

Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program

Guidelines

Purpose

These Guidelines provide information on the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program (VLFP) that begins on 1 July 2015.

The VLFP replaces the Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative (VLLFI) that since 2011-12 has part-funded (up to \$50,000 per position per year), 68 Landcare facilitators.

From 1 July 2015 the current 68 VLLFI facilitator positions will be funded through the VLFP.

Program Overview

In March 2015, the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, the Hon Lisa Neville MP, confirmed her support for the 68 Landcare facilitator positions until June 2019.

Funding

The Victorian Government funding provided for the VLFP for 2015-16 will be the **same amount contracted in 2014-15** through the VLLFI. The funding for years two to four of the VLFP (i.e. from 2016-17 to 2018-19), will be subject to budget confirmation.

VLFP funding is for the employment-related salary and operating costs of the 68 Landcare facilitators.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The funding for the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program is GST free.

Timing

- Signed funding agreements for the VLFP are due with DELWP by 30 June 2015.

- The first (2015-16) payment will be made after DELWP receives your organisation's signed funding agreement.
- 2015-16 Annual Reports for the VLFP are due with DELWP by 15 August 2016. In years two and three, Annual Reports are due by 15 August 2017 and 2018 respectively. In the fourth year, the Annual Report will be due on 1 July 2019.

Full details for the timing of all the milestones will be included in the funding agreement.

Key Management Roles

The VLFP is supported by a variety of hosting arrangements for facilitators, including either by an applicant organisation or a host organisation (where applicable).

1. Applicant organisation

The applicant is the organisation that was successful in securing VLLFI funding for a Landcare facilitator.

An applicant organisation can either act as the employer for a facilitator, or they can engage a host organisation for this purpose.

2. Host organisation

An applicant organisation can establish an arrangement with a partner organisation, such as a local government, Catchment Management Authority, or another suitable organisation, to act as the host employer for its facilitator.

As the employer, the host organisation undertakes employment-related tasks such as payment of

Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program

Guidelines

wages, superannuation, and may also provide office space, telephone, computer, and internet access.

A Memorandum of Understanding is required between an applicant organisation and a host organisation as part of the funding agreement with DELWP.

An existing hosting arrangement (established under the VLLFI) can be changed (from 1 July 2015) for the VLFP, if required. Early notification of any changes to hosting arrangements for a facilitator will assist with the drafting of the funding agreement.

Being an employer carries many significant responsibilities. Applicant organisations are encouraged to use a host arrangement if they do not have the capacity to fulfil these responsibilities. See also *Useful Links on the Employment of Landcare Support Staff*.

Increasing Geographic Coverage

The existing facilitators currently provide support to around 60 per cent of the state's more than 600 Landcare groups.

Under the VLFP there will be a focus on exploring opportunities to increase, where possible, the number of groups and networks and geographic areas supported by the facilitators. Please see Key Work Area no. 7 for more details.

Conditions

1. Applicant organisations, or host organisations (where applicable), are required to enter into a funding agreement with DELWP.
2. VLFP funding is subject to satisfactory annual review based on performance, and an Annual Report being submitted to the DELWP.
3. Applicant organisations are responsible for meeting contractual requirements, including monitoring, annual reporting and acquitting expenditure.
4. Receipt of VLFP funding from the Victorian Government is subject to applicant organisations, and host organisations (where applicable), having \$20 million in public liability and personal accident insurance for the period of the grant.
5. Applicant organisations, and host organisations (where applicable), are required to acknowledge in all publications and materials that the VLFP funding is provided by the Victorian Government.

Conflict of Interest

Where a conflict of interest may arise or is identified in the implementation of this program, DELWP must be notified immediately.

Role of a Facilitator

The role of a facilitator is to enable the effective participation of Landcare groups and networks, landholders and the wider community in natural resource management activities that protect, enhance and restore our natural environment, and improve agricultural productivity.

The facilitator role also retains a strong focus on building group and network capacity, rather than dependency, to enable groups and networks to become self-supporting. Administrative tasks associated with the day-to-day operation of a group or network, or the management of on-ground projects, are not part of the facilitator's role.

Key Work Areas

The Landcare facilitator's work plan will be determined by local needs and priorities, based on the following seven Key Work Areas.

Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program

Guidelines

The specific activities to be undertaken by a facilitator against each of the Key Work Areas below will need to be detailed in a new Program Delivery Plan (PDP) for the VLFP.

1. Building local community capacity to enable groups/networks to be self-sustaining

- assist with the development and delivery of capacity building activities such as courses, workshops, seminars and field days;
- increase the provision of information to groups by keeping them informed of funding, learning and other relevant opportunities; and
- assist groups/networks to function effectively and adopt appropriate governance processes and procedures.

Note: day-to-day administration tasks associated with the operation of a group or network, such as taking meeting minutes, should not form part of the role of a facilitator.

2. Undertaking community engagement and building partnerships

- facilitate information sharing, cooperation, collaboration and networking among Landcare groups/networks and with Landcare staff;
- assist groups/networks to engage local communities in Landcare activities;
- assist groups/networks with their efforts to engage landholders in Landcare;
- promote and provide opportunities for broader community participation in Landcare activities; and
- develop and support local partnerships with other community groups, organisations and schools to increase awareness of, and involvement and participation in Landcare.

3. Assisting with planning and priority setting processes

- assist groups/networks with the development or review of action or strategic plans;

- assist with the interpretation of regional natural resource management plans and priorities at group or network scale;
- assist with the development of landholder property plans; and
- build community knowledge and understanding of natural resource management policies, plans and programs and priority setting processes.

4. Supporting the development of on-ground natural resource management projects

- facilitate access to natural resource management advice, specialist information and expertise to support the development of projects; and
- assist with the planning and development of on-ground projects.

5. Securing project grants and other funding

- identify and promote grants and funding opportunities; and
- facilitate groups/networks to apply for and secure funding for projects.

6. Assisting with monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

- assist groups/networks establish systems or processes for the monitoring of projects; and
- collaborate with Regional Landcare Coordinators to assist with data collection, group/network health surveys, and group/network mapping.

7. Extending support to more groups, networks (and landholders)

- facilitate the establishment of new groups/networks in gap areas, i.e. where there are currently no groups/networks; and/or
- extend support to adjoining Landcare groups/networks that currently don't receive facilitator support; and/or

Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program

Guidelines

- facilitate the revival or re-establishment of Landcare groups/networks that are currently dormant; and
- pursue new or different ways of engaging more landholders and the wider community in Landcare. In particular for facilitators who are unable to extend their support geographically to more groups/networks.

Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)

Landcare facilitators need to work in accordance with current OH&S legislation and best practice.

Privacy

All organisations that are party to a funding agreement with the Victorian Government should be aware that DELWP may publish information about their funding on the Victorian Landcare Gateway website and elsewhere including, but not limited to, the:

- name of the applicant organisation and/or host organisation (where applicable);
- amount of funding allocated;
- term of the funding;
- funding location; and
- name and contact details of Landcare facilitator(s).

By entering into a contract with Victorian Government for funding under this program, the applicant organisation and other parties consent to the use, disclosure and publication of information submitted to DELWP in the ways described above.

More Information

More information on the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program can be found in the *Frequently Asked Questions* fact sheet, which is available on the Victorian Landcare Gateway website at <http://www.landcarevic.net.au/>

Contact Us

You can contact DELWP via email at cel.hub@delwp.vic.gov.au or phone 136 186.

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