

BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

VOUCHER PROGRAM
GUIDELINES

A woman with long dark hair, wearing safety glasses and a dark lab coat, is focused on her work in a laboratory. She is wearing white gloves and using a pipette to transfer liquid into a small vial. A large magnifying lamp is positioned over her work area, providing bright, focused light. The background is slightly blurred, showing other laboratory equipment. The overall scene conveys a sense of precision and scientific research.

BUSINESS VICTORIA

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Overview of the Boost Your Business Voucher Program	4
1.2 What is supported under the Boost Your Business Voucher program	4
1.3 What is a voucher	4
1.4 What is a relevant project	4
2 VOUCHER SERVICE ACTIVITIES	5
2.1 Voucher types	5
3 ELIGIBILITY	8
3.1 The Applicant Companies	8
3.2 Service Providers	9
3.3 Applicant and Service Provider relationship	9
4 FUNDING	10
4.1 Funding conditions	10
4.2 Duration of funding	10
4.3 Payment conditions	10
5 PROJECT EXPENDITURE	11
5.1 Eligible expenditure	11
5.2 Ineligible expenditure	11
6 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	12
7 VOUCHERS - STEP BY STEP GUIDE	13
8 TERMS AND CONDITIONS	15
8.1 Conditions of Registered Service Provider Engagement	15
8.2 Service Agreement	15
8.3 Payment of Registered Service Provider fee	15
8.4 Removal from Registered Service Provider list	15
8.5 Post Project Evaluation	16
8.6 Voucher Specific Program Requirements	16
8.7 Publicity	16
8.8 Confidentiality	16
APPENDICIES – VOUCHER STREAMS	17
1. Advanced Manufacturing	17
2. Asia Gateway	19
3. Food Innovation	21
4. Social Enterprise Capability	23

GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
Applicant	Is an eligible organisation that applies for funding (a Voucher) to support an activity that will lead to improved productivity, market engagement and/or innovation.
Registered Service Provider	Is an eligible organisation selected by the Department to provide services, supported through a Voucher, to an Applicant.
Recipient	Is an eligible organisation that has successfully applied and secured funding for a Voucher.
Scope of Services	<p>A scope of services, also called a scope of works, is a detailed work order. A scope of services helps define the services being sought and details what services are required. In this case the Scope of Services will include a quote.</p> <p>A scope of services is prepared by the Applicant with or without the assistance of the Registered Service Provider.</p>
Service Activity	An activity conducted by a Registered Service Provider that is supported by a Voucher.
Service Agreement	A service agreement is used to document a transaction where the Service Provider provides a service to the Recipient. A service agreement is prepared by the Registered Service Provider, and must detail services, timelines and costs and be signed by the Applicant and the Service Provider.
Voucher	A voucher is a form of government assistance which can be used by businesses to access services, advice or expertise provided by Registered Service Providers.
Voucher Project	Is the defined activities described in the Service Agreement and quote.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Boost Your Business Voucher Program

The Andrew's Government has established the Boost Your Business Voucher Program to support Victorian businesses to become more productive, employ more people, improve market access and in general, increase their scale, diversity and profitability.

The three overarching **objectives** of the Boost Your Business Voucher Program are to:

- > Increase the number of Victorian businesses entering new export markets and securing supply chain opportunities;
- > Increase the number of Victorian Businesses developing and commercialising new products and services through research and development and generating improved productivity through process innovation;
- > Improve the capability of Victorian businesses to accelerate growth and realise new opportunities.

In the longer term, the Boost Your Business Voucher Program will help grow the Victorian economy by supporting the following outcomes:

- > Victorian businesses are inventive, responsive and diverse, with increased levels of business innovation and business diversification;
- > Victoria creates and diffuses knowledge through research, collaboration and commercialisation, leading to increased R&D spending and economic return from research and innovation;
- > Victoria is a desired source of exports and a destination for foreign investment;
- > Victoria's business environment is competitive and provides confidence, including through increased market access;
- > Victorians are adaptive, knowledgeable and entrepreneurial, leading to increased knowledge and skills and extended entrepreneurship.

1.2 What is supported under the Boost Your Business Voucher program

The Boost Your Business Voucher Program helps Victorian businesses through the funding of Voucher Streams targeted at particular Victorian Government policies and strategies. For details on the current Voucher Streams, including stream activities and bespoke eligibility requirements and funding conditions, please refer to the Appendices of this document. Further information on all Voucher Service activities is listed in Section 2.

The terms and conditions that are described in this document shall apply to all Voucher Streams unless otherwise varied within the Appendices pertaining to a specific Voucher Stream. The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources reserves the right to amend the Voucher Streams as required.

1.3 What is a voucher

A voucher is a form of government funding assistance which can be used by businesses to access services, advice or expertise provided by Registered Service Providers.

Vouchers are issued in the name of the Applicant company (the Recipient), have no cash value, and are non-transferable. The vouchers will be provided on a cash co-contribution basis, where Recipients contribute a minimum value of the total cost of services. Payment up to the face value of the voucher (exclusive of GST) will be made by the Department to the Service Provider(s) upon the successful completion of work.¹

Voucher applications will be administered through rounds with defined open and close dates. Eligible applications will be assessed on a competitive basis.

1.4 What is a relevant project

Projects, funded through a Voucher, are growth orientated activities undertaken by the Recipient that, by using the expertise of Registered Service Providers, will assist the Recipient to become more productive, employ more people, create market access and in general increase their scale and profitability.

