

SV Business – Boosting Productivity

Energy Efficiency Capability Grants

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

These FAQs supplement the Guidelines. You can obtain a copy of the Guidelines by registering your details here:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/business/energy-and-materials-efficiency-for-business/boosting-productivity/energy-efficiency-capability-grants>

On the same web page you can also watch videos about the grant program. The videos cover the same content that was presented in the information sessions held on 29 November and 1 December.

If you registered your details, but did not receive a copy, please check your junk mail folder. If it's not there, simply contact grants.enquiries@sustainability.vic.gov.au and ask to be emailed a copy.

To ensure that SV's systems are not prevented from emailing you, please visit the subscriptions page of our website and ensure 'opt out from all bulk email communications' is unchecked:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/news-and-events/newsletters/subscribe>

These FAQs will be updated as required.

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Questions about what types of projects are eligible

What do you mean by building capability?

In general, building capability is about fostering the ability of an organisation to perform its business better – so it is able to do new things it wasn't able to do before, or do things more effectively and efficiently. Building capability is a way of engendering longer-term, lasting change. It gives a business the skills, information and structures to be more resource efficient over the lifetime of a business, rather than a one-off intervention.

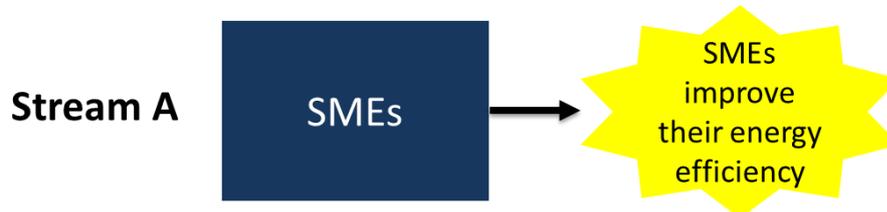
For this grant program, we have defined building capability as 'improving knowledge and skills to help SMEs to take the first steps or realise the full benefits of energy efficiency'. Proposed projects will build the capabilities of the people working within SMEs or providing services to SMEs. When designing your project, you will need to be specific about what skills or knowledge need to be improved (the "capability gaps").

To help you think about what skills or knowledge need to be improved, we have included in the Guidelines some 'Guidance for designing your project approach'. We are seeking to support projects that bridge the skills and knowledge gaps that are the reasons (or present barriers) to SMEs using energy more efficiently.

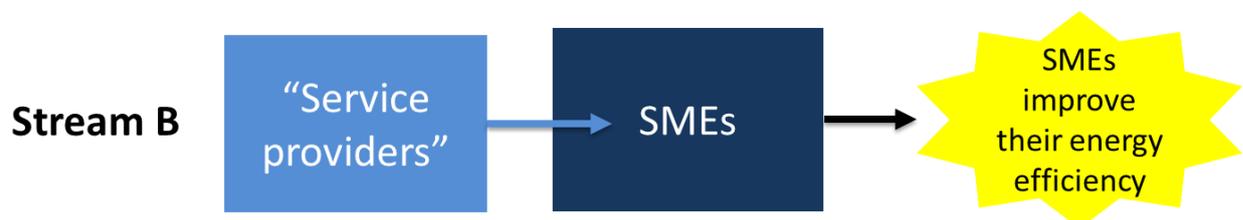
What's the difference between Stream A and Stream B?

The two streams are guides to help you design your project and in the full application there will be some questions that are more relevant to one stream or the other.

Projects funded under Stream A are those that focus on building the capabilities of SMEs.



Projects funded under Stream B are those that focus on building the capability of "service providers".



Please note that all projects, regardless of what stream, need to deliver outcomes of SMEs improving their energy efficiency.

Through this program, SV will fund a range of projects which fit into Stream A or Stream B. Depending on applications received, SV may choose to fund some or no projects in each category.

Can you explain more what you mean by service providers?

'Service providers' are defined as skilled tradespeople or professionals that are employed by or provide services to SMEs. For example, electricians, plumbers or accountants. It is usual that such a service provider would have a recognised accreditation for their skill or profession and have a relevant specific industry association for which they are eligible for membership. Evidence should be provided (in your full application) as to why these service providers are influential in supporting SMEs to take action to improve their energy efficiency.

SV is looking for projects that 'deliver outcomes of big impact and long lasting change' – what do you mean by this?

