

# Zero Emissions Vehicle Commercial Sector Innovation Fund

## Applicant Guidelines



Department  
of Transport

# 1 Background

The Victorian Government is taking strong action to reduce Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. This includes significant commitments toward the decarbonisation of the transport sector through Victoria's Climate Change Strategy, the supporting Transport Sector Pledge and the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Roadmap. These include:

- A policy target of reaching 50 per cent of new light vehicle sales being ZEVs by 2030
- Establishing an expert panel to provide advice on the policies and programs required to reach the sales target.
- A \$46 million subsidy program to reduce the cost of new ZEVs to consumers.
- Committing \$19 million to accelerate the roll-out of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across regional Victoria and support the charging of EV fleets
- Increasing the uptake in ZEVs in the Victorian Government fleet to 400 by 2023.
- A trial of zero emission bus technology to support a move to 100 per cent ZEV bus purchases for public transport services from 2025.

## Commercial Sector Innovation Fund

The Zero Emission Vehicle Commercial Sector Innovation Fund (CSIF) is a \$5 million program within this package that seeks to accelerate the uptake of ZEV technology in commercial settings including the commercial passenger vehicle, freight and infrastructure industries. It was funded as part of the Victorian Budget 2021/22.

Light and heavy-duty commercial vehicles present a challenge to decarbonisation of the transport sector and currently account for approximately 36 per cent of transport sector emissions in Victoria.

The CSIF will fast track the industry to cutting emissions and tackling climate change by driving innovation and new ideas. The CSIF aims to encourage the use of ZEV technology by providing grants to applicants to pilot and trial ZEV technology as well as increasing business readiness for broader uptake of ZEVs.

# 2 Program objectives

The CSIF aims to encourage the use of ZEV technology by providing grants to applicants to pilot and/or trial ZEV technology and increase business readiness for an uptake of ZEVs.

# 3 Eligibility

## 3.1 The applicant

The CSIF is open to any non-government business or organisation in Victoria. Applicants may apply individually or jointly. Where a project involves more than one applicant, the lead organisation should submit the application, but all applicants may contribute to project expenditure to meet any co-contribution requirements.

### 3.1.1 Companies

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for assistance under the program:

- a) Be a business with an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- b) Be financially solvent and able to supply evidence of the ability to meet any co-contribution requirements
- c) Have an operating presence in Victoria

- d) Agree to conduct the majority of proposed activities in Victoria

### 3.1.2 Trust structures

An Incorporated Trustee can apply on behalf of a Trust provided that the Trustee

- a) Will remain sufficiently liable for the performance of any agreement it signs
- b) Comply with the criteria as set out for Companies under items b) to d) in 3.1.1 above.

### 3.1.3 Partnerships

The individual Partners may apply on behalf of a Partnership provided that the Partners:

- a) Will remain sufficiently liable for the performance of any agreement they sign
- b) Comply with the criteria as set out for Companies under items b) to d) in 3.1.1 above.

## 3.2 Ineligible applicants

The following are not eligible to apply:

- a) Individuals
- b) Commonwealth, state and local government agencies or bodies, with the exception of public non-financial corporations

## 4 Available funding

The program provides grants toward the cost of eligible project expenditure allocated on a merit basis. Co-contributions are encouraged and will be considered as part of the assessment framework. The maximum grant amount is \$2 million.

Applicants will be required to provide estimates in support of their applications. Funding will not be provided for retrospective activities, i.e. where project expenditure is incurred prior to receipt and acceptance of a letter of offer. Applicants that commence their projects prior to execution of a grant agreement do so at their own risk.

### 4.1 Co-contribution

Co-contributions are strongly encouraged (monetary or in-kind contributions) and will be considered as part of the assessment framework.

Other government funding (including commonwealth and state government departments or agencies) will not be considered as a co-contribution in the assessment process. Activities which receive financial support through other government funding will not be eligible for support under the CSIF, for example, the purchase of vehicles eligible for support under the Victorian Government's ZEV Subsidy delivered by Solar Victoria.

Full project expenditure, including grant funding and co-contribution funding, must be spent on eligible project activities outlined below.

## 5 Funded projects

Applicants must clearly demonstrate how funding the project will accelerate the uptake of ZEVs in their business or business sector and increase the appeal of ZEVs to other businesses.

## 5.1 Project timing

Grants must be for projects completed within the next two financial years (by 1 July 2023).

## 5.2 Eligible project activities

The CSIF will fund projects which increase the uptake of ZEV technology in commercial settings including (but not limited to) the commercial passenger vehicle, freight and logistics and infrastructure industries.