Voucher funding is not for 'business as usual' activity and the Applicant is required to articulate how their proposed project is likely to lead to these longer term goals.

¹ Where applicable the voucher to be paid by the Department will be increased by the amount of GST.

2 VOUCHER SERVICE ACTIVITIES

2.1 Voucher types

Vouchers are used by Victorian businesses or organisations in exchange for services that will build their capabilities in three main areas:

- > Market Engagement – services to assist businesses and organisations to identify and secure international market development and export opportunities.
- > Innovation – services to assist businesses to develop or commercialise new products and improve process innovation.
- > Business Capability – services to assist businesses to position them to support future growth.

Voucher Streams offer a limited selection of services under these three areas (refer to the Appendices for the relevant service offering for each Voucher Stream).

The Department reserves the right to amend the list of services as required.

2.1.1 Market Engagement

SERVICE ACTIVITIES	VOUCHER PURPOSE	EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTED VOUCHER ACTIVITIES
Marketing and Branding Strategy (International)	Development of brand value proposition and market positioning that increases consumer relevance and differentiates business from competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Brand audit and research. > Brand strategy, including the brand value proposition and market positioning. > Visual identity system to align all customer touch-points. > Develop a marketing strategy and implementation roadmap. > In-country marketing and promotional campaign development.
Market Development Plan (International)	Optimize entry to a new market or grow business activities in an existing market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Market research to understand industry trends, gain customer insights and identify gaps in current strategy. > Set strategic priorities to leverage market insights. > Market expansion activities. > Strategic partnerships and industry alignment opportunities. > Identify pathways into global supply chains.
In-Market Support (International)	Navigate the business environment of a specific market, including access to traditional distribution channels and/or e-commerce distribution platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consultancy and professional service costs for business introductions, company profiling and screening as well as business intelligence, pricing, branding and procedural advice.
Intellectual Property (export related)	Establish intellectual property (IP) mechanisms to capitalise on proprietary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop an IP management system and roadmap. > Conduct an IP research and intelligence analysis.

2.1.2 Innovation

SERVICE ACTIVITIES	VOUCHER PURPOSE	EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTED VOUCHER ACTIVITIES
Process Innovation	Identify gaps in current manufacturing processes and design improvements to increase productivity and competitiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop ways to enhance the productivity of existing manufacturing processes. > Improved manufacturing processes (e.g. use engineering or technical design expertise to determine process improvements).
Product Development	Access the know-how to innovate and leverage technology to develop innovative products for commercialisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Progress the commercialisation of a product. > Fund product design activities (e.g. use engineering or technical design expertise to determine prototype structure, function and/or materials). > Test commercial viability of new hardware technology products through small volume production. > Product testing, validation, prototyping and verification. > Conduct research and development activities to develop novel technology products for commercialization.
Intellectual Property	Establish intellectual property (IP) mechanisms to capitalise on proprietary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop an IP management system and roadmap. > Conduct an IP research and intelligence analysis.
Early stage feasibility & testing	Identify collaborative research opportunities between businesses (Applicants) and research organisations. Suitable for businesses needing an innovative solution to a process, product or research development problem but have limited knowledge, or engagement with the innovation ecosystem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Experimental plan in conjunction with a university including one-on one consultations between researchers and businesses. > Early stage feasibility plans.
Research & Development	Access the know-how to innovate and improve competitiveness and productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Research project that leads to an application for an Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme Research Connections or Accelerating Commercialisation or similar. > Access to research facilities and equipment (e.g. Synchrotron or publicly funded research facilities).
Market positioning and labelling	Navigate international regulatory and compliance systems to identify new opportunities OR develop a food fraud vulnerability control plan, preparing a food fraud vulnerability assessment that includes specific control measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Labelling to address non-tariff barriers to entry into frontier international markets. > Advice on navigating regulatory and labelling compliance and protecting IP in frontier international markets. > Developing a new approach to supply chain management to increase integrity, traceability and help reduce fraud risks. > Developing and implementing a food fraud mitigation plan. > Exploring new distribution methods such as eCommerce.

2.1.3 Business Capability

SERVICE ACTIVITIES	VOUCHER PURPOSE	EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTED VOUCHER ACTIVITIES
Business Process and Systems Improvements	Evaluate current business processes and/or systems to better inform strategies to be more competitive and efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop solutions to enhance business processes. > Develop business plans or strategic plans. > Benchmark current performance. > Evaluate the governance structure. > Project-specific leadership mentoring and coaching.
Business Transformation	Build on business competencies, market knowledge and ideas to improve - or develop new - business models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Undertake a market gap analysis to identify potential opportunities against a benchmark of current performance. > Pursue opportunities through market trends.
Financial Management Planning	Financial management strategy development to better inform business decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Design a strong financial structure. > Develop a financial management strategy to promote sustainable growth (e.g. Mergers & Acquisitions). > Develop an investment attraction strategy.
Industry Standards Implementation & Certification	Implement industry standards to advance business processes, improve products and/or services, increase competitiveness and access new/emerging markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Benchmark against and implement industry standards. > Undertake certification of business systems and process. > Project cost (including external audits) to achieve business systems and process certifications.
Tender Guidance	Assistance to enable businesses to respond to tenders within known supply chains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Costs for professional services to advise on tender submissions. > Advice on tender requirements - and how businesses can be more competitive in winning supply chain contracts or tenders. > Independent product testing to verify tender specifications.
Marketing and Branding Strategy	Development of brand value proposition and market positioning that increases consumer relevance and differentiates business from competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Brand strategy, including the brand value proposition and market positioning. > Visual identity system to align all customer touch-points. > Develop a marketing strategy and implementation roadmap.
Market Development Plan	Optimize entry to a new market or grow business activities in an existing market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Market research to understand industry trends, gain customer insights and identify gaps in current strategy. > Set strategic priorities to leverage market insights. > Market expansion activities. > Strategic partnerships and industry alignment opportunities. > Identify pathways into global supply chains.

