



Timber Supply Chain Resilience Package

Impacted Manufacturers Stream

For manufacturers that use
native Victorian hardwood

Guidelines

MAY 2024

Impacted Manufacturers Stream

Background

On 23 May 2023 the Victorian Government announced that native timber harvesting in Victorian state forests will end on 1 January 2024.

Hardwood product manufacturers will no longer be able to obtain timber inputs from Victorian state forests.

The Timber Supply Chain Resilience Package provides affected manufacturers access to grants, professional advice and planning services to support business transition and to plan for the future.

Support will be provided to eligible businesses that process native hardwood sourced from Victorian state forests to manufacture products such as flooring, stairs, furniture, doors, windows, architectural features and pallets.

This program is administered by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Impacted Manufacturers Stream – Summary

The Impacted Manufacturers Stream provides grants of up to \$3,000 directly to manufacturers that are moderately affected by the end of native timber harvesting (see eligibility at Section 1).

Eligible businesses can access services, advice or expertise from their preferred Qualified Service Provider, to assist with business continuity and to plan for the future.

Support for highly impacted manufacturers

Businesses that are highly affected by the end of native timber harvesting in Victoria should apply via the Highly Impacted Manufacturers Stream, which provides vouchers valued at up to \$25,000 to access advice and services; see: business.vic.gov.au/highly-impacted-manufacturers.

Businesses accessing support via the Highly Impacted Manufacturers Stream are not eligible to apply for support via this program.

Key Program Dates

This program will open for applications on Monday 3 July 2023 and close on Friday, 14 June 2024 at 11:59 pm (AEDT), or earlier at the Department's discretion. Complete applications will be assessed in the order that they are received.

The Qualified Service Provider must complete the service activities before 31 December, 2024.

1. Who is eligible for a grant?

1.1. The business¹ must:

- a) be a legally structured business with an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN on and from 1 July 2021²
- b) be an employing business located in Victoria that is registered with WorkSafe Victoria³
- c) be a business in the manufacturing industry classified under one of the following Australia and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classifications (ANZSIC) codes as of 23 May 2023, unless otherwise agreed by the Department⁴:
 - 1413 Timber Resawing and Dressing
 - 1492 Wooden Structural Fitting and Component Manufacturing
 - 1499 Other Wood Product Manufacturing n.e.c.
 - 2511 Wooden Furniture and Upholstered Seat Manufacturing

If the Applicant's ANZSIC classification is out of date, incorrect or you are unsure how to access this information, assistance can be provided by contacting the Business Victoria Hotline on **13 22 15** or email industrytransition@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

- d) derive between 5.00% and 40.00%* of the business's material inputs (measured by cost) for manufacturing processes from native hardwood from Victorian state forests. This figure must be for one completed financial year: either 2021-22 or 2022-2023.

**Business which rely on native Victorian hardwood for 40% or more of their material inputs may be eligible to access up to \$25,000 worth of support via the Highly Impacted Manufacturers Stream at business.vic.gov.au/highly-impacted-manufacturers.*

1.2. The following are not eligible to apply:

- a) Commonwealth, state and local government agencies or bodies
- b) Publicly funded research institutions
- c) Industry associations
- d) Businesses that may use Victorian hardwood timber but are not manufacturers, such as those engaged in retail trade, product design services wholesale trade, construction (including installation and carpentry) and logistics
- e) Businesses that produce wood chips, firewood, sawdust and/or mulch
- f) Businesses eligible for support under the forestry transition support package being administered by the Victorian Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), or
- g) Businesses accessing support via the Highly Impacted Manufacturers Stream of the Timber Supply Chain Resilience Package.

1 A business must be a legal entity. Trustees may apply on behalf of a trust and partners on behalf of partnerships see Section 6. Sole Traders and Partnerships are eligible to apply if they are employing staff and registered with WorkSafe Victoria.

2 A business registered earlier than 1 July 2021 and maintaining that registration is considered as having an ABN 'on and from' the relevant date. If the business ABN was activated after 1 July 2021, please contact the Department via the Business Victoria Hotline **13 22 15** or email industrytransition@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

3 Business operating within Victorian and registered with WorkSafe Victoria must be able to provide their WorkCover Employer Number and WorkCover Certificate of Currency at the point of Application.

4 An ANZSIC code describes your main business activity and is part of the ABN business details held on the Australian Business Register (ABR).

