

Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program

Round 13 guidelines: Grants for Pet Welfare



We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program

Round 13 Pet Welfare

These guidelines provide the information you need to apply for a Pet Welfare grant under round 13 of the Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program. If you need more information, please email awvgrants@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

About the Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program

The Animal Welfare Fund Grants Program was established under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* in 2011 to support improvement of companion animal welfare in Victoria.

The program aims to:

- improve companion animal welfare
- improve responsible pet ownership
- provide better animal welfare services to companion animals and the Victorian community.

The program provides grants to animal shelters, organisations promoting responsible animal ownership education, community foster care networks, not-for-profit and low-cost veterinary services and groups that provide relief facilities and services during an emergency.

About round 13 Pet Welfare grants

This round forms part of the Victorian Government's \$5 million commitment to support pet shelters and companion animal rescue and rehoming organisations.

What funding is available?

In round 13, eligible organisations may apply for **one small grant and one large grant**.

- **Small grants** are defined as up to **\$20,000 (GST Free)**
- **Large grants** are defined as up to **\$100,000 (GST Free)**.

Note: A maximum of 2 applications will be accepted per organisation across the Round 13 Low-cost Vet Clinic and Pet Welfare grant categories. If an organisation intends to apply for a Low-cost Vet Clinic grant, only one Pet Welfare grant application may be submitted.

Who can apply?

Grant funding can be awarded to not-for-profit organisations that provide:

- for the welfare of companion animals
- an animal shelter service
- education programs on responsible ownership of animals
- services as a community foster care network (CFCN) for companion animals
- animal relief services and use of facilities to the community during emergencies.

All applicants must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be an incorporated body or an organisation registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Who cannot apply?

The following cannot apply for funding:

- Individuals/Sole Traders
- government organisations
- organisations that are seen to endorse, sanction, or give comfort to acts of trespass or unauthorised access to private property

- organisations that undertake activities in contravention of Victorian legislation.

What might be funded?

Eligible organisations can apply for grants to purchase equipment, or upgrade or expand their services, to benefit the welfare of companion animals.

Projects must relate to at least one of the following types of companion animals kept as pets: cats, dogs, horses (and other equines), rabbits, caged birds, guinea pigs, ferrets, rats or mice.

Consideration will be given to applications covering the following areas:

- Upgrade or extension of current facilities to improve the welfare of companion animals
- Improvement in the rates of reuniting companion animals to their owners and rehoming of companion animals
- Education programs on responsible ownership of animals, including consideration of ethics, sentience and duty of care
- Training, services, systems or equipment that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of companion animal rehoming
- Provision of animal relief services during an emergency or crisis.

What will not be funded?

The Pet Welfare grants will not fund the following:

- projects that relate to wildlife, livestock, or pest animals declared under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.
- salaries
- legal fees
- cash prizes or commercial gifts
- ongoing or routine maintenance activities
- recurrent operating costs (such as utility costs and rent, and/or activities establishing expectations of ongoing funding)
- lobbying activities
- costs of consultants to prepare the grant application
- education programs that could be considered political in nature (whole or in part)
- political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties
- activities located outside the State of Victoria.

What is the application process?

Apply online from 27 October 2025. Applications close at 11:59pm on 27 November 2025.

Small grants Application Form: <https://deeca.my.site.com/grants/s/form?id=a0hRF00000AOwptYAD>

Large grants Application Form: <https://deeca.my.site.com/grants/s/form?id=a0hRF00000AOxQzYAL>

To return to a saved application, go to the [Animal Welfare Funds Grants Program](#) web page and click on the 'Access Saved Application' button.

Attaching documents

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email them to awvgrants@agriculture.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number.

How will applications be assessed?

First, applications will be checked for eligibility to make sure that the applicant and their activity are eligible for funding. Animal Welfare Victoria and a panel of assessors will then assess applications against the equally weighted assessment criteria and priority areas.

Preference may be given to projects that:

- leverage off other projects and/or that include financial co-funding or in-kind contribution from other sources (such as the applicant's own funds or fundraising).
- clearly demonstrate the improved animal welfare outcomes, and/or linkages to improved companion animal rehoming rates, derived from the project.

The Minister for Agriculture will approve and announce successful applications following completion of the assessment process.

What are the assessment criteria?

Subject area

The application should clearly outline the:

- goals and aims of the proposal
- types of activities that will comprise the proposal (including project milestones and deliverables)
- any financial or in-kind contributions by the organisation
- outcomes and benefits of the proposal.

Justification of proposal

The application should state which of the following priority areas the proposal addresses, and describe how it will result in improved animal welfare outcomes for Victoria's companion animals:

- Upgrade or extension of current facilities to improve the welfare of companion animals
- Improvement in the rates of reuniting companion animals to their owners and rehoming of companion animals
- Education programs on responsible ownership of animals, including consideration of ethics, sentience and duty of care
- Training, services, systems or equipment that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of companion animal rehoming
- Provision of animal relief services during an emergency or crisis.

