

OCOC Leadership Development Grants 2025 frequently asked questions

Our Catchments, Our Communities Leadership Development Grants 2025

Q. What is the purpose of the grants program?

A. The *Our Catchments, Our Communities Leadership Development Grants* support the development of future leaders in integrated catchment management in Victoria. The grants provide early and mid-career individuals with funding towards leadership and professional development opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities. More information about the grants program is available at <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/grants/ococ-leadership-development-grants>

Q. What is integrated catchment management?

A. Integrated catchment management (ICM) is the coordinated management of land, water and biodiversity resources based on catchment areas. This approach incorporates environmental, economic, social, and cultural considerations and seeks to ensure the long-term viability of natural resource systems and human needs across current and future generations. ICM is an approach that supports catchment stewardship which involves both individual and collective efforts in managing catchments to generate intergenerational benefits for the environment, people and place.

Q. How many grant categories are there?

A. There are three grant categories: **Innovation**, **Aboriginal Leadership**, and **Women in Leadership**.

Q. Who is eligible for the grant funding/who can apply?

A. To be eligible to apply for the 2025 OCOC Leadership Grants, you must meet all the following criteria, at the time of application:

- ☐ be over 18 years of age
- ☐ live in Victoria (or living across the border and working in Victoria*)
- ☐ be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia
- ☐ be applying for a grant for yourself (you cannot apply for someone else or on behalf of an organisation, group, agency, or institution)
- ☐ be an early or mid-career individual in the natural resource management sector working for one of the following:
 - a government agency or body
 - local government authority
 - private sector business or agency
 - educational institution
 - not for profit organisation
 - community network or group
 - non-governmental organisation
- ☐ only for the Aboriginal Leadership Category: identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- ☐ not receiving DEECA funding to conduct one or more of the proposed activities in your application.

*Applications from people living in Victorian border areas of New South Wales and South Australia, who are working in Victoria and demonstrating leadership development that will benefit Victoria, will be considered by the assessment panel.

Q. How much funding is available for each grant?

A. Applicants may apply for up to \$10,000.

Q. What type of activities will be considered for funding?

A. The grants are to be used for leadership or professional development activities such as travel, study, research or training. Eligible activities include:

- ☐ Registration costs for training, course/s, or leadership program/s
- ☐ Travel costs (transport, accommodation, meals) – all flights must be economy class
- ☐ Costs associated with research, excluding purchase of equipment
- ☐ Administrative costs associated with your professional development activity (e.g. communication materials, photocopying and printing).

More information on funding eligibility can be found in the 2025 Grant Guidelines document on the grants webpage <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/grants/ococ-leadership-development-grants>

Q. How will applications be assessed? How do you choose who is successful?

A. Applications will be reviewed to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria and the proposed leadership activities align with the grant category. Applications will also be assessed against the following general criteria:

- ☐ your aspiration to be a leader in integrated catchment management
- ☐ your background/experience in natural resource management and/or integrated catchment management
- ☐ details about your proposed leadership development activities:
 - purpose of activities (i.e., travel, study, research, mentoring and/or training)
 - how these will contribute to your leadership in integrated catchment management in Victoria
 - how these will further your professional development and improve your leadership capabilities
 - how others will benefit from the knowledge and experience gained, and how this will be shared with the catchment and natural resource management sector
 - timelines and itinerary
 - budget details
 - demonstration that the proposed activities are achievable within the timeframe and budget.

Shortlisted applicants will be provided to a selection panel who will assess the proposals and recommend the recipients of the grants. The Minister for Water, the Hon. Gayle Tierney will approve the grant recipients.

Q. Can I apply for more than one grant, or under more than one grant category?

A. Yes, but you can only be successful in one grant category. You must submit a separate form for each application.

Q. Can I submit an application on behalf of someone else?

A. No, applications submitted on behalf of another individual will not be considered.

Frequently Asked Questions



Q. How long do successful applicants have to complete their project?

A. Applicants will have 12 months from receipt of payment to spend allocated funds.

Q. When will I be notified of the outcome of my application?

A. All applicants will be notified by email after the assessment process is completed.

Q. I would like to apply for a course/program, but I won't know if I'm accepted until after the application deadline. Can I still apply for a grant?

A. Yes. In this situation, you should make it clear in your application that the success of your enrolment is not yet known. Please contact us to discuss the status of your enrolment by emailing ourcatchments.ourcommunities@deeca.vic.gov.au.

Q. Can I apply for a grant to study at university?

A. You can apply for funding to complete a stand-alone course or module facilitated by a university institution, but you cannot apply for a grant to complete modules or courses which contribute to your academic/tertiary degree at university.

An exception for the Aboriginal Leadership category is the National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation (NIKERI) Institute, or a similar institution that specifically provides higher education units such as those listed on [Indigenous Higher Education Units | National Indigenous Australians Agency \(niaa.gov.au\)](#)

Q. Will applicants be required to match funding?

A. No, applicants are not required to match funding.

Q. Is it possible to change what I want to do after I have received my grant?

A. Yes, it is possible to vary your initiative/project after you have received funding, although we would request that the original intent of your grant is maintained. Any changes must be discussed with, and approved by, the appropriate DEECA officer before they can be included as part of the grants program. Please contact ourcatchments.ourcommunities@deeca.vic.gov.au for more information.

Q. What information is required in the final report on completion of grant funded activities?

A. A template is available for final reports. Please contact ourcatchments.ourcommunities@deeca.vic.gov.au to receive the template. High quality photographs of funded activities should be submitted with the report. Photographs can also be submitted earlier if available. Third party testimonials are also welcome.

Q. When is the final report to be submitted?

A. The final report is due to be submitted by 31 December 2026.

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