



Program Guidelines and Rules

Program	VLG Unit Advocacy Grants Program 2026
Version	1.0 (approved by the VLG Board, Thursday 22 October 2026)
Owner	VLG Board (President)
Applies to	All VICSES volunteer units applying for a grant

At a glance

Grant pool	\$30,000 (one-off)
Maximum grant	Up to \$2,000 per unit; one application per unit
Who can apply	Any VICSES volunteer unit, through its Unit Controller
Applications open	Monday 27 October 2026
Applications close	5:00 pm on Sunday 15 November 2026
Outcomes advised	By Thursday 26 November 2026
Grants paid	By Friday 4 December 2026
Apply at	https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/zpT393XNqX
Questions	grants@vicsesvlg.org.au

1 About the program

The VICSES Volunteer Leadership Group Inc. (VLG) has received the liquidated assets from the National SES Volunteers Association (NSESVA), being funds preserved on behalf of VICSES volunteers. The VLG holds these funds as custodian for the benefit of VICSES volunteers.

As an early and visible return of those funds to volunteers, the VLG Board has approved a one-off grants round of approximately \$30,000. Units may apply for up to \$2,000 toward anything that helps the unit raise funds, advocate for volunteers in its community, recruit and retain members, or build its capability. The aim is money that makes more: grants that keep working after they are spent.

This is a one-off program. It does not establish an ongoing grants function of the VLG. Not every application will succeed, and the Board may offer part funding.



2 Key dates

Date	Milestone
Monday 27 October 2026	Applications open
Sunday 15 November 2026, 5:00 pm	Applications close.
16 to 20 November 2026	Eligibility check and panel assessment
Wednesday 25 November 2026	VLG Board decides the awards
By Thursday 26 November 2026	All applicants advised of the outcome
By Friday 4 December 2026	Grants paid to unit bank accounts
30 June 2027	Acquittal due: short statement with receipts
30 November 2027	Outcome report due

3 Who can apply

Any VICSES volunteer unit may apply. The application must be submitted by the Unit Controller, or by another member with the Unit Controller's written endorsement.

Each unit may submit one application for a maximum of \$2,000. The application may cover more than one item and more than one category.

For Regional Units who do not operate accounts themselves, the VLG can make purchases of goods on their behalf. VICSES regulations apply to all items purchased.

4 What can be funded

A grant may be used for items and activities within one or more of the five categories below. The suggested items are a guide, not a closed list. Other items that clearly serve a category are considered on merit.

Category	What it covers	Suggested items
Fundraising	Building the unit's ability to raise its own funds	• Tap-and-go donation terminals and card readers, such as Square, QR code donation signage, stands and collection tins • Raffle prizes, tickets and permit costs • Fundraising event costs, such as stall hire and barbecue supplies • Community Education material design and printing • Online donation page set-up



Category	What it covers	Suggested items
Advocacy and community awareness	Raising public understanding of the unit, its volunteers and their work	• Social media advertising • Print material, such as flyers, brochures and posters • Banners, pull-up banners and marquee branding • Local newspaper or radio advertising • Open day and community event costs • Photography and video to tell the unit's story
Recruitment	Attracting new volunteers	• Recruitment campaign advertising • Information night costs • Recruitment flyers, posters and video • Welcome packs for new members
Retention and recognition	Recognising members and keeping them engaged	• Non-Uniform Unit polo shirts and similar member apparel • Awards and recognition nights • Plaques, certificates and framing • Unit gatherings and family days • Member amenities, such as kitchen or common room items
Leadership and capability	Non-operational skills that help the unit run well	• Non-operational training, such as leadership, grant writing, treasurer or social media skills • A facilitated unit planning day • Design or communication software subscriptions for the first year

5 What cannot be funded

The following are outside the scope of the program:

- Operational equipment, vehicles, facilities, or anything that is the responsibility of VICSES or is eligible under VESEP.
- Items purchased or committed before the grant is awarded.
- Alcohol.
- General operating costs, debts or ongoing expenses beyond the first year.
- Cash payments or financial assistance to individual members.
- Political activity or donations to other organisations.



