

Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program

Program guidelines

**We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge that Aboriginal self-determination is a human right and recognise the hard work of many generations of Aboriginal people.**

To receive this document in another format, email the Office for Women [women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au).

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. ‘Indigenous’ or ‘Koori/Koorie’ is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

ISBN 978-1-76130-435-4 (pdf/online/MS word)

Available at [VIC.GOV.AU – Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program](https://www.vic.gov.au/women-energy-and-manufacturing-funding-program) https://www.vic.gov.au/women-energy-and-manufacturing-funding-program

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# Message from the Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

The energy and manufacturing sectors are vital to Victoria’s economy. These sectors are currently undergoing a rapid transformation, driven by new technologies and the Victorian Government’s commitment to achieve 95% renewable electricity by 2035 and net zero emissions by 2045.

We need to tackle workforce challenges and advance gender equality. We also need to increase the number of women working in these industries.

I am very proud to present the Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program. The program supports initiatives in the energy and manufacturing industry. It does this by addressing the unique challenges within these traditionally majority-men industries. It also encourages more women to enter and thrive in these sectors.

This funding focuses on programs that will increase women’s participation in trade-based and leadership roles. These roles have been predominantly occupied by men. It provides support to initiatives that address barriers, improve recruitment, boost retention, and create opportunities for women to excel in these fields.

My vision is for this program to deliver projects that support women from diverse age groups, backgrounds and identities to embark on and advance their careers in these industries. I hope these grants drive progress towards gender equality in Victoria. But I also hope they enable women to take on meaningful roles in the manufacturing and energy industries across our state.

I encourage all those interested to apply for our program. We need to keep working towards making a tangible difference in the lives of Victorian women.



**The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP**Minister for Women

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# About the Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program

The Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program supports strategies to increase women's participation in the energy and manufacturing industry.

The guidelines sets out the program’s requirements for:

* initiatives to support delivery of strategies to boost women’s participation
* improvement of gender equality in Victoria’s manufacturing and energy sectors.

These strategies aim to address recommendation 19 of the [Inquiry into economic equity for Victorian women](https://www.vic.gov.au/economic-equity-victorian-women-inquiry)[[1]](#footnote-2) to attract, recruit and retain women in majority-men industries.

Occupational and industrial gender segregation is a key driver of the gender pay gap and women’s economic insecurity.​

Majority-men industries tend to be higher paid than majority-women industries, and are more likely to have performance pay and other forms of remuneration.

Women also often face many barriers to retention and progression. These include:

* lack of access to paid parental leave
* sexism
* inflexible working arrangements
* sexual harassment.

Women’s economic equity increases social inclusion and benefits the economy. This includes through:

* higher productivity
* innovation
* economic growth.

As the [Inquiry into economic equity for Victorian women](https://www.vic.gov.au/economic-equity-victorian-women-inquiry)[[2]](#footnote-3) notes – addressing the gender imbalance in majority-men workforces requires targeted initiatives to address issues unique to these sectors.

The Victorian Government has done this before through:

* [Women in Construction Strategy](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-women-construction-strategy)[[3]](#footnote-4)
* [Women in Transport Strategy](https://www.vic.gov.au/women-transport)[[4]](#footnote-5).

Now the government is looking to do the same with the manufacturing and energy sectors.

The manufacturing and energy industries are facing challenges around skills shortages. This is in part due to the gender imbalances in their workforces. Women account for just:

* 32 per cent of Victoria’s manufacturing sector
* 33 per cent of the electricity, gas, water and waste services industry.[[5]](#footnote-6)

Reducing barriers and supporting more women into these sectors will:

* improve outcomes for Victorian women
* help businesses be fair and more inclusive
* address skills shortages
* boost business performance.

Research has shown that companies with better gender diversity in their boards were 28 per cent more likely to outperform their peers.[[6]](#footnote-7)

These strategies will complement existing Victorian Government initiatives and industry approaches, such as:

* Made in Victoria 2030: Victoria’s Manufacturing Statement
* Victorian Energy Jobs Plan (currently under development).

