



FUNDING GUIDELINES:

Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities

Background

The 2019-2020 bushfire season was unprecedented in intensity and devastation. Throughout the summer fires burnt large areas of Victoria, primarily in East Gippsland and North East Victoria. These fires had significant impacts on communities, businesses and the environment.

In January 2020, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments announced an \$86 million Victorian Bushfires Community Recovery Package. This package is joint funded through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), which are the Commonwealth-state cost-sharing arrangements for providing financial support for relief and recovery activities resulting from natural disasters and terrorist acts.

Bushfire Recovery Victoria

Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) is a new, permanent and dedicated Victorian Government agency working directly with local communities to listen, help and deliver what they need to recover from the impact of bushfires.

Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Initiative

The Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Initiative is a \$35 million initiative, which aims to provide financial support to locally-led and responsive programs that support the recovery of communities in Victoria's bushfire affected regions.

The Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Initiative is being administered by BRV.

All programs funded under the Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Initiative will seek to support the following objectives:

- Improve community connectedness and cohesion
- Support community development
- Strengthen communities' resilience against natural disaster
- Build community capability and capacity for recovery
- Empower communities to lead and direct their recovery process.

Within in the Community Recovery and Resilience Grants initiative, an initial \$5 million has been allocated to Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities program. All projects funded through the program must support the objectives of the Community Recovery and Resilience Grants initiative.

What are Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities?

Bushfire Recovery Grants for Community Facilities have been established to support local organisations to repair and improve damaged or destroyed community facilities in fire affected communities. BRV will consider applications for projects that that help to bring communities together and support community recovery and resilience.



Applicants will be able to apply for grants up to \$50,000.

Examples of the types of repairs and improvements to community facilities that could be supported include:

- Repair a playground, skate park, pavilion or other outdoor facilities that have been damaged or destroyed
- Repair community hall or building (e.g. kitchen or bathroom upgrades, energy efficiency, general repairs) that have been damaged or destroyed
- Projects that support community recovery and resilience

Grants cannot be used for:

- Offsetting of salaries, operating costs for existing staff or contractors
- Feasibility studies, business plans, cost benefit analysis and economic impact studies
- Projects that may have a negative impact on existing businesses / services
- Passing on funding to a third party in the form of a sponsorship or grant
- Retrospective funding for projects that have commenced activity or construction or are completed before the funding is approved
- The purchase of land or buildings

Accessibility

Applicants must ensure the community facilities is accessible to everyone.

Guidelines

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible, an organisation must be either:

- A community, not for profit or Aboriginal organisation that is an incorporated legal entity under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2001 (Vic) or the Corporation (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (Cth).
- A social enterprise with a clearly stated purpose or mission related specifically to supporting bushfire recovery.

And you must have:

- A current Australian Business Number (ABN)
- No outstanding final reports or final reports required for any previous government grant programs.

We strongly encourage applications from:

- New and emerging community organisations
- Not for profit community organisations,



- Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, and
- Local organisations that are based in bushfire impacted areas.

Auspice Organisations

Auspice organisations can support unlimited applications from lead applicants.

If your organisation is not incorporated or does not have an ABN, you may still apply if you are supported by an eligible auspice organisation that has agreed to manage the grant for you.

An auspice arrangement is when a larger organisation assists a smaller organisation to fund a project.

The larger organisation is known as the auspice organisation. Your community group or organisation is known as the grant recipient.

The following are examples of organisations that can auspice a smaller group or partner in an application but cannot apply as the lead applicant:

- Local councils
- Preschools, TAFE institutes and universities

Who cannot apply?

- State and federal government departments and agencies
- Individuals and sole traders
- Unincorporated community organisations
- Commercial enterprises
- Fixed trusts
- Local councils, including council managed, operated, administered and regulated trusts (can act as an auspice)
- Registered primary and secondary schools, preschools, TAFE institutes and universities (can act as an auspice)
- Commercial enterprises are not eligible to apply for a grant alone (they can partner with an organisation as a sponsor and only provide contributions).

Selection Criteria

Provided your organisation is eligible to apply (see Applicant Eligibility) your application for a Bushfire Recovery Grant for Community Facilities Grant will be assessed against the following:

- How well it meets the five key selection criteria set out below, and
- Whether you demonstrate all application requirements and provide all the required documentation.

In preparing an application, you are encouraged to engage with your local Community Recovery Committee (where it exists) to assist you in meeting the selection criteria.



1. Purpose

Applicants must provide an explanation of how their facilities project will deliver direct benefit to a bushfire affected community and supports one or more of the objectives of the Community Recovery and Resilience Grants initiative.

2. Community Participation

Applicants must demonstrate how the project will:

- be used by the community
- be accessible to the community
- be promoted to the community. Please note, 'word of mouth' is not a valid promotion type.

3. Location

Applicants must demonstrate that their facilities project is located in a bushfire affected area and describe how the bushfires directly impacted on their community.

As of June 2020, the following Local Government Areas and Alpine Resorts are considered within the scope of the Community Facilities program:

Local Government Areas

Ararat, Alpine, Ballarat, East Gippsland, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Greater Bendigo, Indigo, Mansfield, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Southern Grampians, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wellington and Wodonga

Alpine Resorts

Falls Creek, Mount Buller, Mount Hotham and Mount Stirling

4. Planning and delivery

Applicants must provide a clear explanation on how the project will be undertaken and the anticipate completion date.

This explanation should include a description of how the delivery of the project will provide economic benefits (e.g. use of local trades) and social benefits (e.g. enhanced wellbeing) for the local community.

5. Budget

Applicants must provide evidence to show that:

- Costs of community facilities are accurate and reasonable
- Include any in kind or co-contribution funding support

Further mandatory requirements

Applications for projects on public land must be endorsed by the relevant land manager (e.g. Local Council or the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning).

Applications must outline how the proposed project(s) will comply with the Victorian COVID-19 restrictions and requirements.



Applications must comply with any other applicable legislation (e.g. *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2008* (Vic), local planning laws)

Assessment Criteria

Applications received will be assessed against the criteria as outlined in the table below.

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Number of objectives of the Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Initiative the project meets and the extent to which those objectives are met	30%
The positive economic benefits for the local economy from the project	25%
Community participation and accessibility	25%
The direct impacts of the 2019-20 Victorian Bushfires on the community	20%

Funding Agreements, Reporting and Acknowledgement

Organisations approved for funding will enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with Bushfire Recovery Victoria.

The VCFA will outline:

- The grant's terms and conditions, including use of funds
- Agreement terms
- Key deliverables and due dates, and
- Reporting requirements.

Organisations that are successful in receiving funding will have 30 days to enter into a VCFA. If a grant offer is not accepted during this period, the grant may be withdrawn.

Reporting

Organisations will be required to report on the funded activity and can submit their final reports online and must submit their final report on time.

Acknowledgement Guidelines

A common condition of BRV grants is that grant recipients must agree to follow BRV guidelines for acknowledging the government's funding. A breach of these guidelines is considered a breach of your funding agreement with BRV. The BRV Acknowledgement Guidelines can be found at <https://www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-victoria>.