

# Regional Worker Accommodation Fund \$150 million

Stakeholder briefing



## Regional Worker Accommodation Fund Objectives

The Regional Worker Accommodation Fund aims to increase prosperity, opportunity, and liveability for regional communities.

The fund will invest in **housing, accommodation and related infrastructure** that **increases** the supply of **appropriate** and **affordable** housing and accommodation for key workers and their families.

### **Grant Funding**

Applicants may seek a **minimum of \$150,000** and up to a **maximum of \$5,000,000** in grant funding per project (exclusive of GST)

## Regional Worker Accommodation Fund Definitions



**Key workers** - Private and public sector regional workers essential to local prosperity, opportunity and liveability, where their role requires a physical presence in that location to perform the work. This can include seasonal workers.



**New housing options** – A net gain or increase in housing or accommodation that is suitable for the needs of the key workers and their families.



**Affordable** – The cost to the key worker does not prevent them from accessing the accommodation over the medium to long term (minimum of 5 years following project completion).



**Appropriate** – Accommodation that is safe, fit-for-purpose and suitable for the needs of workers and their families, as well as employers.

## Regional Worker Accommodation Fund Outcomes



A net increase in appropriate and affordable housing and accommodation for key workers and their families.



Regional businesses and services are better able to meet their immediate and future staffing needs.



Regional communities have improved access to services through attraction and retention of workers in sectors critical to the prosperity of their location.



A thriving, healthy and sustainable workforce, through the provision of safe, well designed and environmentally sustainable projects that are integrated with their community and enhance local amenity.

## Key dates Round 1 - indicative

Activity	
Expression of Interest applications open	1 December 2023
Expression of Interest applications close	25 February 2024
Expression of Interest applications assessment	March 2024
Successful Eol proponents invited to make Formal Application	Late March 2024
Formal Applications close	Mid-April 2024 (3 weeks after opening)
Formal Applications assessment	April – June 2024
Project announcements	From July 2024
Project completion	30 June 2026

## Regional Worker Accommodation Fund Co-contributions

- The fund is a negotiated grant program.
- All applicants are encouraged to make a co-contribution towards the total project budget of eligible activities and expenses for key worker housing.
- The co-contribution must not be from other Victorian Government grants or funded programs for the eligible activities and expenses.
- Project proposals able to demonstrate financial contribution towards eligible activities and expenses will be considered favourably during assessment. Projects with higher co-contributions are highly preferred and will be prioritised.
- Private sector applicants must confirm their maximum level of contribution towards eligible activities and expenses.
- Applicants must provide evidence that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the department, that the applicant has sufficient funds available for the stated co – contribution amount, if applicable.



## What will be funded?

- ✓ Funding will be provided for housing, accommodation and related infrastructure that increases the supply of appropriate and affordable housing and accommodation for key workers and their families, to support job security, economic growth, and improved access to services across rural and regional Victoria.
- ✓ Applicants must demonstrate evidence that there is a need in the proposed location.
- ✓ The Victorian Government will only support worker accommodation projects that comply with all relevant codes, support accessibility, and meet health and safety standards. To achieve this, the government will only work with reputable developers and operators who have a proven track record in developing high standards and compliant buildings, as well as meeting best practices in tenancy management.

## Projects must:

- ✓ Provide housing or accommodation for key workers and their families in regional locations
- ✓ Deliver a net gain or increase in appropriate housing or accommodation
- ✓ Provide affordable housing or accommodation for key workers and their families for a minimum of 5 years following completion
- ✓ Provide housing or accommodation that will be available for key workers and their families at least 70% of the time throughout the annual period of demand.
- ✓ Show a direct benefit to the location and its community through alignment with the fund objectives and outcomes.





## Eligible activities and expenditure

- ✓ New key worker housing and accommodation design, site, construction and building costs
- ✓ Enabling infrastructure design and construction costs, but only to the extent the infrastructure enables delivery of key worker accommodation
- ✓ Upgrade, redevelopment, or expansion of existing buildings, where the project will provide a net gain of worker accommodation, e.g., refurbishment of existing dwellings i.e. office spaces, hotels, motels, etc.
- ✓ Consultant fees and professional services required for the delivery of the funded project



## Ineligible activities and expenditure

- ✘ Requests for retrospective funding where projects have been completed or have commenced construction prior to receiving funding approval
- ✘ Activities that are already funded or partially funded by other Victorian Government grants or funding agreements
- ✘ Projects located in metropolitan areas or outside Victoria – Note cross-border initiatives can be considered on a case-by-case basis
- ✘ Strategic planning activities or services, such as planning scheme amendments, growth area plans, precinct structure plans
- ✘ Demand or feasibility studies, business cases or masterplans
- ✘ Upgrade, maintenance, or renewal of existing buildings where no additional key worker accommodation is being provided
- ✘ Student, community, social or public housing and accommodation
- ✘ General business operating costs and administrative running costs