

NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENCE GRANTS SCHEME – VICTORIA

Flood Planning and Mitigation Projects

Applicant Guidelines

2017-2018 funding round



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Introduction

This document is a guide to the operation and administration of the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS). Please read these guidelines and the Application Form carefully before starting your application.

The 2017-2018 NDRGS funding round will only be accepting applications for Flood Planning and Mitigation Projects.

What is the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme?

The NDRGS is a grants program funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department under the National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience (NPA) signed by the Prime Minister and Premier. The Agreement can be viewed on the Federal Financial Relations Website¹.

Under the Agreement, Victoria develops an Implementation Plan for approval by the Federal Minister for Law Enforcement and Cybersecurity to receive funding for the NDRGS.

In accordance with Victoria's 2017-18 Implementation Plan, Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is offering grant funds under the NDRGS for flood planning and mitigation projects.

The objective and outcomes of the NPA to be achieved by the NDRGS are as follows:

National Partnership Agreement Objective

- Enhance Australian communities' resilience to natural disasters.

National Partnership Agreement Outcomes

The outcome will be strengthening community resilience to natural disasters consistent with state risk profiles and the priority outcomes of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience² (NSDR) in the following areas (the NSDR Key Themes):

- (1) Leading change and coordinating effort;
- (2) Understanding risks;
- (3) Communicating with and educating people about risks;
- (4) Partnering with those who effect change;
- (5) Empowering individuals and communities to exercise choice and take responsibility;
- (6) Reducing risks in the built environment; and
- (7) Supporting capabilities for disaster resilience.

Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

National Partnership Agreement Outputs

The outputs include:

- implementing a program of natural disaster resilience activities to address priorities identified in risk assessments and consistent with the NSDR

¹ <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/environment.aspx>

² <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/emergencymanagement/documents/national-strategy-disaster-resilience.pdf>

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- providing support to emergency management volunteers through a range of activities including addressing the key issues of attraction, support and retention, consistent with the National Emergency Management Volunteer Action Plan, 2012.

Projects that fall outside these parameters are unlikely to be approved for funding.

Flood Projects

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) provides funding for flood risk assessments and flood warning system infrastructure projects to complement NDRGS funds.

In respect of land abutting the coastline or a coastal reserve, which is less than 5 metres Australian Height Datum or within one kilometre of the coastline (including the Gippsland Lakes), the application must comply with Victorian Government policy articulated in the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014.³

In general, urban or town stormwater projects will not be eligible for funding under the NDRGS. Municipal councils submitting flood projects must consult with their relevant floodplain management authority and enlist their support; evidence of which must be provided with, or in, the application.

Size of Grants

Grants sought should not be below \$10,000, and should generally not exceed \$250,000.

A project seeking NDRGS funding may be a clearly identified and a discrete element of some other larger project. The intended outputs of that element within the larger project must be specifically identifiable.

Eligibility Criteria

Who may apply?

- State government departments and agencies including floodplain management authorities
- municipal councils
- volunteer emergency service organisations
- peak bodies and incorporated associations/organisations with an emergency management purpose, connection or interest
- research institutions
- private and non-government organisations, including small business and associated business groups

Public Purpose

To be considered for funding, the purpose of any project must be to serve the public interest first and foremost. Projects that primarily confer a potential commercial benefit upon the applicant or a key partner will not be considered.

Conditions attached to NDRGS Grants

Grants will be conditional upon applicants agreeing to the following:

- applicants must demonstrate a funding contribution towards their projects, which amount to at least one third of project costs, with the remainder of the project funding provided by the

³ www.vcc.vic.gov.au/page/victorian-coastal-strategy-2014

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NDRGS and DELWP. Further details on contributions can be found in the section on Applicant Contributions.

- a funding agreement being executed between EMV and the successful applicant
- Australian Government funding under the National Partnership Agreement, and any State Government funding provided in conjunction, being publicly acknowledged in all publications, promotional and advertising materials, public announcements and activities or any products, processes or inventions developed under the NDRGS.

Specific Australian Government conditions for construction projects

- For projects costing over \$5 million, the project manager must ensure that only a builder or builders accredited under the *Australian Government Building and Construction WHS Accreditation Scheme* is contracted. The applicant must provide the necessary assurances to the Commonwealth.
- Where the value of Australian government contribution to a project exceeds \$5 million and represents at least 50% of the total construction project value, a successful applicant must ensure that compliance with the *Building Code 2013* is made a condition of tender for all contractors and subcontractors who tender for the Project. The applicant must provide the necessary assurances to the Commonwealth.

Exclusions

Grants will not be available for ongoing program funding, nor maintenance/upkeep of assets, nor can NDRGS funds be used as a state or local contribution for a project under another Commonwealth Government grants scheme requiring shared funding. Similarly, Commonwealth funds may not be used as all or part of the local funding contribution to a project under NDRGS.