2. Grant funding

- 2.1. Grant funding of \$3,000 per business is available for eligible activities. A business (as defined by its ABN) can only receive one grant.
- 2.2. A business must intent to procure services to the value of at least \$3,000 (not including GST) from their nominated Qualified Service Provider with a minimum of eight hours of service time.
- 2.3. Grant funding will be provided to the eligible business in two payments:
 - a) Payment One: \$2,000 if assessed as eligible following application and the nomination of a Qualified Service Provider, and
 - b) Payment Two: up to \$1,000 on completion of the Service Activity and submission of evidence to the Department of full payment to the Qualified Service Provider. If the Service Activity costs incurred are less than \$3,000 (not including GST), Payment Two will be adjusted to match the lower amount incurred.
- 2.4. The grant provided under this Program is not a taxable supply and therefore is not subject to a GST liability.⁵
- 2.5. If the Service Activity costs exceed \$3,000, grant recipients will be required to pay the costs above \$3,000. The State of Victoria will not be responsible or liable for any costs exceeding the \$3,000 grants, arising from or in connection with the funded Service Activity.
- 2.6. Funding will not be provided for activities that have been undertaken before the recipient has applied and been found eligible. The recipient must not commence the Service Activity before receiving and acknowledging the receipt of the Successful Email (see Section 7.2).
- 2.7. Grants will be allocated to businesses assessed as being eligible in the order that they are assessed and approved until the Program close date or until the available funds are allocated.

⁵ If GST is found to be payable, the Grant shall be increased by an amount equal to any GST payable with respect to the taxable supply for which payment is made provided that with the claim for payment, the Recipient submits a tax invoice, unless the parties have agreed in writing to have issued a recipient created tax invoice. If GST is payable, the total amount of moneys paid under this Agreement will be increased to include the total amount of GST payable.

3. Who is a Qualified Service Provider?

- 3.1. The Qualified Service Provider is the preferred professional adviser to the business, who may be a financial advisor, accountant, lawyer or Tax or BAS Agent, who is qualified to deliver an approved Service Activity to the business (see Section 4 below).

If Applicants do not have access to an existing Qualified Service Provider, links to provider directories can be found at business.vic.gov.au/qsp.

- 3.2. The nominated Qualified Service Provider must:
- be a professional business advisor who is a member of, or registered with, an approved professional service body⁶
 - operate as a business and be registered for tax purposes in Australia with an active ABN, and
 - not be an employee or director of the recipient business, or an associated entity or related entity of the recipient business.

4. Service Activity

- 4.1. The business may select the type of Qualified Service Provider that will assist with informing future business decisions.
- 4.2. The Service Activity provided by the Qualified Service Provider must support one or more of the scope of services listed below:
- advice and analysis regarding the management of cash flow, preparation or cash flow budgets and projections
 - profitability analysis and formulation of financial management and/or operational business strategies
 - tax advice and planning
 - strategic analysis to revise business planning
 - advice regarding the management of debts and liabilities
 - advice regarding workforce management and employee matters
 - legal advice relating to the business.

6 A Qualified Service Provider is any of the following:

- Qualified accountant who belongs to one of the following professional bodies at the declared membership classification i) CPA Australia (i.e., CPA and FCPA), ii) Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (i.e., CA, ACA and FCA) and iii) Institute of Public Accountants (i.e. AIPA, MIPA and FIPA) and comply with the body's continuing professional education requirements; or
- A registered BAS Agent who belongs to one of the following associations at the declared membership classification, including i) the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers (FICB, MICB, AICB), and ii) the Australian Bookkeepers Association (Member), and iii) Association of Accounting Technicians (Australia) Limited and comply with the body's continuing professional education requirements; or
- A registered Tax Agent who belongs to one of the following professional bodies, including i) The Tax Institute, ii) National Tax Agents' Association (NTAA PLUS) and iii) Tax & Super Australia and comply with the body's continuing professional education requirements; or
- A lawyer registered with the Victorian Legal Services Board.

5. Types of ineligible expenditure

- 5.1. The grant payment cannot be used for the following expense types:
- a) service activities that have commenced or concluded prior to applying for funding from this Program
 - b) activities that could ordinarily be obtained in the usual course of business such as operating expenses, rent, stock purchases, utility payments, salaries/wages and associated entitlements, travel costs or routine maintenance
 - c) capital expenditure
 - d) financing fees, servicing creditors or personal debts and expenses
 - e) the purchase, hire or lease of physical goods, plant or equipment
 - f) payment of fines or regulatory charges
 - g) any amount paid on account of goods and services tax
 - h) personal, non-business-related legal advice, or
 - i) any other expenditure as determined by the Department that does not meet program's objectives.

