

Integrated Water Management Grants Program

Application Guidelines (Regional project funding
2021 – 22)



Photo credit

Katie Burns

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



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1. What is the Integrated Water Management grants program?

The Integrated Water Management (IWM) grants program provides funding, on a co-contribution basis, to organisations to deliver collaborative projects that are part of, or derived from, projects endorsed by the IWM Forums or listed in the Strategic Directions Statement (SDS) of IWM Forums.

The Victorian Government is funding these grants to support the implementation of the Integrated Water Management Framework for Victoria (the IWM Framework) (water.vic.gov.au/liveable/integrated-water-management-program/iwm-framework).

The aim of the IWM Framework is to help state and local governments, the water sector and water sector partners work together to better plan, manage and deliver water in Victoria's cities and towns to achieve resilience and liveability for Victorian communities.

Specifically, the IWM grants will provide funding, on a co-contribution basis, to organisations that are members of the IWM Forums to deliver projects that contribute to achieving the strategic outcomes for IWM to make the best use of all water sources and help respond to the challenges of climate change, population growth and environmental decline (see the Assessment Criteria in Section 7 below for details of the strategic outcomes for IWM).

2. Who can apply?

This grants program provides funds, on a co-contribution basis, to organisations to deliver collaborative projects that are part of, or derived from, projects endorsed by the IWM Forums or listed in the SDSs of IWM Forums.

Only member organisations of the IWM Forums can apply for funding under the IWM grants program. These organisations may be:

- water corporations
- catchment management authorities
- local governments
- Traditional Owner corporations
- alpine resort management boards
- water sector partners, including the Victorian Planning Authority.

Although project proposals will involve other project partners (referred to in the Application Form as 'collaborative partner organisations'), only member organisations of the IWM Forums are eligible to apply.

In addition, to be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- be an incorporated body, cooperative or association (including business associations)
- be financially solvent.

3. Who cannot apply?

Entities that are not members of IWM Forums are not eligible to apply for funding under this grants program.

4. What might be funded?

To be eligible for funding, projects must be part of, or derived from, projects endorsed by IWM Forums or listed in a Strategic Directions Statement of an IWM Forum.

Furthermore, to be eligible for funding, projects must satisfy one or more of the purposes of Victoria's Environmental Contribution levy (see the Assessment Criteria in Section 7 below for details of the purposes of the Environmental Contribution levy).

The proposed project must be delivered collaboratively with one or more IWM Forum member organisations or water sector partners. Evidence for the participation of collaborative partners – for example, letters of endorsement – must be attached at the 'Supporting Documents' section of the Application Form.

Funding will only be provided on a co-contribution basis (see Section 6 below for details) and projects will only be funded where a clear case for state investment is provided in the application.

Regardless of the type of project, details must be provided on how Traditional Owner inclusion, including appropriate inclusion activities, has, or will be, embedded into the project's planning and/or delivery.

Projects may be either feasibility studies or capital projects. Capital projects are defined as those that result in on-ground works and may encompass projects that are detailed design and construction or are construction only. A feasibility study is a survey

or analysis of the need, value, and practicability of a project, or the development of an IWM Plan, a business case or functional design for a project, that would meet the objectives of this grants program.

5. What will not be funded?

The IWM program will not fund:

- projects that are not slated to begin in the 2021–2022 financial year
- projects that will go ahead without state co-investment (i.e. no funding gap is identified and/or there are otherwise contracted or legislated organisational obligations)
- projects located outside the state of Victoria.

Also, funding under the IWM grants program cannot be used for:

- the purchase of land
- routine or ongoing maintenance activities
- recurrent operating costs, for example rent, staffing and utility costs, and/or activities establishing expectations of ongoing funding.

However, these costs can be included in the project budget and be counted as part of the applicant's co-contribution towards the total cost of the project.

The applicant must be able to complete the relevant milestones of the project for which grants funding is provided, and complete all other requirements of the funding agreement (including acquittals and final report), by 31 January 2024. Components of the project for which grants funding is not received may continue beyond this date. This will be reflected in the funding agreement.

6. What are the funding details?

The total funding allocated to the IWM grants program is \$14.1 million over three years (2021–22 to 2023–24) with \$11 million specifically for capital projects.

In this round, \$3.1 million has been allocated. Grants of up to \$1 million are available for capital projects. Grants of up to \$200,000 are available for feasibility studies.

