

International Student Welfare Program

Category 1: International Student Group Activities

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the International Student Welfare Program?

The International Student Welfare (ISW) Program forms part of the support Study Melbourne provides for international students in Victoria. It provides funding for activities, approaches and partnerships that promote the wellbeing of international students and enhance their experience of living in this state.

Who does the International Student Welfare Program support?

The program supports post-secondary international students studying at Victorian universities, vocational colleges and other registered training organisations.

It does not fund activities aimed at supporting students studying and/or living outside Victoria.

It does not fund activities aimed at supporting international students studying in Victorian primary or secondary schools.

What categories of funding are available?

Two categories of funding are available under the ISW Program:

Category 1: International Student Group Activities provides funding of up to \$5,000 to help eligible student organisations and associations deliver activities that support the wellbeing of international students living in Victoria. You can read the Category 1 funding guidelines [here](#).

Category 2: Wellbeing Partnership Activities provides funding of up to \$75,000 for organisations working in partnership to deliver activities that support the wellbeing of international students living in Victoria. You can read the Category 2 funding guidelines [here](#).

When can we apply for funding in this category?

There are two rounds of funding per calendar year for **Category 1: International Student Group Activities**.

Up-to-date information about the timing of funding rounds, including opening and closing dates and information webinars, will be promoted ahead of each round and listed on the [ISW Program](#) webpage on the Business Victoria website.

Can we submit an application after the closing date?

No. Late applications will not be accepted once each funding round has closed.

If you missed the closing date, you may wish to contact the ISW Program team to discuss the timing of future funding rounds or other funding options. You can contact the program team by email: studymelbourne@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

What does student 'welfare' and 'wellbeing' involve?

Study Melbourne wants every international student to have the best possible experience in Victoria. Caring for the welfare and wellbeing of students helps to achieve this.

We know that every student's experience is different and that wellbeing can be affected by things like:

- feeling connected with other students and the community
- being healthy and feeling safe
- knowing where to go for help and support
- finding a comfortable and affordable place to live
- learning and practising English
- securing voluntary or paid work
- experiencing life in Australia's multicultural community.

What do you mean by 'an activity'?

We mean the specific activity that the funding will be used for. An activity could be a one-off event or series of events, a training course, a leadership program, an awareness campaign, an information resource, or an applied research project.

What kinds of activities may be considered for funding?

Activities that may be considered for funding include (but are not limited to):

- welfare services
- professional and financial advice
- counselling
- events, such as a conference or a welcome dinner
- sporting activities
- workshops
- volunteering and leadership programs
- producing information material and practice guides
- awareness campaigns
- applied research into ways of improving the experience of international students in Victoria
- sponsorship.

Can our activity be part of a bigger event or project?

We may fund activities that are part of a larger event or project.

For example, a student association or an industry group may be holding a conference and the ISW Program may fund an activity that will be held as part of the conference program or as an 'add-on' to the conference.

When you are seeking funding for an activity that is part of a larger project, you need to tell us. Your application has to clearly show the relationship between your proposed activity and the larger one. You should be able to provide information about the larger project, including what it's for, who is leading it, how it's funded, and how it fits with the ISW Program guidelines.

Remember: When your activity is part of a larger event or project, your Activity Plan and the Budget and Expenditure Forecast that are included in your funding application must focus on providing details about your proposed activity, not the larger event or project.

What activities have been funded in the past?

Here are four examples of activities funded by the ISW Program in recent years.

Melbourne Airport Student Welcome Desk

Melbourne City Council partners with international student organisations to deliver the 'Student Welcome Desk' at Melbourne Airport. This activity provides a daily information and assistance service to international students arriving at the airport, including distributing welcome packs to students.

Over 8,000 students were welcomed in 2015 - 2016 and the Student Welcome Desk was funded to operate for a further three years.

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AFIS Information Day 2016

The Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS) was funded to deliver an information day in March 2016 to provide international students with information to enhance their stay in Victoria.

The all-day event included information booths and presentations from health, safety, employment, and community service providers. The information day was held on 12 March 2016 and 270 students registered to attend.

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Community, cultural and wellbeing support for international students in Bendigo

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services is partnering with La Trobe University Bendigo's International Students Group for this locality based activity, which focuses on reducing social isolation and improving employment options for international students in Bendigo.

Local international students are being assisted through this activity, which involves holding community 'welcome events' attended by international students and local

residents; recruiting local residents to be student supports; and brokering local volunteering, internship and employment opportunities for international students.

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Lead Employment Advocates Activity

United Voice, a trade union, and the Council of International Students Australia are collaborating to inform 40 international students about the Australian workplace and employment conditions, and employment services and assistance.

