

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

2020-21 Priority response to multicultural communities during coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 2

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About the program

What is the Priority Response to Multicultural Communities during Coronavirus (COVID-19) Phase 2?

The Priority Response to Multicultural Communities during coronavirus (COVID-19): Phase 2 (PRMC, or ‘the program’) offers grants to multicultural and faith organisations in Victoria.

The program ensures organisations can effectively respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its impacts on multicultural and faith communities, and in particular respond to the distinct and disproportionate challenges experienced by women and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. It also seeks to promote capacity building among local community network and organisations.

What are the Program Objectives?

The key objectives of the program are to:

- maintain the low number and proportion of positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Victorian multicultural and faith communities;
- increase the number and proportion of individuals testing for the coronavirus (COVID19), support vaccine preparedness, and support high number and proportions of individuals being vaccinated in Victoria’s multicultural and faith communities;
- improve understanding and adherence to Victorian Government health directions among Victoria’s multicultural and faith communities;
- build stronger partnerships across the Victorian multicultural sector; and
- build the capacity of local community networks, organisations and services to support prevention and improve preparedness against future coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreaks.

What funding is available?

The program will provide up to \$8 million in total to support multicultural and faith communities by funding organisations to:

- operate in a COVIDSafe way;
- provide support and emergency relief to multicultural and faith communities so that individuals are to remain in isolation where required;
- deliver outreach supports so that individuals in multicultural and faith communities follow all government health directions to prevent the spread of the virus including presenting for testing if they are unwell or have been in close contact with a confirmed case;
- understand and engage with the government’s coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination messaging and present for a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination when the vaccination program is available in their community;
- work with community leaders and organisations to develop tailored approaches to communicating and engaging with communities and equip community leaders with the information that they can use to educate their community;
- address coronavirus (COVID-19) risk factors and vulnerabilities, particularly in communities who may have been directly impacted by Victoria’s ‘second wave’ and/or are in a position where they may be vulnerable to a future coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak; and
- directly support CALD young people and women, who may have been disproportionality impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The amount of funding available per organisation is based on community need, value for money and available program funds.

Will certain types of projects be prioritised?

Priority will be given to applications that clearly demonstrate that the project supports one or more of the following:

- New and emerging multicultural and faith communities.
- Organisations delivering multicultural and faith youth-led and/or projects that mostly support multicultural youth.
- Organisations delivering multicultural and faith women-led and/or projects that mostly support multicultural women.

We also support applications from:

- Culturally diverse regional or rural communities;
- Multicultural and faith communities who may be impacted by any future coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreaks, if they occur (by ethno-specific community or geographic community, based on DH coronavirus case data at the time of assessment).
- Applications servicing LGAs with proportionally high cultural and linguistically diverse resident populations.

What is the funding for?

Funding can be used for the following purposes:

- **Purchase of items** that support multicultural and faith communities to protect themselves from becoming positive to coronavirus (COVID-19), and that supports individuals to follow health directions, including: emergency relief essentials (including food); personal health safety items such as masks and hand sanitizer; and communications technology and software.
- **Delivery of services** that support multicultural and faith communities to protect themselves from becoming positive to coronavirus (COVID-19), and supports individuals to follow health directions, including: community engagement; health communication and education, and translation of health messages, consistent with all current health directions and advice from Department of Health; and outreach and community support, including translation services as part of this support.
- **Any other activities** as identified by communities and their representatives and accepted by Multicultural Affairs, which supports multicultural and faith communities to protect themselves from becoming positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) and supports testing and individuals to follow health directions; or address social and economic coronavirus (COVID-19) risk factors and vulnerabilities.

What cannot be funded?

- Activities that contradict current and future health directions and advice from the Victorian Government (throughout the duration of the Project).
- Activities that do not meet the program objectives.
- Long term projects that do not provide immediate and time-limited support or services to CALD communities.
- Any illegal or regulated product or activity such as (but not limited to) Alcohol, Tobacco Products, Gaming Services, Weapons.

