frequently asked questions
Refubishment and minor works program – 2021

Round 2

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### Program overview

#### What is the Refurbishment and Minor Refurbishment and Minor Program?

Refurbishment and Minor Works is a new funding program run by the Victorian Government to help improve the learning environments, condition and character of Victorian kindergartens.

Applications for round 1 of the Program closed in March 2021.

Round 2 applications are open until Friday 21 May 2021.

It is a stand-alone program that complements the existing *Building Blocks* program.

The program funds minor and refurbishment works, of early childhood facilities.

#### Who runs the grant program?

The Refurbishment and Minor Works Program is administered by the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA).

The VSBA is a division of the Department of Education and Training established in 2016 to oversee the design and construction of new schools and early childhood centres, as well as the modernisation and upgrade of existing ones. For more information on the VSBA, visit [our website](https://www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx).

Successful grant applications are formally approved by the Minister for Early Childhood.

#### How do I apply for a Refurbishment and Minor Works grant?

The VSBA uses an online application system to accept grant applications to the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program.

You can create and submit your application at [vsba.smartygrants.com.au](https://vsba.smartygrants.com.au/).

Applicants must register to use the online system, if they are not already registered.

The application form is easy to complete, and a help guide and FAQs for using the online application system are available at [applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au](http://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/).

Before applying, please refer to the eligibility section (page 5) to see whether your organisation is eligible for a grant under the program.

#### When do applications for the Refurbishment and Minor Works grants open?

Applications open on **26 March 2021.**

#### When do applications to the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program close?

Applications to round 2 of the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program are due to close at **11:59** **p.m.** on **21 May 2021.**

### Definitions

#### What do we mean by Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten?

All projects applying for Refurbishment and Minor Works grants must provide, or intend to provide, a kindergarten program for three and four-year-old children.

Funded kindergarten programs must:

* be planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher (who is registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching)
* align with the [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/Pages/veyladf.aspx)
* for four-year-old kindergarten programs, offer at least:
	+ 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or
	+ 600 hours per year
* for three-year-old kindergarten programs, provide, or intend to provide, up to 15 hours per week.

For more information on kindergarten funding, please consult the [Kindergarten Funding Guide](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx).

More information on what counts as ‘unencumbered’ space can be found [on the Department of Education and Training website](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/indooroutdoor.aspx).

#### What is a schematic design drawing?

A schematic design drawing is a sketch plan giving a general view of the proposed design. These drawings generally include a site plan and floor plans, and larger projects often involve the production of elevations, illustrative sketches and computer renderings.

Detailed drawings help to explain what you propose to do, demonstrate that your project is ready to commence, and support the number of places proposed in your application (for example, by showing the area in square meters for indoor learning areas and outdoor space to be created through the project).

Drawings submitted with your application should clearly show each component of the proposed works and match the scope of works described in your application.

#### Who is a licensed quantity surveyor?

Quantity surveyors are specialised building professionals that estimate and manage the cost of construction projects.

Infrastructure projects with a total project cost of $200,000 or more require a quantity surveyor report as a condition of funding. Having your costings prepared by a licensed quantity surveyor improves accuracy of these costs and helps demonstrate that your project is ready to commence.

Infrastructure projects with a total project cost under $200,000 are required to submit a detailed authorised list of costings/quotes from two registered builders who are qualified to quote on the level of expenditure related to the project cost.

The Victorian School Building Authority maintains a register of licensed quantity surveyors that you can [search online](https://consumer.etoolbox.buildingcommission.com.au/Pages/Search.aspx).

What is an asbestos audit report?An asbestos audit report (sometimes referred to as a Division 5 Audit Report) contains the results of a visual inspection of a building to monitor and identify Asbestos Containing Material (ACM). The asbestos audit is performed by a trained professional such as a builder or contractor. The results of the asbestos audit are logged in an asbestos register, which is to be updated following all subsequent audit reports and removal works.

If ACM is discovered in a building or site, an asbestos management and removal plan must be established for the safe management, removal and disposal of the asbestos.

For further information about asbestos safety including how to find and identify asbestos, asbestos management and asbestos disposal please visit the Asbestos Victoria website at <https://www.asbestos.vic.gov.au/>

#### What do we mean by an experienced project manager?

We require you to appoint a project manager who has suitable experience in delivering similar types of projects for all funded infrastructure projects.

A project manager will develop project plans, monitor the project to ensure milestones are met, coordinate contractors and oversee budgets. This may be someone in your organisation or an industry professional.

### Eligibility

#### Can I apply if I am a private provider?

Yes, provided that you can demonstrate that you are a not-for-profit organisation. You can find information on not-for-profit status at the [Australian Tax Office](https://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/Getting-started/) and the [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission](https://www.acnc.gov.au/) websites.

Businesses and for-profit organisations **cannot** apply for any type of major grant.

