

Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants

Expression of Interest (EOI) Application Guidelines



Solar
Victoria



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Environment and Climate Action September 2023

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Accessibility

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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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Minister's foreword

Since 2018, Solar Victoria has slashed energy bills for more than 260,000 Victorian households by helping them make the switch to solar.

Our flagship Solar Homes Program is playing a key part in accelerating Victoria's energy transition. The program is constantly evolving, to better meet the needs of Victorian households and help us meet our nation-leading renewable energy target of 95 per cent by 2035.

Following our government's landmark decision to phase out gas in new homes requiring a planning permit, we are seeking proposals to work with developers, builders, retailers, distribution businesses and others in our new \$10 million Residential Electrification Grants program to make it even easier for Victorians to install solar and transition to full household electrification.

Solar Victoria will deliver grants to providers undertaking innovative residential electrification projects at scale across Victoria. Successful applicants will be able to leverage funding provided by Solar Victoria, along with their own co-funding, to embark on electrification projects that include solar PV and energy efficient hot water systems. Projects are required to comprise a minimum of 50 properties.

Solar Victoria is currently seeking Expressions of Interest from eligible providers delivering larger-scale electrification projects, who will pass on all benefits of electrification grants to householders.

Becoming an Approved Provider in Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants program is a unique opportunity for established builders, property developers, energy retailers/aggregators, product retailers, manufacturers, banks, entrepreneurs and other organisations enabling or undertaking bulk installations, to provide the benefits of Solar Victoria support to their existing customers and to incentivise new ones.

Distributed energy resources (DER) located at households, such as solar panels (PV), play a significant role in electrification of Victorian homes and our commitment to renewable energy and emissions reduction targets, and have the potential to deliver significant value to grid stability. There is clear potential for these resources to bring demand response management, grid services and other benefits at the same time, through innovation and partnership.

The program will add to our effort to build our renewable economy by encouraging partners to source their solar products and services from within the state and implement an initiative such as an all-electric precinct or development, demand response, coordination or orchestration approach that will demonstrate electrification, reduce energy load during peak times or deliver other benefits. Co-investment from delivery partners will be favoured in the expression of interest.

We are looking for innovation that could support demand response initiatives that reduce the load placed on the grid, back all-electric housing (whether new build or retrofit) that demonstrates what the future of living will look like, or integrate with other clean energy offers, and make it easier for consumers to improve their household comfort through access to renewable energy technologies.

I encourage proposals to work with Solar Victoria to encourage households to switch to solar and start the journey to all-electric homes. Providers thinking differently and deploying innovative approaches to achieving scale in the transition of households to electrification, are strongly encouraged to apply.



The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Climate Action
Minister for Energy and Resources
Minister for the State Electricity Commission



1. The Program

The purpose of these EOI Application Guidelines is to set out the objectives of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants and detail the Assessment Criteria and application process to become an Approved Provider.

The State of Victoria, through Solar Victoria, invites experienced, suitably qualified and committed providers to apply to participate in the program described in this EOI and in the Terms and Conditions set out in Attachment A to these EOI Application Guidelines.

Approved Providers will gain access to bulk funding in the form of a grant to distribute to their customers who install solar PV and/or hot water in new or existing residential premises. In these EOI Application Guidelines, capitalised words and expressions have the meaning set out in the Terms and Conditions in Attachment A to these EOI Application Guidelines.

Applicants who are successful in being selected to participate in this program will be invited to sign a funding agreement in the form required by Solar Victoria.

2. Background: The Solar Homes Program

Distributed energy resources (DER), such as rooftop solar, energy efficient hot water (hot water), and solar batteries will play a critical part in our transition to a renewable energy future.

In August 2018 the Victorian Government established Solar Victoria to deliver Solar Homes, a \$1.3 billion, 10-year commitment to help Victorians install 778,500 solar PV systems, 18,500 batteries and 60,000 hot water systems in their homes, helping them take control of their energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Since its launch in August 2018 the Solar Homes program has supported the installation of more than 250,000 solar PV, hot water, and battery systems in Victorian homes.

The State of Victoria through Solar Victoria, an entity of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, administers the program.



3. Distributing Solar PV and Hot Water Funding through Approved Providers

3.1. Overview

Solar Victoria is making funding available to providers implementing innovative projects that will see solar PV and/or hot water installed at scale in eligible properties in Victoria, helping to ease the transition for industry and households to fully electric homes.

Approved Providers will lead the creation of new channels to market that will embed renewable energy in residential premises and ensure that cost saving and greenhouse gas reduction benefits can be fully realised by both present and future homeowners.

For the first time, Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants will see Solar Victoria allocate funding in bulk to providers installing solar PV and/or hot water in more than 50 new or existing homes. Those providers must then pass that funding on in full as a benefit to homeowners.

While the current consumer facing program will continue in its current form, under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants, scaled allocation of funding will be made possible.

As part of this expansion, we are seeking to partner with innovative providers who have the demonstrated capacity and opportunity to make or enable bulk installations of solar PV and/or hot water in both new and/or existing residential premises.

Becoming an Approved Provider under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants is a unique opportunity for established builders, property developers, energy retailers/aggregators, product retailers, manufacturers, banks, entrepreneurs or consortia enabling or undertaking bulk installations to grant the benefit of solar savings to their existing customers and to incentivise new ones.

3.2. Innovative Solar Installation Initiatives

Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants will support those providers that present new and unique approaches to making or enabling the installation of solar PV and/or hot water in Victorian homes at scale.

Through this initiative, Solar Victoria will consider supporting both transformational innovations that have the potential to reshape how solar energy is adopted by Victorian households, as well as iterative solutions that build and expand on work to date. The fundamental condition is that the project achieves 'change that adds value' with regard to accelerating the uptake of solar PV and/or hot water.

