



CAREER
COUNSELLORS
FUNDING
GUIDELINES



1 PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist organisations applying for funding to deliver the Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service for the period June 2021 to June 2023.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the Department) may negotiate with applicants to ensure geographic coverage and adequate service delivery to demographic groups. The Department may also seek to facilitate connections between applicants to ensure comprehensive service delivery in a particular region.

Further information, including a link to the application form is available at jobs.vic.gov.au/career-counsellors

2 WHAT IS THE JOBS VICTORIA CAREER COUNSELLORS SERVICE?

The Victorian Government has invested an unprecedented \$619.4 million from the 2020-21 Budget to support Victorian jobseekers into work through an expanded and integrated suite of Jobs Victoria employment services.

An important element of this investment is the allocation of \$18.8 million to increase access to professional career counselling. Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors will provide personalised career guidance to Victorians who require support to understand, develop, and self-manage their career options.

The Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service aims to:

- inform and guide jobseekers to make informed decisions about suitable work and education/training opportunities in line with their aspirations, needs and labour market trends
- reduce long-term unemployment by supporting displaced/retrenched workers, as well as young people entering the workforce, towards employment that suits their skills and circumstances
- assist jobseekers to engage in skills development that will lead to employment
- support pathways to economic security for those in precarious work
- strengthen lifelong learning and provide an active approach to labour market engagement and transitions.

Career Counsellors will have a minimum graduate certificate qualification in career development to ensure highly skilled and quality service delivery.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions is responsible for implementation of the program, via Jobs Victoria.

3 WHY IS THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FUNDING CAREER COUNSELLORS?

As a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, many Victorians are facing unemployment for the first time and find the experience challenging. Others, such as recent graduates, need assistance to identify their career options and pathways in a tight labour market.

Career Counsellors will add consistency, quality, depth and capacity to the current career guidance services in Victoria, complementing other services such as those offered through TAFE Skills and Jobs Centres, the secondary education system and the broader suite of Jobs Victoria services.

Professional career guidance can support people to understand their work options and give them the tools and confidence they need to pursue them.

Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors sit alongside other elements of Jobs Victoria support, including:

- **Jobs Victoria Advocates** – working in the community to connect jobseekers to information, advice and support.
- **Jobs Victoria Employment Services** – providing personalised and tailored support to long-term unemployed jobseekers and jobseekers at-risk of long-term unemployment via a network of local employment services across the state.
- **Jobs Victoria Fund** – supporting increased employment opportunities for jobseekers with a focus on the people who have been most affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic, including women and other priority jobseekers.
- **Jobs Victoria online hub** - matching jobseekers who are ready to work with employers who are looking for skilled and talented workers.
- **Jobs Victoria hotline** - providing information and helping to connect jobseekers to local services that can support them to prepare for, and gain, employment.
- **Social procurement investment** –maximising the jobs flowing from government spending.
- **Place-based approaches** – complementing other Jobs Victoria services by supporting local leadership and solutions to unemployment.

Further information and background on these initiatives can be found on our website at jobs.vic.gov.au. The Department is responsible for implementing the suite of Jobs Victoria services.

4 HOW WILL THE CAREER COUNSELLORS SERVICE WORK?

The Department will provide funding to one or more organisations with expertise in delivery of career guidance services to deliver the Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service until June 2023.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Organisations with appropriate expertise in delivery of career guidance will be funded to deliver career guidance services to Victorian jobseekers and others in need of career guidance across the state, including:

- exploring and developing career options
- strengthening jobseeker capacity through exploring aspirations and interests, confidence building, and determining career goals
- support to understand marketable and transferrable strengths;
- guidance on skills development to support career goals
- guidance to develop self-managed career management skills and resilience to navigate labour market changes independently
- preparation and assistance with job interviews resumes, and writing selection criteria responses
- referral to other employment and non-employment related services as required (e.g. TAFE, higher education, Jobs Victoria suite of programs, specialist services i.e., mental health, CALD organisations).

It is expected that these services will be delivered by career guidance professionals with post-graduate qualifications in career development (e.g. Graduate Certificate in Career Development Practice or Graduate Certificate in Career Education and Development).

Funded organisations will be required to deliver services to meet the needs of a diverse range of clients including people with disability, multicultural, and Aboriginal clients through the provision of culturally safe, inclusive, and responsive services.

Funded organisations will also be required to perform the following functions:

- ensure relevant professional standards are met in the delivery of the careers counselling services
- support continuous professional development of careers counsellors employed to deliver the service
- work collaboratively with other services to support the needs of jobseekers (e.g. other Jobs Victoria services, TAFE Skills and Jobs Centres)
- report on activities delivered, including data on clients accessing services and performance data.