#### Can I apply this year if my project was unsuccessful in previous rounds of the Building Blocks?

Yes, organisations that are still seeking support for projects that were unsuccessful in previous grant rounds, or for new projects, are eligible to apply.

We strongly encourage organisations who are resubmitting projects to contact us for feedback on their previous application, and to carefully address the program requirements, eligibility and assessment criteria described in the [Refurbishment and Minor Works Program Guidelines.](file:///C%3A/Users/10027305/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/AD8O3FD4/schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/EarlyChildhoodMinorWorks)

#### Can I apply for more than one Refurbishment and Minor Works grant for my facility?

Yes, if you applied for a grant under round 1 of this Program, you may submit an application to Round 2. ,

#### Can I apply for projects at more than one location?

Yes, you can apply for more than one project provided it is for a separate service. You must indicate the relative priority of each project in your applications. We will take this priority into account when considering the distribution of approved projects across applicants, local government areas and different regions of the state.

#### Can I apply to the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program as well as for funding from another grant program?

Yes, your project can include funding from grant programs administered by organisations other than the VSBA. You must list these in your budget and advise whether the funding has been confirmed or what date it is expected to be confirmed.

#### Can I apply for funding from more than one program administered by the VSBA?

Yes, you can apply for funding through round 2 of the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program as well as other programs administered by the VSBA provided that there is no overlap in the scope of works proposed to be funded through each program. For example, if you propose to deliver a multi-purpose community facility on a school site and you submit a grant application through the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program for the early learning component of that facility, then any funding requests through other programs administered by the VSBA cannot include funding for the early learning component.

Please visit [our website](https://www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/About-Us.aspx) for a listing of the VSBA’s funding and grant programs.

#### Can I apply if my organisation is incorporated but isn’t registered for GST?

Yes. All incorporated not-for-profit organisations (including organisations that aren’t registered for GST) are able to apply for a grant under the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program so long as their project meets the program requirements.

If your organisation is not registered for GST, you will need to include GST in your budget and cost estimates. Any grant payment you receive will not add or include an allowance for GST.

Different payment arrangements are required for organisations that are not registered for GST, and these will be discussed with successful applicants where required.

#### How do I show that our non-government organisation meets the requirements to be an incorporated separate legal entity and appropriately insured against child abuse?

If your organisation already receives funding from the Department, it is likely to already be required to comply with the Betrayal of Trust requirements and so you wouldn’t need to do anything to meet this requirement.

If you are unsure whether your non-government organisation meets the requirements or not, you can contact the VSBA Early Childhood Grants team.

If we advise that you need to provide evidence that your non-government organisation meets the requirements, you can provide an insurance certificate to meet the insurance requirement and the Department will be able to determine if your organisation is incorporated or not.

#### Can I apply if I have already entered into a building contract for the project?

No, to remain eligible for funding, applicants must not enter into a contract for any works proposed in their application before we inform you of the application outcome.

#### Can I apply if my organisation doesn’t currently offer a funded kindergarten program?

If you meet eligibility requirements you can apply for a Refurbishment and Minor Works grant on the basis that you will deliver a funded kindergarten program for at least **four** years once the project is complete.

#### Can I apply if I own a building and want to start a funded kindergarten program?

Yes, if you meet eligibility requirements you can apply for a Refurbishment and Minor Works grant on the basis that you will deliver a funded kindergarten program for at least **four** years once the project is complete.

### Funding

#### How much funding is available from Refurbishment and Minor Works grants?

| **Grant type** | **Maximum grant amount** |
| --- | --- |
| Major Works and Refurbishment | **up to $500,000 per grant (ex GST)**  |
| Minor Works and Refurbishment | **up to $50,000 per grant (ex GST)**  |

#### Do I have to contribute funds to be eligible for a grant under the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program?

No, **co-contributions are not required** for grants funded under the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program.

#### Can I receive a partial grant if there are more applications than funds available, or there aren’t enough funds to cover my entire request?

No, in order to support the financial viability of proposed projects, proposals will not be partially funded.

#### Can I receive more funding if the project cost, or funding from other sources, changes?

No, the Department does not hold additional funding to meet cost overruns for capital works projects. If for some reason the project runs over budget or funding contributions change, the grant recipient must meet the additional costs.

### Application writing tips

#### Do you have any tips for preparing the project budget?

The total project expenditure must match the total project income, including the grant amount sought, your organisation’s contribution and any other contributions.

Be accurate in your costings – you cannot ask for additional funds later because the project was not accurately costed at the start.

Only include income or expenditure items relevant to the project. If the cost is not directly associated with your project, it should not be in the project budget.

Ensure that the grant amount requested, and financial contributions stated in your application match the supporting evidence provided.

