



Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund

Office for Suburban Development,
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

Guidelines
June 2023

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1. Program Description and Objectives

In May 2016, the Victorian Government created Victoria's first portfolio for Suburban Development, and the Office for Suburban Development (OSD), now within the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (the Department), was established. The Suburban Development portfolio is focused on ensuring that, as Melbourne grows, its residents will have affordable and reliable access to jobs, services and infrastructure – no matter where they live in Melbourne.

The Department manages the Suburban Revitalisation Program, which works at a place-based level, identifying and addressing the unique needs of the place in partnership with local stakeholders, particularly local government.

The Suburban Revitalisation Program focuses on renewing small scale suburban activity and neighbourhood centres by improving the quality of public spaces and local infrastructure; unlocking economic assets and land use for jobs, housing and services; and building community capacity and participation.

The Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund (the Program) – part of the Suburban Revitalisation Program – has been established to help to identify, support and deliver local economic, community and renewal opportunities in selected activity centres across metropolitan Melbourne that experience higher levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and/or growth pressures.

The 2023/24 Victorian Government budget allocated \$3.9 million for grants to continue revitalisation activities in the selected Suburban Revitalisation Board sites of Boronia, Lilydale, Tarneit, Melton, Reservoir and Noble Park.

The Suburban Revitalisation Boards are Cabinet-approved advisory committees generally chaired by the local State Member of Parliament and comprised of key community stakeholders, including representatives from local council, institutions such as universities, TAFEs, water authorities, health boards, local schools, non-profits and community services organisations, as well as private sector organisations.

The Program provides funding for projects that build stronger communities, leverage co-investment from delivery partners and meet the broader Suburban Revitalisation Program's strategic objectives and delivery outcomes.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund is to:

- promote innovative forms of collaboration in activity centres
- facilitate social and economic renewal
- improve the quality of public space and local infrastructure
- unlock economic assets and land use for jobs, housing and services
- leverage co-investment from local government, private and community sector stakeholders
- build community capacity and participation
- assist in coordinating place-based planning and delivery of state infrastructure and service investments.

1.2 Objectives

Melbourne is growing at an unprecedented rate, leading to increased pressure on existing (and often ageing) infrastructure, service facilities and public spaces. Changing demographics, technology and social behaviour are also placing pressure on existing infrastructure and services and their capacity to meet the evolving needs of larger and more diverse suburban populations.

The move to increased local living as more people work from home has created additional challenges and opportunities for Melbourne's suburbs. Specifically, this shift creates a significant opportunity to support economic growth and enhanced community connections in our suburbs.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- address the longer-term issue of metropolitan Melbourne's growth, by improving the physical amenity of key suburban centres and their ability to support local economic activity, community well-being and community members experiencing higher levels of socioeconomic disadvantage.
- strengthen the Victorian Government's place-based approach to revitalisation in key activity centres across metropolitan Melbourne through locally led initiatives and governance arrangements.

1.3 Program Outcomes

The desired outcomes of the Program are:

- Improved community infrastructure that is inviting and inclusive

- Community services that meet community needs
- Increased community participation in the local economy and public life
- Increased economic activity among local businesses.

2. About the Program

The Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund is not a competitive grants program. Instead, project proposals are considered on a case-by-case basis against the outcomes of the Program and the individual objectives of the relevant Suburban Revitalisation Board.

3. Who Can Apply?

The Program is available to key stakeholders, identified by the Suburban Revitalisation Boards and operating in the following revitalisation suburbs: Boronia, Lilydale, Tarneit, Melton, Reservoir and Noble Park.

Applications for funding may be invited from the following organisations (delivery partners):

- Local government
- Incorporated not-for-profit organisations and community groups that have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- State Government departments and agencies
- Private businesses providing community services or a social benefit that have an ABN and are incorporated associations.

3.1 Eligible Activities and Projects

The Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund seeks to achieve program objectives by providing funding to project delivery partners, with co-contributions, for projects that will deliver one or more of the following activities:

- **place-making and public space activation** – facilitating outdoor street initiatives, public events and fostering community identity and participation
- **public realm improvements** – streetscape, public space, and minor transport infrastructure upgrades
- **community development** – building local capacity and strengthening community service programs
- **social innovation and employment pathways** – facilitating jobs and skills training, encouraging entrepreneurship and small business development

- **strategic and coordinated place-based planning** – urban design, land use planning and economic analysis.

It is expected that all activities will be delivered within 18 months from the signing of the Grant Agreement.

3.2 Ineligible Activities and Projects

The Suburban Revitalisation Boards Fund will not be available for the following activities and/or situations:

- requests for retrospective funding where projects have been completed or have commenced prior to receiving funding approval
- requests for 100 per cent of funding for a project
- projects requiring ongoing additional funding from the Victorian Government
- ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies, except where a salary subsidy provides project management support for the funded project
- private sector projects undertaken as a result of a Victorian Government contract
- the purchase of land
- activities in areas that are not identified Suburban Revitalisation Board suburbs.

4. Program Funding

Applicants are required to make contributions (cash and/or in-kind) of at least 15 per cent of grant funding, unless otherwise agreed.

Applicants can only apply for up to 10 per cent of the total grant for the engagement of project management support.

Applicants should note that all project costs included in the application must be exclusive of GST.

