

# National Business Events Program Regional Victoria Guidelines

The Melbourne Convention Bureau in partnership with Business Events Victoria are offering eligible event organisers funding up to \$25,000 to support costs for hosting business events in Regional Victoria.

The Victorian Government is supporting the National Business Events Program – Regional Victoria to attract new business events to regional Victoria to support the recovery of the sector from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Events must be held before 31 December 2023 to stimulate short and medium term recovery in the business events sector.

Business Events Victoria (BEV), Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB), and the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) will administer the National Business Events Program – Regional Victoria.

## 1. Available Grants

Applications can be made for grants on a sliding scale up to \$25,000 including:

- up to \$10,000 for business events with up to 700 delegate days and at least 40 percent of delegates using local accommodation. \*
- Up to \$25,000 for business events with more than 700 delegates days and at least 40 percent of delegates using local accommodation. \*

\*Delegate days is the number of delegates x number of event days.

- Applications can be made at any time, up to 31 December 2021 or until the funds have been fully allocated.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit their application at the earliest opportunity.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for the National Business Events Program – Regional Victoria, the following criteria applies:

- The regional, state or national event must be a business to business (B2B) event. A **regional, state or national B2B event** is defined as a corporate or association meeting, conference, convention, trade exhibition or corporate incentive event.
- Corporate incentive events must include a gala/awards dinner and business events program.
- The event must take place at a regional Victorian business event venue or venues (see list of eligible Local Government Areas in Attachment A).
- The event must be attended by at least 25 in-person delegates. Virtual participants cannot be included in delegate numbers.
- The event must have a minimum two-day business event program, with at least one-night stay, and at least 1.5 days meeting/program component, with travel times outside the 1.5 days.
- The event must generate a minimum of 20 room nights, or at least 40 percent of total delegates requiring the use of local accommodation, whichever is the greater.
- The event must be scheduled to commence at least 8 weeks after the application date and the event must be held prior to 31 December 2023.

The following events will **not** be eligible for funding:

- Applicants that do not meet the eligibility and assessment criteria.
- Events for social and family groups, weddings, student groups, sports groups, study and technical tours (unless they meet the eligible criteria), leisure tour groups and consumer exhibitions.
- Business events that have contracted a venue in regional Victoria prior to the submission and acknowledgement of receipt of the SmartyGrants application.
- Virtual events (unless minimum in person delegate target is achieved).
- Events that commence within 8 weeks of the application date.
- Events that are held after 31 December 2023.

**Please note:** Outcome of funding program is at the full discretion of BEV, MCB and the State Government of Victoria. Applicants must not assume they will be successful or enter into commitments based on that assumption before receiving formal notification of the outcome of their funding application. All applicants are encouraged to plan for contingencies and consider other funding sources and options should their application be unsuccessful.

### 3. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria, with funding prioritised to new events generating significant outcomes for regional Victoria.

- i. Number of delegates and total delegate days.
- ii. Number of room nights generated in the local region.
- iii. Duration of business event (number of days).
- iv. Expected level of expenditure in the host community and Victorian business event supply chain.
- v. Additional benefits generated for the State and region such as touring or satellite events, linkages to Victorian businesses or other benefits.
- vi. Calendar fit with the local community.
- vii. Events that align with Victorian Government sector priorities ([Victorian Government Sector Priorities](#)) will be viewed favourably.

#### **4. Who can apply?**

Applications can be made by the event owner or event organiser (including Professional Conference Organiser where authorised by the event owner), including:

- Private sector businesses (where the event will deliver a clear public benefit).
- Incorporated industry associations.
- Not for profit incorporated bodies, cooperatives or associations.

Applicant organisations must have:

- A valid Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Documented evidence of an appropriate legal structure such as an Australian registered company, business cooperative or partnership.

#### **5. Application, Assessment, and Approval Process**

- Before applying, applicants must read the program guidelines and submit an Expression of Interest – EOI form available on the MCB website ([link to be added](#)).
- BEV and MCB will undertake an initial assessment against the program eligibility criteria and will provide feedback. Following the provision of feedback from BEV and MCB, the applicant may then consider submitting a full application.
- A full application must be made via a SmartyGrants online Application Form. This link will be sent to the event organiser once the EOI form has been assessed by BEV and MCB and the applicant meets the minimum criteria.
- Funding applications will be assessed by BEV and MCB who will then provide their recommendations to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events. Successful applicants will be notified by MCB and BEV. It is expected applicants will be notified of the outcome within 8 weeks of their SmartyGrants application submission.

## **6. Conditions of Funding**

- Grant funding must be used to cover actual event costs, including but not limited to accommodation, venue hire, transport, food and beverage, speaker costs and team building activities.
- Funding cannot be used for administrative costs, marketing, payment of salary and related employment costs, purchase of assets, or rent or lease of office space.