Please ensure that your budget reflects your GST registration status:

* If you **are** registered for GST, **don’t** include GST in your estimates. If your application is successful, any grant payment you receive will add and include GST.
* If you are **not** registered for GST, **include** GST in your estimates. If your application is successful, any grant payment you receive will not add or include GST.

For more tips, see our Refurbishment and Minor Works Program [tips sheet](file:///C%3A/Users/10027305/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/AD8O3FD4/schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/EarlyChildhoodMinorWorks).

### Submitting an application

#### Why are some questions on my form greyed out?

Some parts of the application form may not be relevant to your organisation or project. Depending on your answers to some questions, other parts of the online form may be greyed out – if that happens, you won’t need to answer those questions.

#### What do I do if I need help with the online application form?

Please contact SmartyGrants Support Desk via email: service@smartygrants.com.au or phone: (03) 9320 6888. This service is available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time).

You can also find a help guide and FAQs at [applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au](http://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/)

### Assessment of applications

#### If my application meets all of the criteria, will my project receive funding?

Not necessarily. Demand for eligible and highly rated projects is likely to exceed the total available funding.

All applications received will be assessed against the assessment criteria.

#### Do I need to include any information from the service provider in my application?

Yes, you should develop your application in consultation with the service provider. Applications need to include information about the licensed service capacity, enrolments and demonstrate collaboration and evidence of established partnerships. You must also include a letter of support as evidence that you have consulted with the service provider(s) affected by the project.

### Grant application outcomes

#### When will we find out if our application is successful?

We plan to announce the successful Round 1 applications in late May 2021. Round 2 applications will be announced from August 2021.

All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application/s.

#### Will we be given feedback if our application is unsuccessful?

Yes, unsuccessful applicants can contact the Early Childhood Grants team at the VSBA on 03 7022 2564 if they would like detailed feedback on their application.

#### When and how will grant funding be paid to successful applicants?

All grant streams require the applicant and the Department of Education and Training to execute a Common Funding Agreement (CFA) before funding can be released.

#### For Refurbishment grants, the funding will be paid in instalments, subject to attainment of the following milestones:

| Project milestone | Percentage of grant paid |
| --- | --- |
| Funding agreement executed | **20%** |
| Construction commences | **60%** |
| Grant acquittal approved by the VSBA | **20%** |

For Minor Works grants, full payment will be made to successful applicants subject to execution of a CFA.

For Refurbishment grants, applicants will need to supply evidence to demonstrate that these milestones have been met before payment is made Evidence requirements are described in the CFA schedule template.

The Department endeavours to pay milestone payments within approximately 30 business days of the funded organisation providing accepted evidence that the requirement or milestone has been met. However, due to the large number of payments managed by the Department, payments may sometimes take longer to process.

The VSBA reserves the right to cancel grants and recoup payments where there are unreasonable delays in executing grant agreements or completing proposed works, or where applicants make substantive changes to the scope of the project after the VSBA has approved funding.

### Project delivery

#### What are the reporting requirements for my project?

Successful recipients are required to submit monthly project progress reports through an online reporting system to give a brief update on progress, update proposed, forecast and actual dates for project milestones, risks and issues, as well as providing required evidence when payment milestones have been met.

#### How long will I have to complete my project?

The Refurbishment and Minor Works program places a great emphasis on supporting the local economy, jobs and communities in the short term. To meet this goal, successful applicants must complete their projects and acquit their grants within **8** or **12 months** of execution of your CFA (depending on which grant you apply to).

#### What happens if the project runs over time?

Recipients of Refurbishment and Minor Works grants must submit a variation form via the online reporting system if they require a project extension. Applicants will be required to provide evidence regarding the reason for the delay and to demonstrate that the project will be completed within the additional time requested.

The VSBA reserve the right to cancel the grant and recoup payments where there are unreasonable delays in the execution of grant agreements or completion of the proposed works, or where substantive changes to scope are made after funding has been approved.

#### What happens if the project runs over budget?

Grant recipients must meet any additional costs if their project runs over budget. We do not hold additional funding to meet cost overruns for capital works projects.

#### What are the acquittal requirements for the Refurbishment and Minor Works Program?

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 licensed capacity/approved places
* photos of completed project

Failure to acquit projects in a reasonable timeframe, may jeopardise future applications to VSBA grant programs and may forgo the final milestone payment.

### Further assistance

#### Who can I contact for further information about the grant program?

Please contact, the Early Childhood Grants team at the VSBA:

Email: building.blocks@education.vic.gov.au

Phone: (03) 7022 2564

#### What do I do if I am having technical difficulties with the online application form?

Please contact SmartyGrants Support Desk:

Email: service@smartygrants.com.au

Phone: (03) 9320 6888

This service is available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time).

You can also find a help guide and FAQs at [applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au](http://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/)

#### Who do I contact about children’s service licensing and regulation?

Please contact the Department’s Quality Assessment and Regulation Division:
Email: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au
Phone: 1300 307 415