

Veteran Community Grants Program Guidelines

2026/2027

veterans.nsw.gov.au/grants



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Introduction

The NSW Government established the Veteran Community Grants Program (VCGP), formerly the Anzac Community Grants Program (ACGP), in 2015 to help promote appreciation and understanding of the service and sacrifice of military service personnel, and support activities and services to enhance the wellbeing of the NSW veteran community. Since the establishment of the program, grants have been provided for a wide range of projects, including commemorations, preservation and display of war memorabilia, activities for the NSW veteran community and local community historical research. The program is proudly delivered by the [NSW Office for Veterans Affairs \(OVA\)](#).

Purpose and objectives

To support activities and services to enhance the wellbeing of the NSW veteran community and promote appreciation and understanding of the service and sacrifice of military service personnel.

The VCGP is targeted at individuals and not-for-profit organisations that are based in NSW (see 'Who can apply' – page 4).

Priorities

The VCGP prioritises the following types of projects:

- Projects that primarily and directly support veterans and their families
- Projects with evidence of community support
- Minor repairs to infrastructure in poor condition
- Small equipment purchases that benefit community engagement
- Projects based in regional NSW (outside of metropolitan Sydney)
- Projects that acknowledge major anniversaries

Key dates

The VCGP operates one application round per financial year. The key 2026/27 dates are listed in the table below. Any changes will be announced on the [OVA website](#).

Please note funds are not awarded retroactively. This means you should not plan to start the work you are requesting funding for until after you have been advised of the outcome of your application. If your project has ongoing stages, you should not commence the stage your grant application relates to until you have been advised of the outcome.

VCGP stage	2026 Round
Applications open	7 September 2026, 9am
Applications close	Remembrance Day, 11 November 2026, 5pm
Approximate date for announcement of outcomes	11 February 2027

Funding amounts

The VCGP is valued at \$205,000.

The maximum VCGP grant that will be awarded for any one application is \$3,000 for Category 1-3 projects and \$10,000 for Category 4 projects, with a total of \$100,000 allocated for Category 4 funding.

Some eligible costs have limits on how much you can apply for (See 'Grant funds expenditure' – page 6).

Support for applicants

These Program Guidelines contain information to assist you to complete an application for the VCGP. It includes information about the program, the application process, the eligibility and assessment criteria, how the funds can and cannot be used and information for successful applicants.

We strongly recommend you read and understand these Guidelines before starting your application for the VCGP. If you have questions, please contact OVA by email at veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au.

Note: To maintain the fairness and integrity of the application process, OVA staff can only provide general help to applicants. OVA staff cannot prepare, review, or submit your application on your behalf. However, OVA may contact you for clarification on your application after it has been submitted, but we will not make changes to the content in your application based on these discussions.

Eligibility criteria

All applicants are required to meet the following eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will progress in the assessment process (see 'Assessment of applications' – page 10).

Who can apply

Individuals and the following types of organisations are eligible to apply for funding:

- Ex-Service Organisations
- Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations
- NSW local councils operating under the Local Government Act 1993
- Incorporated organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading
- Not-for-profit companies limited by guarantee, registered in NSW (must have ACNC registration and/or DGR status)
- Indigenous Corporations (must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations)
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils

- Religious organisations operating in NSW
- NSW non-government organisations established under their own Act of Parliament
- NSW Government agencies, including government schools
- Educational institutions

In addition, to be eligible for funding applicants must:

- possess an Australian Business Number (ABN) or can provide written advice from the Australian Taxation Office that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment;
- be financially solvent;
- be based in Australia provided the project is of direct and substantial relevance to NSW; and
- have acquitted all previously awarded VCGP/ACGP grants.

Who cannot apply

Applicants who have received funding from the VCGP and/or ACGP for three consecutive years will be ineligible for funding in the subsequent fourth year of the VCGP.

Individuals and schools are ineligible for **Category 4 – Infrastructure and equipment** funding.