Examples of projects suitable for the Solar Victoria Residential Electrification Grants program include:

- All electric homes, precincts, or developments.
- Building of energy efficient and/or Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NATHERS) 7+ star homes.
- Demand response projects that will alleviate pressure on the electricity grid.
- Orchestration of consumer energy resources.
- Flexible export projects that allow the adjustment of solar PV exports in real time.
- Projects that enhance network resilience during extreme weather events.
- Renewable energy projects being undertaken through funding provided from other government sources, such as the Neighbourhood Battery Initiative.

3.3. Who Should Apply

The program seeks proposals from businesses and organisations that will provide innovation to accelerate our transition to all electric homes, by undertaking scaled installation of solar PV and/or hot water on collectives of new or existing eligible properties. Providers thinking differently and deploying innovative approaches to achieving scale in the transition of households to electrification, are strongly encouraged to apply.

There is flexibility as to the nature of the innovative installation program. Our objective under this initiative is to find and support proactive, unique and viable approaches to deploying solar products in Victorian households at scale, and we are keen to hear ideas on how that could be achieved.

The initiative is open to applications from all entities. Providers could include builders, property developers, energy retailers/aggregators, product retailers, manufacturers, banks, entrepreneurs or consortia.

4. Objectives and benefits

4.1. Objectives

The objectives of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants are to:

- Enhance and support the transition of new and existing Victorian homes towards electrification, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy bills.
- Support initiatives that take an innovative approach to increasing the uptake of solar PV and/or hot water in Victorian homes.
- Support a new generation of organisations embedding renewable energy and energy efficient products in homes across Victoria.
- Act as co-investment to attract or combine with additional funding sources such as that provided by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency or the Clean Energy Finance Corporation.
- Encourage program participants to publish the outcomes or research resulting from their innovation projects so as to increase industry knowledge.
- Establish a new streamlined process for the distribution of funding to Victorian households at scale.
- Continue to support low- and middle-income earners by reducing the cost of their annual energy bills.
- Provide economic opportunities to Australian and New Zealand businesses by maintaining a preference for those providers that support local content.
- Ensure safe, reliable and effective solar technologies are installed on Victorian homes.
- Ensure safe and fair employment practices are adopted by Victorian businesses.

4.2. Potential Benefits for Providers

Providers selected through the Expression of Interest process may obtain the following benefits:

- Enhance their standing and reputation for being innovative and at the forefront of the energy transition.
- The opportunity to offer their clients savings of up to \$1400 for solar PV and \$1000 for hot water.
- Leverage a new and streamlined process for distributing funding to clients, at scale.
- Support homeowners on low and middle incomes to reduce their energy costs.
- Support homeowners to minimise the carbon footprint of their homes.
- Access a unique opportunity to collaborate with Solar Victoria to develop a new approach to funding distribution.
- Receive promotion through the Solar Victoria website as part of an approved Solar Victoria Residential Electrification Grants listing.
- Receive consideration for future iterations of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants and other Solar Victoria initiatives.
- Remain on the Approved Providers list for a minimum of 12 months, subject to performance.

4.3. Potential Benefits for Homeowners

Homeowners may obtain the following benefits:

- Subsidised cost of purchasing and installing their solar PV and/or hot water systems.
- Opportunities to enjoy the ongoing cost saving benefits of solar energy.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions of their properties.
- Enjoy a streamlined process for receiving funding.



5. Project design

5.1. Design summary

Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants will support innovative approaches to accelerating the installation of solar PV and/or hot water in new and existing residential premises.

Approved Providers will indicate the number of solar PV and/or hot water installations they expect to undertake within a given financial year and, once the installations have been made and evidence provided, Solar Victoria will allocate to them the corresponding funding amount. The provider will then pass that funding amount on to their clients as a saving.

Solar Victoria encourages potential providers to propose and describe in its EOI how funding distribution could be integrated into its innovative approach to achieving home electrification at scale, and how its project will target householders in the categories established by the Solar Homes Program eligibility criteria (see 5.5).

5.2. Funding Available

Standard Solar Victoria funding amounts for solar PV and hot water will be available under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants. In 2022-23 those are as follows:

Solar PV: Up to \$1400 for the installation of solar PV systems

Hot water: 50% funding of up to \$1000 for the installation of hot water systems

Households are eligible to receive each source of funding where both solar PV (\$1400) and hot water (up to \$1000) systems are installed (a total of up to \$2400).

The Approved Provider will specify the number and proportions of solar PV and hot water funding proposed for their projects.

5.3. Funding Distribution Process

Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants will allocate funding, in the form of a grant, to providers that are able to establish a mechanism to distribute those savings to homeowners. Solar Victoria will collaborate with Approved Providers to enable the integration of its funding with residential solar innovation initiatives, guided by the following framework:

Provider submits Expression of Interest to Solar Victoria and receives approval to participate in program

Provider indicates to Solar Victoria the estimated amount of funding it will require within a designated financial year

Provider enters into funding agreement with Solar Victoria

Provider submits aggregated evidence of eligible homeowners and properties partaking in the volume installation initiative to Solar Victoria

Provider enters into dedicated agreement with eligible homeowner, committing to pass the funding on in full

Provider promotes the rebate offering to existing and potential clients

Provider proceeds with installations of solar panels (PV) and/or hot water on agreed properties

Provider submits evidence of installations having been completed to Solar Victoria

Solar Victoria periodically pays the provider for the total number of installations completed

Provider passes the savings onto the homeowner in full



5.4. Provision of Evidence and Information

Upon submission of this EOI and throughout delivery, Solar Victoria will require providers to submit evidence that various criteria have been met. That will include:

During the EOI process:

- Evidence of a forthcoming solar PV and/or hot water installation opportunity. That could include, but is not limited to property titles, land titles, architectural plans, pages of a construction contract or planning permits (other evidence may be accepted, depending on the nature of the provider and their project).

During project implementation (Approved Providers only):

- Via a dedicated portal on the Solar Victoria website, Approved Providers will be required to submit information about the installation and the homeowner including who the homeowner is, where the property is located, what product was installed, and when it was installed.
- Evidence of the installation will be required and could include the certificate of electrical safety, the plumbing compliance certificate, and photos of the final installation.