Once trained, these students are delivering peer-to-peer information campaigns and providing support across their campus networks. The students have also been linked to the International Student Work Rights Legal Service funded by Study Melbourne.

What kinds of activities will not be funded by this program?

ISW Program funding cannot be used to cover the following costs:

- salaries for existing staff
- recurrent operating costs, for example: rent or utilities or projects establishing expectations of ongoing funding
- budget deficits
- capital expenditure, including buying major capital equipment
- competitions, commercial or fundraising activities
- expenses of overseas visitors
- alcohol purchased for functions or events
- religious or political activities
- research activities (except for applied research into ways of improving the experience of international students in Victoria)
- any costs that have been incurred prior to the start of a funding agreement, such as activities that have already been completed or are underway (other than in exceptional circumstances and with prior written approval from Study Melbourne).

What kinds of organisations can apply under this funding category?

Applicants for **International Student Group Activities** funding must be eligible student organisations or associations.

How do we know if our organisation and activity are eligible for funding?

To be eligible for **International Student Group Activities** funding your organisation **must** be an eligible student organisation or association.

Complete this checklist to see whether your organisation and proposed activity would qualify to be considered for funding under Category 1. If you answer '**No**' to one or more questions, your application most likely **would not** be eligible for funding.

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST	YES	NO
Is the applicant (your organisation) a student organisation or association?		
Is your organisation a legal entity that operates in Victoria?		
Does your organisation have an Australian Business Number (ABN)?		
Has your organisation been operating for at least two years?		
Does your organisation support a strong membership base of international students living in Victoria?		
Is your application seeking \$5,000 or less from Study Melbourne's ISW Program?		
Can you show how the activity you are seeking to fund will support some or all of the aims of the ISW Program?		
Does the proposed activity focus on supporting the wellbeing of post-secondary school international students living in Victoria?		
Will international students be involved in helping to design, deliver and/or review the proposed activity?		
Can you assure us that funding received from the ISW Program will not be used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pay for activities that have already been completed or are already underway • offset the cost of existing operations • meet regulatory requirements 		
Are you able to deliver the activity within 12 months of signing a funding agreement with the State of Victoria? This is a requirement of receiving funding under Category 1.		
Can you demonstrate that appropriate insurance cover will be provided for the activity being proposed?		
Can you confirm that your organisation is not involved in legal proceedings relating to the winding up of its operations, or any insolvency-related actions (including any legal bankruptcy-related proceedings against the organisation's directors or officers)?		

Our head office is overseas. Can we still apply for funding under this program?

To apply for funding, your organisation must have an Australian Business Number (ABN), be a legal entity that operates in Victoria, and have been operating for at least two years.

If your organisation's head office is overseas and still satisfies these and other eligibility criteria, you should be able to apply for funding under the ISW Program.

Another organisation will be helping us deliver the activity. Do we need to let you know?

Yes. If another organisation will be helping your student organisation or association to deliver the proposed activity, your application needs to explain their role and what contribution they will be making. This is particularly important if the other organisation is providing cash or in-kind support for the activity. You will need to provide us with a copy of a letter of support and/or a written agreement between your two organisations.

What evidence do applicants need to provide about their insurance cover?

Your organisation must demonstrate in the funding application that you:

- have considered what insurance is needed to cover any operational and business risks associated with the proposed activity, and
- can explain how this insurance will be provided.

If your application is successful, appropriate insurance cover must be in place from the start date of any funding agreement between your organisation and the State of Victoria. From that time, we may ask you to provide certificates to prove that the appropriate insurance is in place.

What costs do we need to mention in our Budget and Expenditure Forecast ?

As part of your portal application, you will be asked for your Budget and Expenditure Forecast. You will need to identify the amount of ISW program funds that are being requested for the proposed activity and outline the anticipated expenses involved in planning and delivering your proposed activity. For example, these may include:

- event delivery costs, such as venue hire, audio-visual support, furniture hire, catering and cleaning. Note: ISW Program funding cannot be used to purchase alcohol for functions or events
- registration fees, such as for a conference or training program
- professional graphic design and printing costs (for marketing collateral, information materials etc)
- labour costs, such as paying a project manager or part-time support staff; or fees for a workshop facilitator, guest speaker or expert consultant
- other marketing costs, such as advertising.

Do we need to include GST in our Budget and Expenditure Forecast?

No. Please do not include GST in your initial budget estimate or estimates of individual cost items. If your application is successful and you receive funding from Study Melbourne, GST will be added to the amount of agreed funding.

Do applicants need to provide any cash or in-kind co-contributions?

No cash or in-kind co-contributions are required when applying for funding under the **International Student Group Activities** category. However, the assessment panel will look favourably on applications that offer in-kind contributions or additional funding from other organisations.