Project requirements

Applications must align with and be submitted under one of the below category descriptions:

1. Local history, heritage and education

Projects that help inform and educate the wider community about the service and sacrifice of local veterans and their families, including the conservation and display of memorabilia and artefacts, research towards online or print publications and educational activities.

2. Public commemorative events and commemorative spaces

Events that honour or mark military anniversaries and pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of NSW veterans, or the creation of commemorative spaces. Please note, Anzac Day events are ineligible for funding.

3. Provide support to members of the NSW veteran community

Activities such as excursions, milestone reunions, and training and development to assist with the health and wellbeing of the veteran community.

4. Infrastructure and equipment

Projects that improve facilities, infrastructure, and equipment to strengthen the delivery of services and activities for the veteran community.

Applications must also meet the following requirements:

- Applications must be for work that has not already started or been finished.

- Applicants can request a maximum of \$3,000 for Category 1-3 projects. A maximum of \$10,000 can be requested for Category 4 projects. The funding amount sought must be appropriate and to cover eligible costs.
- The following expenditures are limited:
 - Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are limited to one package up to \$2,000 per applicant.
 - Catering, refreshments and associated catering equipment is limited to \$300.
 - Landscaping or gardening improvements are limited to \$1,000.
 - Plaques, medallions or presentation items are limited to small orders only as appropriate to the application.
 - Wreaths are capped to a maximum of two wreaths, limited to \$150 cost each.
- Applications will not be accepted from organisations that have outstanding acquittals for previous VCGP/ACGP grants.
- All applicants must have or be willing to obtain appropriate insurance if they are successful (see 'Insurance' – page 10).
- Grant money will only be awarded for eligible expenditure.

Grant funds expenditure

VCGP grant funding can only be used for projects that either support activities and services to enhance the wellbeing of the NSW veteran community or promote appreciation and understanding of the service and sacrifice of military service personnel.

Funding may be sought for seed projects that support the planning and development of future programs or initiatives. Such applications must align with one of the funding categories and comply with the expenditure requirements applicable to the relevant funding category.

Funds can only be used for expenses/activities directly associated with the grant. Your application must clearly outline your proposed expenditure in relation to the amount of funding you are applying for. If you are unsure if your project may be eligible, please contact OVA by email at veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au.

Eligible expenditure for **Category 1 – Local history, heritage and education** projects includes:

- Display cabinets purchase and/or installation for the display of wartime memorabilia
- Educational materials that are an integral part of a project (this only includes materials that are being created for the project), digital materials are encouraged
- Interpretive / information signage
- Plaques, medallions or presentation items (small orders only)
- Publishing or editing costs (first editions will receive priority)
- Research expenses (i.e. photocopying, the purchase of photographs, copies of records that are an integral part of the project). General administration expenses are not eligible.
- School trips/community group visits or excursions to sites, locations or establishments of military significance

Eligible expenditure for **Category 2 – Public commemorative events and commemorative spaces** projects includes:

- Events to mark the creation of units, regiments, squadrons or ships, with priority given to those celebrating a significant milestone
- Significant NSW military anniversaries, with the exception of Anzac Day events and commemorations
- Audio and visual equipment hire not already owned by the organisation, and their purchase (with the exception of schools, see Grant funds exclusions)
- Bands and musical accompaniments
- Catering, refreshments and associated catering equipment (limited to \$300)
- Creation of a commemorative space or garden that honours the service and sacrifice of NSW veterans
- Landscaping or gardening improvements (limited to \$1,000)
- Printing (external only) of commemorative booklets/orders of service for events, other than Anzac Day
- Projects commemorating individuals
- Temporary lighting
- Venue and equipment hire (external only), including items such as rigging, generator hire, fencing, toilets, traffic management, hire equipment (marquees, chairs, tables and staging), waste management and wet weather contingencies
- Wreaths (maximum of two wreaths, limited to \$100 cost each) if integral to the project

