

Connecting Schools with Indian Communities (CSIC) Pilot Program Guide

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About this guide

Victoria is proudly home to Australia's largest Indian population, which contributes significantly to the success of our state. We benefit greatly from the contributions of our Indian communities as they have established solid bridges between Victoria and India in business, academia, health and science. An opportunity exists to further leverage the expertise and rich cultural value of Victoria's Indian community for the benefit of Victorian primary and secondary schools. The Department of Education and Training (DET) aims, through the Connecting Schools with Indian Communities (CSIC) Pilot Program, to provide schools with funding to facilitate activities which harness the knowledge, experience and culture of their local Indian community. This, in turn, will support Victorian learners to better understand and engage with India.

The potential outcomes of this program are multiple, but there are four core benefits which connect with the Victorian Curriculum F-10 and Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO):

- The development of learners' intercultural capability,
- Community engagement in learning,
- Enhancing learners' global citizenship,
- Building networks between schools, services and agencies.

This guide will provide you with the key information required to set up an initiative for your school to connect with Victoria's Indian community, and how to apply for funding.

What is the CSIC Pilot Program?

Commencing in 2019, all Victorian government schools will have the opportunity to apply for funding through the Connecting Schools with Indian Communities Pilot Program. Schools will be able to develop their own concept or program and identify the funding required to actualise this. Further support is available to schools if and as needed throughout the application process.

This program is administered by the International Education Division of DET. Through this program, schools can apply individually or as a cluster for a single round of funding of up to \$25,000, to be expended by June 30, 2020. Successful schools will be funded using the [Schools Targeted Funding Governance Model](#) (STFGM).

Objectives

The outcomes targeted by the CSIC Pilot Program are:

- For schools across Victoria to have developed strong, sustainable and meaningful connections with the Indian community in order to provide students with opportunities to develop their global citizenship,
- To increase the intercultural capabilities of Victorian students, enabling them to understand, appreciate and respect different cultural contexts,
- Schools have developed new relationships with Victoria's Indian community, contributing to students possessing a greater connection to and appreciation for the cultural diversity of their local community.

Government policy underpinnings

Victoria's India Strategy

In recognition of Victoria's deep connection with India, the Victorian Government launched [Victoria's India Strategy: Our Shared Future](#) (The Strategy) in January 2018. The strong ties between India and Victoria will be further strengthened by The Strategy, which is designed to celebrate our personal connections with India and form the foundations for a mutually beneficial partnership. The CSIC Pilot Program is one of three education initiatives contained in The Strategy aiming to develop and deepen Victorian schools' engagement with India.

The Education State

The Education State is an education reform agenda that aims to make Victoria a state where everyone, regardless of background or circumstances, is offered the best chance to thrive and prosper. It calls for every school to engage in building and maintaining an inclusive school culture in which diversity is promoted as an educational advantage. The CSIC Pilot Program sits within this agenda as it supports schools to keep pace with rapid global change and develop interculturally capable students. Research has shown that schools with the following characteristics prepare interculturally capable students:

- i) strong, explicit and well-established culture of racial, religious and cultural equality in all areas of its operations; and
- ii) active integration of knowledge, attitudes and skills required for respectful engagement with diversity across all members of the school and broader community ([Doing Diversity](#) 2015).

Other references

This guide draws on the findings of the *Indian Diaspora and Schools Partnerships Forum*, convened in 2018. This event involved participants from Victoria's Indian community, a selection of Victorian schools, Victorian State Government, City Councils and the Australia India Institute. Forum participants confirmed that current levels of school engagement with India in Victoria is nascent, despite increasing connections between Victoria and India through trade and migration over the last few decades. With this in mind, the CSIC Pilot Program aims to provide schools with funding to develop meaningful, reciprocal and sustainable long-term partnerships between schools and Victoria's Indian community.

Why engage with Victoria's Indian community?