The application should also demonstrate:

- the level of community support for the proposal
- thorough planning for the proposal's development
- how the proposal addresses an existing identified gap in service provision.

Project plan

For each proposal, applicants should provide:

- a comprehensive project plan
- a timeframe that demonstrates the proposal is ready for funding and is supported by a clear scope and realistic timing
- a budget that demonstrates the proposal is based on sound cost estimates and represents value for money
- any other supporting documentation as required by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). *(Please see the application form).*

Project team

The application should indicate the following:

- who will plan, manage, and coordinate the proposed application
- who will be engaged to deliver the overall program, project, or infrastructure
- the various people and/or organisations involved in delivering components of the program, project, or infrastructure.

What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment and approval process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.

What are the funding conditions?

Funding agreement conditions

The Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) is used for funding agreements with not-for-profit organisations and Local Government Authorities.

It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available on <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement>.

Successful applicants must:

- enter into a Funding Agreement with DEECA
- submit a written project progress report(s) to DEECA, using the required online form
- submit an acquittal/final written report to DEECA, using the required online form, within 60 days of completing the project
- obtain written approval from DEECA for any proposed variations or extensions to the project plan, timeframe, or budget
- operate public liability insurance as required, covering the project's activities and outcomes.

A project period of 12 months will be allocated for completion of funded projects.

Payments

Successful applicants will receive 90% of the grant allocation upon execution of a VCFA. The remaining 10% of funds will be paid upon DEECA's acceptance of the acquittal/final report.

Payments will be made as long as:

- both parties have signed the funding agreement;
- grant recipients provide reports as required, or otherwise demonstrate that the activity is progressing as expected;
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

All grant payments made under this program are exempt from GST.

Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

Grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- *The Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- *The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*
- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring that the approvals and permits necessary to undertake the project (if applicable) have been obtained.

Publicity

If your application is approved for grant funding, you must keep the funding confidential until a public announcement is made by the Minister or their representative. You must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a grant without DEECA's prior approval.

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines (available at <https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants>) will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

Privacy and confidentiality

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities.

If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

Checklist

Read these guidelines and the information about this grant program on the [Animal Welfare Funds Grants Program](#) webpage before applying and complete the following checklist.

Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- checked if your organisation is eligible for this grant funding?
- checked if your activity is eligible for this grant funding?
- checked that your organisation would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations?
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents?

Glossary/definitions

Term	Definition
Animal shelter	Any premises maintained for the purpose of providing temporary care or finding new homes for stray, abandoned or unwanted companion animals, not including premises on which foster care is being provided. A shelter must have all relevant council permits, including registration with local council as a domestic animal business. An animal shelter must also comply with the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Pounds and Shelters.
Animal Welfare Fund	The Animal Welfare Fund established under Part 7F of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> .
Animal Welfare Victoria	Dedicated public service group within DEECA that brings together aspects of domestic animal and animal welfare research, policy, legislation, education and compliance.
Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)	The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission is the national regulator of charities, established under section 105(5) of the <i>Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012</i> (Cth).
Community Foster Care Network (CFCN)	An organisation that: (a) arranges temporary housing for companion animals in private residential premises instead of other premises, and (b) seeks permanent housing for the companion animals.
Companion animal	An animal usually kept as a pet. For the purposes of these guidelines, projects must relate to at least one of the following types of companion animals: cats, dogs, horses (and other equines), rabbits, caged birds, guinea pigs, ferrets, rats or mice.
DA Act	<i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> (Vic).
DEECA or department	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.
Foster carer	Person/s temporarily caring for stray, abandoned or unwanted companion animals (whether or not as part of a CFCN) for the purpose of finding a new home for the animal. Limitations on the number of animals in care at a premises at any one time are as follows: (a) 5 dogs or animal adult equivalent dogs; or (b) 5 cats or animal adult equivalent cats; or (c) a combination of 5 dogs and cats or animal adult equivalent dogs and cats. Foster carers must comply with council and planning laws with respect to the number and confinement of animals on their property.
Livestock	For the purpose of these guidelines, 'livestock' means any animal (other than equines) that is usually kept for the purpose of primary production, including cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, ratites, buffalo, camels, alpacas, goats and deer. For the avoidance of doubt, applications that relate to the rehoming of livestock will not be considered for funding.
Minister	Minister for Agriculture (or delegate).
Not-for-profit organisation	An incorporated body or an organisation registered with the ACNC.
Wildlife	For the purpose of these guidelines, 'wildlife' is as defined in section 3(1) of the <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i> . For the avoidance of doubt, applications that relate to the rehoming of wildlife will not be considered for funding.