Eligible expenditure for **Category 3 – Provide support to members of the NSW veteran community** projects includes:

- Admission costs associated with wellbeing activities
- Educational or training materials created specifically for the project
- Equipment to support ongoing activities – if reasonable and integral to the project
- External printing costs for supporting materials related to the activity
- Salaries/wages for external suppliers, including facilitators, trainers, or presenters
- Transport — bus/coach hire if reasonable and integral to the project
- Venue and equipment hire (external only)

Eligible expenditure for **Category 4 – Infrastructure and Equipment** projects includes:

- Expenditure relating to the purchase or upgrade of fixed assets for ongoing use by the organisation, for example storage structures or marquees
- Works relating to the creation of an asset for ongoing use by the organisation, for example infrastructure and buildings
- Minor construction and repair of buildings including museums, memorial halls and sporting facilities
- Electrical works or equipment
- Lighting upgrades

- Purchase, installation, or upgrade of equipment that directly supports the delivery of programs, services, events, training, wellbeing initiatives, or community engagement activities for veterans and their families, for example audio and visual equipment, video conferencing equipment, furniture and kitchen equipment (excluding the purchase of computers, printers, cameras and mobile phones)
- Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) (limited to one package up to \$2,000 per applicant)

Other eligible costs include:

- Freight (must be directly related to the project)
- Marketing and advertising (e.g. advertising, promotional collateral, marketing activities, public relation, graphic design, associated printing costs)
- Seed funding to support programs and projects, including any advice, consultation or management plans relating to the project that required before commencing the project
- Salaries/wages for tradespeople, professionals, external suppliers and short-term personnel (with a valid ABN) who are essential to delivering the project

Grant funds exclusions

Grant funds must be used for the purposes of the grant. Examples of projects that are not funded by the VCGP are included below.

If your project is ineligible, there may be other grant opportunities available to you. OVA has compiled a list of grants that may provide support for war memorial projects, which is available on the [OVA website](#). Other NSW Government grants are listed on the [NSW Government Grants and Funding website](#).

You cannot use a VCGP grant for projects or activities that:

- do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in these Program Guidelines
- have already started or have been finished
- are of a commercial nature that is for profit
- go towards paying existing debt or budget deficits
- go towards paying permanent salaries/wages
- fund the same project twice (for example, two different organisations cannot apply for funds for the same program or activity)

Items or activities that funding cannot be used for include:

- Accommodation – domestic and international
- Additions to an existing memorial or plaque, or construction of a new memorial (the Commonwealth Government can assist)
- Administration costs (ongoing) of an organisation such as electricity, phone, taxis, printer cartridges, stationery and rent
- Anzac Day events and commemorations
- Applicant's own venue or equipment hire

- Audio and visual equipment hire or purchase for schools (the school sector governing body can assist, i.e. Department of Education, Association of Independent Schools NSW or Catholic Schools NSW)
- Auspicing fees
- Books and journal subscriptions
- Capital expenditure relating to the purchase or upgrade of vehicles or investments
- Capital works within private or commercial ventures
- Catering, refreshments and associated equipment over \$300
- CCTV installation or maintenance
- Commercial projects/projects for profit (all business profit such as the promotion of an organisation, brand or product)
- Conservation of war memorials (Community War Memorials Fund can provide support for this)
- Costs incurred in the preparation of the grant application or related documentation
- Contingencies or miscellaneous costs and fees
- Council approval costs
- Donations
- Entertainment not of a commemorative nature
- Electrical equipment purchases – computers, printers, cameras, mobile phones
- Expenditure already incurred (e.g. project planning, purchasing of equipment or services, commission fees incurred for the development and/or design of the project, annual maintenance costs). This includes where an order has already been placed with a supplier
- Events to mark training or graduation
- Fireworks
- Flags or flag poles (local MPs and the Commonwealth Government including the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) provide this support)
- Flowers (not wreaths)
- Housing-related costs, including renovations or construction of residential properties
- In-kind support
- Memorials – construction of new war memorials/cenotaphs
- Ongoing expenditure, including website hosting and building maintenance
- Politically focused events or activities
- Projects that exclusively benefit the applicant and its staff, such as internal capability building activities
- Projects undertaken outside of NSW or Australia
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Reimbursement for petty cash or other cash costs
- Restoration of graves