If we as educators strengthen and focus collaborative partnerships between schools and the broader community, then we will create a more comprehensive network of support for students and harness the full capacity of the community to improve student outcomes in all facets of their lives. Schools with a genuine commitment to being a learning environment that includes students, teachers, parents and community, make faster, stronger progress towards becoming interculturally capable ([Doing Diversity](#) 2015). Victoria's Indian community present a rich resource for schools to achieve this.

Benefits of connecting with Indian communities

Strong relationships between schools and diverse communities facilitates the sharing of valuable skills, knowledge, experience and resources. Below are just a few of the expected benefits of schools working with the Indian community:

Benefits for students

- A greater understanding and connection to their own community and that of their peers from the Indian diaspora (*FISO Priority: Positive Climate for Learning*).
- Development of intercultural understanding and sensitivity, and an appreciation of different points of view (*FISO Priority: Community Engagement in Learning*).
- Exposure to tangible illustrations of global interconnectedness and an opportunity to explore Indian culture, histories and stories directly from those in Victoria's Indian community (*FISO Dimension 15: Global Citizenship*).
- Self-awareness and the ability to look upon oneself from the outside (*FISO Dimension 13: Intellectual engagement and self-awareness*).

Benefits to school staff

- Increased access to community resources to support their students.
- Empowered to engage with and facilitate global learning due to enhanced intercultural capability.
- Exposure to new ways of engaging students through stimulating and diverse programs.
- Greater access to the unique insight provided by the Indian community.

Benefits to schools

- Increased community connection and pride in the school, particularly for members of Victoria's Indian community.
- Better educational outcomes as children with diverse cultural backgrounds have a sense of belonging and a strong cultural identity.
- Greater access to skills, resources, ideas, training, mentoring and support that community and business organisations from the diaspora can offer.

Benefits to families and the broader community

- Greater understanding and respect for the local community, contributing towards social cohesion and harmony.
- A reframing of school as a place to come together and connect with other families and the local community.

What types of activities might be funded

Below is a list of activities for building relationships between the Indian community and schools that may be considered for funding. These are provided for illustrative purposes only.

Student outcomes

- Visits to sites of significance to the Indian community, which feeds into an ongoing unit of work or part of the curriculum (eg. Humanities).
- Engaging members of the Indian community to run extension activities. For example, university students from the diaspora running maths or science extension activities.

Community engagement

- A cluster of schools establishing a playgroup which includes members of the Indian community to promote cross-cultural exposure in the early years and supports transition.
- Events, seminars or workshops that encourage intercultural dialogue, awareness and challenge stereotypes (e.g. a parent information series for Indian migrant families regarding aspects of the Australian schooling system).

Excellence in teaching and learning

- Professional development for staff on India capabilities which involves members of the Indian community. This could be particularly beneficial for schools with a high concentration of Indian families.

Schools are encouraged to design tailored programs that are relevant to their community. All interested schools can access support from DET at any point in the application process, including requesting advice on developing a concept or initiative.

Expenditure requirements

In accordance with the STFGM categories, please ensure that the expenses you are applying for fall into one of the following categories:

- Program goods and services
- Presenter, guest speaker or facilitator fees
- Professional development fees
- Printing, stationery and administration
- Venue hire
- Hospitality
- Travel (domestic only)
- Meals and accommodation
- Casual relief teachers (CRTs)
- Education Support (ES) staff - casual

Ineligible applications and activities

Funding cannot be given to the following types of expenses:

- Activities intended to raise revenue for non CSIC program related expenses.
- Funding for Victorians to travel overseas.
- Funding for people or organisations from overseas to visit Victoria.
- Funding for events that promote or are held for political purposes.

Who is eligible to apply for funding?

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be either currently employed as a teacher in a Victorian government school or employed by the Victorian Department of Education and Training,
- provide evidence that their Principal/Manager supports their application and agrees to support the program (eg. letter of support or co-signing the application).

See Appendix A for full eligibility requirements.

