

Volunteer Grants 2015 – Questions and Answers

The following questions and answers are specific to this funding round. Please also refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) for general questions about applying for DSS grants.

1. How can I apply for Volunteer Grants 2015?

You can apply online using the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Application Form](#). The Application Form must be submitted by **2.00pm AEDT on 9 December 2015**. As a large number of applications are expected, it is recommended that you submit your application **well before the closing date and time**.

Organisations must read the **Volunteer Grants 2015 Application Pack** available on the [Funding Open for Application](#) page before completing the Application Form.

2. Is my organisation eligible to apply?

An eligible organisation will be an Australian not-for-profit organisation whose volunteers' work supports families and/or communities in Australia and is a legal entity, such as an incorporated association. Further information can be found in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#), under Eligibility.

3. Can my organisation apply for a grant if it is not a legal entity?

An applicant must be a legal entity to apply for funding under the Volunteer Grants 2015.

If you are unincorporated or a community group that is not a legal entity, an eligible sponsor organisation may apply for funding on your behalf.

The sponsor organisation must be an eligible not-for-profit organisation that has the necessary legal entity status to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Department, and to administer the funding on your behalf. Further details about sponsor organisations can be found in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#).

4. How many organisations can be sponsored by a Legal Entity?

A Legal Entity may sponsor a maximum of 20 'Volunteer Grants 2015' applications. Should a Legal Entity sponsor more than 20 applications, only the **first 20** sponsor applications will be assessed by the Department and this decision will be final.

Sponsoring organisations must have a direct connection or relationship with the organisation they are sponsoring, with full agreement to apply, or the application may not be considered. Where possible, the sponsoring organisation should be located in the same State or Territory as the sponsored organisation. A sponsoring organisation can also apply for a grant in its own right.

5. My organisation was successful under Volunteer Grants 2013. Can I apply under Volunteer Grants 2015?

Yes. All eligible organisations can apply for Volunteer Grants 2015.

6. Can my organisation apply more than once for funding?

No. If more than one application is submitted, only one application will be considered for funding. However, an organisation can sponsor a maximum of 20 applications for funding, and apply for funding in their own right.

7. Can Local Governments apply for funding?

No. Local Governments are not eligible to apply for funding in their own right.

However, Local Government entities may sponsor an organisation with volunteers where an organisation is not a legal entity in its own right and the Local Government entity is the **only** or most reasonable option to sponsor the organisation in the community.

8. Can Commonwealth and State/Territory Government departments apply for funding?

No. Commonwealth and State/Territory Government departments are not eligible to apply for funding in their own right. However, a State/Territory Government educational institution may sponsor its parents and friends/citizens committee or school/council/board if these groups are not legal entities.

9. Who in my organisation can complete an application for funding?

The application should be completed by a representative of the organisation with authority to commit the organisation to the [Terms and Conditions of Volunteer Grants 2015](#). The representative is normally the President, Secretary, Treasurer, CEO, Manager or Coordinator.

10. How much funding can my organisation apply for?

Eligible organisations can apply for funding of between **\$1,000** and **\$5,000** to assist their volunteers.

11. Can I apply for more than \$5,000?

No. The maximum funding an eligible organisation can apply for is \$5,000.

12. Can I apply for less than \$1,000?

No. The minimum funding an eligible organisation can apply for is \$1,000.

13. What can my organisation use the grant money for?

Your organisation can use the grant money to:

- Purchase portable, tangible, small equipment items that benefit your volunteers;
- Contribute to the reimbursement of fuel costs or pre-paid petrol cards for your volunteers who use their own car for their volunteering work i.e. to transport others to activities, deliver food or help people in need;
- Reimburse transport costs or provide pre-paid travel cards for volunteers with disability who are unable to drive;
- Contribute to the cost of training courses for volunteers; and/or
- Undertake background screening checks of volunteers.

14. What small equipment items are eligible?

All equipment items must be tangible, portable and directly benefit the volunteers. Examples of eligible small equipment items can be found in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary at Attachment A](#). There may be other items not listed that are eligible. Details about items that are not eligible are outlined in the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#).

When completing your application you must select the category or categories that best fit the item(s) you wish to purchase. You are not required to specify the actual items, just select the category of the item. For example, if you wish to purchase gardening tools for your volunteers to use, select the category 'Landscaping/Gardening'

15. What if I can't find the equipment item my organisation would like to purchase on the list?

Attachment A of the [Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary](#) lists examples of eligible small equipment items by Category. If the item you wish to purchase is not listed, select the category that most closely matches the items.

16. What do I do if I wish to change the item that my organisation has applied for during the application process?

If the item remains in the same category that you have applied for and the amount is unchanged you don't need to do anything.