- Routine operations of the organisation (e.g. audit and accounting, consumables, bank charges, taxes, electricity, legal and license fees, office supplies, insurances, office rent, committee meeting expenses, postage)
- Salaries/wages for someone employed by the applicant on an ongoing basis (including internal marketing personnel, internal researchers and any related entitlements such as overtime)
- Scholarships
- Sponsorships or grants to third parties
- Translation of books/records into English
- Vehicles (purchase of)
- Volunteers (donations, or one-off payments to volunteers)

Application process

The VCGP uses a one-step, online application process. This means you submit one application that will be assessed based on the eligibility and assessment criteria outlined in these Program Guidelines.

How to apply

Your application must be completed and submitted online via the [OVA SmartyGrants website](#). The online application form will be accessible from the website when a VCGP grant round is open. Hard copy applications and emailed applications will not be accepted.

To apply you must:

- complete and submit the online application form by the closing date of the round (see 'Key dates' – page 3)
- provide all the mandatory information requested in the form, including addressing the eligibility criteria
- attach all the mandatory supporting documents

You can submit more than one application per round. Each application will be reviewed on its own merit and evaluated against the other applications received in the same round, including the other applications you have submitted.

Note for all applicants:

- You must ensure your contact details are up to date in SmartyGrants.
- You must ensure you have acquitted any previous OVA/VCGP grants before completing your application for a new round.
- All requests to submit late applications or apply for extensions must be made in writing to OVA by email at veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au. OVA may approve or decline these requests at their sole discretion. OVA will notify you in writing and our decision will be final.

Preparing your application

When completing your application please ensure you provide enough information for the assessment panel to understand the project (including how the project was developed, key dates and who is involved with the preparation and delivery of the project).

You are responsible for ensuring your application is complete and accurate. The form contains instructions, hints, and examples to assist you with answering most questions.

To maintain the fairness and integrity of the application process, OVA staff can only provide general help to applicants. OVA staff cannot prepare, review, or submit your application on your behalf. However, OVA may contact you for clarification on your application, but we will not make changes to the content you have submitted in your application based on these discussions.

Key information and supporting documents

The application form consists of a series of questions, as well as sections to attach supporting documents. We strongly recommend you preview the form on the [OVA SmartyGrants website](#) to familiarise yourself with the questions and the format before starting your application. The preview will be accessible from the website when a VCGP grant round is open.

You must provide enough detail and supporting evidence in your application for the assessment panel members to understand the detail of your project.

Providing all the information and supporting documents requested will strengthen your application.

The below checklist includes the key information and supporting documents required:

- A detailed description of your project, including activities, start and end dates
- Alignment to one of the VCGP categories (See 'Project requirements' – page 5)
- Details on how your project aligns with the VCGP's purpose
- A project rationale of why your project needs to be done, including evidence of need
- Evidence of property/landowner's consent, if applicable to the project (Either a completed [OVA Property / Landowner Consent Form](#) or a letter providing full consent from the property/landowner)
- Details on who is likely to benefit from your project with timeframes
- Evidence of support from your community, including letters from your local council, local RSL sub-Branch, local schools or other community groups
- Detailed quotes and descriptions for the expenditure you are applying for
- Details of all other funding sources you have secured or are pending for the project
- Details of non-financial inputs, including staff/volunteers time/expertise, equipment, facilities, pro bono or in-kind contributions, advocacy, and other types of support
- Details of the applicant organisation, including its legal name, contact information, Australian Business Number (ABN), and authorised signatories
- Details of any previous OVA/VCGP grants the applicant organisation has received

