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| Frequently asked questions (FAQs) |
| Future Ready 2025-2026 program |
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# How should I use these frequently asked questions (FAQ)?

These FAQs are intended to provide additional information and responses to common questions about the Future Ready 2025-26 grant program.

You can find the Future Ready 2025-26 program guidelines at [Future Ready grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/future-ready-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/future-ready-grants

If you cannot find what you are looking for and have a question about the program, please contact the Office for Youth at [futureready@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:futureready@dffh.vic.gov.au).

# About the Program

## How much funding is available to support my project?

Funding ranging from $24,000 to $56,000 over two years ($12,000 to $28,000 per year) is available for eligible organisations to deliver a variety of student supports over 2025 and 2026 (from the start of Term 2, 2025 to the end of Term 4, 2026).

Organisations delivering the program across multiple schools can access the maximum grant amount for each school they are partnering with. This is capped at three times the maximum grant amount (up to $168,000 over two years) for delivery across at least three schools. This does not prevent organisations from delivering in more than three schools. For example, an organisation delivering the program across four or more schools will still be eligible for a maximum of $168,000 over two years.

## Which level of funding is best for my organisation?

Organisations should consider their capacity to engage young people in their program. To receive maximum funding, it is expected that a program would have annual participation figures of at least 20 students per school per year.

Applications that propose to support a higher number of students may be prioritised. Relative to the amount of funding requested, the selection criteria will also consider the project’s reach, outcomes and level of youth participation.

An understanding of the cohort of young people in your local community, their interests and appetite to engage with activities will also help to inform which level of funding is right for your organisation.

## What happens if my organisation is unable to meet targets?

If your organisation is successful in securing funding through the program it will be important to keep the Department updated of any concerns about meeting your agreed targets.

In applying for funding, please carefully consider the capacity of your organisation to meet the targets you set over the two years and apply for a level of funding that is most appropriate.

## What kind of activities can be delivered with the funding?

Future Ready will prioritise applications aligned to **three priority areas**:

1. **Young people achieve their goals through education, training, volunteering or employment.** Young people are positively engaged with and progress in education. They have the knowledge and skills to move into meaningful work or further study.
2. **Young people are respected and involved in decision making.** Young people have their voices, lived experience and solutions heard. They have genuine opportunities to influence decisions.
3. **Young people are confident and strong in their identity and culture.** Young people are connected to their culture, language, beliefs and identity. They feel accepted and valued within their communities.

Through Future Ready, secondary school students will take part in opportunities to understand their potential, develop their skills, reach their goals and be confident in their identity. This may involve a wide variety of activities that achieve the program priorities including (but not limited to):

* mentoring, supporting students to understand and reach their potential
* recognised training, work placement or volunteering, with a focus on practical, hands-on learning opportunities, supporting students on their path to higher education or employment
* leadership opportunities, supporting students to develop practical skills in teamwork, decision making, communication and project management
* inclusive learning and development opportunities, including creative learning (such as art and music), supporting students of all cultural and faith backgrounds and all abilities in an environment that is culturally safe, values diversity and supports students to connect to their identity.

Funding can also be used to cover reasonable transport costs to support participants, staff and volunteers to get to and from program activities. This is encouraged, particularly for students in rural and regional areas where transport can be a barrier to participation in activities.

Please refer to the Program Guidelines for information on activities that cannot be funded.

## What would be considered a reasonable percentage of funding allocated to staffing costs?

There is no pre-determined percentage of funding expected to be allocated for staffing, however project budgets are expected to cover the full cost of delivering projects, including activities and supports to enable young people to participate in programs. Project coordination and staffing costs should be proportionate to your project's scale, and include:

* staffing costs with a direct link to the activity

– any reimbursements, allowances and honoraria for young people supporting the project.

## What is the difference between Future Ready 2025-2026 and the previous Advance program

Changes to the Advance program have been made following feedback and consultation with young people, youth sector organisations and program providers.

Future Ready is converting to a higher value, longer-term (two years rather than one) grant program. Longer term funding will provide more time to plan activities, increase stability and reduce the administrative burden for participating organisations. Higher funding levels are expected to enable provision of effective supports tailored to young people’s specific needs.

Future Ready will also become a contested grant program. Victorian government secondary schools will be eligible to apply, as well as not-for-profit community organisations and social enterprises (in partnership with secondary schools). Eligibility has been expanded to enable opportunities to benefit from partnership approaches, including through leveraging complementary expertise and shared resources.