Successful projects will persuasively demonstrate how they will build the skills and knowledge of Victorian SMEs both within and beyond the period of the grant funded project. As a result of each project more businesses will take the first steps towards or realise the benefits of energy efficiency, including:

- saving energy (i.e. quantity of energy saved through energy efficiency);
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions (through using less energy); and
- realising other co-benefits that come hand in hand with energy efficiency actions, such as increased productivity.

By '**big impact**' we primarily mean the total energy efficiency outcomes achieved by businesses participating in the grant funded project, and the potential of the project to influence the energy efficiency of business clusters, sectors and/or regions. Big impact also includes the potential of your idea to create change beyond direct energy efficiency benefits, such as productivity co-benefits. SV will take a number of factors into consideration when considering what impact your project is likely to deliver. We encourage you to go beyond the face value of your proposal and describe the assumptions and evidence that underpin the big impact your project will achieve.

Within the project we want to see businesses, as a result of the capability activities, changing their inefficient practices. We want this change to be '**long lasting**', that is that the businesses to continue on the energy efficiency path and keep on doing into the future what they have been supported to do through the project.

Beyond the grant funded project, we expect that all contracted organisations will continue to build capability of SMEs or service providers in energy efficiency – either driving deeper energy efficiency changes for participants or engaging with more participants to build their capabilities. The intensity or direction of the project may change, but it should not come to a stop. To this end, we are keen to see delivery methods or business models that sustain capability building well into the future.

How many SMEs should my project reach?

To create big impact, the reach of your project is important. In the full application, you will need to make an estimate of how many SMEs will be engaged both during and beyond the term of the grant funded project.

The Boosting Productivity program aims to reach at least 1,000 SMEs. This is across the two grant programs, Energy Efficiency Capability Grants and Energy Assessments. If successful, the number of SMEs that your project reaches during the term of the grant funded project will contribute to achieving this target.

We anticipate that some projects may engage a large number of SMEs whilst others may pilot an approach that engages a smaller number of SMEs during the project but has potential for wider reach into the future. Also, the impact expected from your project will be much more if you are requesting the maximum amount of grant funding (\$150,000) compared to if you are requesting a lesser amount.

What do you mean by targeting my audience's needs?

Successful projects should be able to demonstrate that they have built capability in their target audience – i.e. the SMEs or service providers that the industry association or business network represents. Projects that fit the definition of Stream B – that is, where they are targeting a tradespeople or others who provide services to businesses, need to also consider the needs of the end users (i.e. the SME customers).

Applications must demonstrate that the applicant has identified and understands their audience's needs in relation to energy efficiency capability building, and that the proposed project is designed to address these needs.

A project that delivers more targeted capability building that is specifically and directly relevant to the audience's needs is likely to deliver more energy efficiency benefits than a project that provides more generalist or introductory capability building to that audience.

Can I get funding for a project that has already started?

No. SV cannot fund projects that have already started.

Can I get funding to develop a software tool?

No, grant funding is not available to develop a software tool in isolation. However, the use of software may be part of a capability building project. This could involve piloting or expanding the use of digital tools for energy efficiency to a new business audience.

Can I get funding to commercialise a technology?

Funding for commercialising a technology is not specifically excluded. However, the project proposed needs to align with the grant program objectives and meet all the criteria. In particular, please note that a project will not be eligible for funding if SV considers it is designed and delivered primarily for private benefit, for example a project that appears to be focused primarily on promoting a single product or service.

Can I get funding for a project to improve vehicle fuel efficiency by SMEs?

Possibly. For the purposes of this grant program, the definition of 'energy efficiency' includes SMEs making more efficient use of transport fuels. However, like any project proposal, the rationale for the project will need to be outlined.

Can I get funding for...

Please refer to Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the Guidelines that explains in more detail what will and will not be funded. The grant funding can be used to pay for any project costs, provided that they are assessed as eligible project costs by SV.

Does the service need to be provided for free?

Not necessarily. You need to carefully consider the pricing of your capability building offer so that your project is best placed to achieve big impact and long lasting change.

Free offerings are the most accessible, but behavioural science tells us that people often do not place a high value on something they receive for free. For example, people may be more likely to be a 'no show' at a free event. Also, given the need to continue to deliver outcomes beyond the timeframe of the grant funded project, it may be helpful to test different revenue models. For example, if your project were a tools library, what we don't want to see happen is that the library shuts its doors when the grant funding ends. If you intend to continue to fund the library into the future with a user pays model, then in the project you could consider trialling a fee for service, to test the business model.