The below checklist includes additional information and supporting documents required for **Category 4 – Infrastructure and equipment** applications:

- Details of how the project will strengthen the delivery of services and activities for the local veteran community
- Detailed condition and supporting photos of existing infrastructure, if applicable
- For infrastructure works, detailed quotes from a qualified tradesperson or engineer for the works that includes:
 - Detailed itemisation of costs and work to be undertaken
 - The scope of works
 - Whether council approval is required
 - Realistic timeframe

Insurance

Grant recipients must maintain current and adequate insurance appropriate to the activities/services funded under this grant to cover any liability of the grant recipient that might arise in connection with the Grant Funding Agreement. A grant recipient must have and maintain the currency of its incorporation and liability insurance (minimum \$5 million).

Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of all relevant insurance policies and certificates if their application is successful.

If your organisation is not covered by the appropriate insurance, another organisation (such as your local council or an incorporated not-for-profit) may be able to apply on your behalf, so that your project will be covered under their insurance.

Assessment of applications

The assessment process and criteria for the VCGP are outlined below.

Summary of the assessment process

Eligibility check

All applications to the VCGP received via the [OVA SmartyGrants website](#) by the closing date of each round will first be reviewed by OVA staff against the eligibility criteria and for compliance with these Program Guidelines (see 'Application process' – page 9 and 'Eligibility criteria' – page 4). Only eligible applications will progress in the assessment process.

Assessment panel

Eligible applications will then be assessed by the Assessment Panel, which is comprised of representatives of OVA and an external stakeholder.

The VCGP application process is competitive. This means the Assessment Panel will assess each application against the eligibility criteria and the assessment criteria outlined in these Program

Guidelines. They will also compare applications to others received in that round. Applications will be scored and ranked in order of merit.

The Assessment Panel may also consider other relevant information based on the content of applications received within the round.

The Assessment Panel makes recommendations to the decision-maker. The Assessment Panel may, in extraordinary circumstances, recommend applications that do not meet all the listed criteria.

Decision-maker

The relevant Minister endorses the recommendations of the Assessment Panel.

All decisions regarding approval, amount of funding awarded, and any special conditions applied are final and there is no appeals process for the VCGP.

All applicants will be formally notified of the outcome of their application by email. Applicants must ensure that their contact details are up to date in SmartyGrants.

Assessment criteria

The Assessment Panel uses the below criteria when conducting their assessments of eligible applications (see 'Key information and supporting documents' – page 10):

- The project aligns with the purpose of the VCGP and its objective to promote appreciation and understanding of the service and sacrifice of military service personnel or support activities and services to enhance the wellbeing of the NSW veteran community.
- The applicant has provided a thorough and feasible project plan, including a clear alignment between the project and the VCGP's purpose, clearly identified major activities, and the activities are realistic and achievable.
- The applicant has provided adequate evidence of need for the proposed project/program, including supporting anecdotal evidence, data or research findings, identified need for the project/program by OVA, other providers or media reports, evidence from community groups who will benefit from the project, and identified targeted beneficiaries align with the VCGP's target groups.
- The applicant has provided evidence that the community supports the project/program.
- The applicant has provided a reasonable/realistic budget that adds up with clearly articulated budget items. The applicant has also considered hidden costs of the project/program, supplied quotes that seem legitimate and reasonable and is seeking funding to cover eligible costs.
- The applicant has adequately accounted for the non-financial inputs (such as labour and pro bono support) that will be required to undertake the proposed project/program. The non-financial inputs are clearly articulated, reasonable and realistic.

Category 4 – Infrastructure and equipment applications will be assessed against the following criteria, in addition to the general assessment criteria outlined above:

- The applicant has clearly demonstrated how the proposed infrastructure or equipment will strengthen the delivery of services and activities for the local veteran community.

- The applicant has supplied detailed quotes as per the program guidelines.

