

OFFICIAL

MENTAL WELLBEING
OF BUSINESS
COMMUNITIES
GRANT PROGRAM

GUIDELINES
ROUND 2 – APRIL 2023

OFFICIAL

Overview

The Mental Wellbeing of Business Communities Grant Program will improve mental health and wellbeing in Victorian small business communities.

The program offers a free mental wellbeing training course for business community representatives. Up to 45 grants of \$15,000 are also available for the delivery of community-led mental wellbeing projects.

Business Communities¹, including chambers of commerce, trader groups, and local government authorities are invited to apply.

Eligible Business Communities will nominate representatives to attend a free full-day mental wellbeing training course. Representatives will also be coached to design a community-led mental wellbeing project plan that meets the program objectives.

Business Communities will submit a community-led mental wellbeing project plan for implementation. A grant of \$15,000 to deliver the project will be paid if the project plan is assessed and accepted by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (the Department).

A showcase of mental wellbeing projects will offer Business Communities a chance to share their experience.

How the program works

Business Communities will progress through the program as follows:

Step 1: Apply and nominate up to three representatives

Step 2: Representatives attend a free full-day training course

Step 3: Submit a community-led mental wellbeing project plan

Step 4: Deliver the community-led mental wellbeing project between June and October 2023

Step 5: Join the showcase of mental wellbeing projects

Step 6: Submit a final report on the mental wellbeing project by 30 November 2023

1 Eligibility criteria

1.1 This program includes a free mental wellbeing training course and a \$15,000 grant. To be eligible for the program, the Business Community or local government authority must:

- a. be a local government authority or an organisation that represents a specific cohort of Victorian businesses or businesses in a defined geographic area
- b. be based in Victoria, or be the Victorian chapter of a national organisation
- c. be a not-for-profit organisation
- d. hold a current Australian Business Number (ABN)
- e. be registered with the responsible federal or state regulator².

¹ A Business Community is defined for this program as a not-for-profit member-based organisation with the purpose of representing, servicing, and advocating for its business members. A business community can be a chamber of commerce, trader group, industry association, business council, networking group, or other registered business collective.

² Not required for local government authorities.

Responsible regulators are Consumer Affairs Victoria for incorporated associations, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) for charities and not-for-profits, and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) for public companies limited by guarantee.

- 1.2 Unincorporated organisations, and organisations with an ABN registered after 1 January 2022 may be required to have a local council enter into the grant agreement on their behalf.
- 1.3 Grant recipients under the Business Chambers and Trader Groups program are eligible to apply.
- 1.4 Business Communities that have received funding under the Mental Wellbeing of Business Communities Grant Program – Round 1 (29 August 2022) may apply, providing they:
 - a. are compliant with all obligations under the prior grant agreement, including acquittal of funds and submission of any final report
 - b. nominate new representatives to complete the mental wellbeing training course.

2 Participating in the program

2.1 Step 1: Apply and nominate up to three representatives

- a. The Business Community must [apply online here](#)
- b. Business Community applications will include:
 - i. a short profile of the Business Community
 - ii. a summary of how Business Community members and their networks will benefit from the program
 - iii. acknowledge and agree to nominate up to three representatives from the Business Community to participate in a free mental wellbeing training course
 - iv. acknowledge and agree that at least one representative will complete the free mental wellbeing training course and lead a mental wellbeing project.
- c. Applications will be open from 26 April 2023 until 11:59pm on 12 May 2023, or until the program is fully subscribed.
- d. All fields in the application must be answered to enable timely assessment.
- e. Applications will be assessed in order of submission and according to the eligibility criteria and attestations made.
- f. Successful Business Community applicants will be invited to enter into a grant agreement with the Department.

2.2 Step 2: Representatives attend a free full-day training course

- a. Details of up to three nominated representatives to participate in the free mental wellbeing training course will be provided by the Business Community applicant.
- b. Nominated Business Community representatives will complete a free mental wellbeing training course to become wellbeing champions.
- c. The free mental wellbeing training course will be held over one full day with some after-hours coaching available.
- d. The free mental wellbeing training course will help Business Community representatives to build the confidence and skill to lead the delivery of a mental wellbeing project.
- e. Up to 5 hours of free flexible coaching and support will also be provided so that Business Community representatives can develop a community-led mental wellbeing project plan and implement the project.
- f. The training provider will review the community-led mental wellbeing project plan, and provide a letter of recommendation to the Department.

2.3 Step 3: Submit a community-led mental wellbeing project plan

- a. After at least one nominated representative has completed the free mental wellbeing training course, the Business Community can submit:
 - i. the community-led mental wellbeing project plan designed by its representative(s) participating in the free mental wellbeing training course.
 - ii. the training provider's letter of recommendation for the community-led mental wellbeing project plan.

