

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WELFARE PROGRAM

Funding Application
Guidelines

Category 1
International Student
Group Activities



STUDY  MELBOURNE



Accessibility

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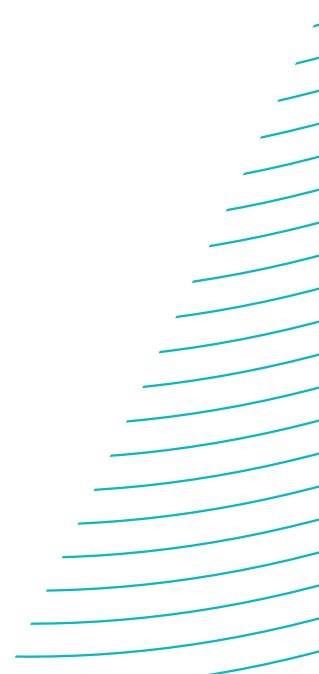
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1. SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Purpose of this document

This document sets down the guidelines for applying for funding under the Victorian Government's **International Student Welfare (ISW) Program – Category 1: International Student Group Activities**.

This category provides funding of up to \$5,000 directly to student organisations and associations. There are separate guidelines for Category 2: Wellbeing Partnership Activities, which provides up to \$75,000 to organisations that partner to support the wellbeing of international students.

The ISW Program is a Study Melbourne initiative, which supports international students living in Victoria.

A thriving international education sector

Victoria is a leading destination for international students and has one of the most diverse student populations in the world.

About 200,000 students from over 170 countries currently live in Melbourne and regional Victoria. This reflects the outstanding quality of the educational and living experiences Victoria offers.

In return, international students have become a vital and vibrant part of Victoria's education sector, economy and culture.

Most students are under the age of 25 and many have never travelled outside their home countries until they come here. For many, this is their first experience of living away from their family home.

Promoting the wellbeing of every student

Study Melbourne wants every student who comes here from overseas to have the best possible experience. They become our ambassadors to the world. Every positive story enhances Victoria's reputation as a great place to live, learn, work and do business.

Study Melbourne works directly with international students, other parts of government, education providers, the business sector and the community to support international students and address issues that affect their wellbeing. We are committed to listening to students' views and responding to their needs.

The Study Melbourne Student Centre, at 17 Hardware Lane, Melbourne, is our central 'drop-in' space for connecting with and helping students. The centre provides free information and confidential support to individual students. A 24-hour emergency support line is available on 1800 056 449.

More information about Study Melbourne can be found at: www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au

What contributes to student wellbeing?

The priorities for supporting the wellbeing of international students vary across the student population and can change from year to year. The quality of each student's experience depends on many factors, including:

- overcoming loneliness and social isolation – feeling connected with other students and the community
- being mentally and physically healthy
- feeling safe
- being able to learn and practise English
- finding a comfortable and affordable place to live
- securing voluntary or paid part-time work
- knowing where to go for help and support
- not being taken advantage of, for example, in the workplace or when paying for goods or services
- learning basic living skills, such as how to shop and cook for themselves or managing their personal finances
- understanding Australia's multicultural way of life.

Most of all, students tell us that they want to establish friendships and feel like they belong in our community.

2. ABOUT THE PROGRAM

What is the International Student Welfare Program?

The ISW Program forms part of the support that 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.

The program supports post-secondary international students – those studying at universities, vocational colleges and other registered training organisations. It does not fund activities that target students studying and/or living outside Victoria.

Activities that may be considered for funding include (but are not limited to): events, sporting activities, workshops, volunteering and leadership programs, producing information material and practice guides, awareness campaigns and sponsorship.

What is the program aiming to achieve?

The ISW Program's goal is for international students to have positive, rewarding and enriching experiences during their stay in Victoria.

The program aims to:

- enable capable organisations to deliver high quality activities that improve the wellbeing of post-secondary international students living in Victoria
- fund activities that respond to the most important needs of international students
- encourage activities that place international students at the centre; genuinely involving them in identifying their needs, planning the response and reviewing the outcomes
- support innovative approaches that extend the capacity of the education sector and wider community to respond to the needs of international students
- increase international students' access to support and information services
- increase international students' social connections and create positive opportunities for them to get involved in the local community.

What level of funding is available?