Jobs Victoria will promote the career counsellors and actively support referral of clients to Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors via Jobs Victoria Advocates, the Jobs Victoria hotline and other channels.

DELIVERY MODEL

In funding the expansion of career counselling services in Victoria, the Department recognises that different delivery approaches may be effective in different circumstances across the state. For example, in locations in Melbourne and regional cities, it may be most effective to have 'fixed' staff in community locations who are able to develop strong local connections with other services. Complementing these community-based career counsellors, increased access to services may be offered through sessional 'on-demand' career counsellors who meet with clients at a time and place that suits the client. This 'outreach' model may be of particular value in regions with lower population density but may also suit people who prefer a more flexible approach. The availability of career counselling services via digital channels (e.g. utilising video conference calls) is also likely to meet the needs of some clients, particularly in rural areas, and thus may increase access to the services.

As a result, the Department welcomes proposals for delivery models that are tailored to specific community needs and offer service-effectiveness and value for money.

Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors will be available across Victoria, with resources allocated in proportion to population needs.

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors will target support to jobseekers and other Victorians who need support to understand their career options and opportunities but lack access to professional career guidance services. This includes people who are unemployed, underemployed, out of the labour market or employed but seeking alternative employment.

Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors will be most suited to people who:

- are unsure of their work/career options and pathways
- are seeking employment but lack a clear vocational pathway/plan
- are unemployed and struggling to secure work due to lack of work experience (e.g. recent graduates)
- are underemployed, or precariously employed, and seeking more secure and/or skilled work
- need support to plan a transition to a new occupation/career
- wish to pursue a professional career involving tertiary education pathways.

Clients of Commonwealth employment services, such as jobactive, can access Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors services if they require additional, more personalised career development support than is currently available to them.

Career Counsellors will not be suitable for individuals who:

- understand their career development needs and pathways but require further information (e.g. specific courses to undertake, basic resume writing and work readiness). Such jobseekers will be able to access further information and advice from Jobs Victoria Advocates or their local Skills and Jobs Centre
- require intensive long-term case management for more complex vocational and non-vocational needs. Such jobseekers will be able to access the support of employment mentors in their local Jobs Victoria Employment Services or other services more relevant to their specific non-vocational needs
- are seeking advice on training and careers pathways focused on the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and can readily access Skills and Jobs Centres and Skills Gateway services
- are current secondary students given existing career guidance in the school system or who are recent school leavers and able to access adequate support through the Commonwealth Government's School Leavers Information Service.

Jobs Victoria will assist with referral of jobseekers and other clients to the most appropriate services, through mechanisms such as Jobs Victoria Advocates and the Jobs Victoria hotline.

5 WHO CAN APPLY FOR JOBS VICTORIA CAREER COUNSELLORS FUNDING?

To be eligible for funding, organisations must:

- be an incorporated entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have organisational resources to mobilise a workforce of appropriately qualified career counsellors (minimum graduate certificate qualification)
- have capacity to oversee the delivery of high-quality career guidance services, including the maintenance of professional standards of delivery and the provision of professional support to career counsellors.

Organisations contracted to deliver employment and/or employment-related services (including vocational training) under Commonwealth or Victorian Government programs wishing to apply must demonstrate how funding for Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors would complement, not duplicate, existing service provision and how they would ensure that the services delivered under this initiative will be additional to existing service delivery. Provision of funding to applicants will be subject to the successful completion of Financial Risk Assessments conducted by the Department.

6 FUNDING DETAILS

Funding is available to support service delivery for the period June 2021 to June 2023.

There is no fixed funding rate/price for the delivery of the Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service. It is expected that costs will vary with the proposed service model.

Applications for funding must include the proposed number of clients to be supported through the services and justification that the funding sought provides value for money. See section 7, Selection Criteria, for more information.

Funding will need to cover the salary/wages of career counsellors including superannuation and other on-costs, on-going professional development, transport, supervision, coordination, accommodation, information technology/digital costs and any other costs deemed necessary to deliver an effective and high-quality service.

The Department will negotiate a grant agreement with organisations selected for funding under this initiative, and the grant agreement will specify the payment arrangements. An indicative payment schedule is as follows:

Payment amount	Milestone
Approximately 25% of total funding	Commencement/signing of contract and provision of a detailed delivery plan
Approximately 70% of total funding	Payments every three months spread across the duration of the contract, subject to satisfactory performance
Approximately 5% of total funding	Compliance with contractual requirements, such as completion of project, reporting and financial acquittal

7 APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Department is seeking applications from organisations with relevant expertise and capacity to deliver the Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service across Victoria. The Department welcomes proposals for different delivery models as outlined in section 4.

