

All organisations considering applying to VFFF are requested to read these guidelines and then contact us on (02) 9291 2727 before commencing an application.

## GRANT GUIDELINES – THRIVING PEOPLE & PLACES

The following guidelines offer information primarily to assist grant seekers determine whether their request is compatible with VFFF’s goal that **People and places experiencing disadvantage thrive**.

You will also find information about VFFF grant making. This is provided in the spirit of transparency and to assist grant seekers determine whether their work aligns with how VFFF works and the role it seeks to play as a grant maker. The final section details our application process.

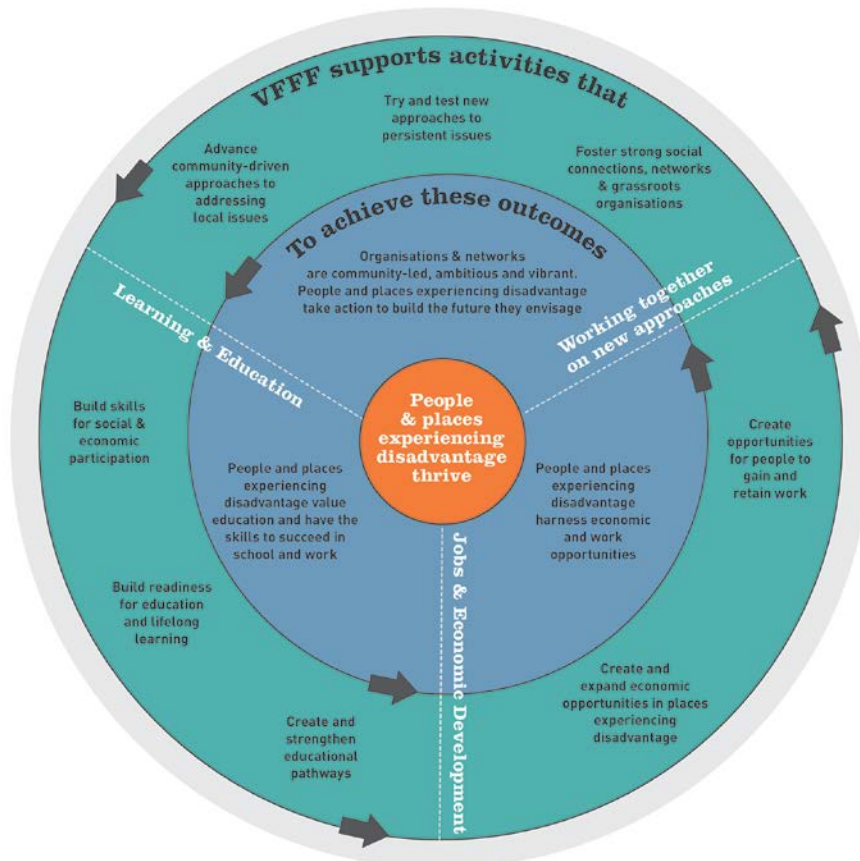
### THRIVING PEOPLE AND PLACES – how VFFF seeks to contribute with its grant making

*The challenge we perceive:* Despite the best efforts of dedicated people, the social services system is not shifting the dial in places and within groups of people where disadvantage has persisted for decades.

*The opportunity we see:* New ways of doing business are needed, working alongside those experiencing the challenges, so everyone in Australia can fully participate in education and work and build the thriving future they envisage.

The diagram below articulates how VFFF sees its contribution to building thriving communities – both among people & in places. We acknowledge there are many other elements of thriving communities that intersect with those detailed here. Our funds are directed to:

- Working together on new approaches
- Learning & education
- Jobs & economic development



## Self-assessment

The following questions are provided so you can assess whether your work aligns with ours. You do not need to do all of these to apply for a grant, doing one very well is terrific!

How does or will your organisation:

- Work with others to address issues that are important to your community?
  - Approach an old problem in a new way?
  - Build connections and/or capacity in your community to meet its own challenges?
  - Work alongside people to build their life skills and aspirations?
  - Work alongside people to build their readiness for learning and work?
  - Strengthen educational pathways?
  - Create jobs or economic opportunities for your community?
  - Support people to gain and retain work?
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## ABOUT VFFF GRANT MAKING

VFFF makes grants to **charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)**. For grants over \$50,000, VFFF provides support for organisations working in NSW. Organisations based outside NSW are welcome to contact VFFF but it is unusual that grants are made for work outside NSW. For grants between \$20,000 and \$50,000, VFFF provides support for organisations working in NSW and Queensland.