The ISW Program is divided into two funding categories. The first category supports low-cost activities run by student groups. The second category targets larger partnership activities involving two or more organisations working in partnership to deliver the activity. This guideline explains what is required to apply for funding under **ISW Program Category 1: International Student Group Activities**.



When can you apply?

There will be two rounds of funding each calendar year for ISW Program Category 1: International Student Group Activities and one round of funding each calendar year for ISW Program Category 2: Wellbeing Partnership Activities.

Up-to-date information about funding rounds, including opening and closing dates and information webinars, will be promoted ahead of each funding round and listed on the program webpage: www.business.vic.gov.au

Please note: late applications will not be accepted.

3. CATEGORY 1 FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

ISW Program Category 1: International Student Group Activities provides funding of up to \$5,000 to help student groups deliver activities that support the wellbeing of international students.

Before you apply, consider the points below and complete the checklist in Section 8 to find out whether your organisation and activity would be likely to meet the funding criteria.

Who can apply?

To qualify for funding under ISW Program Category 1, your organisation **must** be a student organisation or association that:

- is a legal entity and operates in Victoria
- has an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- has been operating for at least two years
- supports a strong membership base of international students living in Victoria
- has appropriate insurance cover arranged for the activity being proposed.

Please note: Individuals **cannot** apply for ISW Program funding.

What are we looking for?

To be eligible for funding, your proposed activity **must** meet these three requirements:

- The activity will promote the wellbeing of international students by supporting some or all of the aims of the ISW Program.
- The activity will support post-secondary international students living in Victoria.
- There will be a clear intention to involve international students so they can contribute to the design, delivery and review of funded activities.

We also **encourage** applications for activities that:

- promote collaboration between students groups, education providers and other organisations
- increase awareness in the community and among support services about the needs of international students
- increase participation by international students in programs, including those that improve their leadership capability and address priority issues affecting their wellbeing, such as employment and accommodation
- are designed to reach students from a number of different cultural backgrounds
- respond to the language or cultural needs of international students or respond to the specific issues for international students living in regional Victoria
- include an in-kind contribution from your student organisation or association, and/or attract additional funding or support from other organisations.

Our Frequently Asked Questions provide more information about what we accept as in-kind contributions and how to give them a dollar value.

What will NOT be funded by the ISW Program?

This program will **not** fund:

- salaries for existing staff
- recurrent operating costs
- budget deficits
- capital expenditure
- competitions, commercial or fundraising activities
- expenses of overseas visitors
- alcohol purchased for functions or events
- religious or political activities
- research activities (with the exception of applied research into ways of improving the experience of international students in Victoria)
- activities that already have been completed or are underway before the start of a funding agreement, other than in exceptional circumstances and with prior written approval from Study Melbourne
- activities designed to offset the costs of existing operations, to meet regulatory requirements, or that duplicate existing services that would best be funded by other government programs.

Other funding considerations

- Submitting an application does not guarantee your activity will be funded. This is a competitive application process and there is likely to be strong demand for this funding. Study Melbourne will consider each application on its individual merits and also compare it with other applications.
- A funded activity needs to be completed within 12 months of the date of the funding agreement. In exceptional cases, we will consider providing funding across more than one year.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, activities will occur in Victoria.
- From time to time, Study Melbourne may fund activities outside of funding rounds to address urgent priority issues affecting student wellbeing.
- Study Melbourne reserves the right to seek proposals from organisations that have not applied during formal funding rounds.
- The decisions we make will depend on available funding.
- Study Melbourne reserves the right not to proceed with funding at any stage in the process.

4. HOW TO APPLY

Follow the eight steps below to complete and submit an online application for ISW Program Category 1 via www.business.vic.gov.au