Applications will be received through a single application round, opening 19 April 2021 and closing 13 May 2021.

Applicants are required to complete an online application form, including the following information:

- organisational details
- location/s for proposed service delivery
- proposed methodology for service delivery
- proposed practice approach
- proposed approach to engagement of careers counselling professionals
- proposed costing/budget
- response to the selection criteria (see page 10).

All applications will be assessed against the selection criteria by the Department, in consultation with regional offices and other Victorian Government departments if required. The Department may negotiate with applicants to ensure geographic coverage and consistent service delivery quality across regions. Applicants will also need to provide financial statements to enable the Department to undertake a Financial Risk Assessment.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

UNDERSTANDING OF VICTORIAN LABOUR MARKET CHARACTERISTICS AND PROGRAMS

Applicants must demonstrate a strong understanding of labour market characteristics and key services in Victoria relevant to delivery of career development and support services.

DEMONSTRATED EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN DELIVERY OF CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES

Applicants must demonstrate their prior experience and success in delivering career development and support services to the community. Applicants should include previous examples of career guidance delivery, including the types of clients assisted and outcomes achieved.

SOUND METHODOLOGY TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE CAREER COUNSELLING SERVICES

Applicants must clearly describe the proposed approach to delivering the Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors service including details of the proposed service model, resource allocation, delivery locations, partnerships, strategies to engage career guidance professionals and systems for continuous improvement.

SERVICE FLEXIBILITY, INNOVATION AND FIDELITY

Applications must demonstrate how they will offer service flexibility and innovation to ensure community needs are met while balancing fidelity to their proposed model. Applications will need to indicate how the organisation will ensure services are culturally inclusive, safe, and tailored for diverse clients.

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

Applications must demonstrate that the organisation has capacity to successfully deliver the services, including systems for engagement, management and support of Jobs Victoria Career Counsellors. Applications should identify any prior experience with similar programs.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Applications must demonstrate how the funding sought will deliver value for money through the services delivered (e.g. leveraging of other support services or resources).

8 GRANT APPROVAL AND GRANT AGREEMENT

The Minister for Employment is responsible for the approval of grant funding. Subject to acceptance of a formal letter of offer, a legally binding grant agreement will be prepared for successful applicants. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the State of Victoria detailing all funding obligations and conditions.

The grant agreement will describe the services to be delivered, proposed outcomes, milestones, timeframes and conditions of payment. Services can only commence once the agreement is executed by both parties.

The State of Victoria has full discretion and authority to determine which organisations are eligible to receive funding under the program and the amount of funding offered. The State of Victoria reserves the right to withdraw the offer of funding if the grant agreement is not finalised or if the project has not commenced within the specified timeframe.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- report on service delivery, as specified by the Department, including details of people assisted, activities undertaken and outcomes achieved
- cooperate with the Department in communicating and promoting the benefits of the program, such as the preparation of media releases and case studies
- consult with the Department prior to the publication of any promotional materials relating to Jobs Victoria
- liaise with the Department to coordinate any events or announcements related to the activity
- provide annual company and financial reports as contracted and upon request
- contribute information on outcomes for use in program evaluation reviews and/or marketing materials
- cooperate fully with audit activities and evaluations undertaken either during or after the completion of the program
- acknowledge financial and any other support from the Victorian Government according to the Acknowledgement and Publicity Guidelines as amended from time to time. These can be found at [vic.gov.au/brand-victoria-guidelines-logos](https://www.vic.gov.au/brand-victoria-guidelines-logos).

NEGOTIATION OF GRANT FUNDS

The State of Victoria reserves the right to negotiate grant funding stipulations with successful applicants.

Payment of grant funds is only to be made following documented evidence of milestone conditions being met. The approval and allocation of funding will comply with the Financial Management Act.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Department will, to the extent permitted by law, treat all information as strictly confidential and commercial-in-confidence where relevant. Any personal information will be managed in accordance with the published Privacy Policy, which can be found at business.vic.gov.au/privacy.

CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information

- Jobs Victoria website: jobs.vic.gov.au
- Email: info@jobs.vic.gov.au
- Phone: 1300 208 575

Please note that engagement with the Department, or any Victorian Government representative, does not constitute endorsement of any application for funding.

ACCESSIBILITY

Word and PDF versions are available at jobs.vic.gov.au/career-counsellors



More information:

jobs.vic.gov.au

Ph: 1300 208 575

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