Victorian Production Fund – Games Guidelines

Essentials

About this program

The Victorian Production Fund (VPF) – Games supports Victorian digital games development companies and creators to develop and release a variety of digital games.

This program accepts applications to support games at pre-production, production and post-release.

Applicants can apply at any time.

Our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

VicScreen is committed to building a thriving and inclusive screen industry that celebrates diversity in both content and people. Applications are expected to authentically reflect a diversity of voices across storytelling, teams and audiences. Applications should demonstrate how the diversity represented in their content is meaningfully reflected within the creative team or that collaboration is embedded from the earliest stages of development. Applicants must outline their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their applications. Before applying, please read VicScreen's DEI Roadmap to 2033.

What are we looking for?

Original digital game projects:

- from Victorian developers at all stages of their career
- that have a mix of creative, cultural and commercial outcomes
- that have clear plans for the stage of development and paths to investment and market
- that support the ongoing development and sustainability of individuals and businesses, as well as the broader Victorian screen sector
- that contribute to VicScreen's strategic priorities of:
  - driving industry growth and jobs
  - generating compelling Victorian content and IP
  - developing skills and talent
  - enhancing Victoria's reputation as a vibrant, diverse and creative game development hub.

Who is eligible?

To apply, you must be:

- an Australian company based in and operating out of Victoria for at least six months immediately prior to the funding application, or
- an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident who can substantiate residency in Victoria for at least six months immediately prior to the funding application.

View our Terms of Trade for further details on eligibility requirements.

What projects are eligible?

- Original digital game projects targeting PC, consoles, mobile, VR, AR or XR with a digital and/or physical release strategy.
- For **pre-production** funding, projects must have:
  - Early-stage concept or prototype materials showing the game's intended key elements such as mechanics, themes, art style, narrative or other game features
  - Development documentation showing the planned work and investment for this stage and plans for securing additional funding and moving into full production.
- For **production** funding, projects must have:
  - Concept materials showing the game's intended key elements and / or a playable digital prototype ready to move into full production
  - Development documentation showing planned work and investment of the project towards a public release.
- For **post-release** funding, projects must have:
  - An existing publicly released project
  - Development documentation that shows a package of work that builds on the released game such as localisation, porting, downloadable content, or other game content.
- Refer to the VPF Games Application Documents Checklist for documentation details and templates

What projects are not eligible for this program?

- In addition to projects excluded under VicScreen's Terms of Trade, the following project types are ineligible under this program:
  - Projects that contain or have relationships to gambling, exploitative pay-to-win mechanics, play-to-earn mechanics, or high risk and volatile trading products or technologies
  - Projects with substantial First Peoples content that do not have Key Creatives from an appropriate background

  - Projects designed primarily for educational, training and simulation, research, marketing or other business-to-business audiences or purposes.
- A project that has been declined for funding from this program unless VicScreen has deemed it significantly reworked.
- A project that has been declined three times for funding from this program.

What can you receive funding for?

- For all stages of development:
  - Specific project features that are vital to the stage goal, as outlined below
  - Staffing costs associated with the development team
  - Engaging highly experienced mentors and/or consultants to assist with creative, technical, or business elements of the project, including accessibility and diversity consulting. For new and emerging teams, this is strongly recommended
  - Legal fees, including assistance with distribution, licensing and publishing agreements and intellectual property protection
  - Accounting costs and advice.
- For pre-production:
  - Development work necessary for a prototype, proof of concept or vertical slice able to move into full production
  - Business development including assistance with publishers, pitch deck generation, branding and market strategy, distributors, franchise development and identifying alternate revenue streams.
- For production:
  - Development work necessary to a project's public release
  - Audience engagement and marketing strategies appropriate to pre-release of the project
- For post-release:
  - Ongoing content development and delivery post project release
  - Localisation or porting costs
  - Additional marketing or post-release audience engagement including strategy planning, press kits, user acquisition, social media and community management.

How much can you apply for?

- Funding is capped at $300,000 per application or $500,000 per project.

