Application Guidelines

EnergyTech Market Ready Support (EMRS) 2026

deeca.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA State Government | Energy, Environment and Climate Action

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.

Accessibility

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service on 133 677. Available at DEECA website (www.deeca.vic.gov.au).

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1. What is the EnergyTech Market Ready Support (EMRS)?

EnergyTech Market Ready Support (EMRS) provides targeted, equity-free grants to in-market Victorian EnergyTech startups to deliver defined commercialisation projects.

Energy innovation is important to achieve Victoria's net zero and renewable energy targets and to support jobs and economic growth. As the energy system transitions, new technologies and business models are needed to deliver cleaner, more reliable and more affordable energy.

EMRS is delivered by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) under the Digital Energy Economy Program (DEEP). Through DEEP, DEECA supports EnergyTech startups with solutions that benefit energy consumers and contribute to Victoria's renewable energy transition. DEEP also supports the growth of Victoria's EnergyTech ecosystem by building a pipeline of investable, early-stage EnergyTech startups that can attract private investment, create jobs and drive long-term economic growth.

In addition to grant funding, DEECA provides ongoing support during the grant period. This support helps startups navigate energy policy, regulatory and market settings. It also improves DEECA's understanding of the commercial, regulatory and market barriers facing early-stage EnergyTech startups to inform future policy and program design. Applicants will be asked the types of support would be most valuable so this can be tailored where appropriate.

Eligibility, exclusions and the types of project activities that may be funded are set out in Sections 2-4.

EMRS does not fund general business growth. It supports a specific commercial step that would be difficult to achieve without targeted assistance.

2. Who can apply?

To be eligible an applicant must meet all the following:

- hold a current Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be a legally constituted entity such as a sole trader, partnership or company that is commercialising an EnergyTech solution
- be the founder or cofounder and have the legal capacity to enter into a funding agreement with the Victorian Government
- hold the intellectual property (IP) or the necessary rights, licences or permissions, to commercialise the EnergyTech solution that is the subject of the application
- demonstrate that the solution is already in-market, evidenced by at least one of the following:
  - an active pilot or trial partner
  - a letter of intent or written commitment from a potential customer or partner
  - documented usage, adoption or deployment
  - early customer revenue.
- be Victorian based and demonstrate that at least 80 per cent of project expenditure will occur in Victoria
- demonstrate at least one of the following:
  - prior funding from an external source (for example, a grant, crowdfunding, incubator or accelerator program, or private investment)
  - co-investment can be secured for the project
  - an ongoing funding or revenue stream.

3. Who cannot apply?

The following organisations and individuals are not eligible to apply:

- individuals or teams with solutions at the idea, prototype or minimum viable product (MVP) build stage who have not yet secured pilot partners or early customers
- Commonwealth, state or local government agencies or bodies.

4. What might be funded?

Grant funding is available for defined commercialisation projects that progress an EnergyTech startup towards market readiness or further expansion, where the solution benefits Victorian energy consumers and/or supports Victoria's renewable energy transition.

Eligible solutions may include those that:

- improve affordability, reliability, sustainability and security for Victorian energy consumers
- align with Victoria's renewable energy transition priorities.

Eligible projects must:

- be a discrete set of project activities
- be designed to achieve a specific, measurable commercial outcome
- be completed within the grant period
- be distinct from general business growth or routine business operations.

Eligible project activities may include:

- converting pilots or trials into ongoing customers
- commercial readiness activities required to secure customers such as customer proof packs, case studies from deployments, procurement, security or compliance materials
- pilot projects or demonstrations designed to evidence commercial viability or procurement readiness, rather than exploratory testing
- market expansion activities beyond initial customers, where these are directly linked to a defined commercial outcome, such as entry into a new customer segment or secured channel partnership
- regulatory compliance, certification or testing required to enter the energy market
- professional services directly related to the project such as technical, legal, IP or accounting support
- wages and salaries for personnel directly working on funded project activities.

