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2025-26 Community Food Relief Program – Coordination Grants

Question and answer

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To receive this document in another format, email the Food Relief Policy team at foodrelief.team@dffh.vic.gov.au

**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.**

**We are committed to safe and inclusive workplaces, policies, and services for people from LGBTIQA+ communities and their families.**

# About the program

## What types of projects may be appropriate?

Projects must align with **two or more** of the program objectives and seek funds for eligible activities.

Program objectives:

* strengthen formal collaboration and enduring partnerships between major providers across the food relief sector to reduce duplication and improve system effectiveness and efficiency
* enhance access to healthy and culturally appropriate food relief for more Victorian communities across the state currently facing food insecurity
* develop or enhance sustainable, cost-effective models for sourcing and distribution of food relief across Victoria, filling critical service gaps and/or improving the quality and variety of food supply.

Eligible activities:

* enhancing shared infrastructure or facilities such as commercial kitchens or food storage to increase food relief system capacity
* sourcing program supplies, such as nutritious and culturally appropriate food and packaging materials
* building formal partnerships and networks and undertaking strategic planning to strengthen the capacity, efficiency or sustainability of food distribution programs and/or to develop enhanced food supply models
* training and development activities to enhance the skills, knowledge and safety of staff and volunteers involved in providing food relief
* direct program delivery costs including transport, logistics and coordination, with a focus on collaboration and shared approaches to reduce inefficiencies
* reimbursing volunteer expenses directly related to the project’s delivery and proportionate to the total project cost.

## Will there be future grant rounds?

This is a once-off program for 2025-26.

## Why is there a focus on partnerships?

Collaboration and partnerships are critical to ensure food relief system sustainability and efficiency. They reduce duplication, enhance efficiency, and leverage shared resources across the state.

Victoria’s food relief system has developed over time, and there are opportunities to streamline and strengthen coordination as organisational and system maturity grows.

The program supports partnership projects that will improve collaboration between major food relief providers to enhance the supply and distribution of food relief across Victoria. It will also strengthen the state’s food security ecosystem.

## Can we apply for less than $150,000?

No – $150,000 is the minimum amount you can applied for. The program’s focus is on supporting partnerships between two or more organisations.

## How long do we have to complete the project?

Organisations have until 30 June 2027 to complete their project activities.

# Eligibility

## We have an overdue report for another project, what should we do?

If you have an overdue report for another grant funded through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department), please contact the responsible team. Your key contact should be on the funding agreement for that grant program.

Applicants with overdue milestones for other grant programs funded through the department may be ineligible for this program.

## How do we find our Australian Business Number (ABN)?

To check your ABN, visit the [Australian Business Register (ABR)](https://abr.business.gov.au) https://abr.business.gov.au/.

## What if our organisation or group doesn’t have an ABN or is not incorporated?

Organisations that do not have an ABN are ineligible to apply for this program.

Organisations with an ABN but are not incorporated entities are also ineligible to apply. *(the department cannot enter into a funding agreement with an entity that is not incorporated, even if they have an ABN).*

Organisations without an ABN and/or are unincorporated may find an auspice and apply through the [Community Food Relief Program – Local Grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants.

## How do we check our organisation type?

You can find your organisation’s registration status on the [Australian Business Register](https://abr.business.gov.au/) https://abr.business.gov.au. Find more details via the regulator for your organisation type:

* for incorporated associations, co-operatives or organisations incorporated through other means, go to [Consumer Affairs Victoria](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au) https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au
* for a Company Limited by Guarantee, go to the [Australian Securities and Investment Commission](https://asic.gov.au/) https://asic.gov.au
* for registered charities, go to the [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission](https://www.acnc.gov.au/) https://www.acnc.gov.au
* for Aboriginal corporations, go to the [Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations](https://www.oric.gov.au/) https://www.oric.gov.au.

## What do you mean by warehousing and logistics capacity?

This program is for established large-scale regional and state-wide food relief distribution services. These services provide centralised food rescue, warehousing and logistics to support a formal network of charity partners providing food relief.

Organisations that don’t fit these criteria may consider applying through the [Community Food Relief Program – Local Grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants.

If you’re unsure whether your organisation is eligible for these grants, email the department’s Food Relief Grants team at foodrelief.team@dffh.vic.gov.au.

## Our organisation has an existing network of charity partners, is that evidence of partnerships?

No. While you should describe existing charity partner networks in your application, for this program a partnership is:

* two or more organisations who will share the grant funds and work together on a single project to maximise impact. Each partner should have defined roles and responsibilities in project delivery.

