

Grants Program Guidelines 2006-2007

The Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre (CUAC) provides an independent, proactive and informed advocacy voice on electricity, gas and water issues for Victorian consumers, particularly low-income, rural and disadvantaged consumers. CUAC's constitutional objectives are

- To provide a voice for Victorian utility consumers in the policy and regulatory debate
- To increase the capacity of consumers and consumer advocates to influence the policy and regulatory debate, particularly on issues affecting low-income, disadvantaged and rural consumers
- To research and fund research into consumer utility issues, with a particular focus on low-income, disadvantaged and rural consumers, and to disseminate that knowledge as widely as possible
- To monitor consumer utilities issues, particularly those affecting low-income, disadvantaged and rural consumers

Applications are now sought for research and capacity-building projects that enhance the input of Victorian utility consumers, particularly low-income, rural and disadvantaged consumers, into the policy and regulatory debate.

CUAC provides funding through its Grants Program to facilitate research on consumer utility issues, and to support projects that enable Victorian consumers to participate effectively in the marketplace.

A central objective of the Public Grants Program is to facilitate the representation of a broad range of consumer views in the policy and regulatory debate. Receipt of CUAC funding does not necessarily indicate endorsement of the recommendations or views contained within the project.

Applications are open to all and projects will be decided on a case by case basis. The CUAC Board decides which projects are awarded funding, paying close attention to CUAC's constitutional objectives in making its decision.

Applications close on Friday, 27 October 2006. Successful applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in March, 2007. *(Please note CUAC has established a separate program to assist consumer advocates make submissions to regulatory reviews with timelines that fall outside the main Grants Program. Guidelines can be obtained from the CUAC website at www.cuac.org.au or from CUAC by phone on 1300 656 767).*

Funding guidelines

Projects submitted for funding should be of demonstrable value to Victorian utility consumers, and break new ground or enhance existing work.

Organisations are strongly encouraged to consider forming partnerships with other funding organisations. It is unlikely that the Board will positively consider funding requests over \$25,000 (exc. GST) without a partnership arrangement. Funding for grants over \$20,000 (exc. GST) will be delivered in tranches.

Projects should normally be completed and reports submitted within a 12-month cycle. The Board is unlikely to approve requests for recurrent funding. Applicants should also note that CUAC will not reimburse an organisation for monies already spent on a project.

Projects will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Projects are in accordance with CUAC's constitutional objectives.
- Projects add value to the ability of Victorian utility consumers to influence the policy and regulatory debate.
- Projects address areas of shortcomings of knowledge or expertise among consumers in the debate.
- Projects are well managed and financially viable, with feasible and clear estimations of required resources.

Applicants are advised to look at the CUAC website www.cuac.org.au to see what research projects have been previously funded by CUAC. CUAC will not fund projects that duplicate existing work, or work underway.

Confidentiality

Grant applications will not be published or distributed outside of CUAC. In order to facilitate the decision-making process, CUAC Board and staff may consult with stakeholders of particular expertise relating to a specific initiative.

Intellectual Property

CUAC reserves the right to publish on its website and distribute publicly any publications or reports funded, wholly or in part, by CUAC. Authorship of a piece of work or project management by an organisation will always be acknowledged.

All documents funded by CUAC should contain the following disclaimer:

The views and interpretations expressed in this paper are those of the author (or organisation) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre Ltd.

Where CUAC has funded an advocacy project where a written report is not produced, CUAC funding should be acknowledged and a statement made to the effect that the views expressed are not necessarily those of CUAC.

As appropriate, CUAC will provide a separate letter endorsing the project's recommendations/ research.

Application procedure

Applicants should provide a summary of no more than two pages providing key information about the project, including:

1. Name of applying individual/organisation, with contact person and details
2. Level of financial support requested from CUAC
3. Partnership details (if applicable)
4. Outline of how the project adds value (i.e. breaking new ground or enhancing existing work)
5. Brief description of project, including provision of
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Outcomes
 - c. Timeline
 - d. Methodology
 - e. Advocacy strategy (where applicable)
6. An indication of how you heard about the CUAC Grants Program.

The summary application should be received by the CUAC office by **close of business Friday 27 October 2006**. Applications can be sent by the following methods:

E-mail: james.henshall@cuac.org.au

Fax: 03 9639 8966

Mail: CUAC, Level 2, 172 Flinders St, Melbourne VIC 3000

All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt.

Please note that late applications will only be accepted by prior agreement with CUAC's Executive Officer.

Short listed applicants will be contacted by CUAC in the week beginning 13 November, 2006, and asked to provide a detailed application by close of business Friday, 2 February 2007.

CUAC is happy to discuss your application and encourages you to contact us with any queries, by email to kerry.connors@cuac.org.au or by phone to 1300 656 767.

For more information about CUAC or its activities, please look at the CUAC website www.cuac.org.au or contact us

Kerry Connors, Executive Officer
Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre
Level 2, 172 Flinders St
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel : 03 9639 7600/ 1300 656 767 Fax : 03 9639 8966
Email: kerry.connors@cuac.org.au
ACN 100 188 752