3 ELIGIBILITY

3.1 The Applicant Companies

The Voucher Program is open to small to medium sized businesses (SME) that are on a growth trajectory. Applicants may apply individually or jointly. Where a project involves more than one Applicant, the lead organisation should submit the application, but both Applicants may contribute to project expenditure to meet any co-contribution requirements (refer to Section 4 Funding Conditions).

APPLICANTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA TO BE **ELIGIBLE** FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM:

- a) be a business registered in Victoria with an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- b) meet any co-contribution requirements with eligible cash expenditure;
- c) be a legal entity;²
- d) meet all industrial relations obligations as an employer in accordance with the National Employment Standards;
- e) have an operating presence in Victoria;
- f) employ at least 20 staff **or** have an annual turnover of greater than \$1.5 million (preference will be given to Applicants that employ less than 200 people);
- g) Conduct the majority of proposed activities in Victoria in partnership with a Registered Service Provider; and
- h) Agree to participate in future program evaluation activity.

THE FOLLOWING ARE **NOT ELIGIBLE** TO APPLY:

- a) Individuals, partnerships, or trusts, however an incorporated trustee can apply on behalf of a trust provided that the State is satisfied that the incorporated trustee will remain sufficiently liable for the performance or any agreement it signs;
- b) Commonwealth, State and Local Government agency or body;
- c) Publically funded research institutions;
- d) Industry Associations;
- e) Not-for-profit organisations; and
- f) Community-based organisations.

Individual Voucher Streams may have additional eligibility criteria or criteria listed above that do not apply. Applicants must refer to the Appendices for specific details on the eligibility criteria under a particular Voucher Stream.

² A legal entity is an association, corporation, partnership, proprietorship, trustee of a trust, or individual that has legal standing in the eyes of the law. A legal entity has legal capacity to enter into agreements or contracts, assume obligations, incur and pay debts, sue and be sued in its own right, and to be held responsible for its actions.

3.2 Service Providers

The Registered Service Providers are selected by the Department through a closed competitive assessment process. Service Providers may be publicly funded, not-for-profit enterprises or privately owned; and should meet at least one or more of the specified service types offered under the Voucher Streams as detailed in Section 2.

Through the application process invited Service Providers will need to demonstrate that they:

- a) have a trading history of at least two years³;
- b) are financially viable;⁴
- c) are based in or have an operating presence in Victoria;⁵
- d) supply eligible services and where applicable demonstrate sector or market-specific knowledge;
- e) commit to undertake their role in accordance with these Guidelines; and
- f) are one of the following entity types:
 - i. A private or public company (not listed) incorporated in Australia under the *Corporations Act 2001*, that is non tax-exempt and is registered for GST; or
 - ii. A not-for-profit organisation that:
 - is an incorporated body, co-operative or associate (including business associations); and
 - has an Australian Business Number (ABN) or can provide written advice from the Australian Tax Office that no withholding tax is required from the voucher payment.

Registered Service Providers will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that they are:

- a) Committed to providing services at competitive market rates;
- b) Committed to servicing projects within a reasonable timeframe as agreed with the Applicant, including the negotiation and agreement of terms concerning intellectual property rights; and
- c) Not currently involved in litigation.

Registered Service Providers will be listed on the Boost Your Business webpage at business.vic.gov.au.

3.3 Applicant and Service Provider relationship

Voucher Applicants and Service Providers must be entirely separate entities. They may not be owned by the same parent company, share governance or have common directors.

Vouchers are primarily intended to support projects where:

- a) there is a new relationship, i.e. the company has never worked (formally or informally) with the nominated Service Provider; or
- b) there has been no recent financial transaction between the company and the Service Provider.

In the voucher application, Applicants are required to declare any existing governance relationships between themselves and the nominated Service Providers, including whether any of the project Service Providers:

- a) are subsidiaries or related bodies corporate within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001*; or
- b) share common directors, officers or senior managers.

3 The Department reserves the right to waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

4 To become a Registered Service Provider, potential service providers may be required to submit audited financial accounts for the previous two (2) Financial Years, plus interim accounts if the financial accounts are over six (6) months old.

5 Where applicable, services that are to be conducted offshore (such as in-market support), or otherwise cannot be conducted in Victoria, will be exempt from this requirement – refer to the conditions under the Voucher Streams.

4 FUNDING

4.1 Funding conditions

Eligible Applicants are permitted to apply for one voucher per funding round.

Vouchers are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST). For example, if the total cost of services is \$125,000, the voucher will cover \$50,000 which is the maximum and capped voucher amount. The remaining \$75,000 must be covered by the Applicant.