Priorities for funding

- DEECA will support in-market EnergyTech startups to deliver a defined commercialisation project.
- Priority will be given to projects proposed by EnergyTech startups that demonstrate clear progress towards commercialisation and market validation, including:
    - documented evidence of in-market engagement, such as pilot or trial partners, early deployments, letters of intent or early customers
    - strong indicators of commercial progress such as conversion of pilots to customers, early revenue generation, customer retention, or demonstrated investment interest.

5. What will not be funded?

EMRS will not fund:

- idea development, prototype build or MVP development undertaken without active market engagement
- retrospective costs including activities completed or costs incurred before the funding agreement is executed
- routine operating costs not directly attributable to the approved project such as rent, utilities or insurance
- general brand, awareness or marketing activities, or routine business development, that are not clearly tied to a defined, time-bound project activity
- funding for routine operations, business-as-usual activities or incremental product improvements
- feasibility studies or research that do not lead to tangible market or deployment outcomes within the grant period
- construction projects or major capital works
- project activities or expenditure where less than 80 per cent of total project expenditure occurs in Victoria
- political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

6. What are the funding details?

Total funding available: **$300,000 (excluding GST)** - **6 grants of $50,000 each (excluding GST)**.

Applicants must demonstrate that all project activities can be completed within the **grant period of 6 months** (9 October 2026 to 16 April 2027).

DEECA reserves the right to award fewer than six grants or not allocate all available funding.

7. What are the assessment criteria?

- Applications will be checked for eligibility to make sure that the applicant and their activity are eligible for funding.
- Eligible applications will then be assessed against the five assessment criteria below. Each criterion includes a percentage weighting to indicate its relative importance in the assessment process.
- Responses should be concise and address all sub-prompts within the word limit.

Assessors will place greater weight on credible external signals in your application - such as pilots, trials, letters of intent, usage or adoption, or early revenue - than on aspirational claims.

Assessment criteria

Criterion	Weight	What you need to address in your application
1. The problem and your solution	20%	• What energy problem or market opportunity are you addressing? • What is your solution and why does it matter now? • How does your solution improve affordability, reliability, sustainability or security for Victorian energy consumers, and/or align with Victoria’s renewable energy transition priorities? • What evidence do you have that this problem is experienced by identifiable customers or users?
2. Your startup and your team	20%	• Who are the founders or key team members and what relevant experience, domain expertise or qualifications do they bring?

		• How long has the startup been operating? • What evidence can you provide of in-market traction? • What relevant programs such as accelerators or incubators have you completed? • What resources such as time, co-funding or networks will you apply to your project if you receive the grant?
3. What will be delivered	25%	• What stage is your solution currently? • What specific commercial milestones will be delivered by project end, such as pilots converted, deployments completed, procurement step achieved, revenue or pipeline outcomes? • Which key commercial assumptions will the project test or de-risk, such as target customer segment, willingness to pay, delivery/implementation model, regulatory pathway? • How will the deliverables improve the solution's commercial viability and/or ability to scale? • What will be different by project end? Assessors will use your uploaded business plan/model to validate deliverables, milestones and key commercial assumptions. *Upload: Completed Business plan/model template.*
4. How the project will be delivered	20%	• What are the key activities and timing? • What is your route-to-market approach during the grant period, such as targets, channels, and the commercial step you aim to achieve? • How will you measure success for market activities (stage-appropriate indicators)? • What are the key risks and mitigations? • What is your funding position and co-contribution? Assessors will use your uploaded project outline template to assess achievability, risks, timing and resourcing. *Upload: Completed project outline template.*
5. Who will benefit	15%	• Who are the primary beneficiaries of your solution's product or service? • What environmental or economic value will be created through the project's completion? • How will the project benefits be sustained beyond the grant period including how the solution will continue operating and scaling through ongoing customers/revenue?

