



## Australian Government

### Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Factsheet GS02 - Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST)

## Purpose

This Factsheet provides information about the BEST grant program, and how to apply.

## What is BEST?

The BEST program forms part of the government's commitment to support the role of ex-service organisation (ESO) pensions and welfare officers and advocates. These practitioners provide advice and assistance to veterans, past and present members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and their dependants. The aim of BEST is to provide support and resources to these ESO practitioners and advocates.

A BEST grant is intended to be a contribution to ESO costs in providing services to the veteran and defence communities. It is not to offset all costs and ESOs are expected to provide in-kind or other support to their pension, advocate and welfare officers.

## Who can apply?

ESOs who provide pensions, advocacy and/or welfare assistance to veterans, past and present members of the ADF and/or their dependants, can apply for a BEST grant. ESOs must be incorporated under the relevant State or Territory legislation.

While each application is considered on its merits, DVA encourages ESOs operating in the same region to adopt a co-operative approach to providing services to clients. This increases both their efficiency and effectiveness and enables the Government to better target areas of high need. DVA is aware however, that particularly in regional or remote areas, it is not always possible to establish co-operative arrangements.

Applicant criteria is outlined in the BEST Grant Program Application Guidelines which are made available on the [Building Excellence in Support and Training \(BEST\)](#) page of the DVA website at [www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/building-excellence-support-and-training](http://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/building-excellence-support-and-training) when a new round of funding has opened.

## What is eligible?

BEST grants are available to assist with:

- salary costs of advocates, pensions officers, and administrative assistants; and/or
- certain equipment and other costs incurred to support the work of paid and volunteer welfare officers, advocates, pensions officers and administrative assistants.

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BEST funds will not be provided for rental, electricity or other utility costs. Applicants cannot receive funding if they:

- have received a current grant from another source which fully funds the same purpose
- are charging for services undertaken for the veteran and defence communities; and/or
- use grant funds for purposes other than claims or welfare related work.

Depending on the demand for funding and the prioritisation of all applications, part funding only may be offered.

Eligible items and funding exclusions are fully outlined in the BEST Grant Program Application Guidelines.

## When is funding available?

There is one BEST funding round each year. Funding is for the period of the next financial year. Payment of grants is subject to previous funding being acquitted as required.

Details of the next funding round will generally be made available on the DVA website early in each calendar year. Applicants are advised to consult the website periodically to be informed of any updated information.

## How do we apply?

To apply, fill out the BEST application form. A form is developed specifically for each BEST funding round. When a new round has opened, the application form and the BEST Guidelines are made available on the [Building Excellence in Support and Training \(BEST\)](http://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/building-excellence-support-and-training) page of the DVA website at [www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/building-excellence-support-and-training](http://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/grants/grant-and-bursary-programs/building-excellence-support-and-training)

Before completing an application for BEST, applicants should read the BEST Grant Program Application Guidelines, which includes the Guide to Completing the Application Form. DVA staff members are available to assist with the development of applications.

Applications must be made by filling out the relevant round's form and returning it to DVA, before the round closes, using this address:

Manager Grants Administration  
Department of Veterans' Affairs  
GPO Box 9998  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

## How are applications assessed?

DVA staff assess applications and pass their recommendations to DVA's Minister who makes the final decision. Applicants are notified in writing of the Minister's final decision.

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## What is required if the grant is approved?

The applicant is required to sign documentation accepting the grant and associated conditions. The signed documentation must be received by DVA before the grant can be paid. The preferred method of payment to a grantee is by direct credit to the applicant's bank account. Applicants are required to acquit the grant within a specified timeframe once the project is completed.

## How does BEST link in with the Training and Information Program (TIP)?

TIP provides training and information for welfare, advocate and pensions officers who are working within ESOs. TIP training is delivered to enable them to provide the best possible advice to current and former members of the defence forces seeking their services.

To be eligible for BEST grant support, especially if they are funded through BEST, practitioners are required to undertake the appropriate levels of TIP training.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit, you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA.

## Related Factsheets

- [GS03 Veteran and Community Grants Program](#)
- [TIP01 Training and Information Program](#)

## More Information

### DVA General Enquiries

Metro Phone: 133 254 \*

Regional Phone: 1800 555 254 \*

[Email](mailto:GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au): GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au

[DVA Website](http://www.dva.gov.au): www.dva.gov.au

[Factsheet Website](http://factsheets.dva.gov.au): factsheets.dva.gov.au

\* Calls from mobile phones and pay phones may incur additional charges.