Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust

TRAINING AND EDUCATION GRANTS 2019-2020

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust was established in 2010 by the Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria from funds accumulated and held by the Board.

From 1 July 2010, a national registration and accreditation scheme was introduced for optometry and other health professions in Australia and the Victorian Board ceased to exist. Ministerial approval had been secured for some of the Victorian Boards reserve funds to be transferred to a trustee. The remainder of the funds were transferred to the newly established Optometry Board of Australia.

The VOTE Trust was created through a Deed of Trust between the Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria and Perpetual Trustee Company Limited. The trust fund was initially established with $490,000 with the requirements that the funds are to be held in perpetuity, invested and the income from the fund dispersed through annual grants and awards.

The Guardian of the fund is the Victorian health minister and a Grants Advisory Committee is appointed comprising nominees of the Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences, University of Melbourne; Optometry Victoria/South Australia; Australian College of Optometry; Optometry Board of Australia; and The School of Medicine (Optometry), Deakin University.

PURPOSE OF SCHEME

The principal purpose of the VOTE Trust is to:

- advance and foster the practice of optometry and related techniques, procedures and policies, principally in Victoria, through research and education, to improve patient outcomes; and
- improve Victorian optometrists' ability to practice, and Victorian students ability to undertake training, principally in Victoria.

The Grants Advisory Committee have interpreted the intent of the Trust to give preference to projects that endeavour to benefit Victorian optometrists and their patients, provide support for projects that display a broader benefit to optometrists and the public, and where the benefit may extend beyond the period of funding.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications for grants of up to $10,000 will be considered. Note that the VOTE Trust may also award an amount less than that requested so please indicate whether you would be open to partial funding.
- Applications must be made on the official SmartyGrants application form.
- Applications close at **5:00pm Melbourne time** on **Friday 4 October 2019**. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Read the instructions and guidelines carefully to ensure your organisation is eligible for funding.
- Access the online application form via **https://perpetual.smartygrants.com.au/vote2019**
- To submit an application you will need to first obtain login details. This gives you secure access to the application so that you can work on it over time, allowing you to save and return to it at a later stage. It also helps us contact you if there is a problem.
- Complete the (web) application form by typing your responses **DIRECTLY INTO THE SPACES PROVIDED** Please keep your answers as concise as possible as there is only limited space in the form to answer each question. Word limits have been provided.
- Please complete each answer in full, i.e. do not use 'as above' or 'refer to x section'.
- Ensure the application is accurate and complete before you submit it. You will receive an automated email indicating that the application has been submitted.
- Please do not attach any additional material at this stage, we will request further information if required.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS and AWARD AVAILABILITY

- Applicants will be notified of the result of their application **by the end of November 2019**.
- Grants and award monies will be paid by EFT after this date.
- Payment will be made to the applicant's organisation as opposed to the award recipient where appropriate; it is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure the funds are passed on.
- An announcement regarding the award will be made in the optometric press after this date.

CONDITIONS OF AWARD

- The monies awarded must be expended by 30 June 2020.
- An acquittal report is required to be submitted through SmartyGrants by Tuesday 14 July 2020.
- The report should highlight the outcomes of the project relative to the stated aims and outline the use of VOTE Trust funds.
- The support of the VOTE Trust should be appropriately acknowledged in reports and presentations.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

The Grants Advisory Committee advises potential applicants that projects from other states/territories of Australia will be considered for funding and that applications from non-optometrists interested in the profession can be considered.

The Grants Advisory Committee is required within the Deed to have regard, but is not limited, to support projects that foster:

Postgraduate training and continuing education

- Seeding funding to support the development of ideas and initiatives in education and training in Victoria. This will allow organisations and individuals to apply for support and get 'something off the ground'. Ideas in funding for a new continuing education opportunity
- Develop online training for practitioners in rural Victoria
- Funding and supporting courses and continuing education in rural Victoria
- Improving the quality of existing continuing education programs by supporting new initiatives or adding different expertise
- Supporting opportunities to garner international experience and specialist training

Undergraduate training and education

- Seeding funding to support the development of ideas and initiatives in education and training principally in Victoria
- Providing undergraduate scholarships in optometry
- Supporting undergraduates in overseas clinical training
- Supporting undergraduate students in clinical training for Aboriginal services or assistance to disadvantaged people

Profession Improvement

- Improving and expanding scope of practice and initiatives to improve profession's service to the community
- Bringing programs and ideas from other countries principally to benefit Victoria
- Using new and developing technologies to improve optometry practices principally in Victoria.

In addition to the above, the Grants Advisory Committee will take into account the novelty of the proposed project, its breadth of access to potential users or beneficiaries, the degree of impact the project may have on the public and/or profession, and the likelihood that the project will continue to have impact into the future.