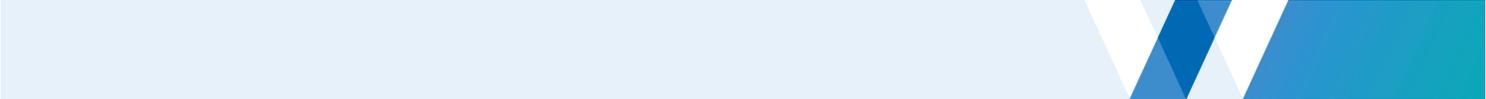
Your application must include letters of support from project partners. You provide these in the application portal by uploading the documents in the Supporting Documentation section.

How do I demonstrate how I will measure success and change? Do I need to submit an evaluation plan?

If you're applying for less than $25,000 per annum, in the application you will need to outline the intended outcome of the activity and how they will be measured.

A strong response (for requests <$25,000 per annum) will outline the data and evidence that will be collected to measure the outcomes of your project.

For example, if you have said that you will change the attitudes of young people you will work with, consider how you measure whether their attitudes did change over the period of your initiative,

Examples of methods to evaluate or assess the effectiveness of your initiative may include qualitative data (surveys, face to face interviews, case studies, collection of anecdotal evidence) or quantitative data (numbers of people involved, percentage of people positively impacted based on surveys, etc).

If you're applying for more than $25,000 per annum, you are required to submit a completed Project Evaluation Plan with your application to the Grants Portal.