



BUILDING BLOCKS GRANTS  
2020 CAPACITY BUILDING  
STREAM GUIDELINES



## Minister's Foreword

Learning doesn't start at school – it starts at birth.

Which is why the State Government is reforming early learning by funding an extra year of kindergarten for every Victorian child. This is where we need to continue building the Education State, and *Building Blocks* is a vital part of that foundation.

We know that two years are better than one when it comes to early learning – children who start kinder at the age of three, gain academic and social benefits that last into their school years and beyond.

But we also know that most Victorian three-year-olds are denied these benefits, because they cannot access early learning. Most kindergartens do not have the space or resources to offer it. Where it is available, it is too expensive for many families to afford. Until now, across Australia, governments have only funded kindergarten for children at the age of four.

We are about to change that in Victoria.

From 2022, every three-year-old will have access to at least five hours of kindergarten a week. That increases to 15 hours by 2029. This is a landmark education reform to support Victorian kids to learn, explore and get the best start in life. This means that an extra year of play-based learning, led by a qualified teacher, will be added to Victorian children's education.

It also requires record long-term funding commitments and new partnerships with local government and early learning providers. We will work closely with local governments across Victoria to effectively plan and provide enough space for every three-year-old by 2029.

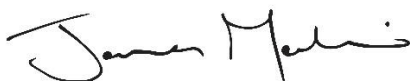
We have committed to investing almost \$5 billion over this decade to deliver this important reform. We are effectively doubling the number of children benefitting from early learning, so about a third of that investment will help build and expand early-learning facilities so they have the space and access to attend three-year-old kindergarten.

This is the largest investment in early-years infrastructure in Victoria's history, and *Building Blocks* will be key in supporting this massive expansion to ensure every child has access to two years of high-quality kindergarten.

It replaces previous schemes for funding capital improvements and making them more inclusive. *Building Blocks* will retain those goals, and be better equipped to grow the capacity needed for our reforms and the increasing demand for more kindergarten places for four-year-olds.

*Building Blocks* is also an opportunity for us to work closely with local government to deliver more, and better integrated, family and community services. It offers incentives for developing early learning centres as one-stop hubs for kindergarten, day care, maternal and child health services, speech pathology, community meeting spaces and adult education.

I encourage all eligible organisations to embrace the life-changing potential of these reforms and consider applying for these grants. I look forward to seeing the exciting proposals and new partnerships they generate.



The Hon James Merlino MP  
Deputy Premier of Victoria  
Minister for Education



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## BUILDING BLOCKS OBJECTIVES

From 2020 *Building Blocks* will replace the Children's Facilities Capital Program and the Inclusive Kindergartens Facilities Program, strengthening our commitment to continue to fund and support the provision of high-quality early years programs for Victorian children and their families.

*Building Blocks* offers grants to co-contribute to kindergarten infrastructure and is the program which will be critical to ensure the success of the roll out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten across the State. It will also support the sector to meet ongoing growth in demand for Four-Year-old Kindergarten. *Building Blocks* will feature:

- significant increases to maximum State grant contributions, on top of those offered in 2019
- greater flexibility for the sector to engage with the grants process at any point in the year, with multiple assessments and announcements planned each year; and
- new delivery options, including access to modular kindergarten facilities, to assist in reducing costs, timelines and project management requirements for the roll-out of quality kindergarten infrastructure.

The *Building Blocks* program consists of:

- kindergartens on existing school sites
- modular kindergarten facilities
- capacity building grants stream
- improvement grants stream and
- inclusion grants stream.

### Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Infrastructure Funding Streams

Building Blocks program				
<b>KINDERGARTENS ON SCHOOL SITES</b> Funding for new kindergartens on existing and new school sites.  The government has committed to ensuring that there is a kindergarten onsite or next door to every new government primary school that opens from 2021.	<b>MODULAR KINDERGARTEN FACILITIES</b> High-quality and sustainable modular kindergarten facilities available through capital funding.  These can be flexibly deployed in partnership with LGAs or other providers.	<b>CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS STREAM</b> Grants for new and expanded early learning facilities that create capacity.	<b>IMPROVEMENT GRANTS STREAM</b> Grants for upgrades and minor expansions of existing facilities.  Investment in IT equipment.	<b>INCLUSION GRANTS STREAM</b> Upgrades to existing facilities to create a safe and inclusive environment for all children.  Equipment to create a safe and inclusive environment for all children.
		Expansions	Minor infrastructure	Buildings and playgrounds
		New Early Learning Facilities	Early Learning Facility Upgrade	Equipment
		Modular kindergarten facilities	IT	
		Integrated Children's Centres		

Applications to the capacity building stream must demonstrate how the project will build and create additional infrastructure capacity for Three and Four-Year-Old funded Kindergarten through the creation of new or the expansion of existing infrastructure.

