

Volunteer Grants 2015 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How do I know if my application was successful?

A list of successful applicants can be found at dss.gov.au/volunteer-grants. All applicants will also receive an email notification with the outcome of their application from mid-May 2016.

2. When will I receive funding?

Successful applicants will receive their Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement from mid-May 2016. Applicants are required to accept funding within 30 days of receiving the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement. Payments will be processed when the Department has received the accepted or signed Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement, as long as there are no other issues. Please allow up to 30 days for the grant to be paid. A remittance advice will be sent to you when the payment has been made.

3. How do I get feedback on my application?

General feedback to assist organisations when applying for future funding is available at dss.gov.au/volunteer-grants. Feedback includes easy to access information about the assessment process, the main strengths of successful applications, and areas where applications could be improved. Due to the number of applications, DSS is not able to give separate feedback to each organisation.

4. Is there going to be another Volunteer Grants funding round?

Decisions about future funding will be a matter for the incoming Government. Information about future DSS funding opportunities can be found on the [DSS Grants Page](#) Organisations can also [subscribe](#) to receive alerts if you would like to know about future DSS grants.

5. Where can I get more help?

If you have any questions, please contact the Department's Grants Support Team on 1800 020 283 (Option 0) (9am to 5pm AEST, Monday to Friday), or you can email grants@dss.gov.au.

6. Which documents do we need to sign and by what date do they need to be returned?

It is preferred that the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement is accepted by email as explained in the instructions provided in the email. Alternatively, a completed, signed copy of the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement can be returned to the postal address provided in the email. Acceptances need to be undertaken within 30 days of receiving the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement.

7. Does the contact person nominated on the application have to be the person who accepts and/or signs the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement?

No. However, the person accepting and/or signing the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement must have the appropriate authority to do so on behalf of the organisation.

8. What if the contact person nominated in the application form, or the person who maintains the organisation's email address, does not have the authority to accept the grant?

The contact person should forward the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement email to the person who has the authority to respond on behalf of the organisation.

9. We do not have an Australian Business Number (ABN). What should we provide instead?

Successful applicants who do not have their own ABN must provide the Department with a declaration outlining the reason for not providing an ABN. If this information is not provided, the Department will be required to withhold 46.5% of the grant.

This can be done by completing a 'Statement by a Supplier' form. This form can be downloaded from the [Australian Taxation Office \(ATO\)](#) website or by telephoning the ATO on 13 72 26. The 'Statement by a Supplier' form should be signed by someone with appropriate authority from the organisation.

10. How long will it be before we receive the grant? Will we be advised when payment is made?

Your payment will be processed when the Department has received your accepted or signed Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement, as long as there are no other issues. Please allow up to 30 days for the grant to be paid. A remittance advice will be sent to you when the payment has been made.

11. How do we get paid if the organisation does not have its own bank account? Can we use another organisation to initially receive the grant on our behalf?

No. The Department will not make payments into a third party's bank account or a personal bank account. The bank account must be in the name of the organisation entering into the agreement with the Department.

12. Can an organisation charge an administration or service fee for sponsoring an organisation that is not a legal entity?

No. Organisations are not permitted to charge a fee for administering Volunteer Grants 2015.

13. We have to complete Business Activity Statements (BAS) for the Australian Taxation Office. How do we account for the grant?

It is suggested that your organisation consult with its treasurer/accountant or call the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) on 13 72 26.

14. Do we have to spend the grant by a certain date?

Yes. The full grant must be spent by 30 June 2017. Any part of the grant that has not been spent by the due date must be returned to the Department.

15. Since we lodged our application, our volunteer needs have changed. Can we alter the items to be purchased?

Yes. You are able to purchase a different item as long as it is an eligible item. You do not need to seek approval from the Department to do this. Examples of eligible items can be found in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary Attachment A](#). Details about items that are not eligible are outlined in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#).

Please email the Department at grants@dss.gov.au with specific information about the item prior to making a purchase if you are not sure whether the item your organisation would like to purchase is an eligible item.

16. What training can my organisation provide to volunteers using this grant?

Organisations can use the grant for all or part of the cost of training courses for volunteers. The courses should be for additional skills and qualifications needed in their volunteering role. Training courses may include, but are not limited to, mental health issues, first aid, leadership, communication skills, governance and/or working with vulnerable people. Recognised courses leading to a Statement of Attainment, Certificate or Diploma are preferred.

17. Can fuel costs apply to the organisation's equipment and machinery?

No. Funding is limited to motor vehicle fuel (including petrol, diesel and gas) costs to reimburse volunteers' costs when undertaking their volunteering activities. Further information can be found in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#).

18. Do we have to return receipts as evidence or proof of purchase?

You do not have to report on how you spend the money for Volunteer Grants funding unless the Department asks you to. If you are asked to report, the Department will require you to provide proof of purchase and to allow the Australian Government's auditors to look at your records. The original receipts showing what you have purchased are required as proof and must be kept for five years. The funded organisation is responsible for keeping a complete set of records for this purpose. This includes receipts for fuel and transport costs. It is not necessary to send receipts to the Department, unless requested to do so.

In regard to training courses/background checks for volunteers, organisations must record detailed information about the training provider, the type of training and the number of volunteers from your organisation who have completed the training/background checks. Recognised training courses leading to a Statement of Attainment, Certificate or Diploma are preferred.

Options to demonstrate proof of purchase for reimbursement of volunteers' fuel/petrol costs or transport costs for volunteers with disability include:

- Fuel/petrol costs incurred by volunteers
- Copies of original fuel expenditure receipts;
- Log book of volunteer motor vehicle trips;
- Copies of original pre-paid fuel card receipts; or
- Account receipts from local service stations.
- Transport costs incurred by volunteers with disability who are unable to drive
- Pre-paid travel cards;
- Log book of volunteer transport trips;
- Copies of public transport tickets; or
- Copies of original expenditure receipts (such as taxi/cab receipts).

Checklist for accepting the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement

- I have read all pages of the Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement, including the Terms and Conditions.
- I have emailed my acceptance as set out in the instructions, or returned a signed copy of the completed Letter of Offer/Grant Agreement to the Department.
- I have provided the Department with a declaration of the reason for not quoting an ABN (if needed).

Further Information

If you have any further queries, please contact the Department on 1800 020 283 (Option 0) or you can email grants@dss.gov.au.