

Enabling Tourism Fund – Competitive Round

Program Guidelines

Contents

1	Context	3
1.1	Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan.....	3
1.2	Tourism Infrastructure Program	3
2	Enabling Tourism Fund – Competitive Round – Application guidelines	3
2.1	Objectives and outcomes of the ETF – Competitive Round	3
2.2	Key dates	4
3	Eligibility	4
3.1	Applicant eligibility	4
3.2	Funded activities	5
4	Funding details	7
4.1	Available funding.....	7
4.2	Funding ratios and co-contribution requirements	7
4.3	Considerations	8
4.4	Activity costing treatment of GST.....	8
5	Application process	8
5.1	Prior to application	8
5.2	Prepare an application	8
5.3	Documentation and information requirements.....	8
5.4	Information only.....	9
6	Assessment and approval process	9
6.1	Assessment process.....	9
6.2	Criteria assessment of applications	10
6.3	Due diligence assessments	11
6.4	Assessment of non-financial risks.....	12
6.5	Approval process	12
6.6	Discretion in awarding grant funding	12
7	Conditions of funding	13
7.1	Acceptance of letter of offer	13
7.2	Grant Agreements.....	13
7.3	Program evaluation reporting.....	13
7.4	Activity commencement	13
7.5	Project control groups	13
7.6	Audit	14
7.7	Privacy and confidentiality	14
7.8	Competitive neutrality	14
7.9	Local Jobs First (LJF)	14
8	Terms of applying	14
8.1	Amendment of Guidelines.....	14
8.2	Disrepute.....	14

8.3 Conflict of interest 15

8.4 Related entities 15

9 Additional information and resources 15

9.1 Support for applications 15

9.2 Links to online resources 15

1 Context

1.1 Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan

The Victorian Government is helping to revitalise and grow Victorian tourism after the impacts of bushfires and the global pandemic, with a roadmap outlined in the [Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan \(VERRP\)](#).

Informed by the findings of the [Regional Tourism Review](#), the VERRP will strengthen Victoria's nation-leading tourism offering through the development of new experiences, products and infrastructure.

The [VERRP](#), which is underpinned by an investment of \$633 million, outlines strategies to attract more international, interstate and intrastate visitors by making the most of marketing expenditure, transforming [Regional Tourism Boards](#) and ensuring state-wide collaboration.

The [VERRP](#) focuses on key experience pillars that are sustainable competitive strengths for Victoria, and which provide significant opportunities for growth.

Pillars relevant to the Enabling Tourism Fund (ETF) – Competitive Round are:

1. **Nature** – experiences and products that activate regional Victoria's natural assets such as forests, parks, alpine areas, wildlife, geothermal and natural mineral springs, coastlines, rivers, lakes and oceans, and contribute to a healthy and resilient environment.
2. **Epicurean** – culinary and gastronomic experiences and products that highlight provenance and demonstrate innovation, including agricultural and regenerative farming experiences, cellar doors, distilleries and breweries.
3. **Arts and culture** – experiences and products that enable the visitor to engage with art and culture in new and innovative ways, such as museums, storytelling, multicultural centres, art and heritage trails, public art installations, galleries and creative venues.
4. **First Peoples' led experiences** – prioritising the world's oldest, continuous living culture that will contribute to the future of Victorian tourism, through the creation of immersive experiences and products that are driven by Aboriginal self-determination.

The examples provided above are not intended to be prescriptive.

1.2 Tourism Infrastructure Program

The Tourism Infrastructure Program (TIP), funded through the 2020-21 State Budget, is a key part of the [VERRP](#) and is developing and delivering a strong pipeline of demand-driving tourism infrastructure projects. This includes a focus on strengthening public infrastructure to enable private investment and to facilitate the development of new tourism products.

