FAQs

garinga djimbayang Grant Program

General

1) **Who informed the development of the garinga djimbayang Grants Program?**
   - A Working Group was convened between 2021 and 2023 to inform the design of the program. It operated as a subcommittee of the Yuma Yirramboi Council (formerly called the Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council) Program
   - The Working Group comprised First Nations members with expertise in a range of relevant areas including Aboriginal economic development, community development, self-determination, community-controlled health and justice, education inclusive of school, vocational and higher education, and the agriculture sector.
   - Recommendations for membership on the Working Group were made by the Yuma Yirramboi Council and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI). The Yuma Yirramboi Council provides independent advice to government on opportunities and issues affecting the prosperity of First Nations Victorians. More information about the Yuma Yirramboi Council can be found here.

2) **What happens if the Department receives two very similar ideas for project funding?**
   - If we receive an application that has the potential to duplicate an existing submission or project, we may recommend that applicants collaborate to obtain the best outcome for the project.
   - However, it is noted that two TAFEs and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) could partner to contextualise the same accredited training with a range of Traditional Owner content and practices, and as such, would be viewed as separate/differentiated projects.

3) **Is there a limit to how many other organisations join as partners?**
   - The lead applicant may only have one primary partner; however, the delivery of elements of your project may be subcontracted out as required to a third party (e.g., guest speakers).
   - RAPs can utilise partner groups to deliver activities outlined in the project application while maintaining a lead role on the cultural direction, input, and advice.
   - The guidelines indicate that a range of secondary partners can also be involved in the project and these include:
     - Traditional Owner groups that are not formally recognised as a Registered Aboriginal Party in Victoria
     - Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
     - Victorian Aboriginal-led businesses
     - Other Aboriginal-led organisations
     - Other Skills First training providers
     - TAFEs from other states
     - Registered Training Organisations that are not TAFEs
     - Learn Locals
     - Local Learning and Employment Networks

4) There are four listed objectives of the garinga djimbayang Grant Program. Does our project need to respond to all four objectives in our application?

- Yes - you will need to demonstrate how your project will achieve on all four objectives, noting that projects will have different degrees of emphasis across the four objectives.

5) The guidelines indicate the lead applicant will be required to administer the grant management and reporting requirements for the project. Does this mean that the lead applicant needs to be involved in all delivery aspects of the project also?

- No. While the lead applicant, as per the application form, is responsible for signing off on all management and financial reporting of the grant, it is possible for primary partners and other organisations to be involved in delivering key aspects of the project.

6) Before I commit effort to the application, can I contact the Department to see if the idea would be considered in theory?

- Yes. This may help you understand how well your idea fits the objective or eligibility. Please email skillsandsafety@agriculture.vic.gov.au and someone will be in contact with you.
- Any applicants (whether lead or primary) will have the opportunity to ask questions with a departmental representative to address questions prior to submission.
- To express your interest in having a conversation with a departmental representative ensure you email the skillsandsafety@agriculture.vic.gov.au inbox.
- Please note, the contact with the Department, whether over the phone or by email, will not/does not indicate approval of an application for funding.

7) Once I submit my application, how long will it take to find out if I am successful?

- The assessment and approval process can take up to 12 weeks from the application closing date.

8) How is the grant funding administered?

- The funding is administered through the execution of a grant agreement with the lead organisation which will outline specific terms and conditions e.g. dates, timelines, specific milestones, what will be delivered etc.
- The grant agreement will indicate key dates when funding is paid out against delivery of key milestones across the duration of the project.
- It is important to note that the grant agreement will specify a recoupment clause for any unspent grant funding at the end of the project, and there may be a requirement for an external audit.
- A budget update will be required as a part of each milestone report submitted.

9) What if the TAFE involved does not have the accredited training course on its scope of registration?

- The Guidelines indicate that qualifications and/or courses must be on an eligible provider's scope of registration.
- Applications related to accredited agriculture qualifications or courses *not yet* on a provider's scope, will be considered on merit if there is evidence that the TAFE has already made an application to add the relevant qualification to scope and that approval timelines will fit within broader project timeframes.

10) Can applications include a proposal to contextualise both elective and core units?

- Yes. Either or both are acceptable.
- Units for contextualisation should be chosen with consideration of local industry needs and delivery to students.
- Please provide rationale in your application why the units represent the opportunity to embed Traditional Owners knowledge and the learning outcomes that will be achieved in support of meeting the objectives of the garinga djimbayang Grant Program.

11) Can an application propose incorporating a unit of competency from a non-agriculture training package as an elective as part of the delivery of accredited agriculture training?

- Yes. If the relevance is there with demonstrable benefit and sustainability to the value of the program, and it meets packaging rules for delivery of the accredited training, then an 'imported' elective will be considered. The applicant would need to provide information/evidence that the training will continue to be delivered to students in agriculture.

12) What compliance is expected by TAFEs in the delivery of non-endorsed components delivered as part of accredited training?