Vouchers will be provided on a cash co-contribution basis outlined below unless an alternate co-contribution amount is stated in the Voucher Stream (refer to Appendices):

-
- > Applicants contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services; and
 - > Vouchers will subsidise 50 per cent of the services to a maximum of \$50,000 (i.e. \$1 for every \$1 awarded through the voucher).

Eligible Applicants may be permitted to receive more than one Voucher and a maximum of two. The receipt of multiple vouchers is dependent on available funding and the directions as set within each Voucher Stream (refer to Appendices).

Funds from other State and Commonwealth Government programs cannot form part of the co-contribution.

The Department reserves the right to amend these conditions and the conditions stated within the Voucher Streams in respect to vouchers that have not yet been awarded.

4.2 Duration of funding

Projects are to commence within two (2) months and be completed within 12 months of the date of voucher issue. The Department reserves the right to withdraw the offer of Voucher funding if projects are not commenced within two months.

4.3 Payment conditions

Each voucher can only be used for the services of one Registered Service Provider and not for multiple service providers. Payment up to the face value of each voucher (plus GST where applicable) will be made by the Department to the Service Provider(s) following provision of services, advice or expertise.

Any upfront payments must be covered by the Applicant out of their co-contribution to the project.

The Department will not be liable to pay the Service Provider until it has received:

- > a valid tax invoice from the Service Provider for services;
- > the Voucher signed by both the Applicant and the Service Provider indicating that the agreed activities have been completed;
- > a Statutory Declaration that states that the project has been completed and that the Service provider has received the Applicant's co-contribution; and
- > a final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence as the Department may reasonably require.

Consideration may be given on a case by case basis, and at the Department's discretion, to split a Voucher payment subject to the following conditions (unless specified in a Voucher Stream - refer to Appendices):

- > The total Voucher value must exceed \$25,000 (exclusive of GST);
- > The period of the project is greater than four months; and
- > Evidence that the cash co-contribution by the Applicant has been made in full

The request to split a voucher payment must be made at the application stage.

5 PROJECT EXPENDITURE

All project expenditure is to be incurred only after the Voucher is issued. Funding will not be provided for retrospective activities. Applicants will need to meet the cost of any ineligible expenditure associated with their project.

5.1 Eligible expenditure

Eligible project expenditure for Voucher funding includes project-related non-capitalised expenditure required to deliver the project and project-related costs of the Service Providers. Applicants will need to meet the cost of any additional and ineligible expenditure that are outside the scope of the Voucher Project.

5.2 Ineligible expenditure

Voucher funds may not be used to cover 'business as usual' expenses, including the following expenses: (unless approved in writing by the Department under exceptional circumstances, or it is the specific purpose of the voucher service activity as described in Section 2)

- a) capital expenditure;
- b) internal costs, salaries or resources of the Applicant;
- c) software and hardware purchases;
- d) training courses, units or modules (e.g. language or other);
- e) interpreting and translation (with the exception of branding or promotional translating associated with broader promotional campaigns);
- f) costs associated with minor or non-technical alterations of a product to suit a specific market;
- g) costs associated with applying for government grants and funding programs;
- h) basic professional services such as ongoing, routine accounting, tax and legal business requirements, licencing, costs associated with export documentation, legal/intellectual property costs, financing fees;
- i) routine maintenance;
- j) travel costs and entertainment costs;
- k) costs associated with group trade missions, delegations, events, seminars, workshops and/or training;
- l) any amount paid on account of goods and services tax;
- m) any administrative fees or surcharges for administering the expenditures listed above;
- n) services relating to import activities;
- o) projects where the primary purpose relates to offshore manufacturing; and
- p) any other expenditure as determined by the Department to not to meet program conditions.

6 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applicants will be required to submit an application online in conjunction with a quotation (including a detailed Scope of Services) provided by the Service Provider. All questions in the application need to be completed to proceed to assessment.

A Departmental assessment panel will assess all voucher applications against the following assessment criteria and scoring:

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	WEIGHTING %
1. Extent to which the proposed project and identified service activities support one or more, of the Voucher Stream objectives as described in the relevant Voucher Stream Appendix.	30
2. Extent to which the project, funded by the voucher, has the potential to benefit the company by reaching longer term outcomes (e.g new jobs, access to new markets and customers, new products and services and increased revenue).	30
3. Demonstrated capacity or capability to successfully implement the project or project findings (e.g. track record of company and resources to be allocated to the project)	20
4. The need for Government support for the project to proceed.	20

Further information may be sought from applicants if required.

A competitive program application must address each assessment criterion to make the best possible case for funding. Claims made against each criterion must be substantiated and full details of all underlying risks and assumptions should be clearly stated.

