

Community Sector Investment Fund

Update No.1, May 2004



Message from the Minister for Community Services

In partnership with the community sector, Government has established a \$7 million Community Sector Investment Fund (CSIF) to invest in initiatives and Infrastructure that benefit Victoria's community services sector.

The CSIF covers community service organisations collectively employing in excess of 20,000 people in the areas of:

- Community Care
- Disability Services
- Housing Assistance
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Palliative Care
- Home and Community Care (HACC)

The CSIF will be used to:

- fund sector specific improvements or innovations that can be applied across the sector
- support initiatives that enhance the capacity and sustainability of the sector to deliver services
- support workforce development, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention.

In order to assist the development of the CSIF, I have established an advisory

committee to provide advice on areas and priorities for improving service capacity in the non-government sector.

The group is jointly chaired by the Parliamentary Secretaries for Community Services and Treasury & Finance and has representatives from business, NGOs and the community. The full membership of the Advisory Committee is:

Mr. Telmo Languiller (Chair)
Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services

Mr. Bob Stensholt (Chair)
Parliamentary Secretary for Treasury & Finance

Mr. Ben Bodna
Community Representative

Ms. Coleen Clare
Children's Welfare Association of Victoria

Dr. Ray Cleary
Anglicare Victoria

Mr. Chris Glennen
Supported Housing Limited

Mr. Jeff Jackson
Health Services Union

Ms. Sue Jackson
Council of Intellectual Disability Agencies

Mr. Paul Linossier
MacKillop Family Services

Ms. Wendy McManus
Australian Services Union

Mr. Arthur Rogers
Department of Human Services

Ms. Cath Smith
Victorian Council of Social Service

Ms. Deb Tsobaris
Council of Homeless Persons

Mr. Lance Wallace
Department of Human Services

Ms. Judy Ward
Business Representative

Mr. Lloyd Williams
Health and Community Services Union

The advisory group is scheduled to report by June of this year. It is expected that the group will consult with service providers and the broader community in undertaking its work

More details about the consultation forums and areas of strategic focus will be provided in upcoming newsletters.

Hon Sherryl Garbutt MP
Minister for Community Services

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Message from the Advisory Committee

What are the potential priority areas for the fund?

The CSIF advisory committee is considering a range of strategies for improving sustainability within community services organisations (CSO's). The advisory group are considering areas such as:

- opportunities for CSO's to consider support service arrangements such as human resource management or payroll administration
- approaches that result in a reduced reliance on casual and agency staff
- WorkCover and occupational health and safety management
- access to 'whole of government' contracts
- support for recruitment and retention of skilled staff
- initiatives that promote local community involvement

What action can the community sector organisations take now?

The committee has already identified some opportunities for community based CSOs to take immediate action.

Access to Victorian State Government contracts

The state government is able to negotiate favourable contracts for the purchase of goods and services. In some cases government funded CSO's are able to access the benefits of these contracts.

There are currently three contracts where immediate access is possible:

1. Fuel and associated products

This contract allows for the purchase of fuel and associated products at discounted rates (over retail prices). An additional benefit is the streamlining of administration and bill payment processes using a retailer card system that includes online card management.

2. Stationery

This contract provides substantial discounts on the retail prices of most stationery items. Additional benefits include online ordering/account management and next-day delivery of purchases.

3. Information Technology products

This contract allows the purchase of a range of IT products at competitive prices. Products available are at a high standard and purchasing through the government contract reduces the likelihood of hardware conflicts or insufficient capacity to support future application access (i.e. department supplied software).

WorkCover premium discount

WorkCover premiums of over \$1,000 (including any outstanding premium from the previous financial year) attract a 3 per cent discount if paid in advance. The Victorian WorkCover Authority Internet site www.workcover.vic.gov.au provides further details on this discount.

Department of Human Services funded CSO's are encouraged to pursue this approach. In some cases it may be necessary for CSO's to contact their agency liaison officer to discuss cash-flow adjustments.

OH&S advice

WorkSafe can provide up to 3 hours free safety assistance to any small to medium business (up to 50 employees). For further information contact the Small Business Safety Program on telephone: 03 9641 1290.

Detailed advice on gaining access to government contracts and other CSIF matters can be found at: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/csif.

Related work

The CSIF has been advised that DHS is currently working on streamlining government accountability and reporting requirements. Further information on this will be provided in subsequent newsletters.



Mr. Telmo Languiller (Chair)
Parliamentary Secretary for
Community Services

Mr. Bob Stensholt (Chair)
Parliamentary Secretary for
Treasury & Finance