The TIP comprises three separate funds:

- Flagship Projects – \$149 million;
- Regional Tourism Investment Fund (RTIF) – \$150 million; and
- Enabling Tourism Fund (ETF) – \$10 million (includes this Competitive Round)

2 Enabling Tourism Fund – Competitive Round – Application guidelines

2.1 Objectives and outcomes of the ETF – Competitive Round

ETF – Competitive Round will accelerate high-potential tourism initiatives through the explorative and market-testing phase and facilitate projects towards investment-ready status.

The objectives of ETF – Competitive Round are:

- Build a strong pipeline of demand-driving public and private tourism infrastructure projects and progress them towards investment-ready status.

- Develop strategic tourism infrastructure projects that will increase visitation, improve quality of customer experience, and increase visitor yield and length of stay.
- Develop projects that broaden Victoria's tourism offering, and support and encourage year-round visitation and dispersal across regional Victoria.
- Leverage and facilitate private sector investment, including through strengthening public tourism infrastructure.

Activities funded through ETF – Competitive Round must support the delivery of the outcomes identified for the TIP, which has three outcome metrics:

1. Increased yield (an increase in the total spend per visitor)
2. Dispersal across seasons and regions (strengthening year-round visitation and visitor dispersal across regions)
3. Increased volume (growth in visitor numbers, repeat visitation and/or length of stay).

2.2 Key dates

The following are the key dates for the ETF – Competitive Round:

Step	Dates
Applications open	25 January 2022
Applications close	4 March 2022
Assessment and approvals process	March to April 2022
Successful activities announced	Mid to late April 2022
Grant Agreements finalised	By 30 June 2022
Activity commencement	By 30 September 2022
Final activity completion	By 30 June 2023
Acquittal report due	By 30 September 2023

3 Eligibility

3.1 Applicant eligibility

3.1.1 Eligible applicants

Applicants must be one of the following types of entities to apply:

- Private sector proponents (defined as an individual, privately-owned or commercial organisation that has overall control and responsibility for project that is predominantly funded through private capital);
- Local and State Government entities, including:
 - Public Land Managers, Land Management Authorities and Committees of Management
 - Local Government Authorities
 - Alpine Resort Management Boards
 - State or Local Government owned entities;
- Incorporated associations;

- Not-for-profit organisations, including community groups that are an incorporated body, cooperative or association; or
- Traditional Owner Corporations, organisations and groups, and Aboriginal-owned businesses.

In addition, to be eligible for funding applications must:

- Possess an Australian Business Number (ABN); and
- Be financially solvent.

Where an entity is not incorporated, an auspicing arrangement may be considered (refer to Section 3.1.2).

3.1.2 Auspicing

Applications from auspice organisations applying on behalf of applicants will be accepted. Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice. If the application is successful, the auspice organisation becomes the official 'recipient' and will receive any funds allocated and is responsible for the management of the activity and the acquittal of grant funds.

3.1.3 Ineligible applicants

The following types of entities are not eligible to apply:

- Unincorporated organisations or joint ventures (unless under an auspice arrangement);
- Utility and services providers;
- Water corporations; or
- Commonwealth Government owned entities.

3.2 Funded activities

3.2.1 Eligible activities

To be eligible for funding under the ETF – Competitive Round an activity must drive the investment-readiness of a project that creates new tourism infrastructure and/ or a significant enhancement that builds on existing infrastructure.

Eligible activities include:

- Business case development
- Feasibility studies and master planning
- Detailed design
- Funding strategy
- Pilot projects and market testing*
- Investigations (eg. geotechnical, heritage)
- Quantity surveying
- Operational viability studies
- Information to promote investment partnering opportunities (go to market approaches)
- Other activities required to progress tourism-related infrastructure projects to investment-ready status.

** For pilot projects to be considered, proponents must demonstrate that the pilot is a key step in testing the viability of a larger scale project with significant tourism outcomes.*

3.2.2 Ineligible activities

The following activities will not be considered for funding under the ETF – Competitive Round:

- Capital and infrastructure expenses;
- Ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies;
- Investigative work that is not part of a broader project;
- Marketing, advertising, or product promotion including signage; or
- Retrospective funding, where activities have been completed or have started prior to receiving funding approval.

