

2025 Bush Kinder Grants Program Application Form

* Required

Information for Applicants

Thank you for your interest in the Department of Education's 2025 Bush Kinder Grants Program. This is the third of four annual grant rounds through which up to 150 grants of \$6,000 will be awarded to kindergarten services each year to establish or enhance a bush kinder program.

Kindergarten services applying for this grant must read and understand the Bush Kinder Grants Program Guidelines available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/bush-kinder-grants-program>.

Completing your application

Please note this application form will not save your progress prior to submission. A copy of the application form is available for you to view the required questions and help prepare your responses ahead of completing this form in one sitting via: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/Bush-Kinder-Grants-Program-application-form.pdf>. After submitting this form, be sure to select the 'save my response' prompt on the final screen to keep a record of your application.

If you would like to apply for a bush kinder grant at more than one service, you will need to complete an application for each service.

Submitting an application does not guarantee funding will be awarded to your kindergarten service.

Who can apply?

Your organisation can apply to the Bush Kinder Grants Program if your kindergarten service:

- is currently funded to deliver a kindergarten program in Victoria
- has a current National Quality Standard (NQS) rating (unless not in scope to hold an NQS rating)
- has undertaken (or made significant progress towards) necessary administrative and curriculum planning and stakeholder engagement to embed a bush kinder program into the existing curriculum, in line with the VEYLDF commencing by Term 2, 2026, or already operates a bush kinder program in line with the VEYLDF: <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-learning-development-framework-veylf>.
- has endorsement from the approved provider, nominated supervisor and kindergarten teaching team to commence or continue a bush kinder program, and
- meets their obligations under the Education and Care Services National Regulations (<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>) with no significant compliance issues or incidents outstanding with the Department of Education.
- Has not been a previous recipient of funding under the Bush Kinder Grants Program.

Applications are due by 11.45pm, 18 September 2025

Privacy collection notice

The Department of Education is collecting this information for processing and assessing applications for the 2025 Bush Kinder Grants Program. Information collected will be dealt with in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973 (Vic) and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic).

Your personal information may be used to contact you about this application and may otherwise be used and disclosed as required by law.

For more information about how the department handles your personal information, and how you may access it, please contact the department's Privacy team on privacy@education.vic.gov.au or see the department's Privacy Policy: <https://www.vic.gov.au/department-of-education-privacy-policy>.

Personal information won't be used for any other purpose than as described above or shared with any third parties.

Applicant contact details

Please provide contact information for the person completing this application form, as well as a secondary contact point who may be contacted if the Department requires further information in order to assess your application.

1. Applicant primary contact person *

First name

Enter your answer

2. Last name *

Enter your answer

3. Position *

Your employment role

Enter your answer

4. Mobile Phone Number *

Must be an Australian phone number

Enter your answer

5. Email *

Must be a current email address

Please enter an email

Applicant alternate contact person

6. First name *

Enter your answer

7. Last name *

Enter your answer

8. Position *

Your employment role

Enter your answer

9. Mobile Phone Number *

Must be an Australian phone number

Enter your answer

10. Email *

Must be a current email address

Please enter an email

Kindergarten Service Details

Please enter the details of the kindergarten service seeking this grant to support the establishment or enhancement of their bush kinder program.

11. Approved Provider Number *

Provider Approval Number (i.e. PR-xxxxxxx) as provided by the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). You can obtain the number from the national register on the ACECQA website, see <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/national-registers>

Enter your answer

12. Approved Provider Name *

This should match the approved provider trading name from the national register on the ACECQA website, see <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-registers>

Enter your answer

13. Service Approval Number: *

Service Approval Number (i.e. SE-xxxxxxx) as provided by the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). You can obtain the number from the national register on the ACECQA website, see <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-registers>

Enter your answer

14. Service Trading Name: *

This should match the service trading name from the national register on the ACECQA website, see <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-registers>

Enter your answer

15. Service's current National Quality Standard (NQS) overall rating *

Please note services that are Provisional-Not Yet Assessed are ineligible to apply

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Exceeding National Quality Standard
- ☐ Meeting the National Quality Standard
- ☐ Working Towards National Quality Standard
- ☐ Significant Improvement Required
- ☐ N/A as managed under Children's Services Act

16. Does your service deliver a Victorian Government state-funded kindergarten program (for three or four-year-old children)? *

Applicants must be currently funded to deliver a kindergarten program in Victoria in order to be eligible to apply

☐ Yes

☐ No

17. Is your service not-for-profit? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

18. Has your service been a previous recipient of a bush kinder grant? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Bush Kinder Program Details

19. Does your service currently deliver a bush kinder program to kindergarten children? *

If your program is in a trial/pilot period, answer no to this question.

☐ Yes

☐ No

20. Will bush kinder be part of your kindergarten service's program delivery by the start of Term 2, 2026? *

If your answer is no, consider applying for future rounds, or as per the Guidelines applicants agree to have their program delivery by the start of Term 2, 2026.