A project example in the Guidelines (section 4.1) is 'developing new or enhancing existing accredited training so that service providers are more capable to support SMEs to invest in energy efficiency'. Instead of an accredited course, can my project involve training participants in a 'skill set'?

Yes, provided that your proposed project meets the grant program objectives and criteria. The examples provided are ideas only. The examples are not intended to limit the originality of submissions, and it is possible that you will come up with other ideas.

Can my project involve renewable energy?

The Boosting Productivity program focuses on energy efficiency. Whilst a proposed project may incorporate some renewable energy elements, the project must focus on delivering energy efficiency benefits.

Questions about who can apply

Can local governments apply?

Yes, if the local government operates a business network.

My business provides products or services related to energy efficiency, can I apply for this grant?

Unless your organisation meets the eligibility criteria (Section 3), you cannot apply for this grant. If you are keen to be involved in this grant program, you will need to explore opportunities to collaborate with other organisation(s) that are eligible to apply.

Can I set up a business network?

No, it needs to be operating in Victoria currently and for at least two years prior to application.

Is an online business network eligible?

An online business network is eligible to apply, but must have an ABN and needs to be operating in Victoria currently and for at least two years' prior to application. It must be a facilitated environment for businesses to network, develop trust, share information and learn from the experiences of other businesses in the network's industry sector or geographic region. The network must not be operated by an organisation or person for private benefit. The business network must fulfil the criteria outlined in the grant Guidelines published on the Sustainability Victoria website.

Can a national industry association or business network apply?

Yes, provided that there is a Victorian presence. Note the eligibility criteria that the applicant must demonstrate prior relevant experience, including:

- a. To apply for Stream A, the organisation must demonstrate experience providing direct support to SMEs operating in Victoria.
- b. To apply for Stream B, the organisation must demonstrate experience providing direct support to service providers that influence how SMEs in Victoria operate.

Although funding will not be provided for any projects delivered outside Victoria, projects that are delivered within Victoria but have the potential for wider benefit, such as piloting industry training that may later be rolled out nationally, could be funded.

Can Sustainability Victoria introduce or connect me with another organisation that I can collaborate with to develop a project for this grant program?

No, this is a competitive grants program and consequently Sustainability Victoria is unable to provide this service. We encourage you to make your own enquiries.

Following feedback from attendees at the information sessions, we distributed a list of attendees so that individuals can more easily contact each other about potential collaborations.

Can a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) apply on their own?

No. As this project is seeking to achieve real change in SMEs, RTO's applying for a grant must involve one or more industry associations or business networks in the proposed project. Industry associations and business network directly engage with members and offer a trusted source of information and advice; this means that they are well placed to deliver interventions that break down barriers and create longer term market shifts.

The involvement of an industry association or business network can help guide the training development and delivery. In this way, there will be an increased confidence that the training is meeting an identified need. As all projects must report on the SMEs that have taken action to improve energy efficiency, a potential way to achieve this could include piloting the training with an industry association or business network that has trusted relationships with SMEs.

Can schools apply?

No, Primary and Secondary schools are not eligible for this funding.

Questions about the application process

I registered on your website to download the Guidelines and EOI, but I didn't receive it.

You should check your junk mail folder. If you didn't receive it, please email grants.enquiries@sustainability.vic.gov.au.

To ensure that SV's systems are not prevented from emailing you, please visit the subscriptions page of our website and ensure 'opt out from all bulk email communications' is unchecked:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/news-and-events/newsletters/subscribe>

I missed the deadline to submit an EOI, can I still apply for this grant?

By exception only, SV may permit an organisation to submit a full application without participating in the EOI stage. Should you wish to discuss this, you should contact grants.enquiries@sustainability.vic.gov.au.

How can I get feedback on my idea?

The EOI process provides the opportunity to receive feedback on your idea.

Can I get feedback on my EOI sooner than the advertised timing (30 January – 10 February)?

No, SV is unable to provide early feedback on EOIs before 30 January 2017.

Can I submit my EOI early?

Yes, you may submit your EOI before the closing date of 18 January. However, feedback will not be provided prior to 30 January 2017.