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Required:

- **Business plan or model** (maximum 3 pages) covering target customers, market size, scalability, revenue streams and customer acquisition strategy. Applicants must use the business plan/model template available from the program web page.
- **Completed project outline template** including project objectives, delivery schedule, budget breakdown, project risks and timeframes. Applicants must use the project outline template available from the program web page.
- **Evidence of other funding sources** (if applicable).
- **Evidence of in-market traction**, such as a letter of intent, pilot/trial confirmation, usage/adoption snapshot, or a customer reference/contact (where appropriate).
- Optional:
- A **short video pitch** (accessible link, maximum 3 minutes).

9. What are the funding conditions?

Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) with DEECA.

Funding is not confirmed until a VCFA has been executed by both parties. Costs incurred before the execution of the funding agreement are not eligible for reimbursement.

It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available on https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement

The activity does not include using the funding for political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this grant funding.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government’s support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government’s support and promotional guidelines (available at https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants) will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

Payments

Payments will be made as long as:

- the funding agreement has been signed by both parties
- grant recipients provide reports as required or otherwise demonstrate that the activity is progressing as expected
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

Monitoring and reporting

Grant recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This includes monthly update meetings and may include progress reports, site inspections, completion records and acquittal documentation.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussion regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

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

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

10. What is the application process?

Applications must be submitted online through the Grants Online portal.

Program web page: https://deeca.my.site.com/grants/s/form?id=a0hRF00000GhJSnYAN

Click 'Start New Application' to begin. Click 'Access Saved Application' to return to a draft. Quote your application number in all communications.

Attaching required documents:

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

Documents that cannot be attached may be emailed to grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au with your application number before the closing date.

Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Applications close at 5:00 pm AEST, 14 August 2026.

Note: No hard copy applications will be accepted. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

11. Additional information

Additional information is available at the program web page.

Program web page: www.energy.vic.gov.au/grants/energytech-market-ready-support-2026

Program enquiries: emerging.energy@deeca.vic.gov.au

If you require assistance submitting your application online, email grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au.

12. What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment process is completed. **All decisions are final and are not subject to further review**. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.

Key dates

Milestone	Date
Applications open	13 July 2026
Information session (online)	16 July 2026
Applications close	5:00 pm AEST, 14 August 2026
Assessment period	August - September 2026
Applicants notified	September - October 2026
Funding agreements executed and project commences	October 2026
Project completed and acquittal report submitted	Within 6 months of project commencement

13. Appendix 1: Definitions

The following definitions apply to these Application Guidelines:

The **Applicant** must be the Founder or Cofounder, though multiple participants in the same application may be accepted into the program.

EnergyTech means a product, service, process, platform or solution that generates, stores, distributes, trades or manages energy more efficiently, sustainably or securely. This includes software, hardware or technologies that benefit energy consumers and support Victoria's renewable energy transition. The solution must address a problem in the energy sector.

Defined commercialisation project means a time-bound discrete set of activities designed to achieve a specific, measurable commercial outcome within the grant period, such as, securing a first paid customer, converting a pilot to a contract, or meeting regulatory requirements to access a target market.

In-market means the solution has moved beyond prototype or Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage and has been deployed or trialled with external customers, partners or users. This may include pilot or trial partners, letters of intent, paid or unpaid deployments, usage or adoption evidence, or early revenue.

Prototype means an early version of a product or solution used to demonstrate proof of concept and gather feedback. Examples may include wireframes, a landing page, videos, or an interactive front-end.

Minimum Viable Product (MVP) means a version of the solution that is sufficiently developed to test with early customers and validate market demand and may generate initial revenue.

Project means a set of defined activities with a specific budget, outcomes and timeframe that results in the startup having progressed their solution's commercial viability, moving the overall solution towards being energy market ready or gaining a firmer foothold in market.

Startup means is a young technology-based business that uses innovation to scale rapidly and capture market at a high velocity. Examples of technology include software/apps, artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, advanced manufacturing & robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics, augmented / virtual reality, 3D printing, advanced materials, genomics & life sciences (including Biotech & MedTech) and autonomous vehicles.

Victorian-based means the Startup must either be a Victorian registered and headquartered company or must be domiciled in Victoria.

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