New program guidelines include more flexible activity requirements and closer alignment to *Our promise, Your future: Victoria’s youth strategy 2022-2027.*

## How does a partnership application work?

The department encourages partnership applications between:

* community organisations (or social enterprises) with secondary schools
* two or more secondary schools.

Organisations or schools can work together on a single application. Partnership applications should include detail on the capabilities and experience of each organisation within the partnership.

This approach will require one organisation to submit the application and act as the single point of contact for the grant.

Community organisations and social enterprises are required to provide a letter of support from the school they intend to partner with to deliver Future Ready, to confirm the school’s commitment to the project. If they receive funding to deliver Future Ready across more than one school, a letter from each school is required.

Funding will only be allocated for one project per school, so it is recommended that schools do not write letters of support for more than one project.

## How do I measure participation numbers?

A young person’s participation should be counted only once annually for each unique activity. For example, if a young person participated in recognised training and there were 10 sessions in 2025, they should be captured as ‘1’ participant in the annual reporting period. If the same young person also participated in a work placement through Future Ready following their recognised training, they should be counted as ‘1’ participant for each activity (i.e. ‘2’ in total).

Participation targets for successful applicants will be determined for each individual project based on the project scope and numbers submitted in their application. This will be reviewed and finalised during the planning phase of the program. The department will work with successful organisations to submit and update activity plans in 2025.

## Can the same organisation submit multiple applications for funding?

Schools, community organisations and social enterprises can only submit one application per funding round. This includes partnership applications led by another organisation.

# About the application process

## When do applications open and close?

Applications open on **7 October 2024** and close on **29 November 2024 at 3:00pm**.

No applications will be accepted after the closing date. Therefore it is strongly recommended to please submit applications well ahead of this time. The department will be unable to accept late applications for any reason.

## How do I apply?

All applications must be submitted online via the [Grants Gateway](https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/) https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/.

## How to register for a Grants Gateway account?

To get started, you will need to access the DFFH Grants Gateway and register for an account. You can access the system by visiting [Grants Gateway](https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/) https://grantsgateway.dffh.vic.gov.au/.

The Grants Gateway User registration guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to register for a Grants Gateway account. **We highly recommend using a shared email account when registering to allow multiple people in the same organisation to have access to the application.**

## What if I have a technical problem when submitting my online application?

If you are having technical problems and the application form is not loading or submitting, please try a different internet browser as this can sometimes help. If this does not work, please contact the Office for Youth at [futureready@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagegrants@dffh.vic.gov.au).

Please provide as much information as you can about the issue in your email.

Technical issues can not be used to seek an extension, so it is important to submit applications ahead of the closing time (3:00pm on 29 November 2024).

## Can we apply using the same projects that have previously been funded?

Current Advance providers are welcome to develop applications using the same model that has been delivered previously, noting that applications will be assessed according to the criteria listed in the guidelines / FAQs. Full detail must be provided in the application – do not assume the department has knowledge of previous delivery.

## When does my organisation need to confirm its auspice arrangement?

You will need to confirm your auspice arrangement when submitting your application, and attach evidence of the arrangement in your application (e.g. a letter of intent or similar from the auspice organisation)

## Can a social enterprise apply if they are for-profit?

The conditions are detailed in the guidelines. Generally yes, noting the organisation should have a clear purpose or mission related to engaging and empowering young people. Social enterprises:

* have an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public community benefit
* get most of their income from trade
* reinvest most of their profit/surplus in fulfilling their mission (at least 50%).

Social enterprises must attach a copy of their constitution with their application.

# The assessment process

## How will my application be assessed?

All applications will be assessed against the selection criteria outlined in the guidelines and application form.

Applications will first undergo an assessment against eligibility criteria. Eligible applications will then progress to a merit assessment with an assessment panel giving a rating against each selection criteria. The assessment panel will be made up of departmental staff and other government representatives.

Based on the merit assessments, the panel will provide funding recommendations to the Minister for Youth.

The Minister for Youth will make a final decision based on panel recommendations and applicants will be notified of outcomes at this stage.

## What are the key questions in the application form that relate to the selection criteria?

These are the questions in the application form that align with the selection criteria in the program guidelines. We have included additional help text below the questions.