How to apply

Applications open	15 April 2019
Applications close	29 May 2020

While all eligible applications will be considered, applications will be prioritised based on submission date, the initiative's objectives and alignment with funding priorities. Schools have flexibility to develop initiatives that best suit their aims. Please be aware that the following principles apply to all submissions:

- Schools should only enter into partnerships that contribute to improving student learning outcomes – specifically, partnerships that will tangibly enhance students' understanding of India and Victoria's Indian community,
- Schools should establish relationships with organisations whose values, products, purposes and objectives are consistent with those of the school, Department and Victorian Government,
- Schools need to ensure funds can be expended prior to 30 June 2020.

All applications must be submitted electronically. If you are unable to submit your application via email, please contact us. DET does not accept any responsibility for hard copies lost in the post.

Applications must address each of the questions in the application template and provide a project proposal (see Appendix B). Schools may include additional documentation if appropriate to support their application. The Department may contact applicants for additional information or supporting documentation after the submission date, this may include the provision of advice on how to enhance an application.

The Department will conduct an initial check to confirm that each application meets the eligibility requirements (see Appendix A), and assess all eligible applications using the funding priorities (see below).

Guidelines

During the application process, schools will be asked to identify the relevant funding priority the activity responds to, and provide rationale for how the application meets this priority. Applicants may respond to one or more of the funding priorities.

Funding priority	Description of funding priority
Focus on enriching student learning and intercultural capabilities.	Activities which directly impact the outcomes of students and are built into a line of inquiry or unit of work.
Strong collaboration between partner schools and organisations from Victoria's Indian community.	Relationships identified in application should include all target organisations/individuals (if known), and demonstrate explicit, meaningful and sustainable collaboration between all partners.
Multi-school clusters/collaboration.	Activities which engage multiple schools in the project. Clusters will be viewed favourably but are not a requirement for receiving funding.

Successful applications

Successful applications will be funded via the creation of an Initiative Agreement between the Department and the school through the [Schools Targeted Funding Portal](#). Recipients will be required to comply with the terms of the Agreement. It is recommended that applicants review the [Schools Targeted Funding Governance Model Manual](#) before applying for the CSIC Pilot Program to ensure they are across the key information, requirements and processes.

Funding decisions

All funding decisions will be based on the eligibility requirements, assessment criteria and submission date. The total pool of funding available is \$120,000. Consequently, there is the possibility that some schools may be unsuccessful in their funding applications.

Application outcomes will be published at study.vic.gov.au

Reporting requirements

Reporting requirements will include your school and the funded initiative being profiled by an external party to aid in the creation of case studies. The Department may also conduct video recordings and interviews to create marketing material for possible future funding rounds.

Please note there are separate reporting requirements as part of the STFGM. These are as follows:

- Ensure procurement is undertaken within the conditions outlined in the initiative agreement and in line with procurement guidelines.
- Submit reimbursement requests (including sundry debtor invoice and supporting evidence of expenditure) via the Schools Targeted Funding Portal.
- Enter reimbursement transactions into CASES21 using the Chart of Accounts for Victorian Government Schools general ledger code for Targeted Program Reimbursement (70085).

For more information, please refer to the [Schools Targeted Funding Portal](#).

Application Support

DET can provide support to schools if and as needed throughout the application process. If you need support at any stage of the pilot program please contact:

Siobhán Marsh

Email: marsh.siobhan.k@edumail.vic.gov.au

Phone: 7022 1508

How to create a successful connection?

There is no set way to build connections between a school and its community, as each relationship will develop differently and will depend on the needs of the school, community and the type of support the community can provide or has the capacity to offer. The following are suggestions for building a meaningful and sustainable partnership between school and community, but should be considered within a local context.

Introduction and scoping

- Identify an issue or goal to be addressed by your school in conjunction with the community.
- Ensure that you consider whether the partnership proposal aligns with your school's Annual Implementation Plan and clearly link the partnership with the school's vision (e.g. increased parent participation from the Indian community).
- Review the partnership proposal with your school council and/or principal (as authoriser of all partnership activity). Be clear about the partnership and what benefits it will derive for the school.
- Map your community resources and how the school could leverage these in support of school goals (e.g. Enhanced delivery of language classes – see Case Study).
- Identify key local Indian community members and leaders who currently support students and families or have the potential to.