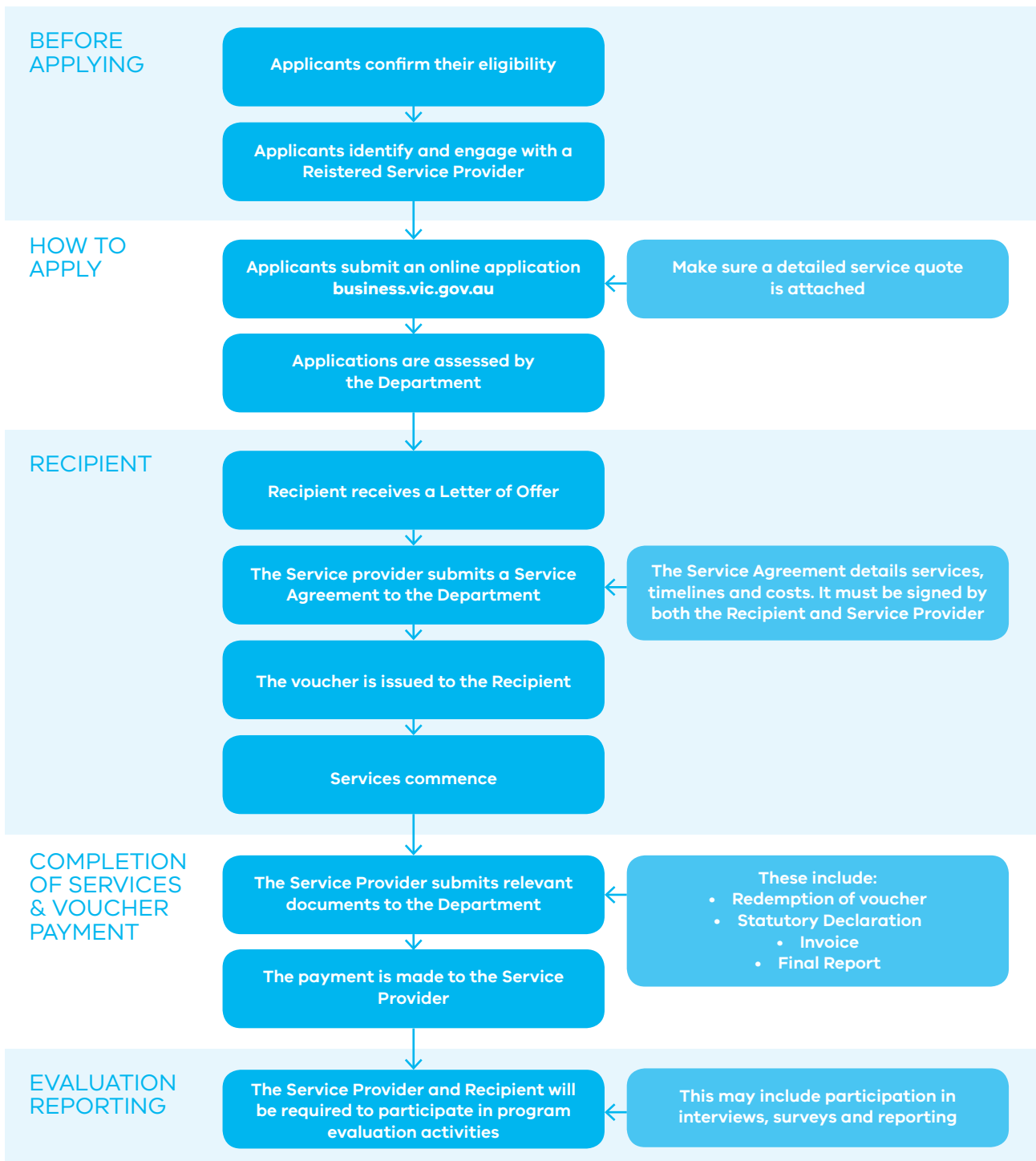
All Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their application by the Department within six weeks of submitting an application.

Recipients will receive a Letter of Offer outlining funding obligations, this offer remains valid for a period of two (2) months from the date of the Letter of Offer. A voucher will be issued to the Recipient once the Department has received the acceptance of the Letter of Offer signed by the Recipient and a Service Agreement signed by both the Service Provider and the Recipient.

7 VOUCHERS - STEP BY STEP GUIDE

Vouchers are to be used by Victorian businesses or organisations in exchange for services that will build their capabilities. Vouchers are not intended for ‘business as usual’ activities.

The projects funded through a Voucher are expected to be growth orientated activities undertaken by an Applicant. The Applicant engages a Registered Service Provider to undertake a service to assist the company to become more productive, employ more people, create market access and in general, increase scale and profitability.



How to Apply

Victorian companies and organisations will be able to apply for a Voucher to undertake services with a Registered Service Provider panel members. The Applicant must first engage with a Registered Service Provider to agree on the services, timing and cost before applying for a Voucher. A detailed services quote must be included in the Applicant’s application.

BEFORE APPLYING

- Step 1:** The Applicant must confirm their eligibility for the program (see Section 3 ‘Eligibility’).
- Step 2:** The Applicant must identify and engage a Registered Service Provider and request a detailed quotation (which includes a Scope of Services – refer to Glossary).

HOW TO APPLY

- Step 3:** The Applicant submits an online application with an attached services quotation. The application form must be completed by an authorised officer of the Applicant entity (i.e. An appropriate financial delegate to approve external service agreements and payments).
- Step 4:** Applications are assessed by the Department’s assessment panel.

RECIPIENT

- Step 5:** A Letter of Offer is sent to successful Recipients requesting a signed Service Agreement between the Service Provider and Recipient. The Applicant accepts the offer in writing.
- Step 6:** A Service Agreement (refer to Section 8.2, Service Agreement), signed by both the Service Provider and the Recipient, is sent to the Department detailing the services, timelines and costs. This document can be sent by the Service Provider.
- Step 7:** The Department reviews the Service Agreement and the Voucher is issued by the Department to the Recipient.

- Step 8:** Services must commence within two months of the issue of the Voucher. Services must be completed within twelve months of Voucher issue.