Making the best use of existing facilities and resources can help many services to offer more places to local families. Before progressing with an infrastructure solution, consider how you can maximise your enrolments and make even better use of your existing facilities.

Four categories of grants can be applied for and will be detailed throughout these guidelines:

- integrated children's centre



- new early learning facility
- modular kindergarten facility and
- expansions.

Through these grant categories, the *Building Blocks* capacity building stream will:

- create additional infrastructure capacity for funded Three and/or Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
- promote integrated service delivery, so families can access early childhood education and care, health and development and family services at one location
- improve access to local and responsive early childhood services for children from vulnerable and/or disadvantaged families and
- establish early childhood infrastructure on or near school sites.

As announced in March 2020, from 2021 the capacity building stream will link to two new features of the *Building Blocks* approach – Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plans and Building Blocks Partnerships.

### Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plans

Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plans (KISPs) are a new, consistent, state-wide planning framework designed to support local government planning to meet increased demand for kindergarten places generated as a result of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten.

While a KISP is not a funding document and would not commit any party to funding specific projects, it is expected that future investment requests through *Building Blocks* and decisions for any local government or not-for-profit projects would align with the relevant KISP.

While the KISP process will inform future investment decisions, we know some work to create new and expanded kindergarten infrastructure can't wait. The Department of Education and Training is starting work immediately with local governments and other partners on infrastructure required for 2021 and 2022 and to support this, the first round of *Building Blocks* grants is now open.

### Building Blocks Partnerships

*Building Blocks* Partnerships are a new initiative to form strategic partnerships with kindergarten providers to deliver multiple projects, to meet demand over the long-term. We will work with local councils and not for profit organisations to provide longer-term certainty of investment, encourage innovation and economies of scale, and deliver the increased capacity we need.

*Building Blocks* Partnerships will be a critical means of working with large partners, particularly local governments to build large numbers of facilities over time. The discussions to establish these partnerships will start from mid-2020.

The improvement and inclusion streams will continue to provide support for key programs previously supported by the Children's Facilities Capital Program and Inclusive Kindergartens Facilities Program and include:

- improvement: upgrades to early learning facilities, minor improvement works and Information Technology (IT) and
- inclusion:
  - buildings and playgrounds: funding to support upgrades to existing kindergarten facilities that promote inclusive early childhood environments and
  - equipment: funding support for the purchase of inclusive equipment.

Further information will be communicated as it becomes available.

### WHAT TYPE OF GRANT CAN I APPLY FOR?

Your project must be for a facility in Victoria that is, or will be, licensed to provide a funded Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program and **must** offer or **intend** to offer both programs. The



*Building Blocks* capacity building stream offers a number of grant categories that must increase capacity at new or existing funded kindergarten services. *Building Blocks* offers grants on a co-contribution basis, and all applications are expected to contribute a percentage of the total project cost.

## INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRE

### Purpose of Grant

Integrated Children's Centres are key hubs for the community, bringing together a range of professional services working together to deliver education, care, health and support services to children and their families. They can provide a focal point for new communities in growth areas, but are equally valuable in improving the accessibility, quality and integration of early childhood services in established metropolitan and regional areas.

### Project Requirements

Integrated Children's Centres funded through *Building Blocks* must provide or intend to provide:

- at least 66 licenced places, based on two rooms providing a funded kindergarten program for three- and four-year-old children. This can be sessional and/or integrated with long day care
- long day care (unless there is no projected demand in the local area)
- maternal and child health services
- allied health services for early years (e.g. early childhood intervention services)
- family services
- flexible, multi-purpose spaces and other services that meet the needs of the local community, including one or more of the following services:
  - supported playgroups or community parent-led playgroups
  - parenting groups or programs
  - occasional care
  - family day care program coordination
  - counselling services
  - community meeting spaces
  - outside school hours care
  - adult education programs.