To be eligible for the program, the lead applicant must be a large-scale regional and state-wide food relief distribution service that provides centralised food rescue, warehousing and logistics to support a network of charity partners.

Applicants should consider how they will partner with other similar or related organisations to create efficiencies, foster collaboration and innovation across the sector, and increase the supply of healthy food to communities and geographic areas of need.

Your application must include evidence of partnerships such as letters of intent or memorandums of understanding.

# Application process

## Do we need to apply online?

Yes. The department’s Grants Gateway is the only way to apply.

If you have accessibility concerns or questions about how to use Grants Gateway, email the Food Relief Grants team at foodrelief.team@dffh.vic.gov.au well before the application closing date.

A ‘how to apply’ factsheet is available at [Community Food Relief Program – Coordination Grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-coordination-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-coordination-grants.

## Can we attach extra supporting information?

All information for assessing your application must be in the application form or project plan. You must attach letters of intent or memorandums of understanding for partnerships and evidence of insurance.

You can attach other supporting documents to the online application. However, the assessment panel will only read the required documentation and information directly relevant to your application.

## What happens if we can’t submit on time?

The closing date and time for the grants is 4:00pm on Tuesday 5 August 2025.

We will not accept late applications.

Plan ahead to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties. Aim to submit your application well ahead of the closing time.

If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance, contact the Food Relief Grants team **before** the closing time, via email at foodrelief.team@dffh.vic.gov.au.

## Can we submit more than one application?

Organisations should focus on developing a quality application for the project that would have the most impact for the Victorian community.

If you submit more than one application, we will only progress the application we consider the best fit for the program objectives.

# Budget

## How does the Goods and Services Tax (GST) work?

This depends on whether your organisation is registered for GST or not. You can check your organisation’s details on the [Australian Business Register](https://abr.business.gov.au/) https://abr.business.gov.au.

If your organisation **is registered for GST**:

* provide your budget excluding GST
* if your application is successful, grant payments will have the GST added to your approved funding amount.

If your organisation is **NOT registered for GST**:

* provide your budget with the GST included
* if your application is successful, GST is not added to your payments. But you may cover the cost of GST with grant funds.

## Should we include other in-kind contributions?

In the project plan and budget, outline any in-kind funding or support provided by the applicant or other sources.

The online application form will allow you to identify which project costs would be covered by the grant or through other funding sources.

# Selection criteria

## How will you rate applications?

We will assess applications against the selection criteria in the program guidelines.

The final selection of highly rated applications will also consider geographical spread, targeting to communities and cohorts in need, and/or where there are current gaps or unmet demand.

## What do you mean by ‘value for money’?

Value for money means the grant funds would be used efficiently, effectively and sustainably to achieve maximum impact and benefit for the intended community.

## Why are drought-affected communities considered high need?

Applications must identify the need and key issues your project is responding to.

Your project should identify the cohorts and/or areas of the state experiencing high need that will benefit from your initiative. This may include drought-affected communities, First Peoples, multicultural communities, rural or regional communities, or other cohorts or geographic areas.

Your application should include evidence to show this need and how your project will appropriately address it.

Focusing on drought-affected communities recognises that some areas of Victoria are now recording significant rainfall deficiencies. For example, areas in the south-west of Victoria. This increases food insecurity for many members of these communities.

# Application outcomes

## How will you notify us of the outcome?

We will notify all organisations via the email address on your application form. It is important that you provide a correct and current email address.

## Will we get the full amount we applied for?

During the assessment process, the department will review project budgets. We may recommend a lower amount:

* based on analysis of the proposed activities, deliverables and project budgets
* to ensure a fair distribution of projects to respond to identified need.

We may also ask for a revised proposal from a shortlist of highly rated applications.

# Conditions of funding

## What reporting will I need to do?

Funded organisations will provide quarterly reports on the status of their projects, and a final report with financial acquittal. Forms for reporting will be on the department’s Grants Gateway portal.

The final report must:

* include a short evaluation of the grant activities and outcomes
* outline how you acknowledged government funding
* provide a transaction list of the items you spent the funds on.

You may also need to provide copies of invoices or receipts for purchases over $10,000.

## When will funds be paid?

We will make the first payment after you sign the funding agreement. Other payments will be tied to submitting progress reports or at other agreed milestones.

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Available at [Community Food Relief Program Coordination grants](https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-coordination-grants) https://www.vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-coordination-grants

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