- Asset / Infrastructure / Capital; and Festival or Event related activities or purchases unless agreed in advance with Multicultural Affairs.
- Retrospective activities or purchases.
- Cash payments and vouchers to community members.
- Cash prizes or commercial gifts.
- Purchase of land.

Eligibility

Is my organisation eligible?

To be eligible, an organisation must meet all eligibility criteria.

You must be either:

- a not-for-profit entity – which you must clearly validate by showing your organisation is:
- registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission; or
- registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria as an incorporated association; or
- registered under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth); or
- the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic); or
- through your organisation's constitution or governance documents.

or

Local Government Authorities (LGAs) including LGA managed, operated, administered and regulated trusts (such entities can act as an auspice for an unincorporated community group

or

a social enterprise with a clearly stated purpose or mission related specifically to supporting multiculturalism.

Definition of "social enterprise":

- led by an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit
- receive a large portion of their income from trade
- reinvest the majority of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission.

Applicants that are not incorporated or do not have an ABN may still apply if they are supported by an eligible auspice organisation that has agreed to manage the grant for them.

Which entities are not eligible?

- State and federal government departments and agencies.
- Individuals and sole traders.
- Commercial enterprises.

How do I know if my organisation has overdue accountability reports?

Organisations that have outstanding accountability reports or final reports from any Fairer Victoria, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (previously the Department of Premier and Cabinet) funded

programs must complete and submit approved outstanding accountability reports or final reports prior to applying or have in place a treatment plan, as agreed with the Department.

To check if you are up to date with accountability reports, please contact DFFH by email at:

Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au

How do I know if my organisation is a ‘legal entity’?

If you are unsure about your ‘entity status’, you can check your organisation’s details online. Your organisation’s official status can be checked at:

- Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) – for Incorporated associations, co-operatives or organisations incorporated through other means (<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/>)
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) – for companies (<https://asic.gov.au/>)
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) – for registered charities (<https://www.acnc.gov.au/>)
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) – for Aboriginal corporations (<https://www.oric.gov.au/>)

To check your Australian Business Register (ABN) go to: abr.business.gov.au/

My organisation does not have an ABN, can we still apply?

Yes, applicants that are not incorporated or do not have an ABN may apply (provided they still meet all the other criteria) if supported by an eligible auspice organisation that has agreed to manage the grant for them.

As an auspice organisation – is there a cap on the number of projects we can I auspice?

Applicants that are not incorporated or do not have an ABN may apply (provided they still meet all the other criteria) if supported by an eligible auspice organisation that has agreed to manage the grant for them.

Where do we find an auspice?

If you are unsure where to seek an auspice, you can consider approaching:

- community organisations that you have an existing partnership or good working relationship with
- more established community organisations within your community
- larger umbrella organisations that support and represent many groups in your community
- neighbourhood houses or community centres; or
- your local council.

My organisation is not eligible, are there any exceptions?

No. This grant program is only for organisations that meet all the eligibility criteria.

Can we request application forms by hard copy mail?

No. All applications must be submitted online.

No late applications will be accepted, so to ensure you do not miss the closing date of applications you will need to apply online. See more details below under ‘*Support for online applications*’.

Can we nominate someone else to help us with emails?

Yes. Just let us know the details of the trusted person that has nominated to assist with email communication with the Department (e.g. local council contact, family member).

Outline this person's details under the Primary Contact section when you apply or confirm contact details (if accepting a Direct Funding Offer). The Primary Contact will receive all day-today correspondence and documents related to the grant funding (e.g. Funding

Application process

How do I apply?

Applications for the program must be submitted online.

You can find the Program Guidelines, more information and the link to the online application form at Priority response to multicultural communities during coronavirus (COVID-19) webpage: <https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-response-multicultural-communities-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Open: 24 February 2021

Close: 4pm Friday 28 May 2020

Please note that late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

What if I miss the deadline for submitting my application – can I get an extension?