- The TAFE must ensure the packaging rules for a particular qualification are adhered to.

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- It will be important to note that whichever TAFE participates, either as the lead (applicant) or primary partner, they will also need to comply with the ASQA standards for RTOs (https://www.asqa.gov.au/about-us/asqa-overview/key-legislation/standards-rtos-2015) and address all ASQA's compliance requirements for the development, implementation, delivery, assessment and recognition of the non-endorsed components that are integrated into a qualification.

13) **Why is the garinga djimbayang Grant Program only open for TAFE partners and not other RTOs?**
- Given the desire to provide sustainable and shareable benefits, the TAFE network is being prioritised.
- The TAFE Network has a long history of working with local communities and supporting local economies and through the 2023 TAFE Statement of Priorities, TAFE demonstrates a commitment to:
  - support Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty in line with Victoria's Pathway to Treaty, and the existing Marrung Strategy and Wurreker Plans
  - prioritise the engagement and support of learners who face barriers to education, training and employment through a network-approach to equality and diversity inclusion.
  - share good practice and contribute to an evidence-base about what works best to improve outcomes in enrolments and completion rates, for different cohorts.
  - through the course of the garinga djimbayang Grant Program, a community of practice will produce a guide for best practice on how TAFEs can work with RAPs, which will inform ensure lasting benefit to indigenous cultural safety and inclusion.
- Other RTOs are welcome to partner with lead applicants and primary partners to support projects as secondary partners.

14) **Why is the garinga djimbayang Grant Program only open to Registered Aboriginal Parties and not broader Traditional Owner groups without formal recognition?**
- The garinga djimbayang Grants Program will be collecting and showcasing Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP). ICIP refers to all aspects and elements of Indigenous peoples' cultural heritage, and the rights that Indigenous people hold in relation to that cultural heritage. In terminology, 'ICIP' is often used interchangeably with 'cultural heritage' and vice versa.
- The Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* recognises Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage (including tangible and intangible cultural heritage) in Victoria. RAPs are the primary source of advice and knowledge and have important roles and functions as the decision makers for their cultural heritage over their appointed area of Victoria.
- DEECA will respect this formal recognition process, understanding that the RAPs have the authority to speak on behalf of all Traditional Owners of their Country. Their registration as a RAP confirms their inherited and fundamental role to speak for Country and culture within their registration area.

Assessment

15) **Do assessors favour quantitative indicators rather than qualitative indicators?**
- All applications are assessed on merit against the fund objectives and assessment criteria.
- Both quantitative and qualitative indicators are taken into consideration.
- Please note the weightings outlined in the guidelines that will be used for assessment purposes.

16) **Who will assess the application?**

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- A panel of experienced departmental grant fund assessors will evaluate all applications using the evaluation criteria provided in the guidelines document.
- The evaluation panel will comprise representatives from relevant Victorian Government departments, led by Agriculture Victoria DEECA.
- The panel will include First Nations representation to ensure the interests and perspectives of First Nations Victorians are represented in the assessment process.

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Budget

17) **What kind of budget do I need to provide?**
   - A budget is required to be attached to your application, as well as a rationale explaining how you arrived at this amount e.g., supported by quotes, market rates etc.
   - The budget template you are required to use is provided on the Agriculture Victoria website together with the Guidelines.
   - Each line item of expenditure and income is considered by the assessors so please ensure it is clear what is included and why.

18) **When we budget salaries for key personnel, is it better to have more details such as hourly/daily rate x hours and days spent in each proposed activity?**
   - We would expect to see the equivalent full time (EFT) for positions and annual salaries for the period of time that a person is engaged on the project. E.g., 0.8 for 3 months. Or 0.6 for 8 months.
   - If personnel are engaged for short periods of time, for instance they may be a subject matter expert or developing resources, then a daily rate and expected number of days/hours of engagement would be sufficient.   E.g., 5 days at 8 hours per day at $76 per hour.

19) **What is considered a project management cost?**
   - Project management costs must be directly associated with the project and not be 'business as usual' expenses.
   - They include project specific staffing and on-costs, resources such as office supplies, photocopying, phone, computer, travel costs and any administrative processes and activities to support delivery of the project e.g. marketing, promotion, guest speakers.
   - Project management costs for the project must not exceed 30% of budget requested – combined for the lead applicant and primary partner.

20) **Are maintenance costs for facilities within scope for funding?**
   - No. Business as usual costs will not be funded. Where funding is being sought for the purchase of equipment, resources, minor facility modifications or similar, it is expected that the applicant has considered how the maintenance costs will be covered as part of the sustainability of the project.
   - Budget requests for maintenance or servicing of vehicles, equipment or machinery will not be considered.

21) **Do these projects require external audits? If yes, would we need to budget for that?**
   - An external audit may be required as part of the final reporting of approved projects, therefore this cost should be included in your budget as a project management cost.