6. Who can make an application and claim?

- 6.1. The person applying must be an authorised representative of the business (such as an owner or director) who can execute contracts and legally bind the business or be a person given authorisation by an authorised representative to apply. The Qualified Service Provider cannot make an application on behalf of the business.
- 6.2. An incorporated trustee can apply on behalf of a trust and a Partner can apply on behalf of a partnership provided that the trustee or partnership would otherwise be eligible and be able to meet the obligations under the signed agreement.
- 6.3. To confirm the identity of the person applying, details of one of the following current proof of identity documents must be provided at the time of application:
- a Driver's License or Learner Permit from any Australian state or territory
 - an Australian passport or New Zealand passport
 - a Medicare Card, or
 - a foreign passport for those issued with an Australian Visa.
- 6.4. If proof of identity is unable to be confirmed, the applicant will receive a follow-up email with instructions on how to provide their proof of identity details.

7. How the program works

A business participating in this Program will progress through three key steps:

7.1. Step 1 – Businesses submit an online Application

- a) Applications are submitted online via the Business Victoria website at business.vic.gov.au.
- b) Businesses must provide the following:
 - Evidence of hardwood from Victorian state forests as a material input, in the form of:
 - paid invoices, orders and/or receipts evidencing purchase of native hardwood from Victorian state forests between 1 July 2021 and 23 May 2023, and
 - a Statutory Declaration from the director or authorised person stating that native hardwood from Victorian state forests represents between 5.00% and 40.00% of material inputs for the business
 - professional membership details (refer to Section 3 and footnote 6)
 - where applicable, a valid Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) registration number, and
 - bank account details.
- c) All questions in the application need to be completed and requested information and evidence provided to ensure timely assessment.
- d) As part of the application process, the business must acknowledge and agree to be bound by the conditions of the grant in the application form and these guidelines. By completing the application form the business is making an offer to the Department and will be bound by the terms of the offer once accepted by the Department.
- e) At the time of applying, the business must nominate their Qualified Service Provider and provide their contact details and professional membership details.
- f) The application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria (see Section 1).
- g) Applicants may be required to provide additional information as requested by the Department.

7.2. Step 2 – Applicants are notified of an outcome and the first payment is issued to eligible businesses to engage a Qualified Service Provider

- a) If the application is successful, the business will receive a formal notification of success via email (Successful Email). An agreement will then be formed between the eligible business and the Department on the conditions contained in the application form, the Successful Email and these guidelines.
- b) The applicant may be asked to confirm their details by acknowledging the Successful Email. The first payment of \$2,000 will be made into the eligible bank account provided in the application, within 20 working days of receipt of the Successful Email.
- c) The business can then engage their nominated Qualified Service Provider to undertake the Service Activity, which must be completed before 31 December, 2024.

7.3. Step 3 – Service Activity completion and final grant installment payment.

- a) The business will be able to claim the second and final payment of up to \$1,000 through a claim form, which will be sent to them via email. All form questions must be completed and submitted to receive the final payment.
- b) The business must attest on the claim form that the Service Activity has been completed by their Qualified Service Provider, and evidence is provided of payment for the full cost of the Service Activity.
- c) The final claim form must be submitted by 31 December, 2024.
- d) The Department will pay the business the final \$1,000 grant funding within 20 working days of confirmation of completed service.

8. Assessment of Eligibility

- 8.1. The applicant will be required to confirm and attest that the business meets the eligibility criteria at the time of application and agrees to be bound by the conditions of the program.
- 8.2. Applications will be assessed using the information and evidence provided in the application form and through verification with other data sources, as outlined in Section 8.3 and 8.5.
- 8.3. As part of this process, any information provided by the business may be shared and subject to verification with other government agencies (State and Commonwealth) including (but not limited to) the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, WorkSafe Victoria, the Australian Business Register and the Australian Department of Home Affairs, as well as the Tax Practitioners Board and professional membership bodies and the suppliers of native Victorian hardwood⁷.
- 8.4. Businesses must ensure that the information listed with the Australian Business Register (ABR) as part of their ABN registration is current and accurate at the time of application.
- 8.5. Business registration details filed with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, Consumer Affairs Victoria and/or other applicable regulators may be checked.
- 8.6. Without limiting the Department's assessment, the following circumstances may be taken into consideration in any decision whether to award a grant:
 - duplicate applications by a trustee and a trust
 - misleading amendments to information provided to public registers describing the business
 - any adverse findings by a government agency or local council regarding a business or its operation
 - a business is, or notice has been given that it will be, placed under external administration
 - there is a petition for bankruptcy or to wind up or deregister a company or business, and
 - a step is being taken to deregister the company or business (including cancellation or lapse in registration of any relevant permit).
- 8.7. Applications will be carefully considered and assessed against the eligibility criteria. The State may, in its absolute discretion, determine: (a) whether the type of business of an applicant is eligible for the grant; or (b) whether the use of native Victorian hardwood is material to the business of the applicant. The State's decision about eligibility for a grant is final.
- 8.8. Applicants that update their ANZSIC classification after 23 May 2023 will be required to provide evidence, to the Department's satisfaction, confirming the nature of their business operations before they can be deemed eligible.
- 8.9. The Department may request further information or clarification to assist with assessment of the application. The Victorian Government reserves, in its absolute discretion, the right to refuse the application where eligibility criteria are not met, or where the applicant does not or cannot provide sufficient information in the required time frame to assess whether eligibility criteria have been met, or where a claim cannot be supported.
- 8.10. Only completed applications that are lodged with the Department will be assessed. Applications that are in draft or are incomplete and that have not been submitted will not be considered as received and will not be assessed.
- 8.11. The business must attest that all industrial relations obligations as an employer in accordance with the National Employment Standards are being met.