### Funding available

Eligible organisations can apply for up to **\$2 million** per grant (GST exclusive).

Funding levels are based on proposed services containing two 33 place kindergarten rooms. Larger services (i.e. providing additional 33 place kindergarten rooms) may be eligible for additional funding beyond the specified amounts. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of relevant factors including, but not limited to, demonstrated local demand, the proposed benefits of a larger service, and service accessibility. Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team to discuss your options.

We will only consider project costs relating to the early childhood infrastructure element of an Integrated Children's Centre. For example, if a proposed project also includes a library or sport and recreation facilities then the costs for these elements cannot be included in the application.



## Project Completion

Integrated Children's Centres **must** be completed and acquitted within **24 months** of the funding being announced by the Minister for Education. Funding agreements must be signed by an authorised officer in the organisation no later than **four weeks** after receipt.

Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team in respect to the above timeline. If you don't think the project will be able to be delivered in this time, you may wish to consider applying in a subsequent round.

## NEW EARLY LEARNING FACILITY

### Purpose of Grant

New Early Learning Facilities provide high quality early learning programs, including a funded kindergarten program for three and four-year-old children. The location and design of new early learning facilities should respond to the needs of local families and support partnerships with other local services for children and families.

### Project Requirement

New Early Learning Facilities funded through *Building Blocks* must provide or intend to provide:

- at least 66 licenced places, based on two rooms providing a funded kindergarten program for three and four-year-old children. This can be sessional and/or integrated with long day care
- must be a completely new building and cannot be an extension or refurbishment of an existing facility
- proposals may also support the delivery of other services, including long day care, Maternal and Child Health Services, or playgroups.

### Funding available

Eligible organisations can apply for up to **\$1,500,000** per grant (GST exclusive).

Funding levels are based on proposed services containing two 33 place kindergarten rooms. Larger services (i.e. providing additional 33 place kindergarten rooms) may be eligible for additional funding beyond the specified amounts. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of relevant factors including, but not limited to, demonstrated local demand, the proposed benefits of a larger service, and service accessibility. Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team to discuss your options.

A delivery option available for new early learning facilities is to utilise modular kindergarten facilities (see Modular Kindergarten Facilities section below).

### Project Completion

New Early Learning Facilities **must** be completed and acquitted within **18 months** of the funding being announced by the Minister for Education. Funding agreements must be signed by an authorised officer in the organisation no later than **four weeks** after receipt.

Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team in respect to the above timeline. If you don't think the project will be able to be delivered in this time, you may wish to consider applying in a subsequent round.





## MODULAR KINDERGARTEN FACILITIES

### Purpose of Grant

Modular Kindergarten Facilities can be used to rapidly deliver high-quality kindergarten infrastructure in partnership with local governments or other providers. Modular kindergartens are architect-designed facilities, which can be produced off-site, and delivered on-site in a matter of months. It can reduce timeline and risks associated with traditional design and construction processes.

Modular Kindergarten Facilities can be located on Council-owned or Department of Education and Training owned land.

### Project Requirements

Modular kindergarten facilities funded through *Building Blocks* must provide or intend to provide:

- at least 33 licenced places, based on a one-room modular kindergarten facility providing a funded kindergarten program for three and four-year-old children. This can be sessional and/or integrated with long day care
- proposals may also support the delivery of other services, including long day care, Maternal and Child Health Services, or playgroups.

### Funding available

Eligible organisations can apply for grants for the manufacture, delivery and installation of the modular kindergarten facility. The balance of grant funding can be utilised for landscaping, including playground and equipment. Organisations can apply for up to:

- \$750,000 for a **one-room** (33 licenced places) modular kindergarten facility
- \$1.5million for a **two-room** (66 licenced places) modular kindergarten facility

Applicants will be responsible for the balance of project costs (i.e. furnishing, car parking).

One-room modular kindergarten facilities will be considered for use where appropriate (i.e. where local population and demand is low, or where required for an expansion).

Larger services (i.e. providing additional 33 place kindergarten rooms) may be eligible for additional State funding beyond the specified amounts. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of relevant factors including, but not limited to, demonstrated local demand, the proposed benefits of a larger service, and service accessibility.

Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants team to discuss your options.

### Project Completion

Given that modular kindergarten facilities will be delivered in partnership between the applicant and the Department of Education and Training project completion timelines will be agreed on a case by case basis, but are expected to be on average within **12 months** of the funding being announced by the Minister for Education. Funding agreements must be signed by an authorised officer in the organisation no later than **four weeks** after receipt.





## EXPANSION GRANT

### Purpose of Grant

Expansion grants increase the licenced places of existing facilities that are already approved to provide a funded kindergarten program for three and four-year-old children.

### Project Requirements

Expansion grants must provide or intend to provide an increase to licenced places at existing facilities to deliver funded kindergarten programs for three and four-year-old children.

### Funding available

Eligible organisations can apply for up to **\$600,000** per grant (GST exclusive).

For applications seeking this maximum funding contribution, it is expected that the expansion project will increase licenced places by 22. For projects seeking a smaller increase to licenced places, the maximum grant allocation may be reduced.

The funding level for an expansion is based on proposed services expanding to create a minimum of 22 licenced places. Larger expansions which incur higher costs may be eligible for additional funding beyond the specified amounts. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of relevant factors including, but not limited to, demonstrated local demand, the proposed benefits of a larger service, and service accessibility. Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team to discuss your options.

### Project Completion

Expansion projects must be completed and acquitted within **12 months** of the funding agreement being announced by the Minister for Education. Funding agreements must be signed by an authorised officer in the organisation no later than **four weeks** after receipt.

Prior to submitting your application, please speak to the VSBA Early Childhood Grants Team in respects to the above timeline. If you don't think the project will be able to be delivered in this time, you may wish to consider applying in a subsequent round.



## WHAT CAN (AND CANNOT) BE FUNDED?

There are items that you can and cannot include in project cost estimates supplied with your capacity building stream application. The following table lists what the Department will and won't regard when considering applications.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED	WHAT CANNOT BE FUNDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project management costs</li> <li>planning and design costs</li> <li>site preparation, including clearing or demolition (if the project will be on DET land please contact VSBA before applying to confirm how these costs can be funded)</li> <li>construction and commissioning</li> <li>landscaping and car parking</li> <li>fixed fittings and fixed equipment</li> <li>removal of contaminants on project sites (e.g. asbestos/arsenic), pending it is within scope of the State's financial contribution to the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>site acquisition and lease costs</li> <li>routine or cyclical maintenance works</li> <li>purchase of cars, buses and other vehicles</li> <li>ongoing administration or operational costs</li> <li>staff salaries and training</li> <li>toys, portable equipment and consumables</li> <li>cosmetic upgrades that do not increase capacity</li> <li>removal of contaminants on projects sites (e.g. asbestos/arsenic), following announcement of the grant</li> <li>additional funding due to project cost overruns.</li> </ul>

The *Building Blocks* capacity building stream will not fund projects that:

- do not create kindergarten capacity
- are not at facilities which offer (or intending to offer) both Three and Four-Year-Old funded Kindergarten programs
- are located outside Victoria
- do not align with the program objectives
- do not meet the requirements outlined in these guidelines
- do not meet the assessment criteria
- have already started or been completed (i.e. retrospective funding)
- are further stages of existing or completed projects.

## WHO CAN APPLY?

Your organisation can apply if it is one of the following:

- a Victorian Local Government Area (Council)
- a not-for-profit community organisation that is a legal entity (for example an incorporated association, incorporated cooperative or Indigenous corporation)
- a Victorian government school
- a Victorian non-government school registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority or Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

**For-profit organisations cannot apply** for any grant streams within *Building Blocks*.



## AUSPICE ARRANGEMENTS

Not-for-profit community organisations in the process of becoming incorporated, or those without capacity to manage the funding, may arrange for an eligible organisation to apply on their behalf. This is known as an 'auspice' arrangement.

We directly fund the auspice organisation, and they agree to take the full legal and financial responsibility for the project. You can find more information about auspicings arrangements at [www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicings](http://www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicings).

If you would like to negotiate an auspice arrangement, you are responsible for identifying an auspice organisation and working with them to prepare the application. The Department will not make auspicings arrangements on your behalf.

