

Volunteer Management Activity 2022-26

Guidelines for the Project Partnerships Program 2024-25

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Program Overview

Introduction

These Guidelines contain information for the Volunteer Management Activity (VMA) 2022-26 Project Framework, and specific information about the 2024-25 Project Partnerships Program managed by The Centre for Volunteering.

Please read these Guidelines before submitting a Project tender.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the Project Partnerships program.
- how to submit a project tender for a listed project opportunity.
- the assessment and selection process.
- how funding is paid out; and
- project monitoring and reporting.

About this program

On 1 July 2021, The Centre for Volunteering (The Centre) was awarded funding by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to build the capacity of Volunteer-Involving Organisations (VIOs).

The Volunteer Management Activity 2021-26 represents a significant shift of services based on a national review commissioned by the Department of Social Services (DSS). Information about the review and redesign can be found on the [DSS website](#).

The VMA focus is:

- The delivery of online services in volunteer management to build the capacity of VIOs and volunteer managers.
- Breaking down of barriers to volunteering faced by identified groups; and
- An increase in service coverage across regional, rural, and remote areas.

The Centre will commission suitable providers/organisations to deliver projects that address the VMA focus areas for the following groups:

- First Nations Peoples
- Newly Arrived Migrants¹
- People with Disability²
- Vulnerable Women
- Young People aged 12-18
- People who are unemployed

¹ Newly Arrived Migrants within their first 5 years of settlement.

² The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) defines disability as:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- the malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgment, or that results in disturbed behaviour and includes disability that:
 - presently exists
 - previously existed but no longer exists
 - may exist in the future
 - is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has disability but does not).

Project Partnerships

The Centre is seeking to partner with external organisations to deliver projects that will provide advice, support, and resources to help enable volunteering by members of identified groups. Projects will build the capacity of volunteer managers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) to better engage diverse volunteers and will enhance volunteer management.

Projects can be online or place-based and applicable to volunteer managers across the sector or for volunteer managers from specific contexts (such as location, service focus, i.e. emergency services).

The Centre will commission and scope specific projects and requirements (i.e., timeframe, deliverables, approximate budget) and advertise these opportunities via a 'Project Board' on The Centre's website and through other communication channels such as social media and targeted emails.

Parties interested in delivering a specific project can submit a detailed project tender by the assigned submission closure date. Project tenders will then be assessed for eligibility by a selection panel, measured against the project criteria and scope. Partnerships will be entered into with organisations who can deliver the projects in line with the project scope.

The materials developed/programs designed and Intellectual Property (IP) from all projects will then be owned by The Centre and used to provide ongoing support to VIOs and volunteer managers to engage volunteers from identified groups.

Project funding available for 2024-2025

Project funding available during this period will be determined by:

- Resource gaps that are identified in the sector.
- Applications being received for each listed project.
- The nature (size, complexity) of projects scoped within the period; and
- The cost of each project identified by potential partners in their project tender.

Activity period and timing of the project process

The Centre for Volunteering will commission specific projects with external providers annually. The efficacy and outcomes of the projects and program will be reviewed by Centre Staff before the next round of projects is commissioned.

Receipt of a project partnership contract is dependent on organisations meeting their requirements as per the Project Criteria and Scope, the Project Contract or an agreed alternative contract, the agreed reporting standards, and Federal Government funding of The Centre under the VMA funding.

Projects must commence and be completed within the 2024-2025 financial year.

Submitting a Project Tender

Parties interested in completing a specific project must submit a detailed Project Tender by the assigned closure date. Project Tenders will then be assessed for eligibility by a selection panel, measured against the project criteria and scope. Partnerships will be entered into with organisations who can deliver the projects in line with the project scope.

When submitting a Project Tender, applicants must:

- Read and understand these Guidelines.
- Meet all hurdle requirements and eligibility criteria outlined in the Project Scope.
- Address all project requirements as outlined in the Project Scope.
- Be an authorised signatory for the organisation (e.g. Chief Executive Officer, President, Chairperson, Treasurer or Secretary); and
- Submit a signed Project Tender before the submission closure date via email to yma@volunteering.com.au.