⁷ The Department is not responsible for any delays caused by third party validation of a business' eligibility. By making an application, the business consents to the assessment and verification process.

9. Outcome notification

- 9.1. The Department will endeavour to notify all businesses of the outcome of their complete application within four weeks of submitting an application.
- 9.2. There may be longer processing times and delays in notification of the outcome of the application if it:
 - a) does not meet the eligibility criteria
 - b) is incomplete
 - c) has incorrect information, such as ABN (Australian Business Number) or bank details (for successful business)
 - d) does not include current or accurate information registered with relevant regulators or partner agencies, such as the Australian Business Register, WorkSafe Victoria, Tax Practitioners Board, professional membership bodies, or
 - e) requires further information or evidence to verify or validate the application and claim for funding.
- 9.3. The Department may at any time remove a business from the application or assessment process, or terminate an agreement if, in the Department's opinion, association with the business may bring the Department, a Minister or the State of Victoria in disrepute.

10. Program Evaluation

- 10.1. Each voucher recipient agrees to take part in the program's evaluation by participating in evaluation surveys. The evaluation enables the effectiveness/impact of the program to be assessed.

11. Compliance and Audit

- 11.1. Grant recipients may be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives on the accuracy of their application, accounting records relating to the Service Activity, and use of government funds, at the request of the Victorian Government, for a period of three years from receipt of payment.
- 11.2. If any information in the application is found to be false or misleading (as determined by the Department in its discretion), or the grant payment is not applied in accordance with the terms of funding as set out in these guidelines and the application, the grant payment will be repayable on demand.
- 11.3. It is an offence under the *Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018* (Vic) for a person to make a statement in a statutory declaration that they know to be untrue.
- 11.4. If the grant recipient fails to complete the Service Activity, the Department may require the refund of the whole or part of the grant as it deems/determines appropriate, in its absolute discretion.

12. Privacy Statement

- 12.1. Any personal information provided for the purposes of the program will be used by the Department for the purposes of assessing eligibility, program administration, program review, evaluation, and auditing. In applying for a grant, the applicant consents to sharing their information with State and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies for the purpose of assessing applications, as outlined in Section 8.
- 12.2. If there is an intention to include personal information about a third party in the application, the applicant must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.
- 12.3. 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 at privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The Department's privacy policy is also available by emailing the Department's Privacy Unit.

13. Other Information about this Program

- 13.1. The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.
- 13.2. If an unsuccessful business considers that their application has been incorrectly assessed, they can lodge a complaint. More information can be found at business.vic.gov.au/contact-us/complaints.
- 13.3. If you have any queries about your application or require further information on the program visit business.vic.gov.au, contact the Business Victorian Hotline at **13 22 15**, or email industrytransition@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Application	The application submitted by the business to the Department for funding under the program for the Service Activity.
Applicant or business	The legal entity specified in the application.
Department	The State of Victoria represented by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.
Grant	The funding provided by the Department to the Recipient under an Agreement that is part of the Application for the Service Activity.
Guidelines	This document.
Native Victorian hardwood	Hardwood that is derived from Victorian state forests.
person applying	An authorised representative of the business (such as an owner or director) who can execute contracts and legally bind the business or be a person given authorisation by an authorised representative to apply.
Program	The Timber Supply Chain Resilience Package – Impacted Manufacturers Stream.
Recipient	The business as specified in the Application where the application has been accepted by the Department, by the issue of a formal notification of success.
Service Activity	A Service Activity is a detailed work order and an activity conducted by a Qualified Service Provider that is supported by a Grant. A scope of service helps define the services being sought and details what services are required.
Successful Email	An email sent by the Department notifying the Applicant that they will receive grant funding.
Qualified Service Provider	An eligible professional service provider selected by the business to provide service activities to the business.