Can I get feedback on my idea if I don't submit an EOI?

SV cannot provide feedback to applicants who do not submit an EOI.

Can I receive a copy of the full application?

The full application form will be made available to everyone who has registered on the SV website to download the Guidelines and EOI. Also, the website will be updated to say when it is available

If you had any difficulty receiving the Guidelines and EOI email from us, please check your email settings to reduce the risk that you do not receive future emails. Also, it is possible that you did not receive the email because you have previously unsubscribed from bulk email communications. To troubleshoot, please follow this link (<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/news-and-events/newsletters/subscribe>) to update your areas of interest, and submit the web form leaving unchecked the box 'Opt out from all bulk email communications'.

Can I include attachments in my EOI?

Attachments may be included in the EOI submission. However, SV is not obliged to review all attachments or provide feedback on information contained in attachments. For this reason, please ensure that the pertinent aspects of your idea are clearly communicated in your response to each question.

How long do my responses to the EOI need to be?

There are no restrictions on how short or how long responses to the EOI need to be. More detailed responses may enable SV to provide more detailed feedback.

Questions about delivering the project (if successful)

What does it mean that the grant amount is 'excluding GST'?

SV pays GST additional to the grant amount.

Should Industry Associations and business networks only deliver the project to their members/participants?

SV would prefer that formal membership of an industry association or prior participation in a business network is not a requirement for participants to access the capability building offerings. This will broaden the reach of the grant program and help more SMEs to improve energy efficiency.

Must RTOs only deliver the project to the members of the industry association or the participants in a business network that they are collaborating with?

No, it is not necessary to limit who participates in the project to those service providers or SMEs that have an existing relationship with the industry association or business network. You may wish to extend your project to reach more service providers or SMEs, especially if your RTO has its own channels to promote and encourage participation.

If my project is supported with a grant, what happens to my intellectual property (IP)?

SV's approach to IP is intended to balance the commercial interests of grant recipients with the need to ensure public benefit from the projects supported.

SV has published the proposed funding agreement (contract) for this grant program on the SV website, and the IP approach is outlined in the published contract Terms and Conditions.

Questions about the information sessions

I missed the information sessions, how can I find out more?

You can watch videos about the grant program on the SV website. The videos cover the same content that was presented in the information sessions held on 29 November and 1 December.

Also be sure to read the Guidelines and these FAQs.

If you have any further questions, please email them to grants.enquiries@sustainability.vic.gov.au.

If there is a high level of interest, SV may host another information session. Any future session(s) will be advertised on the SV website and an email invitation will be sent to those people who have registered to receive information about the grant (i.e. registered their details to download the Guidelines and EOI document).

Is Sustainability Victoria able to present an information session on the grants to a local council and its business networks?

No, Sustainability Victoria is unable to provide individual information sessions on the grant.

Can attendees at the information sessions be provided with a full list of attendees?

Yes, Sustainability Victoria will provide everyone who registered to attend the information sessions with a list of those who registered (excluding anyone who has opted out from their details appearing on the list).

More questions?

Can we get information on which organisations participated in Sustainability Victoria's previous (2014) round of capability building grants?

A list of industry associations and business networks that participated in the previous capability building program is on the Sustainability Victoria website.

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/business/energy-and-materials-efficiency-for-business/building-business-capability>

Key learnings, such as the barriers identified to SMEs taking action to improve the materials or energy efficiency of their business, are included in the Guidelines ("Guidance for designing your project approach"). Note that whilst the two programs focus on 'capability building' there are some significant differences in the program objectives and criteria which are

- A focus on big impact and long lasting change
- The development of communication materials without other activities will not be funded.

How much total funding is available in this grants program?

This program is part of the \$3 million Boosting Productivity program, which comprises both Capability Building grants and Energy Efficiency Assessment grants.

Boosting Productivity was announced 12 October 2016 and the media release provides further information:

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/news-and-events/media-releases/2016/10/12/3-million-in-grants-to-help-small-businesses-operate-more-sustainably>

Can projects be co-funded by more than one source of government funding?

This Capability Building Sustainability Victoria grant funding may be used for projects that have also secured funding from other sources. However, the specific outcomes and elements that the SV funding is supporting must be clearly distinguishable.

SV is not able to fund projects which have not yet secured additional sources of funding but are dependent on receiving these in order to deliver the project.