

Third Party Provider Panels

What are the Third Party Provider Panels?

In its capacity as the Native Title Representative Body for Victoria, FNLRS receives requests for assistance under section 2033BB of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). FNLRS is developing Third Party Provider Panels of lawyers and other professionals with requisite skills and experience who would be eligible to receive funding from FNLRS if an assistance request was granted and FNLRS was not able to provide the assistance. One panel will be for lawyers (solicitors and barristers) and one panel will be for non-legal service providers (including researchers, facilitators, and other advisors and consultants).

Third Party Provider Panel (Legal)

What is the Third Party Provider Panel (Legal)?

- A panel of lawyers accredited to provide high quality legal services to Victorian Traditional Owners in relation to:
 - Native title claims and native title outcomes including those under the Native Title Act and the Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement Act; and
 - Dispute resolution within and between Traditional Owner groups.
- The panel is open to solicitors and barristers.
- Lawyers appointed to the panel will be eligible for funding on a third party basis to provide support to Victorian Traditional Owner groups subject to satisfaction of FNLRS' *Guidelines for Assistance to Native Title Groups* (the Guidelines).

What are the eligibility criteria for the panel?

- Australian lawyers with a minimum of 5 years' experience.
- Experience in successfully prosecuting native title claims.
- Experience in negotiating native title outcomes.
- Experience working with Traditional Owners.
- Expertise in mediation and dispute resolution.
- Demonstrated commitment to healing informed practice.
- Satisfies the requirements of briefing out to third party legal representatives in the Guidelines (section 7.2.1).

Third Party Provider Panel (Non-Legal)

What is the Third Party Provider Panel (Non-Legal)?

- A panel of non-legal service providers accredited to provide high quality professional services to Victorian Traditional Owners that support:
 - Native title claims and native title outcomes, including those under the Native Title Act and the Victorian Traditional Owner Settlement Act; and
 - Dispute resolution within and between Traditional Owner groups.
- The panel is open non-legal service providers, including researchers, facilitators, and other advisors and consultants.
- Individuals appointed to the panel will be eligible for funding on a third party basis to provide support to Victorian Traditional Owner groups subject to satisfaction of the Guidelines.

What are the eligibility criteria for the panel?

- A minimum of 5 years' experience in the relevant professional field.
- Experience working in native title environments.
- Experience working with Traditional Owners.
- Expertise in mediation and dispute resolution.
- Demonstrated commitment to healing informed practice.
- For researchers, satisfies the requirements of briefing out to consultant researchers in the Guidelines (section 7.2.2).

Application and decision-making process

How will applicants be appointed to the relevant panel?

- Applicants will make an application to FNLRs.
- FNLRs will review applications against the eligibility criteria and make a decision.
- Successful applicants will be appointed to the relevant Third Party Provider Panel, published on the FNLRs website and reviewed regularly.

How will the application process work?

- Applicants must complete an application covering:
 - Qualifications and experience;
 - Responses to eligibility criteria;
 - Declaration of commitment to enter into a third party payee arrangement;
 - Referees;
 - Other information as requested in the application form.

How will the decision-making process work?

- Applications are to be emailed to the FNLRS contact person listed on the application form.
- Completed applications (where responses have been provided to all parts of the application form) will be referred to the Assessment Committee for a formal decision on acceptance or rejection.
- The Assessment Committee will review applications against the eligibility criteria.
- Accepted applicants will be notified by letter and sent a panel participation agreement.
- The lawyer or non-legal service provider will be placed on the relevant panel after the return of the signed agreement.

Who will be part of the Assessment Committee?

- A sub-committee of FNLRS Board comprised of three board members and an independent expert member.