Funding will be provided on a co-contribution basis. Applicants must contribute at least 25% of the cost of the project. Preference will be given to applicants depending on the proportion of the cost they propose to contribute.

Applicants' contributions can be financial or in-kind.

7. What are the assessment criteria?

First, applications will be checked for eligibility against sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 above to make sure that the applicant and their proposed project are eligible for funding. Eligible applications will then be assessed using the criteria below. Each criterion is given a percentage weighting and different word limits apply to responses in the Application Form. Applications should address all criteria.

CRITERION 1: What is the project and to what extent does it align with the IWM Program's objectives? (35%)

(1) Applicants should provide a concise summary of the project. If the project is part of a larger project, describe the larger project, who is responsible for it and what its objectives are.

(2) Applicants should describe the expected outcomes of the project (or the intended outcomes in the case of feasibility studies).

(3) In describing the outcomes, applicants should explain to what extent these outcomes align with two or more of the strategic outcomes for IWM to make the best use of all water sources and help respond to the challenges of climate change, population growth and environmental decline.

- Safe, secure and affordable water supplies in an uncertain future
- Effective and affordable wastewater systems
- Opportunities are sought to manage existing and future flood risks and impacts
- Healthy and valued waterways and marine environments
- Healthy and valued urban, rural, agricultural and green landscapes
- Community values are reflected in place-based planning
- Jobs, economic growth and innovation.

Appendix A to these Guidelines provides indicators that applicants can use in assessing the extent to which the project's outcomes align with these strategic outcomes. The indicators in Appendix A to the Guidelines are only for the guidance of applicants. In explaining the extent to which the project's outcomes align with the strategic outcomes, applicants should also consider other relevant indicators.

(4) In describing the outcomes, applicants should also explain how the outcomes satisfy one or more

of the criteria for funding under the Environmental Contribution levy. These criteria are listed in Section 7 of the Application Guidelines. These are:

- Promote the sustainable management of water
 - improved understanding of Victoria’s water systems to inform their effective management in the long term
 - efficient and effective use of Victoria’s water systems, to better manage within the known limits of the resource
 - the long-term resilience and security of Victoria’s water systems
- Address adverse water-related environmental impacts
 - remediate or offset adverse impacts on water-related environments arising from water extraction and associated infrastructure
 - remediate or offset processes that adversely impact on the health of water-related environments.

CRITERION 2: Why is the project necessary and why is it good value for money? (35%)

Applicants should explain the benefits the project will deliver, who will be the main beneficiaries of the project, including Traditional Owner groups, and in what ways they will benefit – e.g. economic, social, cultural benefits.

Quantify the benefits where possible, describe the methodology used to calculate these values, and explain how the project (capital project or feasibility study) represents good value for money in terms of the project budget provided.

Applicants should explain why the project is necessary and what problem it is designed to address (attach any evidence supporting the need for this project at the ‘Supporting Documents’ section of the Application Form).

Applicants should also explain why funding under this grants program is necessary for the project to go ahead. Included in your answer must be an explanation of how the project goes beyond the standard service obligations or other responsibilities of existing organisations.

CRITERION 3: How will the project be delivered? (15%)

Applicants should provide a concise summary of how the project will be delivered.

For capital projects, what evidence is there that the project is feasible and that it will address the needs/problems identified? Applicants should attach any evidence – e.g. feasibility studies – at the ‘Supporting Documents’ section of the Application Form.

For capital projects, applicants must also explain how the proposed project will be managed once it is delivered and how any continuing costs will be met.

All applicants must attach a project plan for the project in the ‘Supporting Documents’ section of this application. For capital projects, the project plan should set out:

- responsibilities
- proposed timelines and milestones
- any permits and/or regulatory approvals required to deliver the project
- implementation risks and risk mitigation strategies (e.g. cost over-runs, COVID-related delays such as supply chain issues, etc)
- identification of key stakeholders
- a summary of the approach to engaging Traditional Owners including allocated budget for this activity.

The level of detail in the project plan should be in line with the scale and complexity of the proposed project and the size of the proposed budget.

CRITERION 4: What expertise/experience does the applicant (and their partners) have to deliver the project, including the proposed approach to the involvement of Traditional Owners? (15%)

Applicants should explain their expertise/experience (and that of the collaborative project partners) to deliver the project. Alternatively, please describe your approach to sourcing expertise to manage the delivery of the project.