No extensions for applications are allowed. Applications will close on 4pm 28 May 2021.

What if I have technical problems when submitting my online application?

If you are having problems, the form isn't loading or submitting, using a different internet browser can sometimes help. If this does not work, please contact the Funding Team on 1300 112 755 or Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au who will assist where possible.

Please allow at least three business days for support and note that the Funding is not available on weekends.

How do I apply if I have an auspice?

If your organisation is not incorporated or does not have an ABN number, you may still apply to the program if you are supported by an eligible auspice organisation that has agreed to manage the grant for you.

The application should be submitted by the auspicee (the organisation that does not have an ABN or is not incorporated), not the auspice organisation.

An auspice arrangement is when a larger organisation assists a smaller organisation to fund a grant activity or event. The larger organisation is known as the auspice organisation. The smaller group or organisation is known as the grant recipient.

If your grant application is successful, your auspice organisation will be responsible for:

- signing the grant agreement
- communication with DFFH regarding grant management
- all legal and financial responsibility for the grant on your group's behalf
- receiving and distributing grant funds under the grant agreement
- ensuring all grant activities or events are completed
- submitting final and evaluation reports and financial acquittals on your organisation's behalf.

Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and mainstream health providers can auspice (one or more) smaller groups on an application but cannot themselves apply.

The auspice organisation must be a not-for-profit and incorporated legal entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN).

Assessment process

How is my application assessed?

Applications will be assessed against the program objectives, eligibility requirements and assessment criteria. Applications will be considered by the Victorian Government's CALD Communities Taskforce.

Applications will be assessed on a fortnightly basis. Organisations are encouraged to apply for funding as soon as possible.

Assessment criteria

- Identified need for the proposed community or cohort, based on available data and community evidence.
- Organisation's proposed response aligned with Program Objectives
- Organisation's demonstrated track record in their work to flexibly support CALD communities and deliver outcomes consistent with funded objectives.
- Organisations capacity to immediately deliver support/services to CALD communities.

Can I ask for a reassessment?

All decisions by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs in relation to any aspect of the funding application, assessment process and outcomes, are final.

Any unsuccessful organisations can contact the Funding Team at 1300 112 755 or Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au to discuss future applications to ensure they meet with program guidelines and eligibility criteria.

Successful applications

Who approves applications for funding?

The Minister for Multicultural Affairs approves successful recipients based upon recommendations provided by the Department and the CALD Communities Taskforce. Once a decision has been made, applicants will be advised of their application outcome.

All decisions by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs in relation to any aspect of the funding application, assessment process and outcomes, are final.

The program is highly competitive. If successful, an organisation may receive an amount of funding less than the amount requested in the application. Applicants may be asked to revise their budget and project in line with the funding offered.

When will successful applicants be announced?

There is no specific date as to when successful applicants will be announced. Applications will be assessed on a fortnightly basis and thus an applicant will be advised of their application outcome depending on the day they submit. You will be contacted at the primary contact email you provide in your application.

Will I get feedback on my application?

Please email the Funding Team at Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au if you require feedback on your application.

Contracting process

What if I can't get my funding agreement and other documents back by the due date?

We advise you get in touch with the Funding Team as soon as possible to discuss your options and indicate your intention to accept the offer of funding. Call 1300 112 755 or email Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au

Can we send our Funding Agreement and documents to DFFH in the mail?

We strongly recommend that you either email your documents back to the Funding Team. Your documents need to be received by the due date in the Letter of Offer, or the offer of funding may be withdrawn.

Hard copy mail is currently experiencing significant delivery delays during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Organisations should return any documents via email to ensure they are received within deadlines.

When you apply or accept your Direct Funding Offer you must provide at least two current email addresses as all communication with successful grant recipients will be by email.

If you cannot return documents by email, please contact DFFH to discuss.

If you have already sent your documents in the mail, please email the Funding Team at Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au to let them know as soon as possible.

