



Background

The Future Farming Strategy is the Victorian Government's major initiative in the delivery of its services and policies for agriculture.

The aim of the strategy is to encourage innovation, and increase productivity and competitiveness through the use of new technologies and farming practices.

One of the strategy's actions is designed to assist the Victorian organics sector to develop its resilience, further differentiate and substantiate its products, tackle current challenges and capture emerging opportunities.

Aims of Initiative

The Support for Organics (SFO) grant program aims to contribute to a more productive, competitive and sustainable organic sector. The program will encourage production, consumption and export of Victoria's organic products.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for assistance under the SFO program, the proposed activity must address one or more of the following **program objectives**:

- build the capacity of the organic sector for future growth
- increase awareness of consumers and producers of the organic sector
- provide defensible information and statistics
- foster cohesive industry representation

The proposed activity must also align with at least one or more of the following key **priority actions**:

- develop supply chain/value chain capacity
- raise knowledge and awareness of the organic option
- develop leadership skills

- develop business skills
- demonstrate innovation in products and or processes
- undertake research & development
- encourage exports

Proposals that are eligible for funding must address at least one of the program objectives and one of the key priority actions and must demonstrate a clear benefit to rural and regional Victoria.

Proposals that are eligible for funding will be allocated a higher priority if they

- maximise funding support from a range of sources
- are ready to be implemented
- relate to the key focus of the Future Farming Strategy – that is contribute to a more productive, competitive and sustainable organic sector; develop its resilience, further differentiate and substantiate its products, tackle current challenges or capture emerging opportunities.

Eligible Proposals

Projects that will generally **not** be eligible for funding are those involving:

- the formation of permanent groups or networks
- tourism focused activity
- individual company marketing material
- requests for retrospective funding, where projects have commenced prior to receiving funding approval
- projects requiring ongoing State Government funding once completed
- projects undertaken by the private sector as a result of Government contractual arrangements or for profit
- projects requiring full funding where funding is normally provided from other State, Commonwealth and/or Local government sources



Applications

- applications will be received throughout the year
- applications will generally be accepted from businesses (including business organisations), regional development organisations, municipal councils, education and training providers, science and research institutions and State Government agencies
- groups of businesses and groups of councils may apply, provided an application is made through an appropriate auspicing body
- applications must include a detailed Project Proposal including how it meets the Program's key action areas and objectives, methodology, budgets and how the project will be managed, implemented and evaluated
- applications from councils must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer. Where there is more than one council involved a Chief Executive Officer must be nominated to represent all councils involved
- the financial viability of an applicant for funding under the SFO program, and their ability to manage and complete the project, will be assessed.

Prior to submitting an application, applicants must discuss their proposal with a representative from Regional Development Victoria.

GST

All project costs included in an application must be exclusive of GST. The grant to be paid by Regional Development Victoria will be "grossed up" by the amount of GST, provided that applicant provides details of the registration for GST, or proof of exemptions from being required to register.

Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with RDV detailing all funding obligations and conditions, including specific conditions relating to the funded project. Funding agreements must be signed by the organisation's Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent).

Successful applicants will be required to provide formal written advice that the project has been satisfactorily completed and a detailed final evaluation must be completed so that the overall effectiveness of the program can be measured. The evaluation report may be required to be completed online, in such an event the applicant will be required to be a registered Business Victoria user. Claims for payments must be supported by a Statutory Declaration and a Tax Invoice (including the amount of GST, or a statement to the effect that the total amount payable includes GST). An independent Audit Certificate detailing the total cost of the project may be required. Claims for payments must be supported by Statutory Declarations.

Further Information and How to Apply, Contact the Program Officer Rowena Cann

Tel: 03 5623 5046

Fax: 03 5622 1602

Email: rowena.cann@rdv.vic.gov.au

Or contact one of Regional Development Victoria's Regional Offices in your area for more information and application details.

Regional Offices

Ballarat

48 Sturt Street
Ballarat 3350
T 5320 5900
F 5320 5998

Shepparton

3/164 Welsford Street
Shepparton 3630
T 5821 1811
F 5822 2554

Bendigo

46 Edward Street
Bendigo 3550
T 5442 4100
F 5442 5452

Traralgon

33 Breed Street
Traralgon 3844
T 5174 9233
F 5174 7545

Geelong

69 Moorabool Street
Geelong 3220
T 5229 0641
F 5229 9503

Wangaratta

27 – 29 Faithful St
Wangaratta 3677
T 5721 6988
F 5721 2265

Mildura

131 Langtree Avenue
Mildura 3500
T 5051 2000
F 5051 2020

Wodonga

6/22 Stanley Street
Wodonga 3689
T 02 6056 2166
F 02 6056 2334

Metro Offices

Dandenong

314A Thomas Street
Dandenong 3175
T 9791 5755
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Vermont

120 Canterbury Road
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3 Belair Avenue
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* Please note that the program concludes June 2011.