VOUCHER IS PAID ON THE COMPLETION OF PROJECT

- Step 9:** Upon completion of services, the Registered Service Provider must submit the following documents:
 - > Redemption of Voucher document (to be signed by the Recipient and the Service Provider);
 - > Statutory Declaration signed by the Service Provider that states the services were undertaken and completed and the cash co-contribution has been received in full by the Service Provider;
 - > A final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence as the Department may reasonably require; and
 - > An invoice (issued to the Department and to the value of the voucher).

- Step 10:** Payment is made to the Service Provider⁶.

EVALUATION REPORTING

- Step 11:** Recipient and Service Providers will be required to participate in program evaluation activities.

⁶ All proposed project costs included in an application must be exclusive of GST. Where applicable, the Voucher, to be paid by the Department, will be increased by the amount of GST.

8 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Department reserves the right to make changes to these guidelines as required.

8.1 Conditions of Registered Service Provider Engagement

Selected Service Providers will be made an offer in writing to register for the Service Providers' Panel. By accepting the offer, Service Providers will be agreeing to the following Terms and Conditions:

- a) Commit to providing services at competitive market rates;
- b) Commit to undertake their role and responsibilities in accordance with these Guidelines;
- c) Guarantee that they are not currently involved in litigation and that they will advise the Department if these circumstances change;
- d) Guarantee that they have sufficient funds to manage terms of payment of up to 90 days against a redeemed voucher; and
- e) Commit to participate in program evaluation activities as required by the Department.

8.2 Service Agreement

The Registered Service Provider will enter into a Service Agreement with a Recipient to provide the agreed services. This service agreement must include, at a minimum, the following:

- a) A description of the scope of services to be provided;
- b) Total fee for the services;
- c) An outline of any required Intellectual Property arrangements; and
- d) Any other Terms & Conditions as required by the parties to the agreement.

Neither the Department nor the State will be deemed to be a party to the Service Agreement or in any way responsible for the consequences or outcomes under the Service Agreement.

8.3 Payment of Registered Service Provider fee

Registered Service Providers will be reimbursed for an amount up to the face value of the voucher (exclusive of GST) for the supply of the service, on the provision of:

- a) a valid tax invoice from the Service Provider;
- b) the voucher signed by both the Recipient and the Service Provider, indicating that the agreed activities have been completed;
- c) a statutory declaration signed by the Service Provider confirming receipt of the cash co-contribution from the Recipient; and
- d) a final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence the Department may reasonably require.

8.4 Removal from Registered Service Provider list

- a) The Department reserves the right to remove any Registered Service Provider from the list at its absolute discretion; and
- b) A Service Provider may request to be removed from the Registered Service Provider list at any stage. The Service Provider must ensure any active voucher projects are managed to completion following removal from the list.

8.5 Post Project Evaluation

All Recipients and Service Providers must agree to comply with the Department's performance monitoring and evaluation regime. The Recipient and the Service Provider may receive an evaluation survey from the Department and may be required to participate in program evaluation activities.

The evaluation surveys may be required for up to three years following completion of the Voucher issue. This is a non-negotiable requirement for all participants of the Program. Non-compliance could impact future applications to the Department's programs.

Successful Program outcomes may be used in Program evaluation reviews and Departmental marketing collateral.

8.6 Voucher Specific Program Requirements

Refer to Appendices for any additional Terms and Conditions that relate to a specific Voucher Stream.

8.7 Publicity

Recipients and Service Providers must agree to cooperate with the Department in the promotion of the Program. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies or promotional events and activities.

The Department may request Recipients and Service Providers to fact check any text and seek approval to use any owned imagery associated with the activity prior to the publication of any such promotional materials.

Recipients and Service Providers must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a Voucher without prior approval by the Department.

8.8 Confidentiality

Any personal information provided by the Applicant and the Service Provider or a third party in an application will be collected by the Department for the purpose of program administration. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purposes of assessing applications. If confidential personal information about third parties are included in an application, Applicants are required to ensure that they are aware of the contents of this Privacy Statement.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2000* (VIC) and other applicable laws.

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. The Department's Privacy Policy can be found online at www.economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department's Privacy Unit by phone on (03) 9651 9749 or email privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

APPENDICIES – VOUCHER STREAMS

1. Advanced Manufacturing

Background and Program Objectives

The Minister for Industry and Employment launched the Victorian Government’s *Advancing Victorian Manufacturing: A Blueprint for the Future* in September 2017. A key component of this Statement is helping businesses innovate, increase their scale and build export capability.

To deliver on this, the Advanced Manufacturing Voucher Stream has been established to achieve the following **objectives**:

- > increase the development and commercialisation of new products and advanced manufacturing processes by Victorian manufacturers;
- > increase the adoption of new or improved capability, business models and business processes by Victorian manufacturers; and
- > increase the number of Victorian manufacturers entering new export markets and securing global supply chain opportunities.

The achievement of these objectives will contribute to one or more of the following **outcomes**:

- > improved productivity and competitiveness of Victorian manufacturers;
- > the creation of new jobs for Victorians;
- > increased exports.

The primary purpose of these vouchers are related to commercialisation and late stage research and development rather than early stage research and development activities. Preference will be given to activities that relate commercialisation and late stage research and development.

