Vanuatu - Australia

# Community Grants Program

Vanuatu–Australia Partnership

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Vanuatu-Australia Community Grants Program?

The Vanuatu-Australia Community Grants Program (VACGP) is a small grants program administered by the Australian High Commission in Port Vila, Vanuatu. It is designed to support community-led projects that improve quality of life. We strongly encourage applications for projects that would benefit disadvantaged groups including women, youth, those with disabilities, and those from isolated communities.

Applicants may apply for projects that take up to one year to complete. The High Commission does not fund projects above VUV4,700,000 per project.

### When can I apply?

Online application for the 2026-27 intake opens from November 9 to November 30.

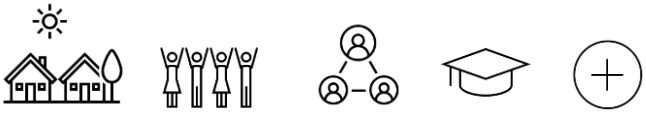
**Tip:** Applications that benefit a larger number of people within a community will be given higher priority than those that benefit only a small group.

### How much funding can I apply for?

The Australian High Commission can provide funding for projects of up to **VUV 4.7 million**.

### Who can apply?

Communities, individuals, Members of Parliament, local registered NGOs, academic institutions,



and other such organisations engaged in development activities in Vanuatu.

### How can I apply?

All applications for the **2026 Vanuatu–Australia Community Grants Program** must be submitted through our online grants management system, **SmartyGrants**.

SmartyGrants is an online platform that can be accessed from anywhere with an internet connection.

You can access the application form through the Australian High Commission's website: https://vanuatu.embassy.gov.au/pvla/communitygrants.html

### When must grant activities be completed?

All successful applicants will have one year (or 12 months) to complete their project.



## What activities are eligible for support?

Applications should primarily aim to achieve practical and tangible outcomes of high development impact.

VACGP may fund:

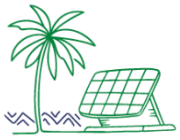
- Building materials and equipment.
- Transport and freight.
- Specialised labour such as electricians, plumbers, welders or site supervisors, where expertise is needed to complete the project.
- Other one-off project implementation costs.



**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects**, including innovative solutions such as solar-powered water systems and improved rural toilet designs.

**High-impact community buildings**, such as community playgrounds, market houses, and cooperatives.





**Solar lighting systems** for schools and market houses

Infrastructure that supports climate resilience and adaptation to climate change.





Sports facilities and equipment.

Building repair.



## What projects are NOT eligible?

VACGP does not fund:

- Drilling of new boreholes.
- Bulk purchasing of items for later distribution (for example, purchasing iron roofing or tools to distribute at the applicant's discretion without specific communities listed).
- Purchasing of vehicles, land, or buildings.
- Sponsoring a sporting tournament or cultural displays that do not have a clear development benefit.
- Projects that primarily support a private commercial business or generate private profit for an individual or company.
- Ongoing operating costs such as salaries, wages, electricity bills, fuel, internet charges or routine maintenance.
- Projects that do not have a clearly defined location and beneficiary community.
- Large-scale road construction or road rehabilitation projects.
- Buildings intended primarily as evacuation centres.

## Can I submit more than one application?

Yes, and you can apply on behalf of your community.



## Can VACGP support projects that generate income for a community?

VACGP may only support income-generating activities where the benefits are shared by a community or community group, and any profits are reinvested for community benefit. Examples may include women's cooperatives, community-managed agricultural projects, community markets or other community enterprises.

## Can VACGP fund projects that distribute goods to multiple communities?

Projects must be located at a specific site, community or village. We do not fund projects that involve purchasing goods for later distribution to multiple communities unless the beneficiary communities are clearly identified in the application.

## What makes a project competitive for funding?

While all eligible applications are assessed on their merits, VACGP will favourably consider projects that:

- are located in disadvantaged or isolated areas
- encourage communities to become self-reliant
- have a significant local contribution, for example labour, materials, freight or additional financial contributions made by the community

## Can VACGP pay for specialised labour?

Yes. VACGP can fund specialised labour where particular skills are needed to complete a project, such as an electrician, plumber, carpenter, or welder. This must be for a specific piece of work at an agreed fixed price, rather than ongoing wages or salaries.



Applicants must provide two quotes showing the work to be completed and the total price. For example, a technician could quote a fixed price for the installation of one solar panel. VACGP requires provision of a business licence, training certificate or other evidence of the specialised labour provider's qualifications or experience.

## Who is a referee?

A referee is someone who can support your application by explaining why the project is important to the community and why they believe you can successfully deliver it.

A referee must be independent of the project team and cannot be the applicant, or anyone directly involved in the project.

**Tip:** Choose someone who is well known and respected in the community, business sector, or government, and who can provide a reliable reference for your application.



## Application checklist:

You will need the following information and documents to complete your online application in the **SmartyGrants** system:

- ✓ Your correct contact details, including a **WhatsApp number**, so we can contact you if your application is successful or if we need more information.
- ✓ Contact details for **two referees**
- ✓ Contact details for the project coordinator, assistant project coordinator, and a female community representative...
- ✓ A **project budget** that includes all project costs and uses only one currency throughout.
- ✓ A signed agreement from the **landowner** confirming their support for the project, if the project involves community infrastructure.
- ✓ A letter of support from the **Ministry of Health**, if the project involves building a clinic.
- ✓ An agreement with your local **Member of Parliament (MP)** if the MP is contributing funding to the project.
- ✓ A sketch, design, or plan of the project, if it involves community infrastructure.
- ✓ Two quotations, demonstrating value for money, for the purchase of materials.
- ✓ Two quotations from transport providers, including shipping vessels where applicable, showing value for money, if the project requires transporting building materials, equipment, or other project items.
- ✓ Two quotations for specialized labour where applicable, showing value for money, if the project requires specialized skills or technical expertise.
- ✓ Any additional documents that may support your application.

## Bank fees and payment shortfalls:

### ➡ Will the full invoiced amount be paid to my supplier?

Not always. Payments to suppliers may be subject to bank transaction fees or currency exchange costs, which can vary and cannot be calculated in advance. As a result, a supplier may receive slightly less than the amount shown on their invoice.

### ➡ What happens if my supplier receives less than the invoiced amount?

If this happens, the grant recipient is responsible for covering any shortfall and ensuring the supplier receives the full amount required. By submitting an application, you acknowledge and accept this responsibility should your project be funded.

## What if I need help?

If you have any questions while completing your application, please contact us on **22777 (Port Vila)** or email **CommunityGrantsVanuatu@dfat.gov.au** during business hours.

Please include your **application number** in the subject line of your email if applicable.