- b. The Department will assess the community-led mental wellbeing project plan in accordance with the assessment criteria at 4.4.
- c. The successful applicant will be paid a grant of \$15,000 to deliver the community-led mental wellbeing project for its Business Community after its plan is accepted by the Department.

2.4 Step 4: Deliver the community-led mental wellbeing project between June and 31 October 2023

- a. Community-led mental wellbeing projects must be implemented by successful applicants between June and 31 October 2023.
- b. Nominated representatives will act as wellbeing champions and take a leadership role in ensuring project delivery aligns with training course learnings.

2.5 Step 5: Join the showcase of mental wellbeing projects

- a. Following implementation of the community-led mental wellbeing project, grant recipients will be invited to showcase their projects to each other and the Department.

2.6 Step 6: Submit a final report on the mental wellbeing project by 30 November 2023

- a. Grant recipients must submit a final report on the outcomes of their community-led mental wellbeing project.
- b. The Department will provide an online template for final project reporting.

2.7 Program timelines

Application	26 April 2023 to 12 May 2023
Complete the free one-day mental wellbeing training course (mandatory)	Commencing May 2023
Grant funding \$15,000	Paid by 30 June 2023
Community-led mental wellbeing project delivered	June – 31 October 2023
Community of Practice – Showcase	November 2023
Complete the final project report	30 November 2023

3 Program objectives

3.1 The objectives of the Mental Wellbeing of Business Communities Grant Program include:

- a. improve mental wellbeing, resilience, and recovery in Business Communities
- b. enable collaboration, connections, and networks within Business Communities
- c. educate, inform, and empower Business Communities in mental wellbeing
- d. increase the uptake of other Victorian business-oriented mental health support programs.

3.2 Eligible projects

- a. Grant funds must be used by recipients to support their Business Community by undertaking activities that align with the program objectives.

- b. Examples of eligible activities include:
- i. supporting and encouraging local business collaboration activities or programs
 - ii. engaging small businesses to co-design programs to improve mental wellbeing, including promotional activities
 - iii. undertaking activities that will start, build on and/or extend work in the Business Community to promote mental wellbeing of small businesses
 - iv. setting up mental wellbeing focus working groups
 - v. helping to improve small business workplace mental wellbeing, resilience, and recovery in a COVID environment.
- c. Recipients may use grant funding to deliver projects other than the examples shown, including for outsourced services.

3.3 Ineligible activities

- a. The following activities **will not** be considered for grant funding:
- i. service provision of psychosocial treatments and business mentoring such as those offered by the Victorian Government, including the Partners in Wellbeing Helpline (including wellbeing coaches, financial counselling, and business advice) and the Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring Service
 - ii. retrospective support for projects that have already commenced delivery or have been completed prior to receiving funding approval, including equipment purchased, contracts entered, or construction started
 - iii. large-scale digital infrastructure projects
 - iv. projects requiring ongoing funding from the Victorian Government
 - v. ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies, except where a salary subsidy provides direct project delivery, management, or administration
 - vi. costs to meet regulatory requirements
 - vii. purchase of vehicles, land, or buildings.

4 Assessment process

4.1 Assessment of eligibility for the program

- 4.2 Applications will be assessed by the Department to determine that the Business Community is eligible to participate in the program as outlined below.

Criteria	Description	Application
Eligibility	As outlined in the program eligibility criteria at section 1 of these guidelines	Meets criteria
Free mental wellbeing training course	Applicants must agree to nominate up to three (3) Business Community representatives to complete a free mental wellbeing training course	Agreed
Community-led mental wellbeing project	Applicants must agree that at least one of the nominated representatives will complete the free mental wellbeing training, and is willing to lead a project on completion of the mental wellbeing training course	Agreed

4.3 Due diligence assessments

- a. Business Communities are subject to a risk assessment which verifies business details provided with the Australian Business Register, Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian

Charities and Not-for-profits Commissioner, Consumer Affairs Victoria, and/or other applicable regulators.

- b. Any of the following circumstances may be taken into consideration in any decision about the Business Community's participation in the program:
- i. any adverse findings by a regulator regarding the Business Community
 - ii. the Business Community is placed under external administration
 - iii. there is a petition to wind up or deregister the applicant
 - iv. the Business Community is, or becomes, deregistered or unregistered (including cancellation or lapse in registration).