The CSIF is not limited to just furthering the uptake of technologies already in market e.g. electric vehicles. This CSIF welcomes and will consider a range of innovative proposals and solutions to reduce emissions. Proposals that could be supported by the fund may include (but not limited to):

- direct purchase incentives for ZEVs for commercial fleets or collective purchasing arrangements;
- trials of ZEV technology with specific commercial users (eg. wheelchair-accessible ZEVs or waste collection vehicles);
- the development and implementation of employee training to assist with accelerating the uptake of ZEVs;
- support for vehicle-charging infrastructure or hydrogen refuelling within fleet depots; or
- business case development.

## 5.3 Ineligible project activities

The CSIF is not intended to support projects which involve:

- Activities which receive financial support through other government initiatives, for example, the purchase of vehicles eligible for support under the Victorian Government's ZEV Subsidy delivered by Solar Victoria.
- Early-stage research and development (R&D) activities.

# 6 Assessment criteria

The grant program involves a competitive, merit-based application process. The Department will assess applications against the assessment criteria, and shortlist applications based on merit.

Applicants are required to submit an online application. All questions in the application need to be completed to proceed to assessment.

Applications will be assessed against the following assessment criteria and scoring:

Evaluation Criteria	Considerations	Weighting
Project driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problem or opportunity that the proposal addresses</li><li>• How does the proposal align with Victorian Government policy</li><li>• Does the project align with existing stated commitments/policies of the applicant</li><li>• Demonstrated benefits to Victoria</li><li>• Demonstrate why government support is needed</li></ul>	15%
Deliverability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details of what will be delivered</li><li>• Delivery timeline</li><li>• Existing work/work done to date</li></ul>	30%

Evaluation Criteria	Considerations	Weighting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility of the project</li> <li>• Skills and capability of the delivery organisation</li> <li>• Demonstration of a record in delivering projects</li> <li>• Assessment of risks</li> </ul>	
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear outline of benefits delivered</li> <li>• Project participants</li> <li>• Local jobs and procurement strategy</li> <li>• Spread of benefits across Victoria</li> </ul>	20%
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial sustainability of the proposal, costing of components and risks of the trial</li> <li>• Additional funding sources/co-investment</li> </ul>	20%
Knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the opportunities for sharing knowledge/outcomes from the proposal?</li> </ul>	15%

Further information may be sought from applicants if required.

Applications must address each assessment criterion and make the best possible case for funding. Claims made against each criterion must be substantiated and full details of all underlying risks and assumptions should be clearly stated. The Department of Transport (the Department) may overlay a diversity consideration to achieve an overall mix of projects that represent a geographical spread across Victoria (metropolitan, regional and rural), and a variety of types of projects, sectors and business sizes.

## 7 Application process

All businesses or organisations seeking access to funding will be required to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) application via the Departments electronic application form.

Potential applicants are encouraged to carefully consider their ability to meet the program requirements and how they will perform against the assessment criteria before committing significant resources to developing an application.

EOI applications are contestable (or competitive), subject to evaluation against the eligibility and assessment criteria.

Further information or documents may be requested by the Department from the applicant during the assessment process. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all requested documentation is supplied to the Department within the required timeframes. Failure to do so may result in the application being deemed ineligible. In some cases, the Department may seek to negotiate with some short-listed applicants in an endeavour to improve proposals, to meet program requirements and execute a funding agreement.

### 7.1 One-off Expression of Interest applications

The CSIF will be delivered through a one-time EOI round. Applications will only be accepted within the opening and closing dates.

All sections of the application must be completed in full and an attachment may be provided.

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

### 7.2 How to apply

EOI Applications must be made using the electronic application form and must be submitted online. Printed, facsimile, posted or other methods of delivery of the application form will not be accepted.

To make an application visit the DOT CSIF application page  
<https://transport.mysocialpinpoint.com/csif>.

For questions relating to the Commercial sector innovation fund please contact  
ZEVCommercialInnovationFund@Transport.vic.gov.au.

## 8 Grant agreement

Successful applicants will be sent a Letter of Offer inviting them to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Department. The grant agreement details all funding obligations and conditions.

The offer may be withdrawn if the Grant Agreement is not executed within a specified timeframe.

## 9 Publicity

A key feature of the assessment criteria is knowledge sharing. This reflects that the objective of the CSIF is to promote the appeal of ZEV uptake in commercial settings.

Grant recipients must agree to cooperate with the Department in the preparation of materials used to promote the benefits of ZEVs to industry, including a media release, event/s and case study on the project, and consult with the Department prior to the publication of any project promotion materials.

## 10 Privacy

Information provided by the applicant for the purpose of this application will be used by the Department for the purposes of assessment of applications, program administration and program review. In making an application, the Applicant consents to the provision of their information to other Victorian State Government departments and agencies if required. If there is an intention to include personal information about third parties in the application, please ensure they are aware of and consent to the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about the applicant or a third party will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and other applicable laws.

## 11 Amendments to guidelines

The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and the application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.