Evidence and information provided during the project implementation should be submitted on a monthly basis, or as installations are completed, and will be required before the grant can be released to the provider.

5.5. Target Beneficiaries of the Funding

Under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants it is expected that funding provided is passed on to the homeowner in full at the household rebate value set by the Solar Homes Program.

In promoting and delivering projects, Approved Providers should demonstrate how they have targeted householders in the categories established by the Solar Homes Program eligibility criteria, including that:

- They are the owner of the existing property or of the home under construction.
- They have a combined household taxable income of less than \$210,000 per year at time of application.
- It is an existing property valued at under \$3 million, or a home under construction that will be valued at under \$3 million at the time of completion.
- They do not have an existing solar PV system.
- Where it is a replacement hot water system, it is at least 3 years old from the date of purchase.

5.6. Agreements between Approved Providers and Homeowners

It is a condition of this initiative that the full funding amount is passed on to homeowners. This obligation will be sanctioned in a standalone agreement between the Approved Provider and the homeowner. Solar Victoria will not be a party to this agreement but will provide requirements to be included and templates for use. Providers and homeowners will be required to execute that agreement before Solar Victoria will distribute funding to the provider.

5.7. Timeline

The funding round is open for eight weeks, followed by a review period and contracting. Please refer to the Solar Victoria website at www.solar.vic.gov.au/electrification-grants for information on the EOI timeline.

Information on activities following contracting are in the table below.

Activity	Proposed Date
Providers Undertake installations	Within 2 years of contract execution
Providers Submit Evidence of Installations	Monthly
Receive funding for installations and pass through to homeowners	Monthly

Solar Victoria may change this timeline at any time at Solar Victoria's discretion.

5.8. Monitoring and Evaluation

During the program Solar Victoria will require that Approved Providers regularly contribute to qualitative and quantitative monitoring and evaluation activities that will allow the refinement and improvement of the initiative. This may include provisions for regular performance meetings, data collection, the completion of surveys and customer interviews that will deliver insights on the systems underpinning the initiative and its outcomes.

For the purpose of enhancing industry knowledge as a whole, Solar Victoria encourages the publication of research or findings that emerge from projects funded under the Residential Electrification Grants program.

5.9. Funding Agreements with Approved Providers

Upon receiving an offer to become an Approved Provider under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants, partner organisations will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Solar Victoria. The funding agreement will set out the terms and conditions that will describe the circumstances under which grants will be allocated. It will require program partners to outline their program timelines and key milestones and will ensure adequate measures are in place to guarantee the principles of Solar Victoria's consumer protections are met and maintained. Solar Victoria will work with Approved Providers to tailor the funding agreement depending on the nature and project of the partner..

6. Eligibility

6.1. Mandatory Eligibility Requirements for Providers

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must satisfy all the Mandatory Eligibility Requirements. Provision of supporting or additional information may be required. All applicants and their consortium members and sub-contractors must:

- Operate in Victoria;
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Demonstrate safe and fair employment practices;
- Have appropriate third-party insurance, including public liability and professional indemnity;
- Accept Solar Homes specific consumer protections (which may be updated from time to time);
- Hold the requisite licences and authorisations to be able to legally operate their business;
- Be willing to sign and comply with a funding agreement in the form required by Solar Victoria (pending agreement with the terms and conditions of that contract);
- Have, or form a consortium with a business that has, a direct relationship with the property owner;
- Disclose all matters (such as any past conduct that has been the subject of any regulatory investigations) in relation to the applicant, its owners or its management that could have an adverse effect (reputational, pecuniary or otherwise) on Solar Victoria, the State of Victoria or this or any other similar Solar Victoria program; and
- State whether there are any actual or perceived conflict of interest issues in relation to Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants.

6.2. Eligible Properties

Both existing properties and new builds (including those still under construction or which are about to be constructed) will be eligible under this initiative. The premises must be used for residential purposes and be defined as either Class 1 or Class 2 by the Victorian Building Authority.

6.3. Eligible Products

Only solar PV and hot water found on, or which can demonstrate a pathway to be on, the [Solar Victoria Product Lists](#) are eligible under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants. This is to ensure that only those products that meet the appropriate safety, quality and warranty thresholds are installed in eligible properties in Victoria.

6.4. Authorised Installers and Retailers

To protect consumers and to encourage the solar industry to raise its standards, Solar Victoria requires that applicants for Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants are, or commit to using, only Solar Victoria authorised installers and retailers.

More details on Solar Victoria authorised installers and suppliers can be found on its [website here](#).

Where the applicant has a preferred retailer or installer that is not approved by Solar Victoria, it is a requirement that they become an Approved Provider through an application via the Solar Victoria Portal.

It is a requirement of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants that only those approved retailers, accredited installers and accredited hot water installers can participate in the Program.



6.5. Auditing and Assurance

Where an Approved Provider has a credible audit and assurance review program in place (including for example quality certification to ISO9001), Solar Victoria may accept that the quality and safety standards of products and their installations are satisfactory based on the Approved Providers evidence and attestation.

Otherwise, the installers and their work may be subject to monitoring, assurance and audit activities conducted by Solar Victoria or its representatives.

In that circumstance, the provider must provide to Solar Victoria, or its representatives, all reasonable cooperation required for Solar Victoria or its representatives to carry out monitoring, assurance and audit activities including providing prompt access to personnel, systems and documentation of the provider or the installers and their work.

A representative of Solar Victoria may inspect an Eligible Product and conduct an audit or assurance review of the Eligible Product (Compliance Audit). A Compliance Audit will consider the selection of the Eligible Product, the Supply and Installation Works, compliance with these program terms (as well as the terms of the funding agreement) and any other issue deemed appropriate by Solar Victoria.

More information on the Solar Victoria audit program can be found on its [website here](#).

