

Alpine Resorts Support Program

Stream 3 Guidelines

Program Summary

Victoria is home to six Alpine Resorts – Falls Creek, Mt Hotham, Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, Lake Mountain and Mt Baw Baw. The resorts are operated by the Alpine Resort Management Boards, statutory authorities who administer Crown Land on behalf of the State.

Businesses in the resorts have been amongst the hardest hit in 2020 with bushfires and coronavirus (COVID-19) significantly restricting trading opportunities. The Alpine Resorts were forced to close for operation from 6 August 2020 following the introduction of Stage 4 restrictions in metropolitan Melbourne (from 2 August 2020) and expansion of Stage 3 restrictions across regional Victoria (from 6 August 2020).

The Victorian Government has established an Alpine Resorts Support Program to assist businesses in the Alpine Resorts manage the impacts of COVID-19.

The Alpine Resorts Support Program has the following objectives:

- To support entities in the Alpine Resorts, that have generally not qualified for the Commonwealth JobKeeper or Victorian Government Business Support Packages to date, manage the impacts of COVID-19.
- To assist these entities to recover post the COVID-19 pandemic and provide them with an opportunity to trade in Winter 2021 with an attractive and competitive product against resorts in New South Wales and New Zealand which were open for business this year.

These Guidelines are for Stream 3 of the Alpine Resorts Support Program, which has the objective of providing additional grants to eligible businesses critical to the economies of the six Alpine Resorts.

1 Standard Eligibility Criteria

- 1.1 To be eligible for support under Stream 3 of the Program, a business must:
- a. Operate a business with premises located in a Victorian Alpine Resort¹;
 - b. Pay \$50,000 or more in annual service charges in respect of its commercial operations²;
 - c. Have:
 - a. A bed count of 70 or more beds; or
 - b. A fully enclosed commercial area of 700m² or greater.
 - d. Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 13 September 2020;
 - e. Be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 13 September 2020³
 - f. Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator⁴.
 - g. At the commencement of 2020 winter season, have operated:
 - a. A food and beverage venue (restaurant, café, pub, bar club or other food venue)
 - b. Retail outlet (rental, clothing, footwear, equipment, supermarket, pharmacy, gifts);
 - c. A business that provides services directly to visitors (transport, activities, experiences, entertainment, health and wellbeing); or
 - d. An accommodation business that also has a public on-site food and beverage venue or retail outlet.
- 1.2 The following businesses are not eligible for funding under this Program:
- a. A business that is responsible for managing lift operations at a resort; or
 - b. A business that is publicly listed.

¹ Victoria is home to six Alpine Resorts: Falls Creek, Mt Hotham, Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, Mt Baw Baw and Lake Mountain. Business location is confirmed via the Alpine Resort Management Boards.

² **For a business that has a direct lease arrangement with an Alpine Resort Management Board:** The four Resort Management Boards were responsible for administering rent relief assistance. Other than not-for-profit organisations, entities received rent relief based on their level of commerciality. Head lessees had to apply based on a combination of them qualifying for rent relief, and on their sub-tenants qualifying in their own right. For example, if a private apartment was leased/genuinely available for lease for 25 per cent of the year, then the entity received 25 per cent rent relief. Registered not-for-profit entities who applied for and received rent relief were considered 100% commercial and the same will apply under this stream of the program. The four Resort Management Boards will be providing business data to the Department to assess and verify a head lessee's application, including confirmed annual service charges and level of commerciality as determined through the rent relief assistance.

For a business that is a sub-tenant and does not have a direct lease arrangement with an Alpine Resort Management Board: This is the service charge component of the lease payments under your lease arrangement, and must not include any amount relating to site rent.

³ Businesses with annual 2019-2020 turnover of \$75,000 or more that are not required by relevant taxation legislation to be registered for GST are eligible to apply.

⁴ Where required by relevant and applicable legislation. Responsible regulators are the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC); the ACNC for charities and not-for-profits; and Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) for incorporated associations.

2 Demonstration of eligibility

- 2.1 Applicants must attest that they meet the eligibility criteria.
- 2.2 Business size and location: Applicants must provide evidence of the current location of their business operations, amount of their service charges in respect of their commercial operations, bed count and/or fully enclosed commercial area, through the most recent:
 - Utility bill or service charge invoice (gas, electricity, telecommunications, water); or
 - Rental receipt; or
 - Signed sub-lease agreement or licence agreement; or
 - Business permit.

3 Assessment

- 3.1 To be considered for funding under this stream, eligible businesses will need to demonstrate that they are critical to the economy of their Alpine Resort.
- 3.2 Applicants will be asked to provide a response to the question below. Applicants must address this question in no more than 500 words and will need to make the best possible case for funding.