3.2.3 Eligible projects

Activities will only be considered for funding under the ETF – Competitive Round where the related project:

- Meets the objectives of this Fund as set out in Section 2.1; and
- Demonstrates strategic investment or supports visitation outcomes in one or more of the following [VERRP](#) priority experience pillars:
 - Nature;
 - Epicurean;
 - Arts and Culture; and/ or
 - First Peoples' led experiences.

Only one application per project will be accepted.

3.2.4 Ineligible projects

Activities relating to the following projects will not be considered for funding under the ETF – Competitive Round:

- Projects that require ongoing funding from the Victorian Government for operation or maintenance;
- Retrospective funding, where projects have been completed or have started prior to receiving funding approval;
- Projects that are only purchasing plant and equipment; or
- Projects that are considered core business for local government, for example but not limited to:
 - Construction of carparks and toilets (unless they are a component part supporting a broader tourism project)
 - Construction and maintenance of Visitor Information Centres
 - Enabling infrastructure not directly linked to unlocking private investment.

3.2.5 Eligible activity and project locations

Activities and projects delivered within the following locations can apply for funding through the ETF – Competitive Round, in accordance with relevant program eligibility criteria:

Alpine	Hepburn	Northern Grampians
Ararat	Horsham	Pyrenees
Ballarat	Hindmarsh	Queenscliffe
Bass Coast	Indigo	Southern Alpine (Lake Mountain & Mount Baw Baw)
Baw Baw	Latrobe	Southern Grampians
Benalla	Loddon	South Gippsland
Buloke	Macedon Ranges	Strathbogie

Campaspe	Mansfield	Surf Coast
Central Goldfields	Mildura	Swan Hill
Colac Otway	Mitchell	Towong
Corangamite	Moira	Wangaratta
East Gippsland	Moorabool	Warrnambool
Falls Creek	Mornington Peninsula	Wellington
Gannawarra	Mount Alexander	West Wimmera
Glenelg	Mount Buller & Mount Stirling	Wodonga
Golden Plains	Mount Hotham	Yarriambiack
Greater Bendigo	Moyne	Yarra Ranges
Greater Geelong	Murrindindi	
Greater Shepparton	Nillumbik	

3.2.6 Environmental and design considerations

Activities and projects should be consistent, where possible, with the following:

- Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD): Infrastructure proposals are encouraged to incorporate ESD initiatives into project designs;
- Universal Design (UD): A philosophy that encourages building development beyond what is required by the Disability Standards for Access to premises. The intent of UD is to create environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible; and
- [The Burra Charter](#) (BC): The BC is a set of principles that have been adopted to create a nationally accepted standard for heritage conservation practice in Australia. It is not a legal requirement to adopt the BC guidelines, however they are well entrenched in policy.

4 Funding details

4.1 Available funding

Applicants may apply for funding of up to \$500,000 per activity, with a minimum funding request of \$20,000 per activity. Applicants may not apply for funding for more than one activity for a given project.

4.2 Funding ratios and co-contribution requirements

The following funding ratios and co-contributions apply:

Maximum funding ratios for co-contributions	Notes
Up to ETF \$4:\$1 other	Higher applicant co-contributions will be considered favourably during assessment.

In-kind contributions will not be considered as part of the funding co-contribution, however any such in-kind contribution will be taken into account during the assessment process.

Funding co-contributions must be from sources other than the Victorian Government (including other Victorian Government departments or agencies) in order to satisfy the required funding ratio.

Activities that have received or will receive Victorian Government funding from other sources outside this Fund may apply, however any such funding will be considered as part of funding assessment criteria.

4.3 Considerations

Activities requesting funding outside the grant gap or lower than the stated applicant co-contribution ratios will be considered on a case-by-case basis and subject to Ministerial discretion.