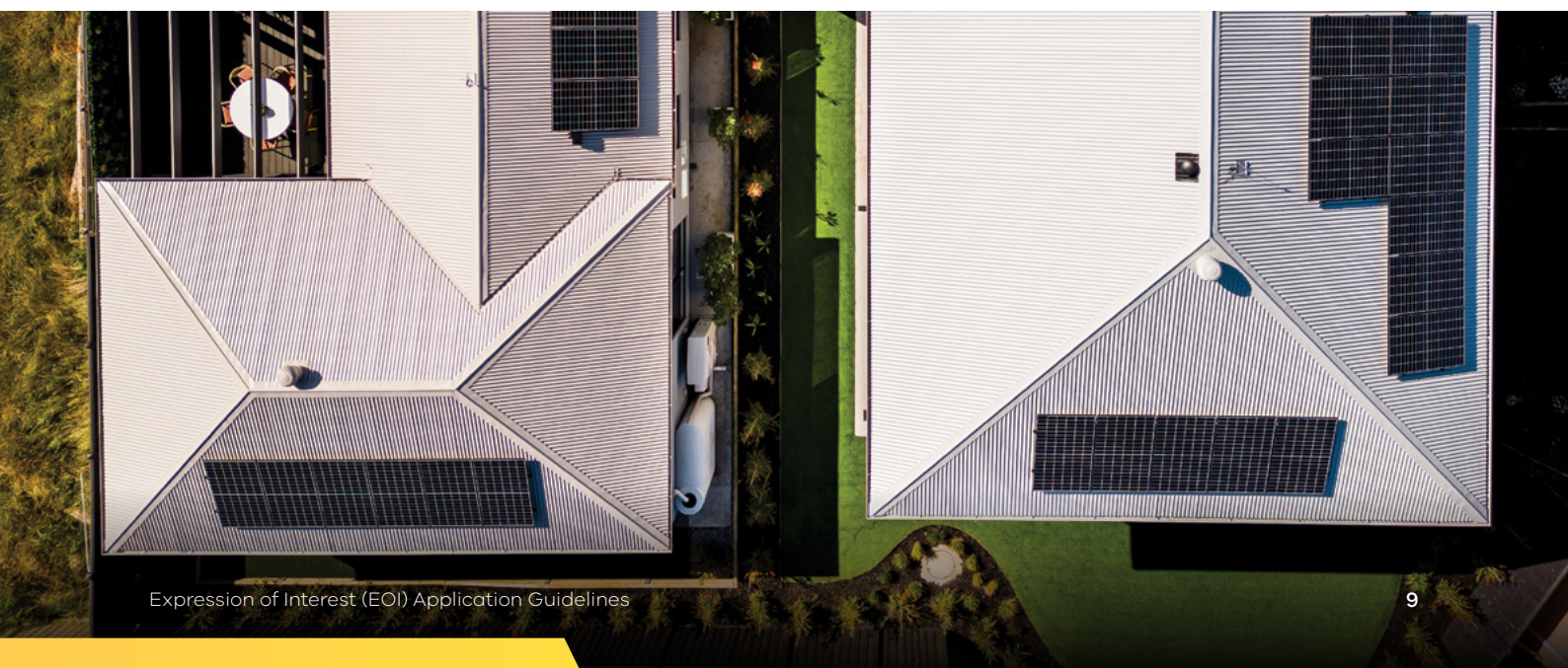
6.6. Safe and Fair Employment Practices

The Victorian Government prioritises working with providers that implement safe and fair workplace practices including promoting fair labour standards and job security, complying with relevant laws and regulations, promoting workplace equity and diversity, fostering positive relationships between employers and employees and who encourage their own providers to do the same.

To that end, it is a requirement of this EOI that the provider confirms that their organisation will adhere to the standards set out in Section 6 of the Victorian Government Fair Jobs Code.

6.7. Local Jobs First Policy

The Local Jobs First Policy (LJF) applies to all grants awarded under this program valued at over \$1 million in regional Victoria, or over \$3 million in metropolitan Melbourne and state-wide activities. For further information, go to [LJF website](#).



7. Application Process

7.1. How to become an Approved Provider

Solar Victoria will determine which providers will be approved under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants as set out in this EOI. It will assess each proposal against four assessment criteria (defined below).

Interested providers will be required to complete and submit an EOI that indicates the number of solar PV and/or hot water installations they expect to make and demonstrates how they will meet the objectives and conditions of participation of this initiative.

Applicants must apply via the DEECA grants portal – Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants.

7.2. Assessment Criteria

Applicants must refer to the Assessment Criteria set out in Table One and Table Two when completing their application form.

Applicants must respond to all required Assessment Criteria in their application. The 'guidance notes' in Table Two are provided to assist Applicants in preparing their application and provide further context to Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants, its objectives and partnership requirements.

7.3. Table 1: Assessment criteria summary

1 Project Characteristics (35%)	
1.1	Nature and outcomes of the solar PV and/or hot water volume installation project and the extent to which it meets the Objectives and Benefits specified in Clause 4.
1.2	Approach to innovation, including how the project applies new technologies and systems to support solar uptake, particularly in hard-to-reach markets, whole of home electrification, energy resilience and distributed energy orchestration.
1.3	Project delivery strategy, including safe and fair employment practices, risk management, capacity to meet delivery requirements and use of local content
1.4	The projects financial strategy
2 Benefits to the Victorian Public (25%)	
2.1	Approach to ensuring consumers are the beneficiaries of the savings
2.2	Plan for monitoring and reporting on outcomes
2.3	Plan for providing evidence of installations and information on funding recipients
3 Consumer Protection (25%)	
3.1	Fair and reasonable agreement with homeowners to participate in this volume installation initiative
3.2	Accept Solar Homes specific consumer protections consumer protections (see section 8)
4 Sales and Marketing (15%)	
4.1	Plan for promoting the volume installation project
4.2	Plan for promoting the savings to homeowners

7.4. Table 2: Detailed assessment criteria

Table Two sets out the Application questions and guidance notes for each Assessment Criteria set out in Table One.

