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| Community and Social Services Graduate Program |
| Information for employers  |
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# What is the Community and Social Services Graduate Program

The Community and Social Services Graduate Program is a new professional graduate program. The program invests in early-career professionals across community services, to build their job readiness and skills.

Community services need highly skilled professionals who can work in challenging environments. We know it can be difficult to support new starters to develop their skills and experience. It has become harder with high demand for services and workforce shortages. However, there is a shared need to invest in new starters to grow the skilled and experienced workforce of the future.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is partnering with community service organisations to invest in the future supply of skilled practitioners.

# Who we are looking for

We are seeking Victorian community and social services employers who want to develop the future community and social services workforce.

As part of the program, we are looking for employers who will:

* invest in the skills and experience of new graduates
* support new graduates to thrive in challenging and rewarding roles, and
* develop their capacity to recruit and support early career professionals.

To participate, organisations must:

* have a current service agreement with the department, or
* deliver services that are in the scope of the department and monitored in other ways - such as registration with the Victorian Housing Registrar.

Organisations must also:

* commit to employing graduates for at least 12 months
* provide a supportive work environment with a range of professional development opportunities, and
* commit and adhere to program guidelines that outline program requirements.

# Benefits for employers

A great early-career experience can set people up for a long and rewarding career. Investing in a rich and rewarding graduate experience will help us retain more new workers in the sector. It will also grow the skilled workforce that community and social services need to meet current and future demand.

The graduate program will provide employers with:

* funding of $8,000 per graduate to share in the investment in supporting early career professionals
* learning and development resources through the graduate program, including professional learning, peer networks and other support available to graduates
* access to a new pool of qualified and motivated graduates in regular application rounds, supported by a centralised recruitment platform.

The program will also attract more people to the community services sector by providing them with a clear pathway from study to work and improved learning and development to build their skills and confidence.

# How to participate

There are two ways for organisations to participate:

* **Employ a new qualified graduate looking to start their career in community services.**
Employers can employ a new graduate through the Graduate Resource Centre. The centre is a specialist community services workforce function that makes it easier for graduates to access information about the program and get connected with community service careers. It will provide employers will access to a new pool of qualified and motivated graduates.
* **Nominate an existing employee that meets the eligibility criteria.**

The program is also open to community service professionals who are recently employed (within 12 months) and have graduated within the past two years. Participating in the program will provide new starters with a rich and supported early career experience, build their skills, confidence and job-readiness.

# Find out more

For more information about the program’s requirements and opportunities, visit [Community and Social Services Graduate Program Information for Employers](https://www.vic.gov.au/community-and-social-services-graduate-program-information-employers) <https://www.vic.gov.au/community-and-social-services-graduate-program-information-employers>.

To receive this information in another format, email cassgraduateprogram@dffh.vic.gov.au

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