Voucher service activities (also refer to Section 2 of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a voucher under the Advanced Manufacturing Voucher Stream for the service activities listed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

VOUCHER TYPE	SUPPORTED SERVICE ACTIVITIES
Fastrack to Export (Market Engagement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Marketing and Branding Strategy (international) > Market Development Plan (international) > In-Market Support (international) > Intellectual Property (export related)
Manufacturing Innovation (Innovation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Process Innovation > Product Development > Intellectual Property
Enhancing Manufacturing Capability (Business Capability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Business Process and Systems Improvements > Financial Management Planning > Industry Standards Implementation & Certification > Tender Guidance > Marketing and Branding Strategy > Market Development Plan

Eligibility Criteria
(also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3.1 and in addition must be:

- > Currently engaged in manufacturing or the manufacturing supply chain, or be able to demonstrate a genuine commercial connection to the manufacturing supply chain
- > For service activities that specifically relate to international or in-market support, it is understood that these activities may occur outside of Victoria

Funding conditions
(also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- > Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST) – see Table 1.2.
- > Recipients must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.
- > Recipients will be eligible for up to two vouchers under this Voucher Stream.

Table 1.2

VOUCHER TYPES	MAXIMUM VALUE OF VOUCHER (EXCLUSIVE OF GST)	MINIMUM CASH CO-CONTRIBUTION BY APPLICANT
Fastrack to Export	\$50,000	50%
Manufacturing Innovation	\$50,000	50%
Enhancing Manufacturing Capability	\$50,000	50%

2. Asia Gateway

Background and Program Objectives

In April 2016, the Premier announced the establishment of the 'Asia Gateway' initiative, which coincided with the release of the Victorian Government's *China Strategy - Partnerships for Prosperity*.

The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream, announced in August 2017 with *Globally Connected: Victoria's Trade Statement*, forms a key part of the Victorian Government's approach to building Victoria's Asia capabilities, connections and engagement with Asia. The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream is seeking Voucher projects that align with the Stream objectives:

- > **Capitalising on growth opportunities in Asia** – Voucher projects will increase immediate to short-term business activities with Asian markets.
- > **Connecting and expanding into Asia** – Voucher projects will provide businesses with the knowhow, networks and skills for effective access to and expansion into Asian markets.
- > **Increased Asia capabilities** – Voucher projects will better position businesses and organisations for long term engagement with Asian markets.

Building Victoria's Asia Capabilities

The Voucher Stream will support Victorian businesses to capitalise on growth opportunities arising from Asia, to ensure that they are well-equipped with the skills and capabilities needed to effectively engage with the region.

The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream defines building Asia capabilities as:⁷

-
- > Developing sound knowledge and understanding of Asian markets and environments
 - > Developing the ability to adapt behaviour to Asian cultural contexts
 - > Developing strong networks and relationships in Asia
 - > Building capacity to deal with governments in Asia
 - > Gaining experience operating in Asia
 - > Tailoring business offerings and value propositions based on customer insights

⁷ Asialink's Developing an Asia Capable Workforce: A National Strategy

Voucher service activities (also refer to Section 2 of the Program Guidelines)

The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream will support one on one, bespoke services to individual Victorian companies and organisations to identify and secure international market development and export opportunities.

Vouchers in this stream can be used by Victorian businesses or organisations in exchange for services that will build their Asian market engagement capabilities.

Eligible organisations can apply for a voucher under this stream for the service activities listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

VOUCHER TYPE	SUPPORTED SERVICE ACTIVITIES
Market Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Marketing and Branding Strategy (international) > Market Development Plan (international) > In-Market Support (international)

Registered Service Providers will support individual companies through the development and implementation of their Asian market engagement project which will contribute to:

- > expanded market access;
- > increased product or service scale and profitability;
- > increased knowledge and capability of doing business in Asia or with Asian clients

Service activities are only eligible for the State's top Asian trading partners, which include:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| > China | > Singapore |
| > Hong Kong | > South Korea |
| > India | > Taiwan |
| > Indonesia | > Thailand |
| > Japan | > Vietnam |
| > Malaysia | |

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3.1. Please note under this Voucher Stream Local Governments and industry associations are eligible to apply and due to the nature of these service activities it is understood that they may occur within key Asian markets.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- > Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST).
- > Applicants must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.
- > Recipients will be eligible for only one voucher under this Voucher Stream

Please note:

- > The Scope of Services will be contingent upon whether Registered Service Providers specialise in the above markets.
- > Applicants will need to provide a compelling case, in their online application, for:
 - undertaking services focusing on more than one market, to ensure a targeted approach; and
 - why there would be a demand for their product or service offering in the specified Asian market

3. Food Innovation

Background and Program Objectives

In March 2016, the Premier of Victoria launched the Victorian Government’s *Food and Fibre Sector Strategy*. A key component of the Strategy is helping businesses innovate and grow by:

- > equipping businesses with the right skills;
- > supporting business to adopt technology, add value and create jobs; and
- > establishing an Innovation Network.

The Victorian Government has established the Food Innovation Voucher Stream to encourage problem solving, develop innovation capability and stimulate business growth.

The Food Innovation Voucher Stream and associated network will link industry with innovation services and capabilities in regional and metropolitan areas, including the Government’s key food and fibre research centres and relevant CSIRO, university and industry facilities.

