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1. **What are the significant dates for the Children's Facilities Capital Program 2012-13 grant round?**

- Grant applications open – 21 June 2012
- Expressions of interest close – 4pm, 3 August 2012
- Detailed grant applications close – 4pm, 14 September 2012
- Successful applications announced – late 2012

2. **What grants are available?**

The following grants are available:

- **Early Learning Facility Upgrade grants** – This grant supports the enhancement of existing early years’ infrastructure throughout Victoria. These grants will enable owners of buildings used for funded kindergarten programs to apply for a grant to upgrade or expand their existing facility to meet the increasing demand for kindergarten programs while continuing to maintain other early childhood programs.

- **New Early Learning Facility grants** - This grant supports providers who wish to establish a new funded kindergarten program to meet demand in their local area.

- **Integrated Children’s Centre grants** - This grant supports eligible organisations to build an Integrated Children’s Centre that combines a range of integrated services that a family may need to help raise young children.

3. **Eligibility and funding**

3. **Who is eligible to apply for an Integrated Children’s Centre grant?**

The following organisations are eligible for funding under the program:

- local government
- community organisations
- government schools in partnership with local government or community service organisations.

Applicants other than local councils are expected to demonstrate support for the project from their council to ensure the mandatory services are provided in the proposed new integrated children’s centre.

4. **Who is eligible to apply for an Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant?**

The following organisations who own buildings currently used for offering a funded kindergarten program are eligible to apply:

- local government
- kindergarten cluster managers
- schools
- other organisations offering a funded kindergarten program.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Children's Facilities Capital Program grants

5. **Who is eligible to apply for a New Early Learning Facility grant?**

The following organisations are eligible to apply:
- local government
- community organisations
- kindergarten cluster managers
- schools in partnership with local government or community service organisations.

6. **I have recently entered into a building contract for some renovations I am undertaking to my facility, can I apply for a grant for this project?**

No, you must not enter into or have entered into a building contract for any works proposed in your application prior to being informed of the application outcome.

7. **Can I apply for a grant if I have received an early childhood capital grant in the past?**

Yes, if you can demonstrate that demand has increased in the local area since your original successful application, and that the new proposal will further increase the capacity of services in the area to meet this demand.

8. **I am not the building owner, can I apply for a grant to upgrade my building?**

No, applications have to be submitted by the building owner. You are encouraged to work with the building owner of your facility to develop an application.

9. **If I own an existing building and I would like to start a new funded Kindergarten program can I apply for funding to make the building suitable?**

Yes, if you meet eligibility requirements you can apply for a New Early Learning Facility grant on the basis that you deliver a 15 hour funded kindergarten program on completion of the project.

10. **Our building is used to offer a range of early childhood services, but we don't currently offer a funded kindergarten program. Can we still apply?**

Yes, if you meet eligibility requirements you can apply for the New Early Learning Facility grant on the basis that you deliver a 15 hour funded kindergarten program on completion of the project.

11. **What WILL be considered for funding?**

**Integrated Children’s Centre grant**

Funding is available to projects that increase local capacity through the delivery of a 15 hour funded kindergarten program on completion of the project through the development of an integrated children's centre that meets the requirements of the Victorian Integrated Services model.

**New Early Learning Facility grant**

Funding is available to projects that will increase local capacity through the delivery of a 15 hour funded kindergarten program on completion of the project through the:
- refurbishment of an existing building not currently being used to deliver a funded kindergarten program
- construction of a new building to provide a new funded kindergarten program in a new location.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Children's Facilities Capital Program grants

**Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant**
Funding is available to projects that will increase local capacity through the delivery of a 15 hour funded kindergarten program on completion of the project through:
- increasing the capacity of the existing funded kindergarten service
- maintaining the capacity of the existing funded kindergarten service where capacity would otherwise have been reduced.