4.4 Activity costing treatment of GST

Applicants should note that all activity costs included in the application and activity documentation must be exclusive of GST.

5 Application process

5.1 Prior to application

Prior to submitting a formal application, applicants are advised to:

- Read these Program Guidelines to establish eligibility
- Read the terms and conditions for the funding offered.

5.2 Prepare an application

Applicants should use the online application form (available on the ETF website) to clearly and succinctly address the assessment criteria outlined in Section 6.2.1.

Applications must have the approval of the Chief Executive Officer (or person authorised to bind the organisation), and the person submitting the application form will be required to attest to this as part of the application process.

Before applying for funding under this program or making any decision, applicants should seek advice from their legal, business and financial advisers to determine their eligibility and the terms of the funding.

Any costs or risks associated with an application are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

The Department makes no representation that a grant of funds will be made to any applicant and reserves the right to amend, suspend or withdraw funding under the ETF – Competitive Round.

Please check with a Department representative if you are unclear about any part of the application. To contact the Department, please email tourism.projects@ecodev.vic.gov.au

5.2.1 Regional Tourism Boards

Applicants are encouraged to work with [Regional Tourism Boards \(RTBs\)](#) and industry organisations to identify and refine potential activities. Letters of support from RTBs can be attached as part of the application.

5.3 Documentation and information requirements

Mandatory documentation	Other supporting documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management plan (which must include scope of works, objectives, outcomes and deliverables, risk management plan, and itemised project budget) (<i>template is provided on the Business Victoria (ETF) page</i>) • Evidence of the organisation's ability to finance the co-contribution • For grants over \$50,000, evidence of financial stability*, as a minimum: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft project brief • Letters of support, including from Regional Tourism Boards, local councils, local business and tourism associations, Traditional Owner organisations etc. • Evidence to support claims made in response to Assessment Criteria 1 (eg. Visitation Impact Assessments, Economic Impact Assessments)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audited Financial Reports for the last three financial years. This should be the 'final accounts' with Directors' Report and Declaration and should include Profit & Loss Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flows, and notes to the accounts. If accounts are not audited, unaudited accounts from an Accountant will be accepted - If the latest financial report is more than six months old, up-to-date Management or Interim Accounts for the current year including Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, and, in the case of public listed corporations, a half yearly financial report - Current Business Plan, or project proposal - The company's financial projections for the next three financial years, including Profit & Loss and Cash Flow • Where an auspice organisation is required, a statutory declaration confirming this organisation has agreed to the activity 	
---	--

** Not required for Local Government Authorities, Alpine Resort Management Boards, State Government Departments and statutory agencies, and publicly funded universities and educational institutions.*

5.4 Information only

These Guidelines and any discussions you may have with representatives of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the Department) are for information only, and do not constitute advice.

Applicants should seek independent advice before making an application or entering into a Grant Agreement.

6 Assessment and approval process

6.1 Assessment process

1. The Department will determine the activity's and project's eligibility against the relevant eligibility criteria, undertake the requisite probity checks and financial risk assessments of the applicant organisations where necessary, and review applications to ensure all mandatory documentation is included.
2. Applications that are incomplete or deemed ineligible will not proceed to assessment.
3. Eligible applications will be considered by an Initial Assessment Panel. The Initial Assessment Panel will competitively assess the applicant projects against the assessment criteria in Section 6.2.1 and score and rank the projects from this assessment.
4. Applications will subsequently be considered by an Executive Assessment Panel that will:
 - a. Review and confirm the assessment undertaken by the Initial Assessment Panel
 - b. Undertake an overall moderation based on the dispersal of tourism outcomes across regional Victoria and the key experience pillars
 - c. Confirm the final list of projects and the proposed grant amounts for recommendation to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events.

5. The final decision on application outcomes will be at the discretion of the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events.

The Initial Assessment Panel will include representatives from the Department. The Executive Assessment Panel is chaired by the Department and includes representatives from other departments and agencies across the Victorian Government.