What is an in-kind contribution?

As part of your application you may wish to describe in-kind contributions being provided by your organisation or partner organisations to support delivery of the proposed activity.

An in-kind contribution means support, other than money, that your organisation or a supporting organisation provides towards your activity.

This may include voluntary labour (e.g. students helping on an information desk), administration costs, or donated goods and services (e.g. donated catering, printing services or professional advice from an expert).

How do we calculate the value of in-kind contributions?

You need to explain the basis for the rates you use to calculate the in-kind value of general or specialist labour, or the provision of goods and services. We recommend you base these on the standard award or commercial rates that you would normally have to pay for these goods or services.

For example, to calculate the in-kind value of time contributed by an existing staff member, use the hourly rate that person is already being paid. An expert contractor or consultant will be able to advise you of their usual hourly rate. To calculate the in-kind value of general staff hours, you may wish to use the pay guide for Victorian social and community services sector employees, on the [Fair Work Commission's](#) website.

What information needs to be in our Activity Plan?

One section of your portal application will ask for your Activity Plan. You must complete the Activity Plan as it gives the assessment panel a better idea of how you intend to plan and deliver each aspect of the proposed activity and its intended outcomes. The plan should contain detailed information, facts and figures about:

- what the activity aims to achieve
- what events, products or services will be delivered, where, and how many international students are expected to benefit
- how the activity will be organised and who is responsible for delivering the main components. The roles and contributions of any partner organisations should be explained, if applicable.
- how international students will be involved in helping design, deliver and/or review the activity
- exactly what any ISW Program funding will be spent on (as opposed to what any other funding components will be used for)
- the timeframe for delivery, including milestone dates.

Please make sure that the content of your Activity Plan is consistent with the information provided in the rest of your Application Form and clearly explains what and who will be involved in delivering your activity, from start to finish.

Please note: if you are successful in securing funding from the ISW Program, you will be required to submit progress reports and a final Activity Report that explain the outcomes against what was originally set down in your original Activity Plan and budget.

Is there a timeframe in which funded activities need to be delivered?

Yes. Activities that receive **International Student Group Activities** funding must be delivered within 12 months of the date a funding agreement is signed.

Do we need to involve international students in delivering our activity?

Yes. All applicants must demonstrate how they intend to involve international student groups and/or students in the design, delivery and/or review of the activity.

This could be achieved in a number of ways, for example by:

- consulting with international students or student groups to obtain their views
- having them assist as volunteers or paid workers
- seeking their help to recruit participants
- involving them in monitoring and providing feedback on the activity
- establishing partnerships with student organisations or associations.

This helps to ensure that each activity is designed to meet the needs of international students and is delivered in a way that successfully engages with and supports them.

Given we are a student group – do we still need to demonstrate how international students will be involved?

Yes. You still need to describe how you will engage with and involve international students in planning, delivering and/or reviewing the activity.

For example, are you intending to consult with members of your organisation who are international students, involve international students on your organising committee, or survey participants for their feedback at the end of the activity?

What is meant by ‘promoting Study Melbourne’ as part of any funded activities?

All funded activities must be conducted under the Study Melbourne brand. You will need to display the Study Melbourne logo on promotional and information materials and at events relating to the activity.

Logos and brand guidelines will be supplied to each successful applicant once their funding agreement has been executed.

Will our application be considered if we don’t provide all of the supporting documentation?

You must provide all the necessary supporting information and documentation or your application may not be eligible for funding.

This includes providing copies of letters of support and/or written agreements with any supporting organisations that will be helping you deliver the activity.

What do you mean by ‘conflict of interest’?

A conflict of interest occurs when a person has a personal, professional or business interest that may influence, or be perceived to influence, their decisions or interfere with the proper performance of their official duties. Conflict of interest can be actual, perceived or potential.

For example, if a decision-maker in your organisation or one of their immediate family members *owns* a business that will gain financially if your funding application is successful, that would be a conflict of interest. If the person or their family member is an *employee* of that business, that may still be a perceived or potential conflict of interest.

How long will it take to find out the outcome of our application?

It may take up to 8 weeks from the closing date before applicants for **International Student Group Activities** funding are notified as to whether their application has been successful.

What if the assessment process takes longer than expected?

Study Melbourne will notify applicants if the assessment process is taking longer than expected.

Where can we get advice about preparing our application?

A member of the ISW Program team can be contacted by emailing: studymelbourne@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Information will be available for potential applicants during the year, and will be advertised via the electronic International Education bulletin. You can subscribe to the bulletin here www.global.vic.gov.au/victorias-capabilities/industry-sectors/international-education/international-education-bulletin.