The strategies will also focus on:

* advanced manufacturing
* renewable energy.

These growing areas are important to the Victorian economy and will require more workers in the future.

Announced on 25 October 2023[[7]](#footnote-8), the first tranche of funding as part of these strategies focused on:

* increasing existing programs to attract more women into manufacturing and energy
* support for training and skills development.

# Funding objectives

The program objectives are to increase the participation and equity of Victorian women in the energy and manufacturing sectors by supporting:

* clear and attractive career pathways
* access to education and training
* economic equity and leadership opportunities
* accountability for workplace culture, diversity and wellbeing.

Initiatives need to demonstrate alignment with at least one of the above areas.

## Priority considerations

Priority will be given to applications that focus on one or more of the following:

* **Projects that support retention and ability to thrive** in the energy and manufacturing sectors. This includes addressing more long-term and structural barriers to their participation.
* **Supporting women who may face compounding barriers due to other forms of disadvantage or discrimination**, such as First Nations women, older women, multicultural women, LGBTIQA+ women, women with a disability and single mothers. This may include:
  + identifying relevant transferable skills
  + supporting pathways to manufacturing and energy sector jobs
  + addressing ageism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism in workplaces.
  + Initiatives addressing barriers to participation and pay.
* **Encouraging cultural, attitudinal, behavioural and structural change** to advance gender equality.
* **Majority-men roles:** Supporting women into majority-men roles within these industries, such as:
  + STEM
  + trades
  + technical
  + leadership.
* **Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs):** Activities that support and advance gender equality in small and medium-sized enterprises.
* **Regional and rural areas:** Activities in regional locations. For the energy sector, priority goes to renewable energy sector projects in identified growth areas, such as:
  + Gippsland
  + Central North
  + Murray River.

## Available funding

The total funding available for this program is **$1.320 million**.

The program aims to support an even distribution of initiatives per industry. Some initiatives may support women in both the energy and manufacturing industries.

Delivery needs to align with the timeframe of the strategies. All approved projects must be completed, and funds spent by 30 April 2025.

Please note that the pool of funding available for the program is limited. We recommend applicants consider scoping initiatives of no more than $200,000.

Due to the competitive nature of this program, we may allocate less than the requested amount to successful applicants. Depending on the number and type of applications received, applicants may be required to revise their proposal through a process of negotiation. Any revisions will be required in writing.

We will provide written notification of the outcome of all applications.

Do **not** assume you are successful or enter into financial or other commitments until you receive notification in writing.

Note: There is a limit of **one** application per organisation.

# How to apply

Important information about making an application

| Applications open 23 January 2024 | Submit application | Applications close 20 February 2024 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Read the program guidelines. * Make sure your organisation meets the eligibility criteria. * Attend an information session. * If you have any questions, contact the Office for Women by email [women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au). | * Register to log in to the Grants Gateway to complete an application. * Complete the [online application form](https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/s/login/). * Answer all questions. (Incomplete applications are not accepted.) * Attach relevant or mandatory documents with the application. * Submit the application by the due date and time. | * Late or incomplete applications are not considered. |

# Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for funding, applicants **must**:

* be an eligible organisation (see [Who can apply for a grant?](#_Who_can_apply))
* have no outstanding reports from previous Victorian government grant programs
* be seeking funding for an eligible activity (see [What can the grant money be used for?](#_What_can_the)).

## Who can apply for a grant?

Organisations can apply for a grant if they meet the eligibility criteria:

* **You must be either**:
  + an organisation incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) or equivalent law
  + a company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and registered as not-for-profit through the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
* **You must have**:
  + a valid Australian Business Number (ABN). To check your ABN, visit [Australian Business Number](https://abr.business.gov.au/)[[8]](#footnote-9)
  + at least $10 million in public liability insurance to cover all aspects of funded activity for the term of the funding agreement – or an auspice arrangement with this insurance cover
  + no outstanding final reports from other departmental grants.