**Auspice arrangements cannot be used by for-profit organisations to apply for any grant streams within *Building Blocks*.**

## ASSESSMENT

Once the closing date for applications has passed, the Department will:

- check to confirm that applications meet the eligibility requirements
- assess all eligible applications against the assessment criteria and
- convene an assessment panel to oversee recommendations and manage any conflicts of interest.

The Department may also undertake further project cost assessment in instances where project costs are particularly complex or clarification is required.

Following this process, the Department will provide its recommendation to the Minister for Education for final approval of successful grants. The Minister reserves the right to provide strategic investment to projects.

### Assessment Criteria

Funding recommendations will be based on the extent you can demonstrate that your project addresses the following assessment criteria. These are weighted according to the specified percentages. The weightings align with *Building Blocks* capacity building stream objectives:

- delivers a quality kindergarten program that responds to projected demand for funded kindergarten places (25%);
- the proposed project will support the integrated delivery of early childhood and related family services and / or the establishment of partnership arrangements with other services (12.5%)
- improves access to high quality early childhood services for the local community (12.5%)
- the proposed project is co-located with a government school or supports the establishment of other connections with local schools (12.5%)
- the proposed project facilitates access for children of all abilities (12.5%)
- the proposed project promotes environmental sustainability, and includes environmentally sustainable features, for example in design or construction (12.5%)
- confirmation the project is ready to commence construction (12.5%).

These criteria reflect the objectives of *Building Blocks* capacity building stream funding and relate to both the construction of the facility and operation of the service.

Easy to use reference fact sheets are available for more information relating to these criteria and tips to support you address these when preparing your application.



### Past performance

We will review your past performance and assess whether this is likely to have an impact on successful delivery of your project. This will include considering whether you have:

- taken appropriate steps to deliver previous projects funded through the Children's Facility Capital program within appropriate timeframes
- overdue projects funded by the Department and whether extensions have been requested and approved and/or
- completed projects funded by the Department and whether you have submitted all documentation required to acquit the grant funding, including regular monthly reporting and acquittal within the contracted time frame
- Proposed an operator of the service with a record of delivering a quality kindergarten program, particularly in the same community or area as the project.

Poor performance against these factors may result in projects not being recommended for funding or funding withdrawal.

### FUNDING CONDITIONS

#### Early childhood facilities funded through *Building Blocks* must:

- be operated by an organisation that is licenced to provide funded kindergarten services in Victoria
- offer or intend to offer a funded three and four-year-old kindergarten program for children
- operate as a kindergarten service for at least 10 years from when the project is completed.

To remain eligible for funding, you must **not** enter into a contract or commence any works proposed in your application before we inform you of the application outcome.

Organisations that receive a grant must:

- agree to the requirements outlined in these guidelines. Failure to do so may result in funding being withheld
- enter into a formal Common Funding Agreement with the Department
- follow the *Building Blocks* Acknowledgement and Publicity Guidelines, including liaising with the Department on events such as sod turns and openings, and erecting signage for projects
- submit an acquittal form and the required supporting evidence for approval by the Department upon completion of the project
- successful applicants for a Modular Kindergarten Facility may be required to enter a peppercorn lease with the Department of Education and Training
- hold milestone events on request from the Department of Education and Training, for example a sod turn, construction site tour or official opening
- agree that no additional state funding will be allocated to the proposed project and if additional costs arise they must be met by the applicant.

We encourage you to review the Acknowledgement and Publicity Guidelines, Common Funding Agreement schedule template and standard terms and conditions, and the example monthly progress report before submitting your application.

These documents will clarify your obligations for receiving *Building Blocks* funding. They are available at <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/> under guidelines and forms.

We will only vary the conditions of the standard funding agreement in exceptional circumstances. Using the standard Victorian Common Funding Agreement should minimise the need for legal advice; however, applicants pay any legal costs they incur in relation to the funding agreement (these costs may be budgeted into the total project cost and funded through the grant).



