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# ADULT COMMUNITY AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD

# CAPACITY AND INNOVATION FUND

# ROUND 9 GUIDELINES (CAIF 9)

# **PRIORITY LEARNER COHORTS**

### TIMELINES - CAIF ROUND 9 2017

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| Applications open | 8 March 2017 |
| Applications close | 4 April 2017 |
| Applicants will be advised of outcomes | May 2017 |
| All projects will commence | 1 July 2017 |

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# What is the ACFE Board Capacity and Innovation Fund?

The Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board administers the Capacity and Innovation Fund.

The ACFE Board Capacity and Innovation Fund (CAIF) provides opportunities for Learn Local providers to develop and implement projects designed to meet learner needs and to increase participation and attainment.

In CAIF Round 9 applications are invited from registered Learn Local providers and Adult Education Institutions for project grants.

# Why is the ACFE Board funding these projects?

CAIF is a key element in support of the ACFE Board’s mission to increase the educational participation and attainment of adults, improve social cohesion and boost the human and social capital of Victoria.

In 2017 proposed projects must respond to the pre-accredited training needs of one or more of the ACFE Board Priority Learner Cohorts and be aligned with priorities in the ACFE Board Strategy 2016-2019 <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/ace.aspx>

# CAIF Round 9 - Priority Learner Cohorts

The ACFE Board has identified the following priority learner cohorts for specific emphasis in pre-accredited programs:

* Women, including young mothers, women seeking to re-enter the workforce after significant time away, women who have experienced or are experiencing family violence
* People in low socio-economic status localities
* Early school leavers
* Indigenous people
* Low skilled and vulnerable workers
* Unemployed/underemployed people
* People from a culturally or linguistically diverse background
* People with a disability
* Young people who may be at risk of disengaging or who may have already disengaged from the community and/or education

# What are the aims of the Fund?

The Round 9 Capacity and Innovation Fund aims have been updated to reflect the priorities in the ACFE Board Strategy 2016-2019 for priority learner cohorts.

All Expressions of Interest by Learn Local providers and Adult Education Institutions for Round 9 Capacity and Innovation Fund grants must align with one or more of these aims to be considered for project funding.

The CAIF project if funded aims to:

1. **Maximise learner participation, equity & access to high quality programs** 
   1. Maximise access for priority learner cohorts to consistently high quality pre-accredited programs.
   2. Improve responses to priority learner cohorts needs and aspirations, connecting to further education and employment pathways.
   3. Improve the quality, relevance and responsiveness of course offerings to meet priority cohort.
   4. learner needs through initiatives that contribute to improvements in training and assessment practices.
   5. Encourage networks of providers to maximise access for priority cohort learners through agile program delivery.
   6. Expand opportunities for Learn Local trainers to seek support, promote innovation and collaboration in delivery to priority learner cohorts through communities of practice.
2. **Support pathways to further education and employment** 
   1. Respond to the pathways needs of priority cohorts through targeted regional strategies
   2. Improve design and delivery of programs and initiatives with high conversion rates to further education and employment for priority cohort learners.
   3. Improve planning, monitoring and tracking of priority cohort learners transitioning to further education and employment.
3. **Demonstrate the effectiveness, socio economic value and impact of pre-accredited training**
   1. Encourage strategic partnerships, programs and initiatives that improve participation and attainment for the priority cohort groups.
   2. Leverage other initiatives to support priority learner cohorts.
4. **Respond effectively to identified needs in local communities** 
   1. Support network collaborations across the Learn Local sector which promote shared knowledge, skills and maximise resources and harness innovation that maximise participation, pathways and attainment of priority learner cohorts.
   2. Build the capacity of providers to respond to priority learner cohort needs through innovative and sustainable models.

# What are the funding groups?

The CAIF funding groups are aligned with the priority learner cohorts and aim to encourage project proposals that support each key priority learner cohort and align with the revised aims.

Learn Local providers should identify the priority learner cohort their project is primarily directed to support and apply for funding in that group.

The ACFE Board is seeking innovative projects that are specifically targeted to support improved engagement, pathways and attainment for each of the priority learner cohorts through pre-accredited training programs.