Question
<p><i>How is your business important to your Alpine Resort's development and offering and what role does your business play in supporting of the local supply chain and regional economic activity?</i></p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The type of offering the business provides – for example, a budget or group style offering that attracts first time visitors or a year-round operator that supports expansion of the green season offering• The key demographics the business brings to its Alpine Resort• The number of direct jobs the business supports during the winter season (based on 2017, 2018 and 2019 winter season)• Any local contractors or suppliers that rely on the business (based on 2017, 2018 and 2019 winter season)

- 3.3 The four Alpine Resort Management Boards (RMBs) will be providing business data and insights to the Department to assist in verifying and assessing applications, including:
 - Location: Confirmation of location in an Alpine Resort
 - Size: Confirmation of service charges, level of commerciality as determined through the rent relief assistance (where relevant), fully enclosed commercial area and/or bed count
 - Operations: Confirmation on the type of business you operate
 - Importance of business: Verification of your response to the question above to confirm that your business is of importance to your Alpine Resort's development and offering, local supply chain and regional economic activity.

- 3.4 A Departmental panel will provide a recommendation on the disbursement of grants. The Department's decisions on all matters pertaining to the award of funding under this Program is at the Department's absolute discretion.

4 Available funding

- 4.1 Funding will be allocated through a grant process.
- 4.2 The grant amount is capped at a maximum of up to \$25,000, less any funds received under the Victorian Government's Business Support Fund Round 3 and Licenced Hospitality Venue Fund.
- 4.3 In the event there is an oversubscription of recommended applicants following the assessment process, the Department reserves its right to alter the grant amount and the award of funding under this Program in its absolute discretion.
- 4.4 A business as defined by its ABN can only receive one grant under this stream of the Program.

5 How the funding may be used

- 5.1 Grant funds may be used to assist the entity, for example, on:
- Meeting business costs, including service charges, utilities, salaries;
 - Seeking financial, legal or other advice to support business continuity planning;
 - Developing the business through marketing and communications activities; or
 - Any other supporting activities related to operational or capital expenses of the business.

6 Application process

- 6.1 Businesses can apply for a grant through the Business Victoria website (business.vic.gov.au).
- 6.2 All questions in the application must be completed to ensure timely assessment of the grant application.
- 6.3 Stream 3 will be open for applications for two weeks until 11.59pm on 10 June 2021.
- 6.4 As part of the assessment process, information provided by applicants will be subject to a crosscheck with other government departments and agencies such as the Australian Business Register, Australian Securities and Investments Commission and Consumer Affairs Victoria.

7 Evidence of compliance

- 7.1 The department will confirm the amount of funding received by an applicant under the Victorian Government Business Support Fund Round 3 and Licenced Hospitality Venue Fund.
- 7.2 Applicants are subject to a risk assessment which verifies business details provided with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Australian Business Register and/or any other applicable regulator.
- 7.3 Applicants will be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives and will be required to produce evidence relating to their eligibility at the request of the Victorian Government for a period of four years after the grant has been approved.
- 7.4 If any information in the application is found to be false or misleading, or grants are not applied for the purposes of the business in accordance with the terms of funding as set out in these guidelines and attached application, the grant will be repayable on demand.

8 Other application information

- 8.1 Any of the following circumstances may be taken into consideration in any decision whether to provide support to an eligible business:
 - Any adverse findings by a regulator regarding a business;
 - A business is placed under external administration;
 - There is a petition to wind up or deregister a company or business; and
 - The business is or becomes deregistered or unregistered (including cancellation or lapse in registration).
- 8.2 Applicants must ensure that their ABN is up-to-date and current as at the time of application.

9 Other information about this program

- 9.1 The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.
- 9.2 Applicants must agree to participate in evaluation of the program for a period of up to three (3) years.
- 9.3 Applicants are required to submit an application online via the Business Victoria website (business.vic.gov.au). All questions in the application need to be completed to ensure timely assessment and grant payment.
- 9.4 Further information may be requested via email address: alpineprograms@ecodev.vic.gov.au
- 9.5 The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions will endeavour to notify all applicants on the outcome of their submitted application within 20 business days from the program closure date.

10 Post project evaluation

- 10.1 By making an application, all grant recipients agree to comply with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' performance monitoring and evaluation regime. The Recipient may

receive an evaluation survey from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions and may be required to participate in program evaluation activities.

- 10.2 The evaluation surveys may be required for up to one year following the issue of the grant. This is a non-negotiable requirement for all grant recipients in the program. Non-compliance could impact future applications to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' programs. Successful program outcomes may be used in program evaluation reviews and Departmental marketing material.