6 Advocacy and compliance

Advocacy under this program means non-political community awareness. Grant funds must not be used for any material or activity that names, supports or opposes a political party, candidate, member of Parliament or policy position, or that could reasonably be seen as election material. A Victorian state election is held on Saturday 28 November 2026; units should keep this in mind when planning any public material.

Units are part of VICSES. Unit Controllers are responsible for ensuring that everything funded by the grant complies with VICSES policy, including policy on fundraising, donations, finance, branding and media, and with the law, including Victorian raffle requirements. If you are unsure whether an item is permitted under VICSES policy, check with your Regional Office before applying.

7 Funding priorities

Your unit may hold funds that are already committed to other priorities. You are not excluded because you have money in the bank. What the panel needs to understand is **why your current funding priorities do not cover the requested item**. For example, a unit may have all of its available fund committed to vehicle replacement forecasted costs.

In support, the Unit Controller states the unit's available funds as at 30 September 2026 and the main priorities those funds are committed to. No bank statements or account records are required.

8 How to apply

1. Read these Guidelines in full.
2. Agree the item, cost and expected result within your unit. Obtain a quote or a firm price estimate for each item and keep it; the panel may ask for a copy.
3. Complete the online application form at:
<https://vicsesvlg.org.au/public/pages/grant2026>
4. The form takes about 15 minutes. There is no file upload; describe your items, suppliers and prices in the cost breakdown question.
5. Submit before 5:00 pm on Sunday 15 November 2026. You will receive an acknowledgement from the VLG within two business days.

If a unit submits more than once, the latest application received before the closing time is the one assessed.

What the form asks for

- Unit name, VICSES region, Unit Controller's name and contact details
- Amount requested (up to \$2,000) and the categories it falls under
- A description of each item or activity and what you expect it to achieve



- A cost breakdown: each item, the supplier and the quoted or estimated price
- Why your current funding priorities do not cover the item
- Available funds as at 30 September 2026 and what those funds are committed to
- A declaration, including the Unit Controller's endorsement

Bank account details are not collected on the form. They are requested only from successful units.

9 How applications are assessed

Applications are checked for eligibility and completeness, then scored by an assessment panel of VLG directors against three criteria. The panel recommends awards and the VLG Board decides.

Criterion	What the panel considers	Weighting
Benefit	How well the item will raise funds, build awareness, recruit or retain members, or build capability, and how lasting the benefit is	40%
Funding priorities	Why the unit's current funding priorities do not cover the item, its available funds and what those funds are committed to	40%
Value and deliverability	Whether the cost is reasonable and the item can be delivered as described	20%

10 Conditions of grant

- Successful Units are required to be a VLG Unit Supporter member. Units are not required to join to submit an application. Membership is available at <https://vicsesvlq.org.au/public/pages/join-us>
- Grants are paid by electronic transfer to the unit's bank account only. No payment is made to a personal account.
- A grant must be used only for the approved purpose. Any change requires the VLG's written approval before the money is spent.
- Grants must be spent and acquitted by 30 June 2027, by a short statement with receipts.
- The unit must give the VLG a short outcome report by 30 August 2027, stating what the grant was used for and, where relevant, the funds raised and the members recruited as a result.
- The VLG may use outcome reports in its advocacy for volunteers and may publicise grants awarded. Units are asked to acknowledge the VLG's support where appropriate.
- Funds that are unspent, or not used for the approved purpose, must be returned to the VLG.



11 Contact

Questions about the program or the application form: grants@vicsesvlg.org.au.

Grant Application Form



VLG Unit Support Membership





Program Rules

VLG Unit Advocacy Grants Program 2026 – rules established for the grant, adopted by the VLG Board on Thursday 22 October 2026.

1 Purpose

- 1.1** The program is a one-off grants round that recognises the funds received by the VLG from NSESVA. It helps VICSES units raise funds, advocate for volunteers in their communities, recruit and retain members, and build unit capability.
- 1.2** The total pool is \$30,000. The Board is not obliged to allocate the full pool and may at its discretion allocate additional funds.
- 1.3** These rules are the rules established for the grant for the purposes of rule 6(3) of the Constitution.