4.4 Assessment of the community-led mental wellbeing project

- a. After at least one nominated representative has completed the free mental wellbeing training course, Business Communities can submit the community-led mental wellbeing project plan designed by its representative(s).
- b. The Department may offer feedback to the Business Community applicant and training provider about revising the community-led mental wellbeing project plan for resubmission.

Note that the Business Community bears all the risk of the community-led mental wellbeing project plan being assessed as unsuccessful and no award of funding being made. The Department accepts no liability for any costs or claim whatsoever in connection with the Business Community's and/or its representatives' attendance at the free mental wellbeing training course.

- c. The community-led mental wellbeing project plan will be assessed on how well it meets the assessment criteria as outlined below:

Assessment Criteria	Description
Criterion 1 – Impacts and objectives	
<p>The project plan sufficiently demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alignment with the program objectives • that it will use and enable Business Community collaboration and networking to support mental wellbeing, resilience, and recovery outcomes • it is structured to support the identified needs and requirements of the Business Community members • it has identified the outcomes that the project will deliver. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the project will promote the mental wellbeing of Business Community members and contribute to the program objectives. • Demonstrate how the project will meet an identified mental wellbeing need, for example helping business community members respond to challenges arising from the pandemic and other disruptions. • Outline who you will be partnering with, key stakeholders you will be working with and their proposed contribution to planning and delivering the project. • Outline desired outcomes (include changes for groups, communities, organisations, or systems over time, for example: changes in knowledge and skills) • Outline activities to be implemented and target group/s (e.g., particular industries, culturally and linguistically diverse and/or Aboriginal-owned small businesses). • Outline timelines to deliver the program.
Criterion 2 – Project implementation and organisational capability	
<p>The project plan sufficiently identifies the resources required to deliver the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline resources required, their capability and capacity to deliver the project. • Include a budget that outlines costs associated with the delivery of activities and/or resources to support the work.

5 Terms and conditions of funding

- 5.1 A Business Community applicant as defined by its ABN can only receive one grant.
- 5.2 Successful Business Community applicants will be contacted via email and invited to enter into a grant agreement with the Department, with advice on next steps.
- 5.3 Grant funds will be released to Business Community applicants after:
 - a. the Business Community applicant enters into a legally binding grant agreement with the Department
 - b. a minimum of one representative completes the free mental wellbeing training course
 - c. submission of a community-led mental wellbeing project plan
 - d. the community-led mental wellbeing project plan has been assessed and approved by the Department.
- 5.4 Grant recipients will be required to report by 30 November 2023 on the outcomes of their project and contribute information and data about the funded activities or programs to the Department for evaluation of the program.
- 5.5 Grant recipients may be required to provide copies of supporting documentation to evidence reported project expenditure, and to return any unspent funds.

5.6 Publicity

- a. Successful applicants must agree to cooperate with the Department in the promotion of the program. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies, or promotional events and activities.
- b. Successful applicants must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a grant without prior written approval from the Department.
- c. The Department may publicise the benefits accruing to the successful applicant and/or the State associated with the provision of the grant and the State's support for the Project.
- d. By making an application, the applicant consents to the Department including the name of the successful applicant and/or grant amount in any publicity material and in the Department's annual report.

5.7 Reporting for program evaluation

- a. As a condition of funding, successful applicants will be required to participate in any program monitoring and evaluation activities initiated by the Department. This may include completing surveys throughout the program to measure progress to achieving outcomes, and for up to three years after program completion. Non-compliance could impact future applications to the Department's programs.
- b. Reporting is critical to the Department in understanding program impact, supporting continuous improvement in program design and delivery, and delivering more effective grant programs to the people of Victoria.

5.8 Privacy and confidentiality

- a. Information provided by the applicant for the purpose of this application will be used by the Department for the purposes of assessment of applications, program administration and program review. In making an application, the applicant consents to the provision of their personal information to State and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies for the purpose of assessing applications. If there is an intention to include personal information about third parties in the application, please ensure they are aware of, and consent to the contents of this privacy statement.
- b. Any personal information about the applicant or a third party will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and other applicable laws. Enquiries about access to personal information or privacy policy can be emailed to privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

5.9 Absolute discretion

- a. Decisions by the Department on all matters pertaining to the award of grant funding under this program, including accepting the training provider's recommendation in respect of community-led mental wellbeing project plans, is at its absolute discretion.
- b. The Department reserves the right to request the applicant provide further information should it be deemed necessary.
- c. The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and the application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.

6 More information

- 6.1 Further information may be obtained by contacting Business Victoria wellbeing@business.vic.gov.au or by phoning 13 22 15.
- 6.2 Contact with the Department does not constitute endorsement of any application for funding.