	Criteria	Application Question	Guidance Note
1	Project Characteristics		
1.1	Nature and outcomes of the solar PV and/or hot water volume installation project	<p>1.1 (a) Outline the project or mechanism by which you will make or enable installations of solar PV and/or hot water and describe how the project will innovate</p> <p><i>*Please include evidence of the opportunity</i></p>	<p>Provide an overview of the volume installation opportunity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the opportunity • How the project seeks to innovate • Number of installations that will be made and in which financial year • Key partner organisations, roles and responsibilities of each organisation and agreements in place • Current budget estimates and business cases or other studies • Nature of relationship with homeowners and agreements in place
		1.1 (b) Provide the locations of eligible properties in which installations will be made	<p>Provide details of the eligible property locations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postcodes • Proximity to one another • Any other geographical information that may be relevant
1.2	Approach to innovation, including how the project applies new technologies and systems to support solar uptake and orchestration	1.2 (a) Describe how your project seeks to innovate (achieves change that adds value)	<p>Innovations could include those projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all electric homes, precincts or developments • Are building energy efficient and/or NATHERs 7+ star homes • Are demand response projects that will alleviate pressure on the electricity grid • Are consumer energy resource orchestration initiatives • Are flexible export projects that allow the adjustment of solar PV exports in real time • Enhance network resilience during extreme weather events • Are renewable energy projects being undertaken through funding provided from other government sources, such as the Neighbourhood Battery Initiative.

7. Application process (continued)

	Criteria	Application Question	Guidance Note
1.3	Project delivery strategy, including details of any co-investment opportunities, safe and fair employment practices, risk management, capacity to meet delivery requirements, and use of local content	1.3 (a) Outline the design and delivery model of the project	<p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project timeline with key milestones and deliverables • Project governance • Status of the purchase of the solar PV and/or hot water systems • Which technologies will be installed (only those found on the Solar Victoria Product Lists are eligible) • Which installers will be utilised and their credentials (only those installers found on the Solar Victoria Authorised Installer list are eligible) • Measures in place to ensure installations are safe and of high quality
		1.3 (b) Provide evidence that the required licences are in place to make the solar PV and/or hot water installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence that all licences are in place (including of all members of any consortium or other multi-party contracting arrangement) for all personnel to perform their proposed role in the project
		1.3 (c) Evidence the lead organisation has no outstanding or unresolved issues with state or Federal regulators	Disclose all potentially relevant investigations, sanctions or proceedings involving complaints or regulatory action by bodies such as CAV, ESC, AER, CER, ESV, VBA etc
		1.3 (d) Confirmation of fair and safe workplace practices	Provide confirmation that your organisation does and will continue to comply with the safe and fair workplace practices outlined in Section 6 (Compliance with Code Standards) of the Victorian Government Fair Jobs Code
		1.3 (e) Describe where the products and services used for the project will be sourced from (local content is preferred)	
		1.3 (f) Describe any co-investment that is in place for the project (financial or in-kind), and/or how the funding provided could be leveraged to attract additional co-investment.	

	Criteria	Application Question	Guidance Note
1.4	The project’s financial strategy	1.4 (a) Confirm that either the Lead Organisation and its parent are solvent	Please confirm in writing that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The lead organisation is solvent• The lead organisation has been in business for at least 3 years• You will be willing to provide evidence of solvency (such as financial statements) prior to entering into a funding agreement should your application be approved
		1.4 (b) Provide the volume installations project budget including in-kind and cash contributions from all partners and expenditure	Provide overview of project budget including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of solar PV and/or hot water systems
2 Benefits to the Victorian Public			
2.1	Approach to ensuring consumers are the beneficiaries of the savings	2.1 (a) How will your volume installation project ensure it is allocating funding to homeowners that meet the target beneficiaries (clause 5.5)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the measures your program will have in place to verify the homeowners that have been provided funding meet the Solar Victoria target beneficiaries.
		2.1 (b) How will the funding be passed on to the homeowner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicate the costs of the installations to the homeowner before and after the savings has been applied• Indicate at what stage of the volume installation program the savings will be passed on to the homeowner• Indicate how the savings will be passed on to the homeowner (eg. that could be either through a reduction in their fees or a credit to their bank account)
2.2	Plan for monitoring and reporting on outcomes	2.2 (a) What is the approach to sharing knowledge about the volume installation projects and the value of the knowledge generated?	Provide information on the potential lessons learned from the volume installation project and how the information will be shared. Please also indicate whether you would be willing to share findings with the broader renewable energy industry. These may relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New technologies or innovations• Regulations• Customer eligibility and engagement• Overcoming technical challenges• Feedback on the delivery process
		2.2 (b) Will you provide feedback and insight on this program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm your organisation is willing to participate in monitoring and evaluation measures that will assess these initiatives, systems, and objectives

7. Application process (continued)

	Criteria	Application Question	Guidance Note
2.3	Plan for providing evidence of installations and information on funding recipients	2.3 (a) What evidence will you be able to provide Solar Victoria throughout and following the volume installation initiative?	<p>Tell us what evidence you can or will be able to provide to show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That your volume installation initiative has 50 or more properties in which solar installations can be made • That the solar PV and/or hot water installations have been completed
3 Consumer Protection			
3.1	Fair and reasonable consumer contracts	<p>3.1 (a) What are the 'Terms and Conditions' applied in the customer agreement to participate in this volume installation project?</p> <p><i>*Attachments may be included</i></p> <p>3.1 (b) What 'warranties' are provided in the customer agreement relating to this volume installation project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of current or planned agreement regarding this initiative • Details of information to be provided to consumers regarding warranties and how they can access assistance, where any component of the service is disrupted • Consumer dispute resolution process developed for participants
3.2	Accept Solar Homes specific consumer protections (see section 8)	3.2 (a) What processes are in place that ensure your volume installations of hot water and solar PV systems will meet and/or exceed the consumer protections Solar Homes requires for its customers?	<p>Provide an overview of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes in place to ensure the volume installation project will meet and/or exceed the consumer protections Solar Homes requires for its customers
4 Sales and Marketing			
4.1	Plan for promoting the volume installation project	4.1 (a) Outline the plan for promoting the project	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will reach and communicate with homeowners • The communications tools that will be utilised • Key messages • Expected timeframe for obtaining a commitment to participate in the program from consumers • Overall timeline for the marketing and sales campaign
4.2	Plan for promoting the savings to homeowners	4.2 (a) Outline the plan for promoting the funding opportunity to your customers	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will target homeowners that align with the Solar Homes eligibility criteria. • How you will communicate the funding opportunity to your audience • The communication platforms that will be utilised • Key messages • How Solar Victoria will be recognised as the provider of the funding • How you will ensure homeowners are aware of their rights and benefits under the program