12. **What WILL NOT be considered for funding?**
Funds are not available from the Children’s Facilities Capital Program for:
- retrospective assistance: an application is considered to be retrospective if a project applicant enters into a commitment, for example, signs a building contract prior to receiving a formal letter of offer from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- purchase of cars, buses and other vehicles
- staff salaries and training
- ongoing administration costs

**Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant only:**
In addition to the above, funds are not available from the Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant for:
- cosmetic upgrades, equipment, white goods
- landscaping, playgrounds or shade sails, except where landscaping, playgrounds or shade sails are required to be relocated or restored due to direct impact of building works funded by the program.

13. **How much funding is available for each grant?**
The maximum funding for the Integrated Children’s Centre grant is 40 per cent of the total capital investment required to a maximum of $1.5 million.

The maximum funding for the Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant is $300,000.

The maximum funding for the New Early Learning Facility grant is 75 per cent of the total project cost up to $600,000 to providers who wish to establish a new funded kindergarten program to meet demand in their local area.

14. **Do I need all the funds required to complete the project committed when I submit my application?**
Yes, you must be able to demonstrate that all funds, with the exception of the grant amount, have been committed to the project at the time of application.

15. **Will I be required to match or contribute to funding if applying for an Early Learning Facility Upgrade grant?**
No, however you will be expected to have secured additional funding from other sources if the project cost is above $300,000.
16. If there are more applications than funds available or there are not enough funds to cover my entire request, will I receive a partial grant?

No, in order to support the financial viability of proposed projects, proposals will not be part funded. The balance of funding across Victoria will be taken into consideration in the allocation of grants from this program.

Criteria for application

17. What are the criteria for assessment of applications?

The application process allows organisations to demonstrate the appropriateness of their service model, the effectiveness of their existing service relationships and the urgency of community need through the following criteria:

- **Capacity** - the project will improve service system capacity by meeting existing or projected unmet demand for kindergarten places without displacing other programs
- **Delivery requirements** - the applicant must demonstrate: full financial capacity to complete the project; capacity to complete the project within a reasonable timeframe; financial viability of the applicant organisation; and consistency with regulatory requirements
- **Integration and partnerships** - the project must demonstrate partnerships with other programs and services according to local community need
- **Demand** – the proposed project is located within a geographic area with high demand pressures for delivery of a 15 hour funded kindergarten that will help meet existing or projected unmet demand for kindergarten places without displacing other programs
- **Partnerships and service model** - the proposed project facilitates more integrated delivery of early childhood and family services through greater collaboration between service providers; more seamless service delivery for participants; and greater inclusiveness and community engagement.
- **Service plan addresses vulnerability** - the proposed project will improve access to universal and targeted services for vulnerable children or children and families experiencing disadvantage

Further information about the criteria is outlined in each grant guideline document located at: [www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/capitalprogram](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/capitalprogram)

18. If my application meets all of the criteria will my project receive funding?

Not necessarily. All applications received will be assessed against the selection criteria. The balance of funding across Victoria will be taken into consideration in the allocation of grants from this program.

19. Do I need to include any information from the service provider in my application?

Yes, applications need to include information about the licensed service capacity, enrolments, wait-lists and financial viability of the service provider, and demonstrate collaboration and evidence of established partnerships. You are encouraged to work with the service provider to develop an application.
20. Does my service need to receive a Capacity Assessment Report (CAR) rating of “D” to be eligible to apply?

No, CAR data is only one piece of evidence that you may choose to support your application. The rating you received as part of the CAR process does not have a direct bearing on your application. You are able to use any number of pieces of information to support your application.

Applications and assistance

21. How do I submit an application?

Applications are developed and submitted through an online process. The online application form can be found on the Children’s Facilities Capital Program website at:

22. Why do we need to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

The purpose of the EOI process is to ensure:
- applications meet the mandatory criteria and have the best possible chance to provide the required information to complete a detailed application
- a required level of evidence is provided to demonstrate the project can be completed within the set timeline expectations.