## **7. Payments**

- Successful applications receiving \$10,000 and over will receive:
  - 50 percent of the funding as a grant upon receipt of a signed Event Sponsorship Agreement with MCB, evidence of a signed venue contract and confirmation of payment of deposit, provision of an event business and marketing plan, and event budget to the satisfaction of MCB.
  - The remaining 50 percent will be paid post event upon receipt of an approved post event report and other requirements detailed in the Event Sponsorship Agreement.
- Successful applicants receiving less than \$10,000 will receive funding after the event and upon providing MCB with evidence of expenditure on eligible items.
  - The grant payment will be made upon the provision of receipts for expenditure incurred on approved items. Where expenditure is below the grant allocation, the grant amount will be reduced to the level of expenditure.
- Applicants must agree to transparency with MCB regarding event details. All applicants must provide supporting documentation if requested by MCB and BEV.
- The grant recipient must refund all funds previously paid if they fail to meet the agreed delegate target contained in the signed Agreement, the minimum overnight attendance target, or if the event is cancelled or otherwise discontinued.

## **8. Conflicts of interest**

- All applicants will be required to declare any interests of which they are aware, which could reasonably raise an expectation of a conflict of interest or material interference with an application.
- Conflicts of interest can be actual, potential, or perceived, and should be declared to ensure that any risks are managed. Detailed guidance can be found on the Victorian Public Sector Commission website in its Conflict of Interest Policy Framework – [Victorian Public Sector Commission](#) and in its eLearning guide on Conflicts of Interest.

## **9. Funding Agreements**

- Successful applicants will enter into an Event Sponsorship Agreement with the MCB.

- Applicants must have the legal capacity to be able to enter into an agreement with MCB in accordance with Australian law. The contract signatory must be the same as per the venue contract. A third party can apply on behalf of an event organiser if they are also signing the venue contract (for example, a Professional Conference Organiser).
- Applicants must not be insolvent and must be in good financial standing to enter into an agreement with MCB.
- All successful applicants will be required to complete a post-event report using the report template provided by BEV. Post event reports will be required within four weeks of the conclusion of the event.
- Successful applicants may be requested to participate in case studies and research to assess the impact of the funding program.

## **10. Acknowledgements**

Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support of the

program. Full details will be provided in the Event Sponsorship Agreement. This may include:

- Provide the Victorian Government, BEV and MCB with logo or recognition on any relevant event promotional material relating to the event (videos, website, print publications etc).
- 'Victoria' brandmark and BEV/MCB logo to appear on the Event Website with a link to [www.visitvictoria.com](http://www.visitvictoria.com)
- Opportunities for Ministerial attendance and/or letter of welcome in official event program.
- Acknowledgement in media releases.

## **11. Disclaimers**

Any personal information about applicants or a third party in an application will be collected by MCB. This information may be provided to Victorian Government bodies for the purpose of assessing your application. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure they are aware of the contents of the privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and other applicable laws. MCB is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find MCB's Privacy Statement online at [melbournecb.com.au/privacy/](http://melbournecb.com.au/privacy/). Enquiries about access to information about you held by MCB should be directed to the Corporate Affairs department of MCB.

**For more information or application assistance please contact  
[info@melbournecb.com.au](mailto:info@melbournecb.com.au)**

## **Attachment A: Eligible Victorian Local Government Areas**

Alpine Shire Council	Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Ararat Rural City Council	Mansfield Shire Council
Ballarat City Council	Mildura Rural City Council
Bass Coast Shire Council	Mitchell Shire Council
Baw Baw Shire Council	Moirra Shire Council
Benalla Rural City Council	Moorabool Shire Council
Borough of Queenscliffe Council	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
Buloke Shire Council	Mount Alexander Shire Council
Campaspe Shire Council	Moyne Shire Council
Central Goldfields Shire Council	Murrindindi Shire Council
Colac Otway Shire Council	Northern Grampians Shire Council
Corangamite Shire Council	Pyrenees Shire Council
East Gippsland Shire Council	South Gippsland Shire Council
Gannawarra Shire Council	Southern Grampians Shire Council
Glenelg Shire Council	Strathbogie Shire Council
Golden Plains Shire Council	Surf Coast Shire Council
Greater Bendigo City Council	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Greater Geelong City Council	Towong Shire Council
Greater Shepparton City Council	Wangaratta Rural City Council
Hepburn Shire Council	Warrnambool City Council
Hindmarsh Shire Council	Wellington Shire Council
Horsham Rural City Council	West Wimmera Shire Council
Indigo Shire Council	Wodonga City Council
Latrobe City Council	Yarra Ranges Shire Council
Loddon Shire Council	Yarriambiack Shire Council