22) **Will funding requests to support cultural safety/competency training as part of the application be considered?**
   - Yes. Cultural safety/competency training required for the TAFE to deliver the project is considered a legitimate project cost. The RAP can be funded to deliver the training or it can be undertaken by another organisation (as agreed to by the RAP partnering on the project).
   - However, where there is existing specific professional development funding for cultural competence available to the TAFE, then this should be utilised. For example, the Government's Wurreker funding for Koorie Liaison and Koorie Student Support Officer programs.
   - It is worth noting that approving/reviewing competency is also viewed as a legitimate project cost. For example, a RAP could also be funded for the time it takes to review a TAFE's cultural competence policy to determine if it is fit for purpose and/or how much training might be required.

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- However, funding requests for a TAFE to review its own cultural competence policy is considered a business-as-usual activity and will not be funded.

23) **Can I apply for funding that supports the development of training and assessment resources?**
   - Yes. The garinga djimbayang Grant Program will fund the learning resources proposed through the project applications. It will support training and assessment guides to provide the best support to teachers and development of learning resources to provide the best learning outcomes to the student.

Delivery and reporting

24) **When do we have to have the project delivered by?**
   - All planning, development, and delivery of training contextualised under the grant funding agreement must be completed by April 2026.
   - Final reporting is due May 2026.

25) **What kind of reporting is required if my application for funding is successful?**
   - Regular milestone reports regarding the activities and the spend of budget line items you requested in the application, and which were approved, will need to be completed throughout the project.
   - You will be expected to report on how you are achieving against proposed timelines and tasks, how you are managing risks, as well as what is working well and general progress against your project implementation plan.
   - This includes reports about resource development, subject matter experts, teacher allocation, teacher upskilling, training activity, student attraction activities, enrolment numbers, student retention and any procurement.
   - You will receive a reporting template after your contract for funding is executed.

26) **Can I vary the project in response to changes in the project environment?**
   - The Department values industry consultation and encourages collaboration to ascertain the scope of the project prior to the application.
   - However, the Department acknowledges that there are sometimes circumstances where the project environment changes and a variation to the project scope is appropriate to achieve the project outcomes.
   - In some circumstances, the Department will consider a negotiation to vary the project contract.

27) **Is there a targeted number of First Nations students required in delivering the training?**
   - No – there is no minimum or targeted number of First Nations students required for the training component of the garinga djimbayang Grant Program.
   - Delivery of the training that has been contextualised with Traditional Owner knowledge is for the benefit of all students, rather than for only First Nations students, to emphasise the importance of Aboriginal traditional knowledge and practices in agriculture.
   - However, student attraction and retention plans should consider and demonstrate the integration of strategies to attract First Nations students.

28) **Is there a preferred mode of course delivery or training in the assessment process?**
   - No. Training may be delivered in person, online or as a mixture of both, depending on the project plan.
   - Consideration should be given, however, to sustainability planning for ongoing delivery of course content.

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Indigenous Data Retention and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

29) What is Indigenous data?
- Indigenous Data is any information or knowledge, in any format or medium, which is collected or recorded from and/or is about Traditional Owners both collectively and individually. This may include information, interviews, surveys, statistics, reports, sound recordings, films, photographs, health records, mapping of Country, samples of plants and animals, languages, knowledge, art, and stories.
- Indigenous Data is a subset of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, or ICIP.

30) What is Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)?
- ICIP refers to all aspects and elements of Indigenous peoples' cultural heritage, and the rights that Indigenous people hold in relation to that cultural heritage. ICIP includes:
    - Traditional knowledge (including scientific, agricultural, technical and ecological knowledge, ritual knowledge),
    - Traditional cultural expressions (including stories, artworks, designs and symbols, literature and language)
    - Performances (ceremonies, dance and song)
    - Cultural objects (including, but not limited to arts, crafts, ceramics, jewellery, weapons, tools, visual arts, photographs, textiles, contemporary art practices)
    - Ancestral remains (human remains and tissues)
    - Cultural environment resources (including minerals and species)
    - Secret and sacred material and information (including sacred/historically significant sites and burial grounds), and
    - Documentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' heritage in all forms of media such as films, photographs, artistic works, books, reports and records taken by others, sound recordings and digital databases.
- ICIP incorporates both tangible (sites, objects) and intangible (knowledge, oral stories, performances) elements.

31) What does a knowledge management agreement look like?
- The Guidelines stipulate that a knowledge management agreement is an output of each project.
- The knowledge management agreement should be co-signed by the TAFE and RAP and will:
    - take into consideration how ICIP and other aspects of outputs from the project will be stored, managed, accessed, and/or utilised now and into the future, especially if the project is designed with consideration of benefitting future/ other students undertaking the same accredited training qualifications delivered by Victorian TAFEs.
    - indicate that all parties understand and have the appropriate systems in place to reflect the preferences and stipulated requirements about using the Traditional Owner knowledge shared (ICIP).

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