2 Eligibility

- 2.1** Any VICSES volunteer unit may apply.
- 2.2** An application must be submitted by the Unit Controller, or with the Unit Controller's written endorsement.
- 2.3** Each unit may submit one application, to a maximum of \$2,000. An application may cover more than one item and more than one category.
- 2.4** The unit must explain why its current funding priorities do not cover the requested item. A unit that holds funds is not excluded: it may show that those funds are committed to other priorities. In support, the Unit Controller must state the unit's available funds as at 30 September 2026 and the main priorities those funds are committed to. Bank statements and account records are not required.

3 What can be funded

- 3.1** A grant may be used for items and activities within one or more of the following categories:
 - a) fundraising: building the unit's ability to raise its own funds;
 - b) advocacy and community awareness: raising public understanding of the unit, its volunteers and their work;
 - c) recruitment: attracting new volunteers;
 - d) retention and recognition: recognising members and keeping them engaged;
 - e) leadership and capability: non-operational skills that help the unit run well;
- 3.2** Suggested items for each category are set out in section 4 of the Guidelines. They are a guide, not a closed list. Other items that clearly serve a category are considered on merit.



4 Advocacy and compliance

- 4.1** Advocacy under these rules means non-political community awareness. Grant funds must not be used for any material or activity that names, supports or opposes a political party, candidate, member of Parliament or policy position, or that could reasonably be seen as election material.
- 4.2** The unit controller is responsible for ensuring that everything funded by the grant complies with VICSES policy, including policy on fundraising, donations, finance, branding and media, and with the law, including Victorian raffle requirements.

5 What cannot be funded

- 5.1** The following are outside the scope of the program:
- a) operational equipment, vehicles, facilities, or anything that is the responsibility of VICSES or is eligible under VESEP;
 - b) items purchased or committed before the grant is awarded;
 - c) alcohol;
 - d) general operating costs, debts or ongoing expenses beyond the first year;
 - e) cash payments or financial assistance to individual members;
 - f) political activity or donations to other organisations.

6 Assessment

- 6.1** Applications are assessed by a panel of at least three directors appointed by the Board. The panel recommends awards and the Board decides.
- 6.2** Applications are assessed against the following criteria:

Criterion	What the panel considers	Weighting
Benefit	How well the item will raise funds, build awareness, recruit or retain members, or build capability, and how lasting the benefit is	40%
Funding priorities	Why the unit's current funding priorities do not cover the item, its available funds and what those funds are committed to	40%
Value and deliverability	Whether the cost is reasonable and the item can be delivered as described	20%

- 6.3** If eligible applications exceed the pool, priority is given first to units with the least uncommitted funds, and then to a fair spread across regions. The Board may offer part funding.
- 6.4** A director who is a member of an applicant unit must disclose the interest, take no part in the assessment of that application, leave the meeting while it is considered and not vote on it. The interest is recorded in the minutes and the conflict of interest register, in accordance with rule 65 of the Constitution.



6.5 Late or incomplete applications are not considered.

6.6 The Board's decision is final. There is no appeal.

7 Payment and conditions of grant

7.1 Successful Units are required to be a VLG Unit Supporter member. Units are not required to join to submit an application. Membership is available at <https://vicsesvlg.org.au/public/pages/join-us>

7.2 Grants are paid by electronic transfer to the unit's bank account by Friday 4 December 2026. Bank account details are requested only from successful units, and payment follows once they are provided. No payment is made to a personal account.

7.3 A grant must be used only for the approved purpose. Any change requires the VLG's written approval.

7.4 Grants must be spent and acquitted by 30 June 2027, by a short statement with receipts.

7.5 The unit must give the VLG a short outcome report by 30 November 2027, stating what the grant was used for and, where relevant, the funds raised and the members recruited as a result.

7.6 The VLG may use outcome reports in its advocacy for volunteers, and may publicise grants awarded. Units are asked to acknowledge the VLG's support where appropriate.

7.7 Funds that are unspent, or not used for the approved purpose, must be returned to the VLG.

8 Key dates

8.1 Applications open on Monday 27 October 2026 and close at 5:00 pm on Sunday 15 November 2026.

8.2 Grants are awarded by Wednesday 25 November 2026 and paid by Friday 4 December 2026.

8.3 Grants are acquitted by 30 June 2027.

8.4 Outcome reports are due by 30 November 2027.

Document review and approval

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Summary of changes	Next review date
1.0	Thursday 22 October 2026	VLG Board	Initial adoption	N/A