Implementation

Once a partnership has been agreed upon, plan a strategy to achieve your goal(s), which includes:

- agreement on clear and realistic objectives,
- agreement about how resources will be allocated (e.g. are you asking members of the Indian community to volunteer their time or will funding be used to compensate them?),
- inviting organisations and people to contribute to the partnership,
- raise awareness amongst students, their families and teachers of the benefits of building connections with the broader community,
- feedback and review process, which allows you to 'check-in' on the activities outcomes and whether these are on track.

Sustainability

Part of developing relationships with groups and organisations in your local community involves thinking about how they will be maintained and sustained. There are several factors that increase the likelihood that school and community partnerships will last over time, including:

- agreeing on and developing clear goals for the relationship,
- having authentic two-way conversations about the relationship, supported by well-designed processes,
- positive relationships among schools, principals, families, community, teachers and students,
- clusters/collaboration with other schools within your region could amplify and sustain the impact of your partnership with the Indian community.

Case Study: Rangebank Primary School

There are many different types of school-community partnerships, below is a case study from a school who has developed strong partnerships with their local Indian community.

Making waves through language

Rangebank Primary School was the first government school in Australia where Hindi language was taught from Prep to Grade 6. Originally, this project was simply about language instruction however, within a short time, parents and community members of South Asian origin became involved in the delivery of Hindi education at the school. The school takes an immersive approach to teaching Hindi, with signs around the school written in both English and Hindi and celebrates prominent Indian festivals and events. The school has continued to diversify its India-connections and now has two sister-school partnerships and cultural classes.

School initiatives include:

- Hindi language classes for Prep to Grade 6 with participation from members of the Indian community,
- Holi and Diwali festival celebrations at the school,
- traditional dance and cultural classes.

Background

The school has more than 420 students currently enrolled and approximately 27% per cent of those speak an additional language, other than English. The school is supported by a culturally diverse community, including a large Indian community from the surrounding suburbs. A key element of the school's vision is to 'prepare students as global citizens — in a collaborative environment with 21st century learning — who are flexible and adaptive and who strive to make a positive contribution to their community'.

Appendix A – Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

Criterion	Supporting information
1. The applicant has submitted a complete application	Application form and project plan
2. The applicant is employed in a Victorian government school (primary or secondary)	Application form/Statement of Support
3. The applicant intends to be involved in the life of the program or a key lead person(s) has been identified in the application	Application form
4. The applicant has the support of their Principal/Manager to undertake all activities associated with the program	Statement of Support or co-signatory on the application

Appendix B – Application and Project Proposal Template

Project			
Title			
Start date	Enter date.	End date	Enter date.
Lead Applicant			
Details of cluster schools (if applicable)			

PROJECT SUMMARY – Briefly describe the proposed project

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES - Please outline the desired objectives and outcomes of the proposed activity/initiative and how this relates to your school's Strategic Plan

INFORMATION ABOUT RELATED PROJECTS - Does your school have pre-existing programs with Victoria's Indian community or India more broadly? If yes, please outline the nature of these projects.

STAKEHOLDERS - Outline the stakeholders involved in the project and how they will be engaged, both stakeholders within and external to your school community.

IMPACT - Outline how this project/initiative will:

- a) Build students global citizenship or Intercultural Capabilities.
And/or
- b) Develop stronger links to your community.

FUNDING PRIORITY - Which of the priority areas does this program address?

✓	Funding priority	Description of funding priority
	Focus on enriching student learning and intercultural capabilities.	Activities which directly impact the outcomes of students and are built into a line of inquiry or unit of work.
	Strong collaboration between partner schools and organisations from Victoria's Indian community.	Relationships identified in applications should include all target organisations (if known). Explicit, meaningful and sustainable collaboration between partner organisations.
	Multi-school clusters/collaboration.	Activities which engage multiple schools in the project.