23. Who can I contact to get help to complete my application or for further information?

Enquiries about the Children’s Facilities Capital Program may be directed to:

*Children’s Facilities Capital Program on:*
Email: childrens.capital.program@edumail.vic.gov.au
Telephone: (03) 9651 3492

*Your regional office contact on:*

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<td>Western Metro</td>
<td>Janet Ryan</td>
<td>Manager, Partnerships and Service Development</td>
<td>(03) 9275 7297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. What do I do if I am having difficulties with the online application form?
If you are experiencing any technical difficulties with the online application form, please contact SmartyGrants Support Desk: service@smartygrants.com.au or call (03) 9320 6888. This service is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time).

25. I am a building owner working in partnership with the service that operates from my building to submit a grant application. I have registered and started to fill in the application form, can the service have their own login to this application?
No. You can only have one login to access your application. If you are a building owner working with the service operating from your building, you will have to either send a pdf version of the application to the service and ask them to complete the relevant parts in a separate file, or create a shared login (possibly from a shared email account) so that you can both access this application.

26. Can I have more than one grant application open at the same time?
It is essential that you only have one application open for entering your responses at any one time, otherwise you may have issues saving the new information into the system. Before opening a new application or editing an existing application on the system, please ensure that you save the current application you are working on and close it.

While it is only possible to have one application open to enter your responses at a time, once you complete your entry and close the form it is possible to open it in the preview view and copy your responses from the preview view into a different application.

If you are experiencing any technical difficulties with the online application form, please contact SmartyGrants Support Desk: service@smartygrants.com.au or call (03) 9320 6888. This service is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time).

Building licensing, regulations and ownership

27. Who can I contact Licensing and Regulations of our children’s service and the requirements for our building?
From 1 January 2012, a new approval system commenced for services operating under the National Law. It comprises of three inter-related approvals; provider approval, service approval and approval to hold a supervisor certificate. Existing services will transition under National Law to hold a provider approval and service approval. Where there are changes made to the premises an application for an amendment to service approval will be required.

Under the National Quality Framework, state and territory Regulatory Authorities are responsible for the approval process. Applications for amendment to service approval must be lodged with the DEECD. Further information on amendments to service approval can be found in the Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 located at www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources or www.education.vic.gov.au/licensedchildservices
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Children’s Facilities Capital Program grants

For other information about the approval and regulation of children’s services in Victoria please contact:
Children’s Services Licensing and Regulations
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Tel: 1300 307 415 Fax: 03 9651 3586
Email: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

28. The land my building is located on is owned by DEECD – what do I do?

You need to complete the ‘DEECD Land Permission Form’ and submit it with your application. You will need to have this signed by the school principal and the president of the school council and then forward to the DEECD Regional Office contact for the completion of page 2 of the form. If you require further assistance with the form please contact the appropriate regional office contact (see list in question 23 above).

Project costs and planning

29. How long do I have to complete my project?

Projects must be completed within 12 months (Early Learning Facility Upgrade grants), 18 months (New Early Learning Facility grants) or 24 months (Integrated Children’s Centre grant) of receiving funding as per the terms and conditions of the grant. Terms and conditions can be found in each grant guidelines at: www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/capitalprogram

30. What happens if the project runs over budget?

The Department does not hold additional funding to meet cost overruns for capital works projects.

You need to ensure that you have adequately budgeted for the total development cost of your project prior to submitting an application and you will need to monitor the costs carefully throughout the project.

31. What are cost plans?

Cost planning is an essential element of construction planning that must be undertaken to ensure that projects can be delivered on time and budget.

A cost plan breaks down the components of a project into elements such as materials and labour, to show how the budget has been allocated, when costs are anticipated, and to ensure that all elements of the project can be delivered within the budget.

For most construction projects, cost planning is undertaken at three stages in the building process:

- Schematic design stage (Cost Plan B)
- Design Development stage (Cost Plan C)
- Tendering stage (Cost Plan D).