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## Our approach

Aiming to maximise available funds, VFFF seeks to be catalytic with its grants and:

- Direct its funds into the grassroots of communities, where the causes and opportunities for change lie
- Support local people to drive the changes they want for their communities (community-led)
- Connect local people with like-minded others who can support them achieve their goals
- Enable communities and organisations to try & test new approaches to persistent issues
- Make investments in organisations we believe in (rather than being project-driven)
- Support organisations at critical times of transition or development
- Support organisations that are unable to rely on high profile fundraising
- Support cross-sector work and collaborations

## Our assessment

We work closely with organisations and groups to understand their current position and future aspirations so we can provide the most useful support we can at the opportune time. In assessing funding opportunities, we consider;

- *Is there strong leadership?* – ‘doing’ leaders with vision, action and tenacity – people who are making things happen and motivating others
- *Is the organisation in good health?* - sound governance, effective operational systems and financially viable
- *Is the work proposed driven by demand?* – there is evidence that the work proposed is relevant and important to the people who are meant to benefit from it, and that those people have or will be genuinely involved in its development
- *Is there a sound strategy?* - the work proposed is a logical and practical response to the issue and local context, and there is evidence suggesting it will be effective in these circumstances
- *Is there capacity and experience to deliver the strategy effectively?* – a deep understanding of the people or place you seek to work with, relevant specialist skills, you are trusted by the people you seek to work with
- *Are the desired outcomes clear and demonstrable?* – clarity on what will be different as a result of the grant, and mechanisms to track outcomes as you go along, allowing refinement in real time
- *Are there other financial contributions?* - or a sound plan to leverage VFFF support to obtain further funding

## Our overall grant profile – in the 2019 financial year:

- 77% of grants approved were multi-year commitments
- Grants ranged from \$25,000 to \$3,000,000
- 40% of funds approved were for work in rural and regional areas

- 84% of grants approved were for core operations or organisational capacity building

In the 2019/20 financial year, we aim for 60% of our funding to go to regional areas and 75% to core operations and organisational capacity building.

### **Types of support**

VFFF provides support that falls under the following three categories:

#### **1. Core operations**

This refers to organisational and administrative costs such as salaries and overheads that maintain the everyday operation of an organisation. VFFF primarily makes core operations grants for small to medium-sized organisations at a critical time of transition or development.

*e.g. Employment of academic mentors across the network of Country Universities Centres, to support students in academic engagement and success (520,049 over 3 years)*

#### **2. Capacity Building**

Capacity building grants aim to strengthen organisations by investing in core competencies such as business or operational planning, board development and governance, management capacity, staff training, leadership development and infrastructure. This support intends to enhance the ability of an organisation to operate more effectively beyond the conclusion of the grant.

*e.g. For National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) to employ a Fundraising Manager (\$375,000 over 3 years)*

#### **3. Programs**

This refers to costs that are directly related to the development, implementation, delivery and evaluation of a specific program or activity. Most VFFF grants under \$50,000 tend to be for programs as well as some larger grants.

*e.g. For Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF)'s Refugee Action Support Program, providing literacy and learning support for recently arrived refugee students (\$50,000)*

**VFFF does not provide funding for:** Scholarships, public fundraising appeals, endowment funds established to provide a corpus for institutions, disaster appeals or political projects and/or lobby groups.

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## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applicants must discuss their request with VFFF by calling (02) 9291 2727 before submitting an application. Once invited to apply, applicants create a log in and are guided through a series of questions. You can save your application and return to it later.

We require copies of organisations' latest audited financial statements and up to date management accounts be uploaded with applications. Receipt of applications is acknowledged by email and shortly after VFFF will be in touch to discuss your request. VFFF reserves the right to seek assistance from external experts in assessing applications.

We aim to be of assistance to grant seekers during the preparation of applications and encourage organisations to contact us with any queries that arise. VFFF will contact grant seekers to work through any concerns or questions and may also request meetings or site visits. We are grateful for grant seekers' cooperation and patience and appreciate open communication throughout the application process.

### ***For requests over \$50,000 there is a two-step process***

- 1) **Register** – a short online form with organisation and contact details.
- 2) **Submission** - further information about the request, budget and activities through the online portal. We use all the information provided to write a submission for consideration by the VFFF Board.

Submissions are considered quarterly by the VFFF Board and applicants are advised of the outcome by phone following the meeting and in writing within a fortnight.

### ***For requests between \$20,000 and \$50,000 there is a single-step grant application process***

Applications are considered quarterly by the Grants Committee and applicants are advised of the outcome by phone following the meeting and in writing within a fortnight.