8. Notes on Consumer Protections

The following table provides notes on Solar Victoria Consumer Protections:

Document	Description	Link
Solar Victoria Consumer Protection	Describes the consumer protections in place to combat inaccurate marketing and high-pressure tactics	www.solar.vic.gov.au/consumer-protection
Solar Homes General Terms and Conditions	Describes the terms and conditions for applicants to participate in the Solar Homes program	www.solar.vic.gov.au/applicant-terms-and-conditions
Solar Victoria Retailer Terms and Conditions	Describes the terms and conditions for Solar Victoria retailers	www.solar.vic.gov.au/retailer-terms-and-conditions
Solar Victoria Installer Terms and Conditions	Describes the terms and conditions for Solar Victoria installers	www.solar.vic.gov.au/installer-terms-and-conditions
Solar Victoria Privacy Policy	Describes the measures in place to protect privacy	www.solar.vic.gov.au/privacy
Solar Victoria Audit Program	Describes safety and quality standards and the Solar Victoria audit program	www.solar.vic.gov.au/audits
Solar Victoria Notice to Market	Sets out the mandatory requirements for retailers and installers to participate in the Solar Homes program.	www.solar.vic.gov.au/notice-to-market-2023-24



Attachment A: Terms and Conditions of the EOI Application Guidelines

1. Definitions and Glossary

Applicant means an entity which submits an application.

Application means the documents constituting an Expression of Interest submitted to the Department by the Applicant.

Application Process means the process for requesting and assessing applications as described in this document, and includes shortlisting applicants as part of the EOI, selecting successful applicants as part of the EOI, and finalising and executing a Funding Agreement with each successful Applicant.

Approved Provider means an organisation approved under Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants to receive a grant and distribute savings to homeowners.

Assessment Criteria means the criteria for assessing the Applications referenced in this Application.

Closing Date means the closing date set out in this document.

Department means the Victorian Government Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and its successor Government departments, and all references to the Department or Solar Victoria will be read and construed as references to the Crown in Right of the State of Victoria.

EOI means the Expression of Interest stage of the application process.

EOI Application Guidelines means this document, comprising the expression of interest document, Attachment A and any other documents incorporated by reference.

Grant means the funding allocated by Solar Victoria to an approved provider, which they will subsequently allocate to homeowners.

Innovation: A project that implements change that adds value.

Lead Organisation means the entity nominated in the Application as being primarily responsible for delivering the project, and which accepts the obligations in respect of the Project, as set out in the EOI Application Guidelines.

Mandatory Eligibility Requirements means the requirements set out in these Application Guidelines.

Privacy Law means the laws, principles and codes relating to the collection, use, disclosure, storage or granting of access to personal information (as defined in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)) and includes the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), the *SPAM Act 2003* (Cth), the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006* (Cth) and includes any applicable codes of practice made under those Acts.

Solar Victoria means the portfolio entity of the Department of that name.

State means the Crown in the right of the State of Victoria.

2. Representations and Warranties

The Department does not make any representations or provide any undertakings to Applicants other than to invite them to submit an Application.

The information in these EOI Application Guidelines or ancillary material has been prepared by the Department in good faith. However, the Department does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of the content of these EOI Application Guidelines and the Department will not be liable for any error or omission or any inaccurate or misleading information provided in these EOI Application Guidelines or otherwise by the Department during the Application Process. In preparing and submitting its Application, the Applicant agrees that no warranty or guarantee is given by the Department and that the Applicant has satisfied itself as to the accuracy and completeness of the information provided and has prepared and submitted its Application accordingly.

The information in these EOI Application Guidelines has been compiled by the Department for the purpose of inviting Applications and must not be relied on for any other purpose.

These EOI Application Guidelines do not contain all the information that Applicants may require in reaching decisions in relation to submitting an Application. Applicants must form their own views as to what information is relevant to such decisions and make their own independent investigations in relation to any such information.

No representation made by or on behalf of the Department in relation to these EOI Application Guidelines or the EOI Application Guidelines subject matter, including in connection with any meetings conducted, will be binding on the Department unless that representation is in writing and is expressly incorporated into a funding agreement.

If the Applicant is a member of a consortium or other multi-party arrangement, the Application must stipulate which parts of the works that each entity comprising the consortium or other multi-party arrangement would provide and how the parties would relate to each other to ensure full provision of the required works. Otherwise, the Applicant warrants that it is not a party to a consortium or other multi-party arrangement.

3. Termination or Alteration of the Application Process

The Department may for its convenience at any time and in its absolute discretion terminate the Application Process, alter the Application Process (including amending the Timeline) or alter the scope of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants.

The Department will endeavour to notify Applicants of material changes to the Application Process or scope of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants, or the termination of the Application Process, but is under no obligation to do so.

4. No Legal Relationship

This EOI is not an offer. It is a formal request for Applicants to submit an Application to participate in the Solar Homes Installations program in response to the Department's requirements. No contract is formed between the Department and any person by reason of these EOI Application Guidelines, an Application or its submission, any part of the Application Process or the lodgement of an Application (other than the execution of a funding agreement).

5. Ownership

All documents submitted by the Applicant in connection with the Application Process become the property of the Department on submission.

The State does not seek any ownership rights in any Intellectual Property owned or developed by Applicants during the Application Process. Each Applicant grants free of charge a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty free licence to the State to reproduce, communicate, adapt or modify the whole or any portion of its Application for any State purpose in connection with the Application Process. If an Applicant is successful, any further Intellectual Property rights and obligations will be included in the funding agreement.

