

Policy

Sponsorship

Purpose	1.1	The purpose of this Policy is to outline the requirements for approving requests for sponsorship by the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner.
Introduction	2.1	<p>Sponsorship of organisations, events and activities can provide the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner with an opportunity to demonstrate and promote its values, goals and regulatory objectives which are central to working with other agencies or community organisations as the primary legal services regulator in Victoria.</p> <p>Sponsorship is generally defined as an investment in either cash or kind, which results in benefits for the sponsoring and the sponsored party.</p> <p>By entering into a sponsorship agreement, VLSBC expects a return on investment, whether that is through media coverage, development of opportunities to build relationships with stakeholders and the community or implementation of our strategic priorities.</p> <p>In assessing opportunities for sponsorship, it is important that VLSBC considers a broad range of criteria to determine where best to allocate limited resources.</p> <p>This policy establishes consistent standards approving requests for provision of sponsorship arrangements with external organisations and events, in accordance with the Victorian Government Sponsorship Policy principles.</p>
Application	3.1	This policy applies to the Victorian Legal Services Commissioner and VLSBC staff, including all contractors, consultants and employees on secondment.
Legislative Framework	4.1	<p>This policy has been developed in accordance with the whole of government Victorian Sponsorship Policy.</p> <p>Sponsorship arrangements must comply with the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> (see Direction 4.22 relating to discretionary financial benefits).</p> <p>This policy should be read consistent with the Codes of Conduct for the Victorian Public Sector.</p> <p>Other policies and guidelines that are relevant to this document are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Style Guide – VLSBC • Brand Guidelines – VLSBC • Conflict of Interest and Declaration of Private Interests Policy - VLSBC • Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

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Key definitions	5.1	<p>As stated in the Victorian Government Sponsorship Policy, sponsorship can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purchase of rights or benefits, including naming rights, delivered through association with the sponsored organisation's name, products, services or activities. The rights or benefits typically relate to the sponsor's reputation management or communication objectives. • Sponsorship includes partnership arrangements, except where the arrangement is governed by the Partnerships Victoria Policy or otherwise involves the development or management of infrastructure. • Sponsorship does not include grants, which are money, goods or other benefits provided to the recipient for a specified purpose, but with no expectations of attaining rights or benefits of the kind outlined above. • Sponsorship does not include bequests which impose no obligations on the recipient and offer little or no rights or benefits to the provider. • Sponsorship does not include the sale of advertising space, editorial comment or advertorials.
Eligibility	6.1	<p>VLSBC sponsors programs that are in line with our Vision, Role, Values and Strategic Direction. In general sponsorships must help us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the advancement of VLSBC strategic priorities • Support our goals and objectives • Increase the effectiveness of our strategic programs • Communicate key messages to target audiences • Engage or build relationships with key stakeholders. <p>Sponsorships must fall into at least one or more of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to justice • Legal education • Legal reform • Legal research • Innovation and the law. <p>Furthermore, they must address each of the following points from the VLSBC sponsorship checklist with their submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of organisation that will manage the funds • Key contact details

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- Target audience
- Detailed description of what you are seeking to do and achieve (goals and objectives)
- Detailed description of the significance and benefits of this sponsorship activity to the legal sector/or community
- Budget
- List of other confirmed sponsors
- Detailed sponsorship benefits available (scalable based on dollar or in-kind support)
- Evaluation measures (including key performance indicators)
- Any future commitments or contingent liabilities that may impact your organisation's ability to deliver on your proposal
- Any existing or potential conflicts of interest
- Links to your organisation's financial statements for the previous two years
- Letter of support from CEO/Head of Department/Director confirming importance of this sponsorship to your organisation.

Successful applicants must agree to adhere to all State and Commonwealth regulations, statutes and policies regarding equal opportunity, employment laws, standards of conduct, health and safety requirements, privacy and freedom of information. VLSBC in any one year may or may not elect to provide sponsorship monies.

Risk Management 7.1

VLSBC must ensure sponsorship arrangements are entered into only with organisations where the risk of damage to the reputation of VLSBC, DOJC and/or the Government as a whole is low.

VLSBC will not provide sponsorship support to:

- Activities or sponsorship partners whose values, products, purposes or objectives are inconsistent with the VLSBC's policies, values, priorities or objectives.
- Organisations that are not incorporated bodies
- Organisations or activities not based in Victoria
- Law firms
- Fundraising activities
- Core organisational operating costs
- School-based educational programs
- Capital works (e.g. building and maintenance costs or purchase of major equipment)

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- Any activity or organisation that requires the VLSBC to endorse its products or services
- Any activity in breach of the Code of Conduct for the Victorian Public Sector.