Successful applicants

OVA will send key information and documents to all the successful applicants via SmartyGrants. If you are successful, you **must complete and return these documents to OVA within two weeks**. These documents will include:

- Your Grant Funding Agreement
- Request for banking details

Grant Funding Agreement and banking details

The Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) is the legal agreement which sets out the terms and conditions related to your grant.

It is your responsibility to provide your correct banking details to OVA. Funds transferred to an incorrect bank account may not be recoverable.

The GFA can only be signed by authorised officers of your organisation. This may be a member of the executive/committee as deemed under the Articles of Association or Constitution for a not-for-profit organisation, or the General Manager or delegated officer if you are a council.

Please note, all applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in their application form.

It is your responsibility to ensure staff availability to complete and sign documents, to read the terms and conditions of the GFA, and to sign the GFA using the correct authorised signatories.

Grant funding will be deposited into your organisation's nominated bank account within 60 days of receipt of all necessary documentation.

Note for all applicants:

- OVA will publish the details of all grant recipients on the [OVA website](#) and [NSW Government Grants and Funding website](#), including the name of the recipient individual/organisation, the project title, a brief description of the project, and the grant amount.
- OVA may contact you to participate in media promotion for the VCGP.

Obligations, reporting and acquittal

Your full obligations following acceptance of a VCGP grant will be set out in your GFA. Important obligations are listed below:

- **You must inform OVA of any variations to your project**, such as changes to the timeline or changes to expenditure. All project variations must be agreed to in writing by OVA before any related work takes place. To discuss a variation, please contact OVA by email at

veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer.

- **You must complete your project within 12 months of your grant being awarded.** If your project is delayed, you must request an extension in writing from OVA before the 12-month deadline. To discuss an extension, please contact OVA by email at veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au.
- **You are required to complete an acquittal form** at the end of your project via SmartyGrants. This will be automatically sent to you and is required to be completed no later than 12 months after the award of your grant.
- **You must retain all financial records related to grant expenditure and acquittal for seven years.** If the project team changes, it is your responsibility to forward all records to the new team.

Unsuccessful applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be formally notified of the outcome of their application by email. All decisions are final and there is no appeals process for the VCGP.

If you are unsuccessful, it does not mean your application was without merit. Funding is limited and not all applications are successful.

Unsuccessful applicants interested in reapplying to the VCGP should seek detailed feedback from OVA. It is important you understand and address this feedback on how your application could have been improved. Please contact OVA by email at veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au.

Glossary

Term	VCGP definition
Accessibility	Processes or structures in place to assist people with mobility issues to have the same opportunity as able-bodied people to access a war memorial.
Acquittal	The process by which you advise OVA that your project is complete and how you spent your grant funding. Grant recipients must complete an acquittal form to report on funded activities and the expenditure of funding when a project is completed.
ACGP	Anzac Community Grants Program
Assessment criteria	The standards against which eligible applications are judged by the Assessment Panel.
Assessment process	The method used to review, score, rank and compare applications to select successful applications.
Award	The process of being granted funding.
Co-contribution	Other sources of funding that are allocated towards your project costs, including other grants, donations, or in-kind contributions.
DVA	Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs
Eligibility criteria	The mandatory items an applicant must address in their application to progress in the assessment process.
Grant	A method of providing financial assistance by the NSW Government.
Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)	The legal agreement which sets out the terms, conditions and payment details related to a grant.
Outcome	The decision of whether your application is successful or unsuccessful in receiving funding.
OVA	The NSW Office for Veterans Affairs
SmartyGrants	The grant management website used by OVA to administer the VCGP.
Special conditions	Requirements set by the Assessment Panel that are specific to your project and that you must adhere to in order to receive funding.
VCGP	Veteran Community Grants Program, formerly Anzac Community Grants Program

NSW Office for Veterans Affairs

Office hours:
Monday to Friday
9.00am — 5.00pm

P: (02) 8688 0602 1300 838 233 (Extension 3)

E: veteransgrants@veterans.nsw.gov.au

W: veterans.nsw.gov.au/grants