

# GUIDELINES

## First Peoples' COVID-19 Business Support Fund

Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) assistance to Aboriginal small businesses

### Program summary

The Victorian Government has announced the First Peoples' COVID-19 Business Support Fund to support Aboriginal businesses that have been subject to temporary closure, trading restrictions or otherwise impacted by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

Victorian Aboriginal businesses are eligible to apply for funding if they meet the criteria listed below.

Once approved, eligible businesses will be provided with a grant of up to \$10,000\* to support them in these unprecedented circumstances.

**Please read these guidelines before completing the application form.**

### Eligibility criteria

**The fund is open to all Victorian Aboriginal businesses (including sole traders and self-employed businesses) that meet the eligibility criteria.**

Businesses are eligible to apply for a grant through the First Peoples' COVID-19 Business Support Fund provided they meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. Are a Victorian business (must be registered in Victoria); and
2. Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and held that ABN on 16 March 2020; and
3. Are certified as an Aboriginal business through Kinaway Chamber of Commerce (Kinaway); and
4. Have a minimum turnover of \$30,000 per annum (or able to demonstrate pro rata turnover for three (3) months); and
5. Have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) or subject to temporary closure or trading restrictions as declared by the Victorian Government.

Ineligible businesses include businesses that are not-for-profits, charitable organisations, community organisations, co-operatives and Australian public companies.

### Evidence of eligibility

Applicants must certify in writing that they meet the eligibility criteria.

Applicants are required to provide **a copy of their business certification documentation from Kinaway Chamber of Commerce (Kinaway)** as evidence that the business is an eligible Victorian Aboriginal business.

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- If the business is not currently a **Kinaway certified** business, the applicant will need to contact Kinaway to complete the process of certification prior to lodging the application.

Contact can be made with Kinaway at <https://kinaway.com.au/>

Applicants are required to submit **evidence that the business meets the minimum annual turnover of \$30,000** (or pro-rata turnover for three (3) months) in the form of one of:

- a letter from an accountant declaring annual turnover or pro-rata turnover for (3) three (3) months prior to 16 March 2020; or
- an annual BAS statement from 2018/19 or 2019/20; or
- at least one Quarterly Business Activity Statement (BAS) from 2019/20 or 2020/21; or
- a fully executed statutory declaration attesting to annual turnover.

### Available funding

The grant amount provided to eligible businesses is up to \$10,000\* per ABN.

**The following restrictions relate to those businesses that have received funding from other Business Support Funds.**

- Aboriginal businesses who have already received funding of \$10,000 or more from the **BSF, BSF-Expansion Program or BSF Round 3** are NOT eligible for additional funding from this Fund.
- Aboriginal businesses that have received grant funding of \$5,000 from the **Business Support Fund-Expansion Program** ARE eligible to apply for funding of \$5,000 from this Fund.
- Businesses that have received funding of up to \$3,000 from the **Sole Trader Support Fund (STSF)** ARE eligible to apply for reduced funding under this Fund (funding will be reduced by the amount received through the STSF).

The First Peoples' COVID-19 Business Support Fund will pay one grant per eligible Australian Business Number (ABN), regardless of the number of business names attached to an ABN.

Applications will be accepted until **26 March 2021** or until available funds are exhausted.

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### How the funding can be used

Grants are provided to support eligible businesses who have been subject to temporary closure, trading restrictions or otherwise impacted as a result of COVID-19. Grant funds can be used on:

- meeting business costs, including utilities, stock, salaries, rent
- seeking financial, legal or other advice to support business continuity planning
- developing the business through marketing and communications activities
- addressing supply chain and logistics challenges
- pivoting the business offering for the current environment
- other supporting activities related to the operation of the business.

### Evidence of Compliance

Applicants may be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives and if so will be required to produce evidence (such as payroll reports to demonstrate impact) at the request of the Victorian Government for a period of four years after the grant has been approved.

If any information in applications is found to be false or misleading, or grants are not applied for the purposes of the businesses in accordance with the terms of funding as set out in these guidelines and the application, the grant will be repayable on demand.

### How to Apply

Applicants are required to submit an application online via the Business Victoria website ([www.business.vic.gov.au](http://www.business.vic.gov.au)). All questions in the application need to be completed to ensure timely assessment, approval and grant payment.

On submission, a receipt of your application will be provided to your contact email address provided in the application.

### Other information about this Program

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms as required without notice.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions will endeavour to notify all applicants on the outcome of their completed application within ten business days (noting that if evidence required is not submitted at time of application the process may take longer).

For further information you can contact the Aboriginal Small Business team at [aboriginalbusinessvic@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:aboriginalbusinessvic@ecodev.vic.gov.au).