The groups are:

# Group 1: Women, including young mothers, women seeking to re-enter the workforce after significant time away, women who have experienced or are experiencing family violence

# Group 2: People in low socio-economic status localities

# Group 3: Early school leavers

# Group 4: Indigenous people

# Group 5: Low skilled and vulnerable workers

# Group 6: Unemployed/underemployed people

# Group 7: People from a culturally or linguistically diverse background

# Group 8: People with a disability

# Group 9: Young people who may be at risk of disengaging or who may have already disengaged from the community and/or education.

# Who can apply?

Applications for Capacity and Innovation Fund projects may be submitted by:

* a registered Learn Local provider or Adult Education Institution with a current BGS or 2017 Skills First contract
* Where Learn Local providers apply as a partnership a lead organisation must be identified and this **must** be a registered Learn Local provider.
* If a partnership application involving two (or more) Learn Local providers is successful, it will count as an eligible grant for the lead and key partner Learn Local providers involved in the project.
* If you are not applying as a partnership but will be working with a group of organisations in the development and delivery of your project, you need to identify these organisations.
* Each Learn Local provider is eligible to apply for and receive **a maximum of TWO grants** per calendar year.

# What funding is available and how long can a project run?

## **Maximum Funding Levels:**

* Providers must ensure that all project applications are costed clearly and accurately, with funding requests commensurate with the activity to be undertaken. Sufficient detail should be provided to enable the panel to determine the funds required, value for money and appropriate allocation of funds. The panel will not accept projects where the bid is not clearly justified within the application.
* It is expected that the majority of CAIF 9 project funding requests will be limited to a maximum of $50,000, regardless of the number of Learn Local providers involved in the project. The panel will be assessing that the amount requested is required to undertake the project successfully.
* Where applications for project funding of over $50,000 are submitted they will be required to:
  + include more than one learn Local provider
  + demonstrate broad application across the sector, and
  + include increased project detail in the form of a detailed business case?
* Providers with applications for projects of $100,000 and above, in addition to a detailed business case, may be required by the assessment panel to attend an interview or submit a presentation on the proposed project.

## Maximum length of time projects can run for:

* Only projects that are ready to start in July 2017 will be considered
* Learn Local providers are asked to propose projects for a maximum of 12 months’ duration.
* Longer project timelines with a maximum of 18 months will only be considered on a case-by-case basis with the need for a longer time frame clearly justified. In general, this will only apply to larger more complex projects.
* All projects must be completed within 18 months.
* Longer projects may involve additional reporting to ensure the project stays on track.

In determining the timeframe of your project you need to take into account the following contract requirements:

* ALL projects will commence in July 2017, following receipt of the commencement payment from the ACFE Board.
* You are required to complete a **PROJECT PLAN** as part of the application which will assist you in estimating the length of time it will take to achieve your project objectives.
* The final report and any other deliverables developed under the project (e.g. learning resources, case studies and assessment tools) are expected to be submitted to the ACFE Board within the agreed timeframe of the project.
* Payments will be withheld if these requirements are not met.

# What will not be funded?

CAIF funding is not available for:

* projects that are a duplication of current or previous CAIF projects
* business-as-usual operations e.g. salaries, rent, consumables,
* training delivery (accredited, pre-accredited or fee-for-service delivery funded or potentially able to be funded by the ACFE Board or DET)  If your project has a training component you must clearly indicate where that funding will be sourced from and not include training salaries in the budget.
* capital works
* ongoing accommodation or related costs
* equipment or materials not directly linked to the achievement of project outcomes or which exceed 10% of the ACFE Board grant.

Applications that request ACFE Board funds for the purchase of equipment and materials must demonstrate that the purchases are directly linked to the strategic objectives of proposed projects, with a rationale for the use of the equipment clearly outlined in the Application.  No more than 10 per cent of the ACFE Board grant can be spent on equipment purchases.

# What are the funding conditions?

Grant recipients must:

* Only use project funds to implement the project that funding was approved for
* Deliver the identified project outcomes within agreed timelines
* Let the Department know immediately if any changes are required
* Comply with all data collection and reporting requirements including documenting of project outcomes and best practice models for sharing across the Learn Local sector. Resources and other project outputs developed with ACFE Board funding must be submitted along with the final report.
* Agree to contribute to the development of case studies and/or promotional material on project achievements, if requested.
* Agree to participate in discussions and forums with Learn Local organisations leading ACFE Board funded projects, such as Capacity and Innovation Fund projects, of a similar nature as required.
* Agree to share any products developed with CAIF funding with other Learn Local providers.