If the item is from a different category or the amount has changed, and the application period is still open, you will need to withdraw your application and resubmit a new application with the changed category and funding.

If the application period has closed then the item category and funding cannot be changed. However, if you are successful in receiving a grant, 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.

17. What do I do if I wish to withdraw my application?

Where an organisation wishes to withdraw their application, an email from the contact person nominated in the application should be sent to vg2015@dss.gov.au.

18. How do I check if my organisation is located in an area affected by a recent natural disaster?

You can use the [Disaster Assist](#) website to check if your organisation is located in an area affected by a major national disaster within the past 12 months (from 10 December 2014 to 9 December 2015).

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

Your organisation can use the grant money to help your volunteers learn new skills or obtain qualifications needed for their volunteering work. Training courses may include mental health, first aid, leadership, communication skills, governance and/or working with vulnerable people. Recognised training courses that lead to a Statement of Attainment, Certificate or Diploma are preferred.

20. Can a volunteer apply directly for a grant for their fuel or transport costs?

No. Individual volunteers cannot apply under Volunteer Grants 2015.

Only eligible organisations can apply for funding to support their volunteers.

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

No. Grant money can only be used to reimburse volunteers for the fuel costs they incur when undertaking their volunteering activities.

22. Does my organisation need to return receipts to provide proof of purchase?

No. It is not necessary to send receipts as proof of purchase unless your organisation is specifically requested to do so. However, your organisation must keep a complete set of records and retain the **original receipts** for **five** years.

The Department may contact your organisation to provide proof of purchase and/or to allow the Australian Government's auditors to look at your records. You may be asked to provide original receipts or certified copies to acquit the funding.

It is not necessary to acquit the funding or send a report or receipts to the Department, unless requested to do so. Further acquittal information is included in the Volunteer Grants 2015 Funding Round Summary.

23. When and how will my organisation know if our application has been successful?

The announcement of successful organisations for Volunteer Grants 2015 is expected to be around May 2016. All applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing to the contact person nominated in the application. Successful organisations will be listed on the Department's website and will receive funding once the Letter of Offer is signed by the organisation and accepted by the Department.

24. What happens if we are successful, and when can we expect the grant funds?

Successful organisations will be emailed or posted a Letter of Offer and asked to accept the Terms and Conditions between the organisation and the Department. Funded organisations are responsible for ensuring the Terms and Conditions of the Letter of Offer are met. Funds will be made available once the Letter of Offer has been signed and returned by the organisation and accepted by the Department. The funds can only be paid to the organisation that applied for Volunteer Grants 2015.

25. 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.

26. Can organisations from Territories of Australia, such as Norfolk Island and Christmas Island, apply for Volunteer Grants 2015?

Yes, eligible organisations from Territories of Australia can apply for Volunteer Grants 2015. Generally, eligible organisations are Australian not-for-profit community organisations whose volunteers' work supports families and/or communities in Australia and are legal entities, including Incorporated Associations.

27. Can an organisation use the grant money to cover the cost of items/fuel already purchased?

No. Items already purchased or are already funded from another source are not eligible.

28. How do I get further information about Volunteer Grants 2015?

You can email **Volunteer Grants** on vg2015@dss.gov.au or phone the **Hotline** on **1800 183 374**.

New Question and Answer added on 10 November 2015

29. My organisation is a Statutory Authority, is it eligible to apply for the 2015 Volunteer Grants Round?

A Statutory Authority would be eligible to apply for the 2015 Volunteer Grants Round where it is an organisation established under Commonwealth or State and Territory Legislation; **and** is a not-for-profit organisation whose volunteers' work supports families and/or communities in Australia; **and** is a legal entity. In this regard, statutory authorities that meet this criteria should select "*Organisation established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or State and Territory legislation...*" in completing Question 5 on the Volunteer Grants 2015 Application Form.

New Question and Answers added on 11 November 2015

30. I am a large State based or National Organisation. How many applications can I submit?

Each individual legal entity can lodge one application in its own right to support its own volunteers, and lodge up to 20 additional applications on behalf of, or to "sponsor", up to 20 community groups. These community groups can include branches/groups associated with your organisation that are not legal entities.

Your organisation's financial accounting area should be able to provide advice about the legal entity status of your organisation and its branches/groups.

31. Our organisation's volunteers travel to various locations to undertake volunteering activities. How should we answer Question 17 'What is the Primary location of the organisations/community groups volunteering activity?'

In Q17 we ask applicants to provide the actual physical address where the volunteers are most active and do most of their volunteer work (at the service delivery level). This address may be different from the organisation's business address.

If activities are undertaken in an environmental location; this address must be provided such as a street, community hall, church, showground, park, reserve, etc.

If volunteers travel to different locations to provide volunteer work, the address that the volunteers are coordinated from should be used.