☐ Yes

☐ No

21. Have off-site options been considered and deemed not viable? *

Applications for on-site bush kinder programs must only be submitted in cases where off-site options have been considered and are not viable in the kindergarten service's specific circumstances. An off-site program may be considered unviable based on there being, for example: no suitable/available off-site location within reasonable distance of the service, and/or accessibility issues that cannot be overcome for identified off-site locations.

☐ Yes

☐ No

22. Where will (or does) your bush kinder program operate from? *

The off-site natural spaces suited to bush kinder programs include places such as metropolitan parks, regional parks, local bushland, local beaches and visitor sites within national and state parks.

Applications for on-site bush kinder programs must only be submitted in cases where off-site options have been considered and are not viable in the kindergarten service's specific circumstances. Off-site programs will be given priority for grant funding in the event the grants program is oversubscribed. Please refer to the Bush Kinder Grants Program Guidelines: <https://www.vic.gov.au/bush-kinder-grants-program>

☐ Off-site location

☐ On-site at the kindergarten premises

23. Has relevant stakeholder engagement and approval been undertaken? *

Applications for off-site bush kinder programs must confirm that the off-site location was selected with appropriate kindergarten community engagement and engagement with the relevant authorities for site use (i.e. Parks Victoria / local council / Traditional Owners / other land owners must be consulted / engaged / give approval where necessary).

☐ Yes

☐ No

Key Selection Criteria

You must provide a written response to the **2 criteria** below in order for your application to be assessed. Please take advantage of the full word count of 350 words for each criteria.

Please ensure that your answers are:

- clear and concise
- factually correct
- underpinned by the VEYLDF (<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-learning-development-framework-veyldf>)
- directly relevant to this application.

24. **1. Demonstrate how your kindergarten service plans to establish (or enhance) and embed bush kinder/nature play into your existing kindergarten program. ***

Please outline in no more than 350 words:

- your service's motivation for delivering a bush kinder program and explain how it aligns with your service's philosophy and connects with your existing educational program to improve children's outcomes as outlined in the VEYLDF (<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-learning-development-framework-veyldf>)
- the main policies and plans you have in place to operate the bush kinder/nature play program and ensure it operates safely and in line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations (<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>)

Please enter at most 2100 characters

25. **2. Demonstrate how your service has collaborated with stakeholders to determine the location of your bush kinder/nature play program and ensure its success. ***

Please outline in no more than 350 words:

- who you have engaged with to determine a suitable location for your bush kinder/ nature play program
- how families have been or will be involved in / informed of your service's plan for establishing a bush kinder/nature play program
- whether staff and management/leadership have prepared for and are supportive of the program.

Please enter at most 2100 characters

Attestations and Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

Attestations

26. To support your application for the Bush Kinder Grants Program, please confirm the following on behalf of your kindergarten service: *

Please select 4 options.

- ☐ The kindergarten service has, or will have in place, appropriate VEYLDF-aligned curriculum, risk management, inclusion and other plans as appropriate, no later than the commencement of the bush kinder program
- ☐ The kindergarten service can meet the regulatory requirements related to delivering a bush kinder program including risk assessments for all excursions and regular outings (regulation 100 and 101)
- ☐ The kindergarten service can meet compliance requirements as outlined under 'Compliance Requirements' in the Guidelines, and
- ☐ The kindergarten service management (approved provider, nominated supervisor and kindergarten teaching team) is supportive of bush kinder, and commits to continuing a bush kinder program into the future as part of its three and/or four-year-old kindergarten program offering, beyond the term of the grant funding.

27. Terms and Conditions

By submitting an application:

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- kindergarten services accept and agree to:
 - the requirements outlined in the Bush Kinder Grants Program Guidelines: <https://www.vic.gov.au/bush-kinder-grants-program>
 - commencing or continuing delivery of their bush kinder program no later than the start of Term 2, 2026,
 - spending the grant funding between December 2025 and December 2026, and
 - completing an acquittal process by no later than January 2027
- kindergarten services acknowledge that, should they be successful:
 - no additional grant funding will be allocated for cost overruns (kindergarten services and/or approved providers must cover any additional costs),
 - the kindergarten service will not be eligible to apply to the Bush Kinder Grants Program in a future grant round within the four-year funding period,
 - the delivery of the bush kinder program, and the appropriateness of equipment/ items purchased and/or services/time-release using the grant funding is entirely the responsibility of the kindergarten service and approved provider, and the Department of Education bears no responsibility whatsoever by virtue of having allocated grant funding to a successful applicant (kindergarten service) to the Bush Kinder Grants Program,
 - kindergarten service details of successful applicants will be retained on an internal-to-government departmental register of Victorian funded kindergarten services providing bush kinder programs, and
- kindergarten services may be contacted in future by the Department of Education in relation to:
 - delivery of their bush kinder program, and/or
 - evaluation of the Bush Kinder Grants Program.

Please select 2 options.

- ☐ I am an authorised representative of the kindergarten service listed in this application
- ☐ I understand, accept and agree to the above terms and conditions on behalf of the kindergarten service

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