# What are the reporting requirements?

There are two main reporting requirements for all successful projects:

* A PROGRESS REPORT (this report will be made available at a later date) will be expected half way through the project.  For projects that are greater than 12 months in duration, additional progress reports will be requested, on a 6-monthly basis.  For example, projects of 18 months’ duration will be asked to provide two progress reports over the life of the project and the final report.
* A FINAL REPORT (this report will be made available at a later date) including an acquittal of project funds will be expected at the conclusion of the project.  Once the final report is approved the final payment will be made at the next available payment cycle.

Sample templates for these reports have been established and are available on the Capacity and Innovation Fund page of the [DET website](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/learnlocal/Pages/acfeboardfund.aspx) during the application period.

The Project Manager will communicate with regional staff from the Training Participation Regional Support Unit, DET for the duration of the project, and notify staff of any issues or emerging risks relating to the project, including any issues related to project duration, in a timely manner.

# Identifying, monitoring and reporting on project outcomes

The ACFE Board is committed to funding projects that lead to tangible outcomes for learners and for Learn Local providers. Communicating what has been achieved through CAIF projects is of vital importance so that innovation and good practice can be shared across the Learn Local sector.

In order for the ACFE Board to know whether or not a funded project is on track or has been successful, Learn Local organisations applying for CAIF funds must clearly identify the intended outcomes and outputs of the project and how they will be measured.

Careful attention must be paid to the identification of proposed project outcomes and outputs in the application form along with the indicators to be used to measure progress from an identified baseline or starting point.

Providers should consider the following in developing these:

# Project Outcomes:

* What is the main objective or purpose of your project?
* What do you expect to have achieved by the time the project is finished? (e.g. for learners, for organisations, for the community)

# Project Outputs

* Apart from the CAIF FINAL PROJECT REPORT (this report will be made available at a later date) will you be developing resources as part of the project (e.g. program and pathway documents, seminars or forums, best practice guidelines, project learnings and insights, case studies and anecdotes, assessment tools, resources to support learning delivery, information on local learner needs). These will need to be submitted along with your CAIF FINAL PROJECT REPORT. (this report will be made available at a later date)

# Outcome Measures:

* How will you know whether your project achieved its objectives and desired outcomes?
* What will you use to measure progress in achieving your project objectives?
* How will you demonstrate to the ACFE Board and to others the difference your project has
* made (to learners, to the organisation etc.)?

# How will payments be made?

* The first payment will be made on execution of the project funding agreement at the commencement of the project (once Agreements have been signed by all parties).
* The final payment will be made based on the quarterly cycle of ACFE Board payments, and will be conditional on approval of the final report.
* Any additional payments determined as part of the funding agreement will be made based on the quarterly cycle of ACFE Board payments, depending on the achievement of agreed project milestones.

# What assistance is available to Learn Local Organisations in completing the Application Forms?

Training Participation Regional Support staff will be available to assist you in developing your project ideas and providing advice on ACFE Regional Council Plans, local priorities and policy contexts.

# How Do I Apply for Funding?

The CAIF 9 Guidelines & Application form are available on the CAIF website. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/learnlocal/Pages/acfeboardfund.aspx>.

# What are the assessment criteria for funding?

* Projects will be assessed by the ACFE Board Selection Panel against the criteria outlined below.
* All applications will be subject to the Value for Money criteria.
* A weighting has been applied to each of the Assessment Criteria to reflect their relative importance in the assessment of applications.

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| ASSESSMENT CRITERIA | Weighting |
| A completed project application submitted by the due date | 1 |
| Does not duplicate any current or completed CAIF projects and declares any other contributory funding to the project. | 1 |
| The application clearly demonstrates that the proposed project aligns with one or more of the CAIF 9 aims | 4 |
| The proposal clearly articulates how the project intends to support improved engagement, pathways and attainment for the identified priority learner cohort through high quality pre-accredited training | 5 |
| The project proposal is likely to make a contribution to innovation and improved practice in the delivery of pre –accredited training to priority learner cohorts | 5 |
| The proposed project outcomes, outputs and measures are realistic and commensurate with the requested funding and timelines | 3 |
| The project has a well-developed budget which represents value for money. | 3 |
| The benefits of the project have potential to be sustained beyond the end of the project | 3 |