STEP 1	<p>CHECK: Use the checklist in Section 8 to find out whether your organisation, partnership and proposed activity are eligible for funding under this program. If you do qualify and decide to submit an application, follow Steps 2–8.</p>
STEP 2	<p>DISCUSS: Contact the ISW Program team to discuss your proposed activity. Email: studymelbourne@ecodev.vic.gov.au</p>
STEP 3	<p>PLAN: Check the opening and closing dates for the next funding round. Plan ahead so you don't miss the deadline.</p>
STEP 4	<p>REGISTER: Set up an online account with Business Victoria to access the ISW Program's online application form and submission portal). An account is easy to set up. Visit www.businessvic.secure.force.com/GrantsPortalLogin and follow the prompts to 'Create an Account'.</p>
STEP 5	<p>WRITE: Complete the online application form for ISW Category 1: International Student Group Activities on the ISW Program page at www.business.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Helpful tips:</p> <p>Draft your responses to the questions in a separate document, then cut and paste your prepared answers into the fields in the online template. This reduces the risk of losing information in the online template.</p> <p>If a question does not apply to your activity or situation, clearly explain that in your response.</p> <p>Check your draft application against the <i>Top 10 Tips For A Successful ISW Program Application</i> in our Frequently Asked Questions.</p>

STEP 6

PROVIDE EVIDENCE: Prepare and upload the necessary supporting documents at the end of the completed online application form.

Supporting documents need to be clearly labelled and cross-referenced with your application form. They will include:

Insurance – show your organisation has the necessary insurance cover to undertake the activity.

Written letters of support – from organisations that will be involved with this activity.

Other documents that support your application – these may include testimonials or reports about your organisation.

STEP 7

CHECK AGAIN: Use the checklist at the end of the online application form to make sure you have completed the form properly and uploaded the necessary supporting documents.

STEP 8

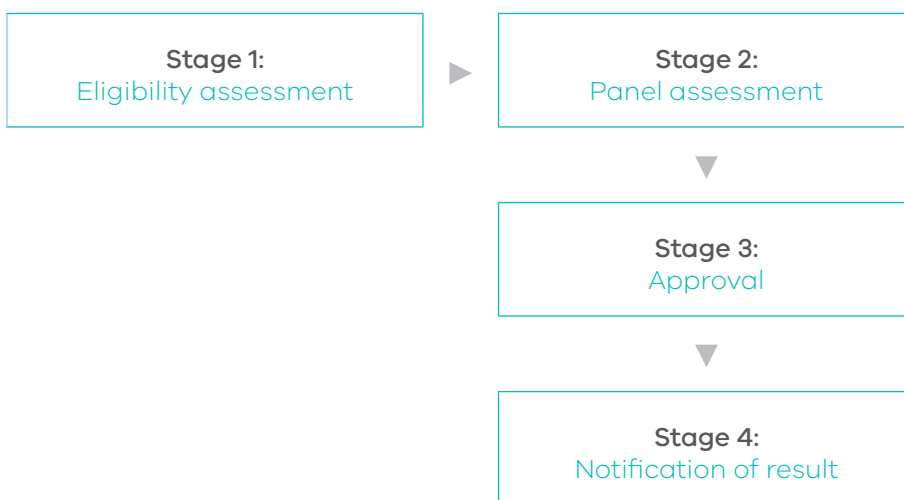
SUBMIT: Submit the application online **on or before midnight on the closing date**. Late submissions to formal funding rounds will **not** be accepted.

Printed, emailed, faxed, posted or hand-delivered applications will **not** be accepted.

If you are having trouble setting up a Business Victoria account or submitting your application, please contact our program team for help.

5. HOW APPLICATIONS WILL BE ASSESSED

Applications will be assessed using the four-stage process below. It may take 6 to 8 weeks from the closing date for applications until a formal funding agreement is signed.



Study Melbourne program staff will review applications to make sure your organisation and the proposed activity are eligible for funding under the ISW Program. This will include checking insurance details and conducting reference checks and a risk assessment.

A panel will then consider all eligible applications. Study Melbourne will invite individuals with subject matter expertise, who come from other organisations and government agencies, to provide advice if required.

The panel will:

- review applications individually
- compare them with the value and benefits offered by other applications
- develop a list of applications they recommend be approved, subject to funding being available.

Recommended applications will be considered for funding approval. Each applicant will be notified of the outcome of their application, and successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer.

Assessment criteria

Panel members will be guided by the questions below when they review applications during Stage 2 of the assessment process. Each application will be given a point score against the four main questions.