Where relevant, comments and advice may be sought from independent external experts and used in assessing applications against the assessment criteria.

6.2 Criteria assessment of applications

All attachments and information provided as part of the application will be taken into consideration during the criteria assessment.

The Department reserves the right to request the applicant provides further information should it be deemed necessary.

6.2.1 Assessment criteria

Criteria 1 – Tourism outcomes and objectives of the project (35%)
<p>This criterion assesses how well the project meets the objectives and outcomes of ETF (see Section 2.1).</p> <p>Assessed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential ability of the project to broaden regional Victoria's tourism offering as a compelling visitor proposal, demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The gap in the tourism offering that is driving the project – Demand-driving potential of the project. <p>Use of project modelling and data sources are encouraged in response to this criterion.</p>
Criteria 2 – Impact of the activity on the investment readiness of the project (25%)
<p>This criterion assesses how the proposed activity will accelerate the project towards investment-ready status.</p> <p>Assessed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clear pathway linking the funded activity to the investment readiness of the project which might include (but not limited to) the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scoping and planning a new tourism idea for future delivery – Clarifying project feasibility and business case to demonstrate financial viability, operational sustainability and economic contribution. – Defining project capital funding options to clarify an identified capital raising strategy for the project to leverage project funding partners – Relevant technical work and analysis to progress required statutory approvals and advance project feasibility. – Preparation of project information to support project advocacy and securing project partners. – Quality of the preliminary activities planned or undertaken to date including risk management, stakeholder management and project planning.
Criteria 3 – Strategic alignment (25%)
<p>This criterion assesses how well the project meets the strategic direction of Victoria's visitor economy and the regional project location.</p>

Assessed on:

- The extent to which the project aligns with and supports one or more of the following strategic pillars outlined in the [VERRP](#):
 - Nature
 - Epicurean
 - Arts and culture
 - First Peoples' led experiences.
- The extent to which the project aligns to other State, regional or local strategic tourism plans (e.g. [RTB](#) plans, [Regional Partnership](#) priorities, Local Government strategies).

Letters of support, including from [RTBs](#) and local councils, are encouraged in response to this criterion.

Criteria 4 – Organisational capability and approach (10%)

This criterion assesses the financial viability of the organisation and its capacity to deliver the outcomes associated with the activity.

Assessed on:

- The applicant organisation's previous experience in successfully delivering comparable activities.
- The applicant organisation's capacity to lead and deliver the necessary expertise and workforce for the activity.
- Financial health and capacity to undertake the activity and to deliver the outcomes beyond the activity's timeframe.
- Evidence of the organisation's ability to finance the co-contribution.
- Risk planning for the project has been documented with appropriate risk mitigation strategies.

Criteria 5 – Need for funding and value for money (5%)

This criterion assesses whether there is a strong argument for government support and whether the activity represents value for money for the Victorian community.

Assessed on:

- Funding leveraged from other sources.
- The level of previous support that the activity or project may have received from the Victorian Government.
- Demonstrated need for government assistance for the activity to proceed.

6.3 Due diligence assessments

Applicants will be subject to a risk assessment to verify business details provided by an applicant with the Australian Business Register, Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commissioner, Consumer Affairs Victoria and/or another applicable regulator.

Any of the following circumstances may be taken into consideration in any decision whether to award a grant:

- Any adverse findings by a regulator regarding an applicant;
- An applicant is placed under external administration;
- There is a petition to wind up or deregister the applicant; or

- The applicant is or becomes deregistered or unregistered (including cancellation or lapse in registration).

The Department may at any time, remove an application from the process, if in the Department's opinion association with the applicant may bring the Department, a Minister or the State of Victoria in disrepute.

For grants over \$50,000 and where applicants are not Local Government Authorities, Alpine Resort Management Boards, State Government Departments or statutory agencies, or publicly funded universities and educational institutions, the Department will undertake a financial risk assessment of the applicant to assess the ability of the applicant to deliver the proposed activity.