You are responsible for making sure your Project Tender is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you are reading these guidelines on behalf of someone else and that person is experiencing any barriers to completing the application, please contact the Project Partnerships team at yma@volunteering.com.au so that we can support them to apply.

If you have questions regarding a listed project opportunity or the Project Tender process, [email](#) the Project Partnerships team with your questions or to arrange a discussion.

Assessment of Project Tenders

A selection panel will review each Project Tender against the assessment criteria below and project scope information.

Additional information will not be considered. If the panel requires further knowledge or documentation other than that contained in the Project Tender, your organisation may be contacted to provide further information. The reasons for this will be documented.

Assessment criteria

A Project Tender will be assessed by a panel against all criteria outlined in the project scope, including but not limited to:

- All organisation hurdle requirements and eligibility criteria being met.
- How the project tender addresses the project scope requirements.
- All information required is completed in full.
- Project tender meets all timelines, deliverables, and budget, as outlined in the project scope.
- Identified risks and issues of the project as well as any mitigation measures are detailed (where applicable).
- Supporting documentation/work examples have been provided (where applicable); and
- Any referee checks requested by The Centre for Volunteering are submitted and assessed.

Assessment panel

Project Tenders will be assessed by a panel. Composition of the panel will depend on the nature of the project scope and expertise required.

Recommendations as to the successful project tender will be made to the CEO of The Centre by the panel. The decision of the CEO will be final.

DSS Approval of project applications

The Department of Social Services is required to approve in writing any funding partnerships that are established with The Centre. The Centre cannot confirm successful partnerships until approved by the Department.

Note: If Project Tenders do not meet the assessment criteria and/or are not approved by the Assessment Panel, if no Project Tenders are submitted, or the Project is not approved by DSS, The Centre reserves the right to engage directly with potential providers to undertake projects.

Notification of application outcomes

All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their Project Tender.

Names of successful applicants, the nature of the project to be undertaken and funds allocated will be published on The Centre's website.

Successful Project Tenders

Successful applicants will be notified via email with a Project Contract or alternative contract.

Project Contract

The Project Contract or alternative contract is an agreement between the Organisation/Contractor and The Centre.

Successful Partners are required to complete and sign the Project Contract, or an agreed alternative contract.

You will have 10 business days from the date of a written offer to sign and return the contract. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your tender on the information you provide in your application.

Where a partner fails to meet the obligations of the Project Contract or agreed alternative contract, The Centre may terminate the agreement.

Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the need for organisations to adopt child safe practices including appropriate screening of staff, mandatory reporting, and adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The Australian Government committed to a new Commonwealth-wide framework to protect children and young people it is responsible for – the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (CCSF).

The Department of Social Services requires Commonwealth funded third parties to submit an annual statement of compliance (Statement of Compliance) to declare that they comply with the child safety requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safety Framework (Framework).

Completion of a statement of compliance will be required by all Project Partners.

All partners must adopt child safe practices and complete a compliance report relating to child safety at the beginning of the project.

You must always comply with the respective state and territory legislative requirements for working with children and mandatory reporting.

Multicultural access and equity

The Centre upholds the Australian Government's [Multicultural Access and Equity Policy](#).

Applicants should consider how they will ensure their services will be accessible to people from CALD backgrounds. For example, service delivery partners may require cultural competency skills. In addition, services, projects, activities, or events may require the use of professional translating or interpreting services to communicate with clients who have limited English proficiency. Based on an assessment of the client target group, costs for translating and interpreting services should be factored into project tender where applicable.

How we pay the funding

The Project Contract or agreed alternative contract, will state the:

- project activity requirements.
- maximum funds amount to be paid.
- the payment amount and payment periods; and
- deliverables and reporting milestones.

Any additional expenditure incurred during the delivery of the activity will not be funded under this agreement.

Payments and GST

Payments will be made by The Centre as outlined in the Project Contract or agreed alternative contract where applicable. It will note the GST exclusive amount and reference the GST amount to be paid.

Payments made will be GST inclusive. If you receive funds, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving funds before you enter into an agreement. You can also visit the Australian Taxation Office website for more information.