Who signs the funding agreement?

The funding agreement is between the successful organisation (or auspice organisation on their behalf) and the Victorian Government. The Funding Agreement will include the terms and conditions of the grant including the use of funds, term of the agreement and reporting requirements.

The funding agreement needs to be signed by an 'authorised representative' - someone in the organisation with the authority to enter into a legal agreement for the organisation (e.g. President, CEO, Chair etc.).

If you are supported an auspice, the funding agreement is between the Victorian Government and the Auspice – it will need to be signed by an authorised representative from the auspice organisation (not by someone from the applicant organisation).

When should we get funds and be able to start our activities?

Before we can transfer funds, you will need to complete, sign and return the following documents by the due date in the Letter of Offer, or the offer of funding may be withdrawn:

- Funding Agreement (signed and all pages returned)

- Vendor Form (the group's bank details)

Once we have received your documents (and if applicable, any outstanding overdue reports), your grant payment. This can take up to 30 days (but is usually quite quick). Once funds are received you can start your activities.

Please note, all payments are dependent on an organisation being up to date with reports for existing DFFH (previously the Department of Premier and Cabinet) grants.

Managing your contract

What are the reporting obligations?

Grant recipients will need to provide monthly reports, in a format determined by the Department, and a Final report.

At the end of the funding period you will be required to submit a final report outlining the use of funding and the activities achieved. DFFH will provide all report templates to funded organisations via email.

To complete the Final Report, all funds need to be spent and activities complete before you submit your report by the due date specified in your Victorian Common Funding Agreement. If you have completed your activities before the due date, you can submit your report early and close your grant.

DFFH will provide all progress and final report templates to organisations via email.

What happens if we can't complete our activities or spend all the money?

It is best to contact the Funding Team as soon as possible if you will not be able to finish your activities or spend all the money. It is best to contact them early if you have issues to discuss your options.

- if the Funding Agreement has not been signed, then the offer of funding may be withdrawn with no further action required
- if the agreement has been signed and funds paid, the funds must be returned. The Funding Team will assist you to cancel your funding agreement so you can apply for other funding in future
- if you have partially spent the grant funds, you can return the unspent funds, but you will still need to submit a Final Report for the money you did spend

There is no negative outcome if you cancel or return grant funds as it shows good financial responsibility, so you will still be eligible to apply for other grants in the future.

However, if you don't let us know about issues with your funding or activities, you could end up with your Final Report overdue which *will* make you ineligible to apply for other grant funding or receive any more funds under existing grants until it is returned.

Please contact the Taskforce Funding Team for further information on 1300 112 755 or Multicultural.COVID.Taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au They can help you to ensure you do not end up with overdue reports that will impact your future funding.

What happens if the COVID-19 restrictions change during my project?

It is a condition of funding that grant recipients comply with all current Department of Health (DoH) advice regarding health directions, restrictions and social distancing at all times while delivering activities under the program.

It is the responsibility of the organisation to stay up to date with the most recent health advice and must follow the health directions and social distancing requirements that are in place. If providing support, guidance or advice to members or the general public, you must ensure this aligns with the current restrictions and DoH health guidance. This includes, for example:

- health information and advice that you promote to your communities
- compliance with social distancing restrictions in the delivery of your activities
- providing a safe workplace environment for staff and/or volunteers

All current information (including translated resources) about DoH health directions, social distance requirements and restrictions can be found at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>.

You can also contact the Coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398. If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450.

This information is outlined in the Funding Agreement for all successful grant recipients.

To receive this document in another format, phone [1300 112 755](tel:1300112755), using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the [Funding Team, CALD Communities Taskforce <multicultural.covid.taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au>](mailto:multicultural.covid.taskforce@dffh.vic.gov.au).

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Available at the Priority response to multicultural communities during coronavirus (COVID-19)

[<https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-response-multicultural-communities-during-coronavirus-covid-19>](https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-response-multicultural-communities-during-coronavirus-covid-19)