The main **objectives** of the Food Innovation Voucher Stream are to:

- > foster industry engagement and collaboration between R&D providers and businesses;
- > increase commercialisation rates of research through development of innovative products, packaging and processes in growth oriented SMEs;
- > improve productivity levels by shifting the food sector’s focus and culture from reactive to proactive, and from survival to competitive and disruptive;
- > support projects that align to Food and Fibre Sector related Government initiatives including the Healthy Choices Guidelines; and
- > reduce the barriers and challenges faced by businesses which are limiting the level of investment in disruptive innovation.

Voucher service activities (also refer to Section 2 of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a voucher under this stream for the service activities listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

VOUCHER TYPE	SUPPORTED SERVICE ACTIVITIES
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Process Innovation > Product Development > Early Stage Feasibility & Testing > Research & Development > Market positioning and labelling

- > Applicants are encouraged to consider the Victorian Government’s Healthy Choices guidelines in their applications (<http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/healthy-choices/guidelines>); for example, projects to develop an innovative product to increase the nutrient rating of foods, product size reformulation, product design for healthy fresh vending or otherwise increase the supply of healthier foods, would be considered favourably.

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3.1 and in addition must:

- > become a member of the Victorian Food Innovation Network (www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/FoodInnovation); and
- > be currently engaged in the food value chain (this includes agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing and excludes forestry and fishing), or
- > be able to demonstrate a genuine commercial connection to the food value chain.

Funding conditions
(also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- > Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST) – see Table 3.2.
- > Applicants must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.
- > Early stage feasibility and testing vouchers are an exception and are capped at \$10,000. They do not require any cash co-contribution (see Table 3.2). There is an expectation that businesses will make an appropriate staff member available to work with the Service Provider for up to a maximum of 10 hours.
- > Recipients will be eligible for up to two vouchers under this Voucher Stream.

Table 3.2

VOUCHER TYPE	MAXIMUM VALUE OF VOUCHER (EXCLUSIVE OF GST)	MINIMUM CASH CO-CONTRIBUTION BY APPLICANT
Innovation	\$50,000	50%
Early Stage Feasibility and Testing Voucher	\$10,000	0%

Voucher Specific Program Requirements (also refer to Section 8 of the Program Guidelines)

Registered Service Providers will be required to participate in the Victorian Food Innovation Network as part of a Community of Practice (CoP). Organisations must nominate at least one technical expert to participate as a member of the CoP.

CoP members will be required to:

- > attend one face to face meeting;
- > attend three quarterly online meetings per annum;
- > contribute to the development of network content (two contributions/year); and
- > provide information about events and opportunities relevant to the Food Innovation Network for the promotion to the food sector.

Exemptions from joining the CoP may be requested in writing to the Department and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

4. Social Enterprise Capability

Background and Program Objectives

The Victorian Government’s *Social Enterprise Strategy* was released in 2017 and outlines how the Government will partner with the sector to provide support and strategic leadership. The Victorian Social Enterprise Strategy vision is that “Victoria’s inclusive growth is supported by thriving and sustainable social enterprises”.

The Strategy has three action areas:

- > Increasing impact and innovation
- > Building business capacity and skills
- > Improving market access

The strategy identifies that social enterprise founders and managers in Victoria can benefit from developing business capabilities through accessing specialist assistance to resolve growth limiting issues and/or to take advantage of growth opportunities.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream is a key initiative aligned with the building business capacity and skills action area to support the viability, sustainability and growth of social enterprises.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream’s long term outcomes are to:

- > grow individual social enterprises in Victoria, assisting them to scale up their social, economic and environmental impact;
- > assist individual social enterprises in Victoria to create new and extend existing opportunities for employment of disadvantaged Victorians;
- > raise the participation of Victorian Social Enterprise founders and managers in capability development leading to future viability, sustainability and growth; and
- > further develop the pipeline of investable Victorian social enterprises.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream will support capability development projects within individual Victorian social enterprises. Projects supported under the Stream will:

- > lead to **Organisational Efficiencies** through implementation of new-to-the-firm business systems and processes that increase firm productivity; and/or
- > increase **New Market Development** through identifying new market opportunities and developing workable plans to access those markets; and/or
- > increase **Financial Readiness**, better equipping social enterprises to identify and manage investment and funding opportunities; and/or
- > increase **Contract Readiness**, better equipping social enterprises to access government and corporate procurement opportunities.

Voucher service activities
(also refer to Section 2 of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Voucher under this stream for the service activities listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

VOUCHER TYPE	SUPPORTED SERVICE ACTIVITIES
Business Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Business Process and Systems Improvements > Business Transformation > Financial Management Planning > Industry Standards Implementation & Certification > Tender Guidance

Eligibility Criteria

(also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

- > Not-for-profits and charitable organisations are eligible to apply.
- > Businesses that employ less than 20 staff are eligible to apply.

In addition to the eligibility criteria described in Section 3.1, Applicants must:

- > be a social enterprise as defined by its business model that supports an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit;
- > derive a substantial portion of income from trade-based activities; and
- > reinvest the majority of business profit in the fulfilment of their mission.

Funding conditions

(also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- > Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$25,000 (exclusive of GST).
- > Applicants must contribute a minimum of 20 per cent of the total costs of services.
- > Vouchers will subsidise 80 per cent of the services up to a maximum of \$25,000 (i.e. \$4 of voucher funding for every \$1 contributed by the applicant).
- > Recipients will be eligible for up to two vouchers under this Voucher Stream.
- > Requests for split payments of Vouchers may be made for Vouchers with a minimum value of \$10,000 (exclusive of GST).



Economic Development,
Jobs, Transport
and Resources