BUDGET DETAILS – provide details of what the project will cost in total

Estimated total cost of project:	\$ Enter \$
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Please note: you will be asked to identify itemised costings in the project proposal template (overleaf).

Principal/Manager endorsement

Either attach a letter of support for this proposed project or ask your Principal/Manager to sign below.

I _____ (full name), as Principal/Manager of the applicant, endorse this Application and Project Proposal for the Connecting Schools with Indian Communities pilot program.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Project proposal template

List the activities and tasks necessary to deliver the project if it is funded. Please include all planning and implementation milestones and any associated costs, ensuring that these are in line with the STFGM categories listed on page 6.

Activity	Steps required to complete activity	Deliverable	Anticipated cost and details	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
<i>Example:</i> <i>(this row can be deleted)</i> Purchase resources	- source products	<i>Purchase Hindi language textbooks</i>	<i>\$500</i>	<i>10 May 2019</i>	<i>30 May 2019</i>
<i>Example:</i> <i>(this row can be deleted)</i> Engage local community to support Hindi language instruction	- Find a local temple/community hub to visit for regular Hindi conversation	<i>Institute monthly excursions for Hindi conversation</i>	<i>Bus costs: \$500 per month (\$6000 total)</i>	<i>1 June 2019</i>	<i>1 June 2020</i>

Add rows as required

Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions

Am I eligible to apply for funding through this program?

To check whether you are eligible to apply, refer to the eligibility requirements in Appendix A.

My school would like to work with Victoria's Indian community but we aren't sure where to start.

Staff from the International Education Division in DET are available to work in partnership with schools, if required, to provide face-to-face support and guidance to all interested schools to help develop this concept or initiative. If this is something your school would like to access, please email csic@edumail.vic.gov.au. This support is available to all applicants.

Do I need to be currently working with an Indian community?

Anyone who meets the eligibility requirements can apply for funding through the CSIC Pilot Program. All applicants are required to provide a Project Proposal (template provided in Appendix B), outlining how they intend to engage with the Indian diaspora relevant to your school community. This can be created with the support of DET staff or independently. Staff or schools who do not currently work directly with the Indian community will still be considered. For those without current relationships with the diaspora, it would be advantageous to include additional information regarding how you will initially engage with members of Victoria's Indian community.

Can I apply if I live in a rural or regional area, or an area without an existing Indian population?

Yes, schools across Victoria are encouraged to apply.

Can I submit an application by post/email?

Yes, however, DET strongly recommends that applications be submitted electronically. If you are unable to submit your application via email, please contact us to discuss options. DET does not accept any responsibility for hard copies lost in the post.

Can multiple schools submit a joint application?

Yes. Joint application from a cluster of schools or cluster groups will be accepted and will be prioritised for funding.

What if my application is incomplete or late?

We strongly encourage completing your application by the deadline as late or incomplete applications will hold up the process and may not be considered for funding. If you are having difficulties developing your concept or initiative, please contact DET for support. All applicants can access application support at any point of the process.

My Principal/Manager is not available. Can I ask someone else to endorse my application?

The Department may accept a signature from a person other than the Principal/Manager (for example, the Assistant Principal) in some circumstances.

Do I have to submit additional documentation?

No. All applicants are welcome to provide additional documentation that they believe supports their application, however this is not mandatory.

Can I submit additional documentation after I have submitted my application?

Yes. If you have submitted your application and wish to provide additional documentation, please email csic@edumail.vic.gov.au (ensuring you quote your project title and lead applicant) at any time up until the closing date on **29 May 2020**. Additionally, the panel may request additional documentation from you following submission.

How will applications be assessed?

Applications will be assessed against eligibility requirements and assessment criteria (see Appendix A). You will need to address all of the assessment criteria in your application. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and funding amount requested. Applications will be assessed by a panel of representatives from DET and external specialists.

Will you let me know if you have received my application?

All applicants will receive a confirmation email when their application has been received. This will be sent to the primary email address submitted by the applicant during the application process. If you have submitted an application, but have not received confirmation, please email csic@edumail.vic.gov.au to check if your application has been received.