

Better Parks and Playgrounds



Program Guidelines

What is the Better Parks and Playgrounds program?

The Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playgrounds program seeks to improve Victoria's open space network by investing \$7.4 million in projects that will ensure that Victorians have easy access to much needed open green open space to exercise, relax or just enjoy the outdoors.

This investment will provide funding to specific public land managers to design and deliver eleven new or upgraded parks in designated locations across Victoria. This program also supports the continued implementation of the Victorian Government's [Open Space for Everyone Strategy 2021](#).

This Program aims to:

- Provide funding for projects to cater for increased demand for open space for recreational use arising from population growth and higher population density
- Invest in projects that will optimise and revitalise the quality, safety, amenity, shared use, accessibility and function of the existing open space network in targeted locations.

Contents

Who can apply, project details and funding amounts?	1
What might be funded?	2
What will not be funded?	3
What are the funding details?	3
What are the assessment criteria?	3
What supporting documents will need to be provided?	4
What are the funding conditions?	4
What is the application process?	6
Additional information	6
What is the notification process?	7
Key dates	7
Checklist	8

Who can apply, project details and funding amounts?

This program will provide capped funding to specific eligible organisations (public land managers) for the purpose of delivering better parks and playgrounds. Identified public land managers can apply for funding in accordance with the table below.

Table 1: Eligible organisations, project detail and maximum available funding

Eligible organisations	Project Detail	Available Funding (ex GST)
City of Melbourne	Design and delivery of a new green space in the area bound by Sturt Street, Grant Street, Dodds Street and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Southbank.	Up to \$1,500,000
City of Darebin	Design and delivery of open space improvements at Merri Common, Northcote.	Up to \$1,500,000
La Trobe City Council	Design and delivery of a new Adventure Playground at Mathison Park, Churchill.	Up to \$1,000,000
Parks Victoria	Design and delivery of a facility upgrade focussed on improving inclusiveness at the Deep Rock Sporting Precinct in Yarra Bend Park.	Up to \$1,000,000
City of Whittlesea	Design and delivery of a park upgrade at Hendersons Creek Wetlands playground, South Morang.	Up to \$500,000

Eligible organisations	Project Detail	Available Funding (ex GST)
City of Whittlesea	Design and delivery of a new playspace in Doreen (site to be confirmed by public land manager).	Up to \$500,000
Capel Sound Foreshores Committee of Management (CoM)	Design and delivery of open space improvements at Capel Sound Foreshore Reserve camping grounds.	Up to \$500,000
Banyule City Council	Design and delivery of a park upgrade at Greensborough War Memorial Park, Greensborough.	Up to \$400,000
Hobsons Bay City Council	Design and delivery of a new community garden at Brooklyn Reserve, Brooklyn.	Up to \$250,000
City of Greater Dandenong	Design and delivery of wetlands related park improvements at Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve, Springvale South.	Up to \$220,000
City of Kingston	Design and delivery of a park upgrade at Chelsea Street playground, Cheltenham.	Up to \$75,000

What might be funded?

The Program will provide capped funding to eligible organisations for existing parks and reserves in the identified locations and high-level project scope details for funding up to the maximum amount as outlined in Table 1.

Eligible organisations may use a component of the grant funding to complete the required planning/approvals, design, community consultation (including engagement with Traditional Custodians) and project management costs of delivering the project. These costs cannot exceed an amount greater than 20% of the total grant funding (i.e. a minimum of 80% of the grant funding must be used for construction of the project).

Each project application will be required to submit a proposed budget breakdown for the project. Project applications will also need to provide indicative project delivery timelines, including timelines to complete a concept and detailed design, community consultation, construction commencement and practical completion of the project.

Works must commence on site within 18 months of executing the grant funding agreement and must be completed by no later than 30 June 2026.

What will not be funded?

The program will not fund the following activities:

- the purchase of land;
- the remediation of contaminated land (unless approved by DEECA as a component of the project proposal and subsequent funding agreement);
- routine or ongoing maintenance activities (unless approved by DEECA as a component of the project proposal and subsequent funding agreement);
- Works that have already commenced;
- Planning/approvals, design, community consultation and project management costs of delivering the project that exceed 20% of the grant (refer 'What might be funded'); and
- Works that do not directly relate to the project detail outlined in **Table 1**.

What are the funding details?

The total funding available for this program is up to \$7.4 million.