These EOI Application Guidelines and any supporting material provided by or on behalf of the Department are, and will remain, the property of the Department.

6. Communication about the Application Process or Application

Applicants may contact the Department with questions regarding submitting an Application, the EOI Application Guidelines or the Application Process by emailing the Department at svreg@delwp.vic.gov.au. The Applicant agrees that any questions and / or the answers provided by the Department may be made publicly available by the Department as part of the Application Process. The Department is not obliged to respond to any question or request for clarification or further information.

Applicants must not otherwise contact, communicate or discuss these EOI Application Guidelines, the Application Process or their proposed Application with:

- any employee, contractor or other personnel of a Victorian Government department or agency except as expressly permitted by these EOI Application Guidelines;
- any of the State's advisers in relation to Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants, including assessment panel members; or
- Members of Victorian Parliament or their staff.
- Any obligations on Applicants not to contact, communicate or discuss these EOI Application Guidelines, the Application Process or their proposed Application will not be taken to have been breached to the extent that the contact, communication or discussion occurs:
- to, and in response to a request by, a house or a committee of the Parliament of Victoria; or
- with the Victorian Auditor General, Ombudsman or an Information Commissioner.

Applicants may contact other agencies, such as Distribution Network Service Providers and relevant energy bodies, in order to complete the due diligence element of their Application. Unauthorised contact, communication or discussion by Applicants will be grounds for the rejection of their Application.

7. Confidentiality, Privacy and Publicity

Applicants must keep confidential any confidential information concerning the Department, received as a result of, or in connection with:

- preparing or submitting an Application; or
- any discussions between itself and the Department,
- during the Application Process. Applicants must not disclose such information to a third party (including any other Applicant) except:
- as may be required by law;
- to its consultants and advisers on a need-to-know basis and subject to obligations of confidentiality the same as or more stringent than the obligations under these EOI Application Guidelines; or
- with the prior written permission of the Department.

Each Applicant agrees that the Department may disclose their Applications, along with any other information disclosed by the Applicant to the Department during the Application Process, to the State and its departments, management, consultants and advisers or otherwise and if required by law to do so.

Any personal information collected as part of the Application Process will be handled by the Department in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic).

Each Applicant warrants and represents to the Department that in relation to any personal information that the Applicant discloses to the Department in connection with the Application:

- all individuals to whom the personal information relates have provided all necessary consents required under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic);
- all individuals to whom the personal information relates have been made aware of the identity of the Department and of the other matters that the Applicant is required under the Privacy Laws to take reasonable steps to ensure that the individuals are aware of; and
- the disclosure of the personal information to, and its use by, the Department is authorised under the Privacy Laws.

Applicants must not make any public statements or communications, or publish any media releases, in relation to the Application or Application Process, other than disclosures that the Applicant is required to make under the rules of any applicable stock exchange, without first providing a copy of the statement, communication or media release to the Department and obtaining the prior written approval of the Department.

Applicants must not, in connection with the Application Process, do or omit to do anything which:

- damages, brings into disrepute or ridicules the Department or State's, name, messages, programs or reputation; or
- attracts public or media attention which may be prejudicial or otherwise detrimental to the Department or State's name, messages, programs or reputation.

8. Proprietary Information

Proprietary information will be dealt with in accordance with the Department's existing policies and procedures in this regard. These policies and procedures are available from the Department upon request.

If an Applicant wishes to provide information in respect of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants which it regards as proprietary, that Applicant/potential Applicant must notify the Department in writing of its intention to do so, outlining the type of information involved and its reasons for believing it to be proprietary. The Department will respond to the Applicant indicating if the State also regards that information as proprietary information.

The Applicant/potential Applicant will then be able to decide, in the light of the Department's response, whether to share the relevant information with the State, and, if so, on what terms.

9. Discussions

Applicants that are short listed, as part of the EOI, may be invited to amend, alter or otherwise change their Application.

In addition, the Department may, in its absolute discretion, request or allow an Applicant to amend, alter or otherwise change its Application at any time during the Application Process.

The Department may discuss with an Applicant any matter in the Department's absolute discretion, at any time during the Application Process.

10. Application Documents

By submitting an Application, the Applicant warrants to the Department:

- the truth and accuracy of all information contained in its Application;
- it has made proper allowance for all matters contained in or capable of inference from these EOI Application Guidelines and other information made available to it;
- it has made proper allowance for all matters which might impact on the Applicant's ability to participate in Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants or to do so within any particular time, cost or quality constraints;
- it has, and will maintain, the necessary skill, qualification and experience to enable it to participate in Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants;
- it has, or will be able to, obtain all the necessary consents, permits or authorities necessary in order for the Applicant to participate in Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants; and
- it is not insolvent within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), is not trading while insolvent, is not at risk of insolvency, is not at risk of any other steps being taken in respect of the Applicant relating to insolvency (such as any actions by creditors or in respect of any security interests) or otherwise and there is no unfulfilled or unsatisfied judgment or court order outstanding against it.

By submitting an Application, the Applicant:

- acknowledges and agrees that it is bound by the terms and conditions of Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants and as contained in these EOI Application Guidelines; and
- acknowledges and agrees that it is bound by its Application.

The Applicant's Application must use the Application Form provided by the Department and the Applicant must ensure its Application contains information and details required by the EOI Application Guidelines and Application Form for questions and any other information necessary or required by the Department to make the Application Form complete and enable assessment by the Department.

If the Application does not conform to the form required by the Application Form, does not respond to each component of the Application Form, does not respond in the timeframes required by the Department or is incomplete in any way, the Department may, in its absolute discretion, exclude the Application from consideration or reject the Application. Unnecessarily elaborate Applications or other presentations beyond that which is sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired or required.

If an Applicant identifies an error in their Application (excluding clerical errors which would have no bearing on the evaluation), they must promptly notify the Department in writing.

11. Timeline and Late Applications

Applicants must comply with the Timeline. To the extent that the Timeline includes steps or actions to be taken by the Department, those steps and dates are indicative only and the Applicant acknowledges that the Department is under no obligation to meet those dates.