### How to check your organisation type

* For incorporated associations, co-operatives or organisations incorporated through other means, visit [Consumer Affairs](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/)[[9]](#footnote-10).
* For a Company Limited by Guarantee, visit [ASIC](https://connectonline.asic.gov.au/)[[10]](#footnote-11).
* For registered charities, visit [Australian Charities and Non-profits Commission](https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities)[[11]](#footnote-12) (ACNC).
* For Aboriginal corporations, visit [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations](https://www.oric.gov.au/)[[12]](#footnote-13).

## Who cannot apply for a grant?

Organisations that are **not** eligible to apply are:

* state and federal government departments and agencies
* local government authorities (LGAs) including LGA-managed, operated, administered and regulated trusts
* applicants with overdue or outstanding final reports from previous or current departmental grants
* applicants based outside Victoria.

## What can the grant money be used for?

The types of activities that may be funded include:

* support for introducing workplace policies that advance gender equality, for example:
  + piloting flexible work practices
  + a four-day work week
* programs or training for employers to create more inclusive workplaces
* improvements to workplace facilities and safety policies
* ‘wraparound’ supports for women already in these sectors, such as women’s networks
* leaderships programs
* scholarships for women
* vouchers for buying tools and other relevant equipment
* trade demonstration/showcasing events
* networking events
* any other initiatives that align to the intent of the program.

Where eligible and assessed as suitable, multiple providers may be funded to deliver initiatives simultaneously up to the maximum funding allocated.

## What will not be funded?

The program **will not** fund:

* activities that do not align with the program’s principles and objectives (see [Funding objectives](#_Funding_objectives))
* commercial or fundraising activities
* activities that promote or are held for politically partisan purposes
* activities taking place outside Victoria
* activities occurring outside the funding period
* buying alcohol
* building works
* interstate and international travel
* items not clearly described or are labelled ‘miscellaneous’ in the application
* retrospective funding for projects or programs that have already started or are complete
* applications from organisations that have not met the terms and conditions of other departmental grants.

## Other eligibility criteria

You are encouraged to submit the following documents with your application:

* evidence of insurance currency (mandatory)
* list previous funding received from the Victorian Government (provider of the funding and what was funded)
* evidence of staff, mentors or presenters’ competence and experience
* evidence of experience delivering similar initiatives
* a summary of intended evaluation (completed evaluation plan to be submitted within 3 months of signing a funding agreement).

If successful, providers will be required to complete a Gender Equality Action Plan within 3 months of signing a funding agreement. Resources and guidance will be provided by the Office for Women.

# How are applications assessed?

All applications go through the following assessment process:

* **Eligibility assessment:** All applications undergo an eligibility assessment against the eligibility criteria. The eligibility assessment determines whether the application should proceed for merit assessment.
* **Merit- assessment:** Eligible applications are assessed against the assessment criteria. This is based on responses provided in the application form. (See [Merit assessment](#_Merit_assessment).)
* **Assessment panel:** All applications are reviewed by a panel. The panel includes representatives from across the Victorian Public Service with industry and gender equality expertise.
* **Ministerial approval:** The Minister for Women makes the final decision based on the recommendations from the assessment panel.
* **Application outcome:** All applicants are notified of the outcome of their application by email.

All decisions **are final** that relate to any aspect of the:

* funding application
* eligibility
* assessment process.

This includes any decision to:

* award a grant under the Women in Energy and Manufacturing funding program
* withdraw the offer or cancel the grant funding agreement.

## Merit assessment

Assessment criteria are additional to eligibility criteria.

Assessment criteria are the specified principles or standards against which applications are judged. The criteria are used to assess the merit of applications and, in the case of a contested grant program, they are used to determine application rankings.

Applications are first checked to make sure that the applicant and their activities are eligible for funding. After that, eligible applications are assessed using the following criteria. Each criterion is given a percentage weighting to show its relative importance in the assessment process.

Applications should address all relevant criteria. They should also explain any criteria that cannot be met.

### Criterion 1 – Planned Activities (weighting 30%)

Factors under this criterion may include:

* measurable outcomes for participants
* number of participants
* delivery style and approach.