All projects are expected to adhere to relevant building guidelines and regulations:

<https://www.business.gov.au/planning/templates-and-tools/industry-factsheets/national-construction-code>

Additional conditions for projects involving government school sites are outlined in Section 12 of these guidelines. Section 3 of the VSBA's Building Quality Standards Handbook also includes information that, while primarily designed for schools, may assist with design of your project: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/infrastructure/BuildingQualStandHdbk%202018.pdf>

## NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS

The Betrayal of Trust Report found that survivors of institutional child abuse were sometimes unable to identify an appropriate legal entity to sue.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse also recommended that governments consider requiring organisations they fund to be insured against child abuse.

**From 1 July 2019**, non-government organisations funded by the Victorian Government to deliver services to children will be required, as a condition of funding to be:

- **incorporated separate** legal entities that can be sued in their own right in child abuse proceedings and
- **appropriately insured** against child abuse.

The new requirements will improve the ability of child abuse survivors to bring a legal claim for compensation and ensure that successful claims can be paid.

## LOCAL JOBS FIRST

The Local Jobs First Policy issued under the *Local Jobs First Act 2003* supports businesses and workers by ensuring that small and medium size enterprises are given a full and fair opportunity to compete for both large and small government contracts, helping to create job opportunities, including for apprentices, trainees and cadets. The LJF Policy is implemented by Victorian Government departments and agencies to help drive local industry development.

The LJF Policy applies to grant projects where the value of the grant is above the threshold values of:

- \$3 million or more in metropolitan Melbourne and
- \$1 million or more in regional Victoria or
- any grant for a project valued at less than \$3 million that the Minister has declared to be a significant project.

Projects funded through *Building Blocks* capacity building stream will have to comply with the Local Jobs First Policy.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER FUNDS

There are a number of other grant programs that provide funding for the development of early childhood facilities and services. VSBA need to be advised of other funding applications for your project. We reserve the right to consider grant applications made for other programs, offered by the Department of Education or other government departments, and to submit capacity building stream applications to other Department agency led grant programs for consideration for funding under those programs where appropriate.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

A qualified and experienced project manager must be identified at the time of application and appointed within four weeks of the funding announcement.



The name and contact details (email, telephone number, including mobile) of the proposed project manager must be included in the application. The project manager must be appointed before the Common Funding Agreement can be executed.

Failure to follow these requirements regarding a project manager could ultimately result in the Department recommending to the Minister for Education to withdraw the funding commitment.

## PROJECT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

As a condition of grant funding, successful applicants must comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements, including:

- monthly status reports through an online reporting system to provide an update on progress, updating proposed, forecast and actual dates for project milestones, flagging risks and issues, and providing the required evidence when payment milestones have been met
- advising the Department in advance of key milestones including architect appointment, design completion, sod turn and construction completion and providing opportunities for public communication of these milestones
- advising the Department of scope changes (relating to time, cost and project scope) by completing and submitting a variation form via the online reporting system
- site inspections, meetings and teleconferences with Department staff or representatives if required and
- production of building contracts, receipts and/or invoices when requested.

## PROJECT EXTENSIONS

Recipients must contact the Department immediately if they require a project extension. Applicants will be required to complete a variation form providing detailed evidence that explains the reason for the delay and demonstrates that the project will be completed within the additional time requested.

Project extensions are not guaranteed to be approved. Excessive delays may ultimately result in the Department recommending to the Minister to withdraw the funding commitment.

## SERVICE APPROVALS

For all grants provided under the capacity building stream, you will need to obtain approval for the service before completing the project acquittal. Notifications and applications may be submitted via the National Quality Agenda IT system at <https://public.nqaits.acecqa.gov.au>. Applications may take some time to consider and approve.

Further information is available from the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) or by contacting the Department's Quality Assessment and Regulation Division on 1300 307 415 or by emailing [licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au).

## ACQUITTAL REQUIREMENTS

All successful applicants are required to complete the following requirements and upload the following information into the Department reporting system to complete their acquittal:

- certificate of final completion
- certificate of occupancy
- certified project expenditure list on letterhead and signed by an authorised registered accountant
- the Department's acquittal document, completed, signed and dated by two authorised representatives
- letter of service approval including licenced places
- photos of completed project.



## HOW TO APPLY

Applications for *Building Blocks* capacity building stream open 12 March 2020 and will be open all year round. Applications submitted by:

- midnight 15 May will be announced in August 2020
- midnight 31 July will be announced in November 2020.

Application forms can be accessed online at <https://vsba.smartygrants.com.au/>. Applicants must be registered to use the SmartyGrants application system. Registration is a free and straightforward process.