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- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Is the applicant (and any activity partners) capable of delivering the activity? | The panel may consider whether the applicant and any activity partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have the resources and experience to deliver the activity, manage the funding, and report on progress and outcomes• have delivered similar activities in the past• have experience working with international students. |
| 2. Will the proposed activity support the wellbeing of international students in Victoria and is it an appropriate response to their needs? | The panel may consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whether the applicant has given enough evidence about the wellbeing issue/s being addressed and why their proposed approach will work• if there are any gaps in logic or problems with how the activity addresses students' needs• whether the proposed activity is duplicating existing services or activities• what the likely immediate and long-term benefits would be for international students in Victoria• the likely response the proposed activity would receive from the international education sector and students. |
| 3. Is the proposed activity of a high quality? | The panel may consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whether the activity and its intended outcomes have been well thought through• whether the application's activity, budget and expenditure plans are thorough, logical and realistic• whether the proposal is cost-effective and offers good value for money• whether the activity will improve the leadership capability of international students and address priority issues affecting their wellbeing, such as employment and accommodation. |
| 4. How well will the proposed activity engage with and involve Victorian-based international students? | The panel may consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the number of students that will be supported• whether there will be genuine involvement from international students in the design, delivery and evaluation of the activity• the level of involvement from international students and organisations involved in international education and with international students• whether the activity will reach students from different cultural backgrounds• whether the proposed activity takes into account the cultural and language needs of students• the potential for building the capacity of international student groups and organisations• whether the activity will reach and support students in regional centres. |
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6. IF YOUR APPLICATION IS APPROVED

- Your organisation will be sent a formal **Letter of Offer**.
- You will have two weeks to accept the offer to enter into a legal funding agreement with the State of Victoria, through the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR). The funding agreement will set out the agreed terms and conditions, how and when you will receive the funding and what you will be expected to achieve in return for the funding.
- The funding agreement will be between the applicant and the State of Victoria through DJPR. If you have activity partners they will not be parties to the funding agreement, although you may be asked to provide supporting documents from the partners as part of the application process.
- You will have 12 months from the date of the funding agreement to deliver the activity. In exceptional circumstances, DJPR may agree to allow a longer timeframe to complete the activity and may consider multi-year funding.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Your information will be confidential

To the extent permitted by law, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) will treat your application as confidential. If required, you agree to allow DJPR to provide copies of your application to other government agencies or external experts for review as part of the assessment process.

Sometimes we see opportunities to link up two or more applicants so they can partner to develop a stronger, joint proposal. You agree to allow DJPR to share your name and contact details with other applicants for this purpose. Please advise us if you do not wish this to happen.

Funding decisions are final

Decisions about how we allocate funding under the ISW Program are final and no further discussions will be entered into.

Study Melbourne reserves the right to allocate funds outside the formal funding rounds in exceptional circumstances, such as needing to urgently address a priority issue that affects student wellbeing.

Promoting Study Melbourne

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.

8. CHECKLIST: ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Use this checklist to see whether your application would qualify to be considered for funding from the ISW Program.

If you answer **'No'** to one or more questions, your application most likely **would not** be eligible for funding. If you do not know the answers to some questions, please contact one of our program team for advice.

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST		YES	NO
1	Is your application from an organisation, rather than an individual?		
2	Is your application from a student organisation or association?		
3	Is your organisation a legal entity that operates in Victoria?		
4	Does your organisation have an Australian Business Number (ABN)?		
5	Has your organisation been operating for two years or longer?		
6	Does your organisation support a strong membership base of international students?		
7	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)?		
8	Can you demonstrate how your proposed activity supports some or all of the aims of the ISW Program? (See Section 2 / What is the program aiming to achieve?)		
9	Does your activity focus on supporting the wellbeing of post-secondary school international students living in Victoria?		
10	Will international students be genuinely involved in helping to design, deliver and/or review your proposed activity?		

9. FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Websites

www.business.vic.gov.au – provides up-to-date information about the ISW Program, including dates for funding rounds, information webinars, and the online application forms and templates.

www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au – provides information for international students in Victoria, including other support programs and the government's *International Education Sector Strategy 2016*.

Frequently Asked Questions

If you have any questions about the ISW Program, these guidelines or the application process, please refer to the [Frequently Ask Questions](#) (FAQ) page on the Business Victoria website.

Examples of activities that have been funded by the ISW program in the past can be found on the FAQ page.

If you still have questions, please contact the program team.

Subscribe

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

Contact

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