### Criterion 2 – Strategic alignment (weighting 30%)

Outcomes align with intent of program:

* to increase the participation and equity of Victorian women in the energy and manufacturing sectors through supporting:
  + clear and attractive career pathways
  + access to education and training
  + economic equity and leadership opportunities
  + accountability for workplace culture, diversity and wellbeing.
  + alignment with priority considerations listed above under ‘Funding Objectives’

### Criterion 3 – Resourcing (weighting 20%)

* ability to promote the program and recruit participants
* ability to submit a project plan, Gender Equality Action Plan and progress reports
* enable periodic monitoring and evaluation of activities, including but not limited to performance and experience measures
* suitably qualified and experienced staff, mentors, presenters.
* access to suitable venues and facilities for training or workshops.

### Criterion 4 – Previous experience/gender equality expertise (weighting 20%)

* demonstrated expertise or experience delivering similar initiatives or plans to form partnerships with gender equality organisations or experts as part of this project.

# Notification of application outcomes

All applicants receive written notification of the outcome of their application.

If you **are successful**, the department will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you **are unsuccessful**, the department will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome.

Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback within one week of being advised of the outcome. Written feedback is given within one month of your request.

# Funding conditions

## Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with the department within a specified timeframe. If a funding offer is not accepted during this period, the department may withdraw the grant.

The funding agreement outlines:

* the grant’s terms and conditions, including use of funds
* key deliverables and due dates
* reporting requirements.

All funded activities **must** be completed by 31 April 2025.

If successful, the department may publish details including project name, description and grant amount online or in a media release at the Minister for Women’s discretion.

For more information, visit [Victorian Common Funding Agreement](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement).[[13]](#footnote-14)

The activity does **not** include using the funding for political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

## Payment of grant funds and reporting requirements

The department will pay successful organisations on completion of agreed project milestones and deliverables outlined in the VCFA.

Milestone payments are made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) once deliverables are met, in line with the VCFA.

### Goods and Services Tax (GST)

* **GST is paid** if the grant is funding a good or service, and if the recipient organisation is registered for GST.
* **GST is not paid** if the recipient organisation is not registered for GST.
* **GST is not be paid** if the recipient organisation is a government entity (for example, school, TAFE).
* **GST is not paid** if the grant is not funding a good or service.

## Funding acknowledgement

Successful applicants must acknowledge funding from the Victorian Government. Support and promotional guidelines (Acknowledgement and Publicity Guidelines) form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

## Legal responsibilities

In delivering the activity, grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth, state or territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

* *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
* *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic)
* *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic).

## Insurance requirements

You must have public liability (minimum $10 million) insurance and any other insurance that is relevant to the activities of your project. The department will ask for proof of insurance that covers the project period.

Non-government organisations that are funded to deliver services for children must be:

* incorporated separate legal entities that can be sued in child abuse proceedings
* appropriately insured against child abuse.

For more information visit [Department of Justice and Community Safety](https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/organisations-providing-services-to-children-new).[[14]](#footnote-15)

# More information and assistance

If you have questions about the grants, please contact [women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:women.victoria@dffh.vic.gov.au).

## Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications.

Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and other applicable laws.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. To find the DFFH Privacy Policy visit [Department of Families, Fairness and Housing](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/privacy-statement)[[15]](#footnote-16).

Requests for access to information about you held by DFFH should be sent to:

Privacy Manager  
P.O. Box 500  
East Melbourne 8002.

1. https://www.vic.gov.au/economic-equity-victorian-women-inquiry [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Op. Cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-women-construction-strategy [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://www.vic.gov.au/women-transport [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023, *Labour force, Australia, detailed – EQ06*, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. McKinsey and Company, 2020, *Diversity wins: How inclusion matters*, https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/diversity%20and%20inclusion/diversity%20wins%20how%20inclusion%20matters/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters-vf.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/attracting-more-women-manufacturing-and-energy [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. https://abr.business.gov.au/ [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. https://connectonline.asic.gov.au [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. https://www.oric.gov.au [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/organisations-providing-services-to-children-new [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/privacy-statement [↑](#footnote-ref-16)