Payment of approved and acquitted project funds will only be transferred into a bank account in the name of the organisation that submitted the Tender. Payment of funds to a personal bank account is not permissible.

Payment Schedule

Unless agreed prior to project commencement and outlined in an agreed alternative contract with The Centre, the payment schedule will be as follows:

- The first payment of 50% of the agreed Project Service Fee will be made upon completion of signing of all documentation; Project Contract or agreed alternative contract and Child Safety Compliance Report.
- The second payment (25% of agreed Service Fee) can be invoiced at mid-contract point when all scheduled meetings have been attended, updates provided, and deliverables and timeframes met; and
- The third payment (25% of agreed Service Fee) can be invoiced at the end-contract point when all project outputs and outcomes have been delivered and approved.

Note:

- Contract payments will be subject to all scheduled meetings being attended, updates provided, and deliverables and timeframes met during the project first half and second half periods.
- Payments will be issued within 30 days from receipt of the invoice; and
- Payments are always subject to the receipt of project funding (including the Funding) by the Principal.

How we monitor your project activity

Keeping us informed

Your responsibilities

If successful, you must carry out the project activities in accordance with these Guidelines and the VMA 2022-26 Project Contact or an agreed alternative contract with The Centre.

You will be responsible for:

- Meeting the terms and conditions of your contract and managing the activity efficiently and effectively.
- Meeting milestones and other timeframes; complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements in accordance with details in your contract.
- Participating in project program evaluation as necessary; and
- Ensuring that the project activity outputs and outcomes are in accordance with your contract.

You need to inform us in writing, of any changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete the project, carry on business and pay debts due because of these changes.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the terms and conditions of your contract with us, you must contact us immediately.

The Centre's responsibilities

The Centre will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in our contract with you.
- provide timely administration of the funding; and
- evaluate the partner's performance.

We will monitor the progress of your project by checking in with you regularly and assessing reports you submit. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information, or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

Reporting

The Organisation must have a system in place to meet their data collection and reporting obligations outlined in your contract with The Centre:

- You must provide regular short written and verbal updates at scheduled meetings and provide progress against agreed project activity milestones and outcomes.
- You must indicate any foreseeable risks and detail risk mitigation strategies.

Ad-hoc updates

We may ask you for ad-hoc updates on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project activity.

Project agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your project agreement. You can request a variation by contacting The Centre at VMA@volunteering.com.au.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the contract and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under Your contract with The Centre.

Evaluation

We will evaluate the performance of all project partners, the efficiency of implementation and the effectiveness of the VMA project in meeting outcomes. We may contact you up to one year after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

Acknowledgement

All publications related to the project under the program must acknowledge The Centre and the Commonwealth as follows: *Funded by The Centre for Volunteering and the Australian Government Department of Social Services.*

Probity

The Centre will be responsible for ensuring that the project assessment process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct, and is consistent with the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs).

Enquiries and feedback

All complaints about this project opportunity and/or selection process may be made in writing to: vma@volunteering.com.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially and investigated appropriately in accordance with The Centre's [Complaints Policy](#).

Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the project opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if The Centre staff, any member of the selection panel and/ or you or any of your personnel has a:

- professional, commercial, or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process, (e.g. an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel).
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation that is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently.
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation partners with The Centre under the project program/ project opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. If later you think there is an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest as part of the project process, you must inform The Centre in writing immediately.

Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#), the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). When submitting an EOI and project tender under this opportunity, you agree to The Centre collecting your personal information, including your name, contact details and role in your organisation – this is for the purpose of project assessment and administration. If you do not provide this information, we cannot consider your EOI and project tender.

We may share the information you give us in your application, including personal information, with nominated personnel such as the selection panel and the Department of Social Services. The information submitted will only be handled by Centre staff with responsibility for managing the VMA program.

As part of your application, you must declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents, and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity.

Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to give out to any person or organisation, other than The Centre for Volunteering, any confidential information relating to the project tender and / or agreement, without our prior written approval.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- The Centre for Volunteering employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively.
- Employees and contractors of The Centre for Volunteering so we can research, assess, monitor, and analyse our programs and activities.
- The Department of Social Services.