This requires at a minimum, the provision of the following:

- Audited Financial Reports for the last three financial years. This should be the 'final accounts' with Directors' Report and Declaration and should include Profit & Loss Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flows, and notes to the accounts. If accounts are not audited, unaudited accounts from an Accountant will be accepted.
- If the latest financial report is more than six months old, up-to-date Management or Interim Accounts for the current year including Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, and, in the case of public listed corporations, a half yearly financial report.
- Current Business Plan, or project proposal.
- The company's financial projections for the next three financial years, including Profit & Loss and Cash Flow.
- An attestation of whether the applicant is or has been the subject of any investigations by the State Revenue Office (SRO) and/ or Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Outcomes from the financial risk assessment will be taken into consideration in any decision to recommend and award the grant.

6.4 Assessment of non-financial risks

Applications to the ETF – Competitive Round must include sufficient information to enable the Department to assess financial and other non-financial risks associated with the proposal as part of its due diligence. This includes consideration of elements that may pose a reputational risk to the State, such as:

- Whether the applicant has failed to meet key contractual obligations for previous grant agreements with the State. Note: as appropriate, delays due to COVID-19 restrictions and responses will be taken into consideration at the Department's discretion.
- Where the proposal has already been fully funded by the applicant through other means (eg. capital raising on the Australian Stock Exchange).
- Whether the applicant is or has been the subject of any investigations by the SRO and/ or ATO.

6.5 Approval process

The Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, in consultation with other relevant Ministers, will consider the advice received from the Executive Assessment Panel and determine whether to approve the granting of funds in accordance with a successful application. The Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events has the discretion to make any number of grants available or withdraw funding under the ETF – Competitive Round in its entirety.

Applicants will be advised of the decision relating to their application in writing. Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer from the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events.

6.6 Discretion in awarding grant funding

Decisions on all matters pertaining to the award of grant funding under this Fund are at the Department's and Minister's absolute discretion. This includes approving a lesser amount than that applied for, amending funding conditions or withdrawing the ETF – Competitive Round without notice.

7 Conditions of funding

7.1 Acceptance of letter of offer

Successful applicants will have [10] business days from the date of the Letter of Offer to accept the offer in writing after which a Grant Agreement will be drawn up between the applicant and the Department.

7.2 Grant Agreements

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Department on its standard terms and conditions. The Grant Agreement details all funding obligations and conditions.

Grant Agreements must be signed by the organisation's Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent duly authorised representative with the requisite authority to bind the organisation) and will:

- Describe the purpose for which the funding must be used;
- Set out any requirements or conditions that must be met prior to the payment of a grant instalment; and
- Outline agreed milestones and activity outcomes that must be achieved before payment of a grant instalment.

Once the Grant Agreement has been signed, the applicant will be required to actively manage and deliver the activity and provide accurate progress reports to the Department.

The documents provided as part of the application and as outlined in Section 5.3, will become addendums to the grant agreement and form part of the final executed agreement.

7.3 Program evaluation reporting

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.

After completion of the activity, applicants must submit annual evaluation reports assessing the activity's success in meeting its stated objectives, outputs, and outcomes. Depending on the significance of the activity, these evaluation reports may be required for up to three years following completion of the funded activity.

Successful applicants may be required to contribute information on activity outcomes, including longer- term impacts beyond activity completion, for use in program evaluation reviews and the Department marketing materials. It is the responsibility of successful applicants to put in place adequate collection arrangements to capture the appropriate data in relation to outputs and outcomes. Non-compliance could impact future applications to the Department's programs.

7.4 Activity commencement

The activity and any expenditure of funds associated with the activity must not commence until after the Grant Agreement has been duly executed by both the Department and the successful applicant.

Once the Grant Agreement has been executed, the successful applicant will be required to commence the activity within the agreed timeframe. If a successful applicant does not commence the activity by the commencement date, the Department may terminate this agreement in its absolute discretion.