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| **Weighting** | **Questions and help text** |
| **Program overview**  **(15%)** | 1. **Describe the aims, objectives and benefits of your proposed Future Ready project for young people including how this project aligns with the program's objectives.** 2. **Describe the local needs for the program in your community. Provide statistics, data, and results from consultations conducted with young people to support your description.**  * Refer to program overview and program priorities sections of the Program guidelines |
| **Project delivery**  **(35%)** | 1. **What activities will your project deliver and what are the expected outcomes? Include how you will measure impact.**  * Clearly outline the range of youth-led activities your project will deliver under each activity category. Include details about the scale, frequency, and duration of each activity where relevant. * Explain how these activities address the interests and needs of young people in your community and expected outcomes for each activity type. * Provide clear indicators of success, such as increased skills, improved confidence, enhanced creativity, or greater community involvement among participants. * Explain the methods and tools you will use to measure these outcomes * Where relevant, explain how the requested funding aligns with the number of participants and overall impact of the proposal.  1. **How will your project manage risks and ensure the safety of young people?**  * Describe the risk management processes that will be implemented in your project including any key risks you foresee. * Explain how your project will comply with the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/) https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/ to ensure the safety and well-being of young people participating in Future Ready activities. * Mention any training or guidelines provided to staff and volunteers to ensure they are equipped to handle potential risks and emergencies.  1. **Estimated number of young people participating in your project per year**  * Provide an estimate of the number of young people participating in your project per year (note: a minimum of 20 young people per school each year is expected).  1. **How will you support young people to be involved in planning and delivering your project?**  * Describe the strategies you will use to engage, retain and recognise young people's active participation in guiding the program. * Please indicate if your project plans to establish a youth advisory group to lead the project. * Estimated number of young people that will be directly involved in the design and delivery of your Future Ready project and activities per year. |
| **Effective support for all students to reach their potential**  **(30%)** | 1. **What strategies will be implemented so that your Future Ready activities are inclusive and accessible to all young people, including young people from newly arrived and refugee communities, Aboriginal young people, young carers, young people with disability and LGBTIQA+ young people? How will students who face complex barriers to participation in education and their local community be supported to participate?**  * Outline the steps you will take to make sure your project is inclusive and welcoming to all young people, including those identifying as LGBTIQA+, multicultural and multifaith young people, newly arrived and refugee communities, Aboriginal young people, and young people living with disability. * Describe any specific accommodations or supports you will provide to address the needs of diverse participants. * Explain how you will promote inclusivity and diversity through your activities. * Discuss any training or awareness programs for staff and volunteers to ensure they understand and uphold inclusive practices. * Outline how young people who face complex barriers to participation in education and the local community will be supported to participate in your Future Ready activities.  1. **How will your project offer opportunities for students to develop transferable skills?**  * Describe how young people will be supported to develop transferable skills through your Future Ready project, including opportunities:   – for hands-on learning  – to lead the planning and delivery of Future Ready activities  – to develop skills in decision making, communication, teamwork, project management and leadership. |
| **Organisational experience and capability (15%)** | **Explain how your organisation has the experience, capability, and capacity to deliver the program successfully.**  Consider the following in your response:   * Evidence of success * (for community organisations) Provide specific examples of past success partnering with schools and delivering programs in schools * Connections and partnerships: Describe your strategies for building networks and partnerships that will support this project by enhancing the impact, delivery or sharing of best practices. * Governance and management: Outline your governance structure and management processes, including risk management and how you will address potential challenges that may arise during the project. * Organisational Commitment: Detail your organisation's commitment to the project through staff allocation, roles and any additional resources or support provided to ensure the project's success. |

## Will successful organisations receive the total amount requested as part of the grant application?

Due to the competitive nature of this program, successful organisations may not receive the full funding amount requested as part of their grant application. If a lesser among is awarded, applicants will be provided with an explanation for this.

For instance, the assessment panel might decide that an application demonstrates a strong alignment and capability to deliver the program, but has not costed their program commensurately with its proposed activities. In this situation a lesser amount may be offered, and a revised budget and deliverables will be agreed when entering into a funding agreement.

## When will outcomes be known?

The department aims to notify all applicants of outcomes as soon as possible following a rigorous assessment and approval process. This is expected by late February 2025, but please note this timeframe is subject to change. Unsuccessful applicants will be given the opportunity to seek written feedback on their applications.

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

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In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Available at [Future Ready grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/future-ready-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/future-ready-grants

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