Projects developing products or services for commercial application, including by the not-for-profit sector, will not be considered for funding.

The Application Form and Process

Applications for NDRGS funds must be submitted through SmartyGrants, a web-based grants management system.

Further information and a link to the application portal can be found at www.emv.vic.gov.au/ndrgs

The Assessment Process

Applications are assessed by a panel of experts who are experienced emergency management and flood mitigation/planning personnel. Each application will be scored against the funding criteria. The role of the panel will be to prioritise applications for the guidance of EMV, in developing the program for approval to the Minister for Emergency Services.

EMV may, in preparing documentation for the panel's consideration, seek confidential comments from independent experts on any application. The panel may also request additional conditions, or suggest amendments by an applicant to a project.

Panellists are only provided with your application prior to meeting. Any supplementary material you submit is provided for panellists' reference at the assessment meeting, but is seldom referred to in detail. It is therefore critical that you capture the key project elements within the application form.

Assessment: Preferred Projects

Your application will be assessed on the quality of the proposal, the significance of the need for the project, the strength of its alignment to the NSDR key themes, the potential value of the outcomes and

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outputs in relation to addressing the need, the contribution to the achievement of inclusion and sustainability outcomes, and value for money of the proposal.

A higher score will be given to applications for projects that:

- most effectively implement one or more of the key action themes of the NSDR
- address the disaster risk profile of Victoria (see below), or of a regional or local area
- enhance Koori inclusion, access, participation and/or safety
- contribute to creating a more diverse and inclusive sector, or better connecting with Victoria's diverse communities
- address environmental sustainability.

Applicants should also demonstrate through their responses, that they have arrangements in place to ensure that project tasks will be achieved within budget and required timelines.

Lower priority will be accorded to:

- projects that could qualify under other grant or government funding programs, regardless of their funding ratios
- projects that could be regarded as core business for an organisation but do not meet the criteria for exclusion, as above
- projects for purchase of assets where the organisation's revenue stream normally provides for such investment
- applications from organisations that already have project grants under this or other related programs, and where the other project/s have not progressed according to their original timetables, and/or where the other project is a precursor to the project in the application and is not close to completion.

Risk considerations

Applicants should consider the potential consequences of flood emergencies in the categories of people, public administration, environment, economy and social setting.

Applicants should specify the number of people at risk in both the project design flood and probable maximum flood, if known. Please also indicate the relative importance of this problem for your organisation and/or for the community/ies you serve, and whether it relates to a recognised risk priority at State, regional or local level.

You may wish to refer to the publication *Emergency Risks in Victoria*⁴ to use in your application. It sets out a recent prioritisation of risks in this state.

Other Considerations

Research and/or Development Projects and Public Interest

Research and/or development projects related to flood planning and mitigation are subject to a potential end-user-interest test. Applications must contain (or attach) an endorsement from a recognised emergency management organisation stating that it has a direct interest in the findings of the research project or product of the development project, without necessarily committing to

⁴ <http://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/report-state-emergency-risk-assessment-2012-13>

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implement it. Under the NDRGS, preference is given to applied research where benefits to emergency management and the community are expected as a direct outcome of the activity.

In addition, all research and/or development projects must demonstrate how the outputs of the project will either be used by the applicant for a public purpose, or how they are to be made available to other organisations at no or a nominal cost.

Intellectual Property

The funding agreement provides that title to and intellectual property (IP) rights in and arising from any funded material (such as documents, software or other records or material produced using grant funds through the project), will be owned by the grant recipient. In most cases, EMV has no desire or need to be granted a licence to use the IP generated by a project. Should EMV seek to be granted such a licence, this will be advised during the life of the project.

If ownership of all or part of the IP created by the project is intended or likely to reside in others such as doctoral candidates, consultants or contractors, this must be disclosed in the application.

Experimental or Pilot Projects

Pilot projects aimed towards flood planning and/or mitigation may be supported, noting that the applicants must accept responsibility, both to include rigorous evaluation and detailed documentation into the project, so that the learning achieved is not lost. Applicants should also be shown to explore the transition to normal/other ongoing funding, so that successful projects can be continued.

Community Awareness, Education and/or Engagement Projects

For flood planning and mitigation projects that propose activities in the general area of community awareness, education and/or engagement, applicants are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with Section A of the Australian Emergency Manual N^o 45 Guidelines for the Development of Community Education, Awareness & Engagement Programs, published in 2010 by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.⁵

Multi-Year projects

For this funding round, NDRGS funds can be committed for one year only, as there is no National Partnership Agreement in place beyond 30 June 2018. This means that multi-year projects cannot be considered. Please note though, that funding for the 2017-18 grants round will be held over for distribution in 2018-19 due to the timing of the release of the round.

Where projects are conducted in stages and future funding is not committed, applicants must declare that the stage proposed to be funded, will produce an output that is usable and useful, even if further stages are not funded.

