2026-27 Aboriginal Community Food Security Grant Guidelines

Grant overview

VACCHO is partnering with the Victorian Government to deliver the **2026-27 Aboriginal Community Food Security Grants** to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait food security activities and Community-led initiatives in line with self-determination principles.

These grants recognise the pivotal role of Aboriginal-led organisations in delivering food relief and food security initiatives that are culturally responsive and meet the needs of Victoria's Aboriginal Communities. The ongoing impacts of colonisation are visible in every aspect of Aboriginal lives, including inequity in education, health, housing and other socio-economic areas[1]. These interrelated impacts mean there are a disproportionate number of Aboriginal people in Victoria facing food insecurity, compared to non-Indigenous Victorians[2]. Food insecurity adversely affects physical and mental health, and people's ability to pursue employment, education, and other opportunities that contribute to wellbeing[3].

These grants are open to all Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal Community Gathering Places and Aboriginal-led organisations.

How much can you apply for?

Grant size	$10,000, $25,000, $50,000 or $100,000
Total funding pool	$725,000
Number of grants available	Up to 25 grants, depending on the size of individual grants awarded
See below under *What will you get?* for more details	

Are you eligible?

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal Community Gathering Places and Aboriginal-led organisations are all eligible. If you have any questions about whether you're eligible, please contact VACCHO.

[1] Yoorrook Justice Commission, The Impacts of Colonisation | Yoorrook Justice Commission, Yoorrook Justice Commission website, 2025

[2] Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Food Policies for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health - VACCHO, 2025

[3] Ejiohuo O, Onyeaka H, Unegbu KC, Chikezie OG, Odeyemi OA, Lawal A, Odeyemi OA. Nourishing the Mind: How Food Security Influences Mental Wellbeing. Nutrients, Nourishing the Mind: How Food Security Influences Mental Wellbeing - PMC, 2024

What are the objectives of these grants?

Projects funded through the grants are intended to strengthen Aboriginal Community food security, in a self-determined way. This includes:

- removing barriers to food access for Aboriginal families facing food insecurity.
- developing or strengthening local food systems, i.e. food production or food share initiatives.
- facilitating connections and referrals to other supports and services that people need alongside food.
- strengthening community partnerships and networks to improve access to food, reduce duplication and improve effectiveness.
- other place based, self-determined responses to food security priorities as identified by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

What can you use the grant for?

Grants are flexible and VACCHO invites organisations to propose activities or initiatives that align with the above list of objectives. Here are some examples of initiatives that we would encourage:

- Food pantries to directly increase access to food.
- Developing partnerships and coordinating with local food relief agencies.
- Developing or expanding community food production assets (for example community gardens, community food share initiatives) to produce and share food.
- Events, workshops, yarning circles to discuss and share food knowledge, and bring the Community together around food.
- Initiatives to increase food-related skills such as cooking activities, learning about food safety, and food-related life skills.
- Development or updating of locally tailored food-related information and resources for Community.

We will consider both new activities and the expansion of existing initiatives. However, please note that as this is a one-off grant, it may be suitable for the establishment of new activities but not ongoing costs.

It is expected that applications seeking the larger grants will outline activities that match the funds in scope as per the table below.

Funding amount sought	Activities
$10,000 or $25,000	Small scale initiatives
$50,000 or $100,000	Larger scale initiatives reaching bigger or multiple communities

What timelines apply?

It's expected that projects will be completed within approximately 12-15 months. VACCHO will be available to support the delivery of initiatives throughout the project period. We will seek a progress report in May-June 2027 and then again for projects still running, in December 2027.

Funded organisations may be invited to showcase their initiatives and share learnings at a statewide gathering, toward the end of 2027.

What will you get?

Successful applicants will receive a grant amount of $10,000, $25,000, $50,000 or $100,000. This is a one-off grant.
Smaller grants of $10,000 or $25,000 will be delivered in one upfront payment. Larger grants $50,000 or $100,000 will be delivered in two payments.
VACCHO will be available to provide support as needed throughout your project.

How will we decide?

We will use the following selection criteria in assessing applications.

1. Project addresses a demonstrated need in your Community.

2. Project aligns to the grant objectives.

3. Project is clear and includes reasonable cost estimates and a broad plan for delivery within realistic timeframes.

Grant timelines

Applications open	Monday 29 June 2026, 9am
Applications close	Monday 20 July 2026, 5pm
Notification of outcome	August 2026
Contracts signed and funding received	Early September 2026 First payment received for all grants late September 2026 Second payment for larger grants to be paid as per date on grant agreement
Project Activities begin	Early September 2026
Project Activities end	Approximately December 2027

How to apply

The application form along with instructions on how to apply is online at the VACCHO funding portal at https://vaccho.smartygrants.com.au/foodsecurity

For more information, please contact: Belinda Nowakowski, Senior Project Officer, Healthy Communities team

T +61 3 9411 9411 E: healthycommunities@vaccho.org.au