- You must contribute 50% or more of the stage budget through in-kind work, applicant cash, external funds or some other combination. You must provide evidence of external funds contribution to the finance plan as part of your application.
- For pre-production, the requested amount should target between 10% and 25% of the project's total budget.
- For production, the requested amount should target between 10% and 50% of the project's total budget.
- For post-release, the requested amount should target up to 50% of the post-production budget.
- In some circumstances the requested amount cap may be exceeded for Victorian production companies with projects providing exceptional value or benefit in meeting VPF objectives.
- Funding is provided as an assigned production investment, where VicScreen's equity, copyright and recoupment position is assigned to the applicant.
- Applicants can discuss their funding requests with VicScreen prior to submitting an application.

Projects with First Peoples Content

- VicScreen does not support projects with substantial First Peoples content without a First Peoples member on the key creative team.
- If your project includes First Peoples Content, please refer to VicScreen's First Peoples Content Statement to ensure your project is eligible and you have the required documents ready to submit with your application. If you are unsure about what is required, or have any questions, please get in contact with VicScreen to discuss further.

Who can you talk to about this program?

- Head of Games and Interactive – Paul Callaghan, 03 9660 3224
- Production Executive (Games and Interactive) – Lise Leitner, 03 9660 3277
- For technical issues or form submission enquiries, Senior Grants Officer – Susannah Britt, 03 9660 3206

The Details

What do you need to apply?

- Discuss your project with VicScreen staff, including eligibility criteria and the submission and assessment process.
- Complete the online application form and provide the supporting documentation in the Application Documents Checklist.

What happens after you apply?

- Your application will be assessed by our games assessment panel consisting of qualified staff and external industry specialists.
- Funding is competitive and assessors take into account the Assessment Criteria (see below), VicScreen's availability of funds, the diversity of the current slate of projects and teams across all platforms, as well as the perceived need for VicScreen funds by the applicant.
- Funding recommendations are presented to VicScreen management, CEO or Board for approval.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Quality & feasibility of the project
  - How the project is compelling and distinctive across its mechanics, narrative, visual style, use of technology or other key creative elements, and how clearly the supplied creative materials communicate the project's vision and direction
  - The level of planning in delivering the project and how clearly the supplied materials show the project's scope, tasks, milestones, deliverables and risks
  - The ability and skills of the team in delivering the project's scope.
- Ability of the project to meet the objectives of the Victorian Production Fund
  - The level of economic benefits generated including the level of confirmed funding, established commercial relationships, and/or clear and achievable plans to secure future funding
  - The level of employment and spend in Victoria triggered by this stage
  - The project's impact on the long-term sustainability and commercial goals of the developer
  - The level of cultural value and impact the project has in terms of Australian practitioners, experiences and representation
- Contribution of the project towards VicScreen's broader strategic objectives
  - How the project contributes to industry development, including developing key talent, growing development businesses, providing additional training or career development opportunities, driving innovation, supporting a diverse network of practitioners and supporting new creative and cultural infrastructure
  - Promoting Victoria as a vibrant destination through commercial and cultural success
  - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
    - » How robustly the application advances diversity across one or more core areas:

- Meaningful representation of diversity in themes, narratives, any in-game characters and target audience
- Project leadership and Key Creatives
- Industry access and opportunities for training/career progression/mentoring.

– Accessibility

» The extent to which accessibility measures have been considered and planned for, along with the suitability of proposed measures

How long until a decision is made?

You can expect to know the outcome within 8-10 weeks of submitting an application.

What happens if you get funding?

- You will be contacted by email once the outcome is known.
- Successful applicants will enter into a standard, non-negotiable agreement with VicScreen, setting out the terms and conditions of the approved funding, including deliverables and credit requirements.

What happens if you don't get funding?

- We will contact you to let you know if you have been unsuccessful in obtaining funding.
- You are welcome to get in touch with the Program Manager to receive feedback on your application.

What will help your application?

- Read these guidelines and the Terms of Trade, which set out the core terms on which VicScreen conducts its business. Terms underlined in black appear in the website glossary.
- Review the online application form – make sure you have all required documents ready to be submitted with the application.
- Read our First Peoples Content Statement.
- Read our DEI Roadmap to 2033.
- Make sure your application speaks to the Assessment Criteria.

Ready to start your application?

Victorian Production Fund – Games Application Form