For assistance with the online application system, please contact the Smarty Grants Support Desk by phone on (03) 9320 6888 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday or email [service@smartygrants.com.au](mailto:service@smartygrants.com.au). You can also find a help guide and Frequently Asked Questions at <http://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/>

All sections must be completed, and the application form submitted to be considered for funding. Changes can be made to an application any time until it is submitted.

The Department will not consider late applications.

## PROJECTS ON DET LAND

If you propose to build or upgrade a facility on DET land, you must contact the VSBA Early Childhood grants team as early as possible during the development of your proposal to discuss the approach to land and project delivery, by phone on (03) 7022 2652 or via email [building.blocks@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:building.blocks@edumail.vic.gov.au).

Applications for projects on DET land must include a completed Land Use Proposal Form and must enter into a lease agreement with DET in addition to their Common Funding Agreement. Further information on these requirements can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions, available on the DET website at <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/>





## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

The grants offered under the capacity building stream are highly competitive and organisations need to ensure that their applications include clear and convincing supporting documentation to increase the chances of being successful.

**All applicants** are required to provide the following:

- ✓ considered responses to the selection criteria, that demonstrates how the project will meet these.
- ✓ authorised written confirmation of co-contribution amounts from the applicant and all other funding organisations including contributions from the Federal Government, Victorian Government, local government or other sources.
- ✓ a cost plan prepared by a licensed quantity surveyor.
- ✓ a soil assessment report, from a qualified Soil Hygienist.
- ✓ professional schematic design drawings.
- ✓ a site plan to illustrate what parts of the land or building will be changed by your project.
- ✓ a project plan to support the dates nominated in the application for stages of the project.
- ✓ if your project will directly affect service providers currently operating at the facility or providers of services in the area that would be relocated to the new facility, evidence that you have consulted with these providers such as letters of support or documented outcomes of consultation and engagement.

If you are a **not-for-profit** or a **non-government school** you are also required to provide the following:

- ✓ evidence of not-for-profit status (such as a copy of your Australian Business Number, registration as a not-for-profit, certificate of registration as charity, or a certificate of registration as an incorporated association).
- ✓ a signed certified accountant's confirmation of the applicant's last two years financial statements as evidence of financial viability.
- ✓ a letter of support for this project from the CEO of the Local Government Area (or authorised delegate), dated within three months of your application closing date.
- ✓ if an auspice arrangement is proposed, written confirmation from the auspicating party is required.

### Required evidence

The type of evidence required depends on who owns the land. Evidence of the following must be provided:

- ✓ building ownership.
- ✓ authorisation to build on the site.
- ✓ intention to operate a facility for **at least 10 years after completing the project**.
- ✓ land ownership.
  - if **you** own the land, you can provide a copy of the land title, LANDATA documents or council rates notice showing your organisation's name and the service address.
  - if the **local government** or a **third party** own the land, you must provide a copy of the title with project address and owners name as well as the current lease with an end date at least 10 years after completing the project.
    - i) If the current lease will end earlier than 10 years from the date that the Common Funding Agreement is signed, the applicant will need to provide a letter from the land owner stating they intend to allow the facility to operate as a kindergarten for at least 10 years after completing the project.



- ii) signed, written approval (on letterhead of the organisation) from the land owner to undertake the works is also required.
- Where the land owner is not the building owner the applicant needs to provide evidence of:
  - i) title of building ownership;
  - ii) permission to undertake works; and
  - iii) Authorisation for the applicant to use the building to operate a kindergarten for 10 years after completing the project.

If the land is owned by DET, you should complete a Land Use Proposal Form. The form can be found at: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/>

### FURTHER INFORMATION

We encourage applicants to read the Frequently Asked Questions available on the DET website at: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/>

For further information regarding eligibility, program requirements and assessment criteria, please contact the VSBA Early Childhood Grants team by phone on (03) 7022 2652 or email [building.blocks@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:building.blocks@edumail.vic.gov.au).

Prospective applicants are also encouraged to discuss their project with the Early Childhood Quality Participation and Access Manager in their area. Full DET regional office contact details are available online at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx>.

For further information regarding three-year-old kindergarten reform please visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/kinder>.