Funding is capped for each project and is conditional on the final scope and budget of the project being endorsed and approved by DEECA.

Eligible organisations are encouraged to contribute towards the overall cost of the project(s). These contributions can be a combination of in-kind support (time associated with planning and project management) and cash contributions. Co-contributions can also be from other project partners or grants but must be outlined in the application.

What are the assessment criteria?

Project applications will be checked for eligibility by DEECA to ensure:

- alignment with these program guidelines; and
- project documentation is to a satisfactory standard for a funding agreement to be executed between DEECA and the organisation.

As the Better Parks and Playgrounds program is a package of eleven targeted projects in designated locations there is no weighted assessment criteria.

The assessment of each application submitted by the eligible organisation will focus on how the project will be delivered, in accordance with the following:

- demonstrating how the project is financially viable and represents value for money;
- demonstrating that the organisation/public land manager has the necessary capacity and capability to deliver the project;
- considering how the project can incorporate cooling and greening into the project design;
- outlining the necessary planning, approvals, design and consultation (including with Traditional Custodians) required to deliver the project and demonstrating that those planning considerations can be factored into the project schedule and still be delivered within the required timeframes;
- outlining the proposed funding contributions with a budget breakdown (this will be provided in the program briefing and will be required to be submitted as part of the application); and

- having considered and addressed any potential impacts on gender equity, accessibility and Traditional Custodians.

What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Please submit the following documents with your application where available and/or applicable to the project:

- Site plan;
- Design concept;
- Information relating to any community consultation undertaken at the site;
- A Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) that demonstrates the land is not contaminated or potentially contaminated;
- Any relevant supporting strategies or plans (e.g. Park Masterplan, Council Open Space Plan etc).
- Evidence of confirmation of other funding sources;
- Evidence of relevant works permit/s and/or approvals.



wonguim wilam Park, Warrandyte.
Wurundjeri Country.

What are the funding conditions?

Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with DEECA. The Victorian Common Funding Agreement is used for funding agreements with not-for-profit organisations and Local Government Authorities. It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available on <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement>.

The DEECA Transfer Payment Agreement will be used for funding with Parks Victoria. Contact Open.Space@deeca.vic.gov.au if a copy is required.

The activity does not include using the funding for political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*
- *Heritage Act 2017 (Vic)*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Disability Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *Local Jobs First Act 2003 (Vic)*

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this grant funding.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines (<https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants>) will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project and must comply with the [Acknowledgement and Publicity Guidelines](#).

Payments

Payments will be made as long as:

- the funding agreement has been signed by both parties;
- grant recipients provide reports as required, or otherwise demonstrate that the activity is progressing as expected;
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

Monitoring

Grant recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This may include progress reports, site inspections, completion reports and acquittal documentation.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

What is the application process?

Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online Portal. A link will be provided to eligible organisations once a program briefing has been undertaken between DEECA and eligible organisations.

To apply, click on the 'Start New Application' button. To return to a saved draft application, click on the 'Access Saved Application' button.

Attaching required documents:

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email them to grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the timeframes provided to eligible organisations in writing by DEECA.

Note: No hard copy applications will be accepted. Late and incomplete applications may not be considered.

Additional information

Additional information is available at the program webpage:

<http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/better-parks>

The Open Space Programs team can be contacted at:

Open.Space@deeca.vic.gov.au.



Horscroft Place Pocket Park, Moorabbin. Bunurong Country.
Photo credit: Kingston City Council

What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.

Key dates

Program guidelines provided to eligible organisations	Late August 2023
Program briefing	5 September 2023
Applications open	11 September 2023
Applications close	13 October 2023
Applicants notified	November 2023
Project funding agreements established and finalised	December 2023
Projects formally commence	January 2024 onwards
Projects completed and final reports and financial acquittals submitted to DEECA	No later than 30 June 2026

NB: Key dates may be subject to change – eligible organisations will be advised of any changes accordingly.

Witternberg Reserve, Frankston. Bunurong Country. Photo credit: Frankston City Council



Checklist

Before applying, complete the checklist below.

Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- discussed your project with the DEECA – Open Space Programs team?
- checked if you are, or your organisation is, eligible for this funding?
- checked if your project is eligible for this funding?
- checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your project?
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents?



Carrington Park, Knoxfield. Wurundjeri Country.

Cover Image: Brimbank Park. Wurundjeri Country. Credit: Parks Victoria.

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