Particular reference should be made in interactions with the sponsorship recipient (and documented in any sponsorship agreement) of:

- our ability to terminate the agreement if the party cannot proceed with the sponsorship activity as planned;
- our ability to recover or withhold financial benefits where there is an inadequate delivery of agreed benefits by the other party, particularly if the recipient becomes subject to the agency's regulatory purview;
- acknowledgement the sponsorship does not denote a general endorsement of the organisation or its products
- the sponsorship has no bearing on our ability to exercise our regulatory functions.

Sponsorship proposals criteria

8.1

All sponsorships proposals must be submitted in writing. They must address all required key criteria and provide all additional information requested in our Sponsorship Checklist. When putting forward a proposal for sponsorship, applicants must supply the following details:

- as much information as possible about the proposed activity, event or initiative
- how the sponsorship will promote or link with the VLSBC strategic priorities.
- the amount of financial contribution requested or nature of in-kind support required
- if the sponsorship is monetary, include any details to demonstrate financial management, including an ABN and indication whether the organisation is registered for GST
- information about the business, organisation, group, or other body that is requesting sponsorship
- if applicable, details of the target audience, date and location of your event, activity or initiative
- information about any marketing or media activity anticipated or planned around the event, activity or initiative
- what is expected from the VLSBC
- whether the event, activity or initiative will include or involve any other organisations, agencies or departments

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- benefits to VLSBC and in turn lawyers, legal clients or the wider community
- Opportunities to engage with the legal profession or wider community.

Approval roles and limits of sponsorship

9.1 **Requesting organisation/sponsorship recipient – responsibilities include:**

- completion of the sponsorship proposal including responses to selection criteria and provision of additional information as outlined in the Sponsorship Checklist.
- completion of a signed agreement regarding VLSBC terms and conditions
- demonstration that the sponsorship agreement requirements have been met
- provision of an evaluation report including any media or other community exposure such as attendance numbers
- noting that sponsorship approval in one year does not guarantee further support in future years, which may also depend on reporting requirements being met.

9.2 **Internal sponsorship assessor – responsibilities include:**

- familiarity with the VLSBC Sponsorships Policy
- liaison with the requesting organisation/sponsorship recipient to provide the Sponsorship checklist and any other information regarding VLSBC requirements
- confirmation the Sponsorship proposal has been completed in accordance with this policy
- completion of the Sponsorship assessment criteria
- liaison with the Manager, Strategic Communications and Engagement regarding the application and the internal assessment of its value to VLSBC.

9.3

Manager, Strategic Communications and Engagement – responsibilities include:

- familiarity with the VLSBC Sponsorships Policy
- review of the of the completed recommendation memo including the internal sponsor’s assessment
- review of the sponsorship proposal to check the application against criteria

9.4

- decision to endorse recommendation in the sponsorship memo for approval based on alignment with selection criteria.

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9.5

Manager, Corporate Governance - responsibilities include:

- Provision of procurement and contract management advice.

Director – responsibilities include:

- Approve/Reject application based on the VLSBC Sponsorship Policy criteria with reference to the:
 - Total annual budget allocation for sponsorships
 - Quality and number of applications
 - Past performance and value (where applicable).

Ethical Behaviour and Fair Dealing

10.1

Sponsorship activities and relationships must not influence our decisions and behaviour in conducting our regulatory obligations and/or other financial matters, such as purchasing and funding decisions. All our dealings must comply with the **Code of Conduct for the Victorian Public Sector** and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

VLSBC staff members responsible for sponsorship management or decision-making must maintain high levels of integrity in all official dealings including:

- disclosure and resolution of conflicts of interest
- disclosure and consideration of gifts, invitations to events (other than those included in a sponsorship agreement) or functions in accordance with our Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality framework
- receiving approaches from organisations that might be interpreted as attempts to obtain influence or advantage
- maintenance of confidentiality in response to commercial in confidence, intellectual property issues, matters under negotiation and any other confidential information
- maintenance of high standards of accountability.

Requests for sponsorship enquiries or proposals directed to any VLSBC Board member, the CEO/Commissioner or member of staff, particularly those who are directly involved in regulatory or investigatory duties should be immediately referred to the Director, Policy and Outreach to be assessed in accordance with these guidelines.

Breaches of ethical standards can lead to disciplinary action or dismissal.

Approvals process

11.1

All documentation regarding applications are to be stored in the document group Sponsorship Proposals and Agreements on Content Manager.

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Related documents

12.1

Sponsorship letters and checklist templates

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Document Control

(Internal use only)

Responsible for review and update

Strategic Communications & Engagement Advisor

Approved by

Victorian Legal Services Board CEO & Commissioner

Endorsed by

Senior Leadership Team

Next review

July 2022