Government Policy

To be approved, projects must be consistent with the policies and intentions of the Australian and Victorian Governments. Projects may be rejected on the grounds that approval would generate a policy or a precedent that either or both governments are unwilling or not ready to take up.

⁵ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/manual-series/>

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Applicant Contribution

Applicants must demonstrate a funding contribution towards their project, which amounts to at least one third of project costs, with the remainder of the project funding provided by the NDRGS and DELWP.

The combined applicant and DELWP contribution for a project must be at least 50%. This can be provided by a single agency, or can be contributed by a consortium of agencies, whether state, local, volunteer or private, but not Commonwealth. It will be the applicant's responsibility to establish and manage the consortium and the various parties' contributions.

Consideration may be given to approving a project with a lower than one third applicant contribution for low capacity councils or other organisations.

Any applicant's offer of a financial contribution to the project costs may assist in having a project approved for funding, subject to all other elements of the application combining to accord it high priority.

Project Administration, commencement and reporting requirements

Once a project is approved and the formal offer of a grant is made, applicants will be required to sign a funding agreement with EMV within 40 business days of receiving the letter of offer. The Victorian Government's Common Funding Agreement⁶ will be used for all successful applicants, including not-for-profit organisations.

The project manager must notify EMV of project commencement as soon as possible after receipt of the signed and executed agreement, and definitely within 40 business days of receipt.

Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in the offer of a grant being withdrawn. Approved projects will receive 50% of the approved grant once the funding agreement is signed and executed. The balance of funds will be paid at the discretion of EMV, and definitely once reporting requirements are met.

At a project's completion, a final report must be submitted including a copy of any document, report or other printed output produced by the project, together with a statement of compliance and audited financial statements. These must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer, or their equivalent.

Projects are expected to be completed within 12 months, from the date of their commencement.

Application process

Applications will be submitted via EMV's online grant application service. Access is via EMV's website www.emv.vic.gov.au/ndrgs

The closing date for applications is **9am, Monday 10 September 2018**. Late applications will not be accepted.

On submission of your application, you will receive a confirmation email advising that your application has successfully been submitted.

If you do not receive a confirmation email, please contact ndrgs@emv.vic.gov.au

⁶ <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement>

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While supporting documentation can be uploaded into the application form, it is recommended that attachments be no larger than 5mb and total no more than 25mb.

Need more help?

More information can be obtained from the NDRGS liaison officer at EMV (Ph: 8685 1303, email: ndrgs@emv.vic.gov.au).

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Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Grants Scheme

Disaster mitigation – Measures taken in advance of a disaster aimed at decreasing or eliminating the impact of disaster on society and the environment.

Disaster Resilience – The National Strategy on Disaster Resilience focuses on the common characteristics of disaster resilient communities, individuals and organisations. These characteristics are:

- functioning well while under stress
- successful adaptation
- self-reliance, and
- social capacity.

Emergency management – A range of measures to manage risks to communities and the environment, including the organisation and management of resources for dealing with all aspects of emergencies. Emergency management involves the plans, structures and arrangements which are established to bring together the normal endeavours of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to deal with the whole spectrum of emergency needs, including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Emergency management capability – the resources available to undertake emergency management related tasks, functions and duties in terms of what can be achieved and how well it can be done. Capability can be considered in the light of the question ‘capability for what?’ where the ‘what’ describes the complexity and range of tasks to be performed, and/or standards to be achieved. Capability includes skills, motivation, leadership and competence in addition to physical resources such as vehicles and equipment.

Emergency management capacity – the resources available to the State’s emergency management system or to organisations or local units to perform the tasks expected in terms of how much can be achieved/delivered.

Emergency management volunteer – a person who volunteers their time and services to the emergency management sector. The sector encompasses all activities relevant to emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

In-kind contributions – A non-cash input which can be given a cash value. In-kind contributions are for costs directly associated with an approved project. They are not to be used for administrative overheads, ongoing running costs or other core activities of applicant organisations.

Natural disaster – A serious disruption to a community or region caused by the impact of a naturally occurring, rapid onset event that threatens or causes death, injury or damage to property or the environment, and which requires significant and coordinated multi-agency and community response. Any one, or a combination, of the following can cause serious disruption to communities, infrastructure and the environment: bushfire; cyclone, earthquake; flood; landslide; storm; storm surge; tornado or tsunami.

Not-for-profit organisation – Not for profit organisations operate other than for the profit or gain of its individual members, whether these gains would have been direct or indirect. Any profit made must be re-invested into the organisation or used to pay for activities and functions.

Risk reduction – has the same meaning as disaster mitigation.

Volunteer Organisation – An organisation whose primary purposes are carried out by volunteers. It may or may not have paid staff for administration purposes. For the purposes of the NDRGS, the definition excludes statutory emergency service organisations.