Applicants must also explain how Traditional Owners will be engaged with during the delivery of the project.

(Note: the approach to engaging the community and Traditional Owners may also be reflected in the project plan as set out in Assessment Criterion 3 above.)

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Please submit the following documents:

1. The completed online Application Form
2. Other supporting documents requested in the Application Form, including:
 - The detailed program budget.
 - The project plan.
3. Any other documents provided in support of the applicant's claims.

9. What are the funding conditions?

Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with DELWP. The Victorian Common Funding Agreement is used for funding agreements with not for profit organisations, Traditional Owner corporations and Local Government Authorities. It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available at vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement.

For other successful applicants, funding agreements will be generated using the standard DELWP agreement with project-specific schedules and milestones.

Local Jobs First Policy

Through its Local Jobs First Policy (LJF), the Victorian Government is committed to improving opportunities for local suppliers to create more new jobs and grow the economy. The LJF Policy applies to all grants awarded under this program (except where the recipient is a state or commonwealth government agency) valued at over \$1 million in regional Victoria, or over \$3 million in metropolitan Melbourne. For further information, go to [LJF website](#).

Legislative and regulatory requirements

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

The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

The Freedom of Information Act 1982

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Water Act 1989

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this grant funding.

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form 'Statement by a Supplier' so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines (delwp.vic.gov.au/grants) will 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.

Payments

Payments will be made as long as:

- The funding agreement has been signed by both parties.
- Grant recipients provide evidence of progress and reports as required by the funding agreement, or otherwise demonstrate that the activity is progressing as expected.
- Other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

Monitoring

Grant recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This may include progress reports, site inspections, completion reports and acquittal documentation.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by DELWP 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.

DELWP is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DELWP Privacy Policy online at delwp.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DELWP should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by phone on 9637 8697.

10. What is the application process?

Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online portal.

To apply, go to the grant program web page water.vic.gov.au/liveable/integrated-water-management-program and click on the 'Start New Application' button. To return to a saved draft application, click on the 'Access Saved Application' button.

Attaching required documents:

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email them to grantsinfo@delwp.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Make sure your application is submitted by 5:00pm 13 December 2021

Note: No hard copy applications will be accepted. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

11. Questions and assistance

If you have questions about the grants program, the criteria or the assessment process, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at water.vic.gov.au/liveable/integrated-water-management-program.

If your question is not answered there, please email your question to iwm.branch@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Please note that we will post replies to questions on the IWM portal page (without identifying the applicant) for the information of all other applicants.

If you need technical assistance submitting your application online, email grantsinfo@delwp.vic.gov.au.

12. What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their application.

13. Key dates

Applications open	27 September 2021
Applications close	13 December 2021
Applicants notified	Mid-February 2022
Activities commence	From contract execution
Funded milestones completed and acquittal reports submitted	By 31 January 2024

14. Checklist

Before applying, read these guidelines and complete the following checklist.

Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- checked if your organisation is eligible for this grant funding? (See sections 2 and 3 of these guidelines)
- checked if your project is eligible for this grant funding? (See sections 4 and 5 of these guidelines)
- checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivering your project? (See section 9 of these guidelines)
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents? (See section 8 of these guidelines).

Appendix A: IWM Strategic Outcomes

Outcome	Indicators*
1. Safe, secure and affordable water supplies in an uncertain future	Amount of water conserved or alternative water supplied to meet an identified demand (with magnitude judged with regard to scale of town)
2. Effective and affordable wastewater systems	Environmental standards and resource recovery
3. Resilience to existing and future flood risk	Extent of the flood management.
4. Healthy and valued waterways, wetlands and waterbodies	Ecological health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Riparian · Hydrology · Water quality
5. Healthy and valued urban and rural landscapes	Connectivity; accessibility; greening; cooling; recreational values (active or passive)
6. Community values are reflected in place-based planning	Water-systems literacy; response to community values, incl. Traditional Owners, in planning and design
7. Jobs, economic benefits and innovation	Scale of employment and innovation

*These indicators are only for the guidance of applicants. In explaining the extent to which the project's outcomes align with these strategic outcomes, applicants should also consider other relevant indicators.