The Department may accept or reject any Application received after the Closing Time on the Closing Date in its absolute discretion.

12. Validity of Applications

An Application will be valid for 60 days from the Closing Date and may be extended, in writing, by mutual agreement between the Department and the Applicant.

An Applicant who wishes to withdraw a previously submitted Application must immediately notify the Department of the fact. Upon receipt of such notification, the Department may cease to consider the Applicant's Application but without limitation to the Department's or the State's rights under these EOI Application Guidelines.

13. Acceptance of Applications

The Applicant's Application will be evaluated by the Department against the requirements stipulated in these EOI Application Guidelines.

The Department does not bind itself, and the Applicant agrees that the Department is not bound, to accept any Application.

The Department may accept or reject (in whole or in part) any Application. The Department is not required to give reasons for the acceptance or rejection of any Application.

A letter of acceptance from the Department will be issued to each Applicant selected to participate in Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants.

Following acceptance of an Application, the Department may provide the Applicant with an executable version of a funding agreement to be entered into by the Department and the Applicant. The Applicant must execute that funding agreement and provide (unless otherwise required by the Department) an original signed counterpart to the Department.

Acceptance of an Application by the Department is subject to the valid execution of a funding agreement within a period of one month from the date of the notification of Application acceptance. Failure to execute in this time period may result in withdrawal of the Department's acceptance. Requests for an extension of the discussion period must be promptly made to the Department in writing and may be granted at the Department's absolute discretion.

Details of the successful Applicants and a summary of their projects will be publicly available on State Government websites after the public announcement of the relevant Solar Victoria Residential Electrification Grants by the Government.

14. Costs and liability

All costs incurred by the Applicant in the preparation and lodgement of its Application or otherwise and any costs incurred in relation to the evaluation of the Application, negotiation, the selection process and any future process related to Solar Victoria's Residential Electrification Grants will be borne by the Applicant.

The Department is not liable for, and all Applicants and prospective Applicants release the Department from, any costs, expenses, losses, claims or damages that may be incurred by Applicants or any other person for any reason whatsoever in connection with or as a result of preparing its Application or participating in the Application process.

15. Change in Circumstance

The Applicant must inform the Department promptly, in writing, of any material change to any of the information contained in its Application, and of any material change in circumstances that affect the truth, completeness or accuracy of any of the information provided in, or in connection with, its Application.

16. Anti-competitive conduct

Applicants must not engage in any anti-competitive conduct, including, but not limited to, collusion, coercion, abuse of marketplace power or breach of any provision of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) in respect of these EOI Application Guidelines or the Application process.

The Applicant warrants and agrees that it is in all respects independent and that no anti-competitive conduct has taken place or will take place between the Applicant and any other Applicant or interested party in connection with the Application Process, including the preparation of any part of the Applicant's Application.

In addition to any other remedies available to it under law or contract, the Department may immediately disqualify an Applicant that it believes has engaged in anti-competitive conduct in respect of any Application.

In addition, it may result in the Applicant being barred from further application processes or contracts with the Department for a period to be determined by the Department.

17. Conflict of Interest

Any Applicant with a real or perceived conflict of interest must declare that interest to the Department as soon as the conflict is identified. Where a conflict of interest arises, it must be assessed and be resolved to the Department's satisfaction.

All Applicants are required to ensure that their performance in respect of identifying, declaring and resolving any conflict of interest is consistent with all laws, demonstrably consistent with community expectations and beyond reproach. Any Applicant who states that they have an actual or perceived conflict of interest in their online Application Form must contact the Department and complete and submit a conflict of interest declaration stating the nature of the conflict and the management strategy. The Department will consider the conflict of interest declaration and make a decision in writing whether the Application can be considered (including on a conditional basis) or not.

18. Eligibility requirements

Any Applicant who believes the eligibility requirements associated with these EOI Application Guidelines to be discriminatory, restrictive or biased in favour of a specific product or service must inform the Department in writing as early as possible but in any event BEFORE the Closing Time on the Closing Date.

19. Probity for Application Procedures

The Applicant, its personnel and any of its associates must not offer any incentive to, or otherwise attempt to influence any of the persons who are either directly or indirectly involved in the Application Process, or in awarding any subsequent agreement. If the Department determines that the Applicant or any of its personnel or associates have violated this condition, the Applicant may be disqualified from further consideration, in the Department's absolute discretion.

By submitting an Application, the Applicant consents to the Department, or a third party engaged by the Department, performing probity and financial investigations and procedures in relation to the Applicant or any of its associates. The Applicant agrees, if requested by the Department, to seek consents from individuals to allow such probity checks.

20. Complaints

If any Applicant wishes to make a complaint or considers that the Application Process has failed to accord it a fair right to be considered a successful Applicant, the Applicant must provide immediate notice (prior to the Closing Date) to the program contact nominated by the Department from time to time, of the alleged failure or breach so that the matter may be considered and remedied where possible. Notification under this clause 20 must set out the issues, any relevant background information and the outcome desired. The Department will take any actions it considers necessary in relation to any complaints or communications received in connections with this clause 20.

In addition, Applicants must note that under section 13 of the Ombudsman Act 1973 (Vic), the Victorian Ombudsman is able to enquire into or investigate any administrative action taken by any government department.

21. Rights and discretions of the Department

Each Applicant agrees that wherever the Department is entitled to take action, form an opinion or make decisions of any kind, it may do so, or decline to do so, in its absolute discretion and is under no obligation to provide justification or reasons.

The Department may in its absolute discretion reject an Application from an Applicant or determine that an Applicant can no longer participate in the Application Process, if that Applicant fails to comply with any requirements of these EOI Application Guidelines or any other direction of the Department.

The Department may waive any requirement or obligation under these EOI Application Guidelines or under the Application Process. Any such waiver must be express and in writing and will not affect any other obligations nor is the Department required to advise other Applicants.

22. Governing Law

This document is governed by the laws of the State of Victoria. The Applicant irrevocably and unconditionally submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of Victoria, Australia.