All successful grant applicants, as applicable, must operate under an appropriate [COVIDSafe Plan](#) to govern operations.

7.5 Project control groups

In some instances, based on activity size, complexity and the amount of funding being provided, a project control group (or equivalent) may need to be established with regular meetings and reports. At its discretion, the Department may request to be either a participant or observer in these meetings.

7.6 Audit

The Department may conduct, or the Department may engage a third party to conduct, a performance review or audit of funding recipients. Funding recipients must:

- Actively cooperate with and provide assistance to the Department or any third party engaged by the Department to conduct an audit or performance review;
- Make available to the Department or any third party engaged by the Department all information and Records needed for the audit or performance review in accordance with any written request from the Department or third party engaged by the Department; and
- Provide the Department or any third party engaged by the Department with access to the Organisation's premises or place of business to carry out the audit or performance review.

7.7 Privacy and confidentiality

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, and authorises to the provision of their information to any State or Commonwealth Government department, agency or third party that may be engaged by the Department, for the purpose of assessing applications or conducting a review of the program or application process. 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 set out in this privacy statement.

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 for other concerns regarding the privacy of personal information, can be emailed to the Department's Privacy Unit by emailing privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The Department's privacy policy is also available by emailing the Department's Privacy Unit.

7.8 Competitive neutrality

All successful applications to the ETF – Competitive Round from a Government body, including Local Government Authorities and Government agencies, will be required to comply with the Competitive Neutrality Policy Victoria (if applicable) in respect of any commercial goods or services offered by the body as a result of the grant.

7.9 Local Jobs First (LJF)

LJF is a procurement policy that ensures that small and medium size enterprises are given a full and fair opportunity to compete for both large and small government contracts, helping to create job opportunities. Per the Local Jobs First Policy and *Local Jobs First Act 2003* this Program is subject to LJF. Therefore, program applicants should engage with the Industry Capability Network (ICN) when applying and consider submission of an LJF Plan with their application. Further information can be found at <https://localjobsfirst.vic.gov.au/>.

8 Terms of applying

8.1 Amendment of Guidelines

The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and the application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.

8.2 Disrepute

The Department may at any time, remove an applicant from the application and assessment process, if in the Department's opinion association with the applicant may bring the Department, a Minister or the State of Victoria in disrepute.

8.3 Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which someone in a position of trust or influence has competing professional or personal interests.

Applicants must advise the Department of any real or perceived conflict of interest relating to a project for which it has applied for funding.

Conflicts of interest for Victorian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Service Employees (Section 61) of the *Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic)*.

8.4 Related entities

The applicant cannot use grant funding available through this program to engage the services (including supplier or consultancy services) and/or purchase products from another entity that is wholly or partly owned or controlled by the applicant. Applicants and Service Providers must be entirely separate entities. They may not be owned by the same parent company, share governance or have common directors.

In the application, applicants are required to declare any existing governance relationships between themselves and the nominated service providers. Including whether any of the activity Service Providers are subsidiaries or related bodies corporate within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* or share common directors, officers or senior managers.

The Department may apply this provision at any time to disqualify an applicant from receiving grant funding if a connection between the applicant and an associated entity is identified that is not in keeping with the purpose and objectives of the program.

9 Additional information and resources

9.1 Support for applications

To help applicants prepare their application, additional information and resources will be available on the ETF website, including relevant application templates and frequently asked questions.

Please check with the Department representative prior to submitting if you are unclear about any part of the application.

To contact the Department regarding ETF, please contact – tourism.projects@ecodev.vic.gov.au

9.2 Links to online resources

[Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan](#)

[Regional Tourism Boards](#)

[Visit Victoria](#)

[Tourism industry research and data](#)

[Creative Victoria](#)

[Tourism Australia](#)

[The Burra Charter](#)

[Australian Tourism Awards](#)

[Accessible Tourism – Tourism Accessibility Resource Kit](#)

[Regional Partnerships](#)