5. Assessment and Approval

5.1 Assessment and Approval Process

The assessment and approval process are outlined below:

- Projects are identified by stakeholders located in an agreed suburban revitalisation suburb, in collaboration with the Department.
- Project proposals are jointly developed by Department staff and the stakeholder. The Department may undertake some due diligence steps on the project and delivery partner.
- The project proposals are considered by the relevant Suburban Revitalisation Board for endorsement, ensuring that the collective projects proposed meet the breadth of its vision objectives and priorities. Each Suburban Revitalisation Board works within the Suburban Revitalisation Board Terms of Reference (available [here](#)), which outline Conflict of Interest processes for project endorsement.
- The delivery partner is invited to complete an application form to request funding for their proposed project(s) if endorsed by the Suburban Revitalisation Board.
- The applications are reviewed by the Department against the eligibility, assessment criteria and due diligence steps set out in Section 5.2 and Section 5.3.
- Department staff involved in assessing applications must declare whether they have any conflicts of interest associated with applications.
- Delivery Partners are required to provide, where appropriate, material supporting the financial risk assessment process.
- The Department recommends endorsed projects to the Minister for Suburban Development for funding approval.

- The Minister considers the Department's recommendations and determines whether to approve the funding.
- Successful applicants are required to enter into Grant Agreements with the Department, detailing all funding obligations and conditions.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

The Department will assess eligible applications and any supporting documents against the following criteria:

Project aims

The proposed project demonstrates that:

- the main beneficiary of the funding is the community
- the proposed project addresses the Program's objectives (see Section 1.2); and
- the proposed project will assist in delivering the Program's outcomes (see Section 1.3).

Project need

The proposed project demonstrates:

- what community engagement has occurred or evidence that shows need or demand for it; and
- engagement with Traditional Owners where appropriate.

Project alignment

The proposed project:

- aligns with multiple of the relevant Suburban Revitalisation Board vision objectives and priorities included in the endorsed Suburban Revitalisation Board's Revitalisation Report to Government; and
- helps to support the breadth of the Suburban Revitalisation Board's vision objectives and priorities when considered alongside other endorsed projects.

Project delivery and capability

The application demonstrates the extent to which the project:

- is investment-ready and supported by a clear project management approach, including a realistic draft project plan and governance model - a draft project plan is to be provided as part of the application process
- has all access and planning permits considered in the project design, if relevant
- is financially viable based on sound cost estimates, representing value for money
- can be successfully delivered within anticipated timeframes (no more than 18 months after the signing of the agreement) and budget
- proposes a collaborative approach with a range of partners and indicates how they will contribute to the project. Proposed projects with two or more partners will be favoured.

5.3 Due Diligence Assessments

The Department will undertake due diligence assessments of proposed projects and applicants, which may include:

- Where the proposed delivery partner may gain benefits or perceived benefits from the project (beyond benefits gained as a member of the community), the Department may request further information about the project beneficiaries or may request advice from a probity advisor.
- The potential for a reputational risk to the State.
- The applicant's past delivery performance in relation to any other Grant Agreements between the applicant and the Department.
- Financial risk assessments for grant amounts of more than \$50,000:
 - Where required, the previous 3 years of financial annual statements are to be attached to the application form.

Outcomes from such assessments may be considered in any decision to recommend or award a grant, or in entering into a Grant Agreement with successful applicants.

6. Conditions of Funding

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement or, if the applicant is a State Government department or agency, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department.

Grant Agreements are legally enforceable documents that clearly set out the obligations of both parties. The Grant Agreement aims to protect the Victorian Government's interests and the efficient and effective use of public money. It also ensures there is appropriate recognition of Victorian Government support in project related publications, media releases and promotional material.

Grant Agreements will:

- describe the purpose for which the funding must be used
- set out any requirements or conditions that must be met prior to the payment of a grant instalment
- outline agreed milestones and project outcomes that must be achieved before payment of a grant instalment.

The Grant Agreement will be supported by a project plan, detailed budget with a breakdown of expenditure and timelines, as well as details of planned project activities.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to actively manage and deliver projects and provide progress reports to the Department. Grant Agreements will include reporting requirements for the duration of the funded project. These requirements may include:

- submission of project progress reports to the Department
- staged payment milestones tied to progress report submission
- advice on project progress or completion
- other milestones and reporting requirements as deemed necessary.

The Department will manage Grant Agreements and the payment of funds for approved projects.

Successful applicants will be required to contribute to project evaluations during and/or after project completion and submit an evaluation as part of the final project report, including evidence of project completion. The evaluation must assess the project's success in meeting its stated objectives, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

These arrangements will support a robust evaluation of the Suburban Revitalisation Board's activities.

The Department reports publicly on grants and programs, as well as their outcomes, that it administers. This reporting includes the identity of successful applicants and projects.

7.1 Acknowledgement

Grant Agreements will require successful applicants to acknowledge the Victorian Government and the Suburban Revitalisation Program's support for funded projects, in accordance with the Department's guidelines. This may include the use of logos or similar on any project related publications, media releases and promotional material.

Guidelines for the acknowledgement of the Victorian Government and use of logos can be found at <https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/home/resources>

7.2 Communication of Initiative

Successful applicants must liaise with the Department to coordinate any media communications related to the project and may be required to contribute information on activity outcomes for the State Government to use in communications materials.

7.3 Privacy

Information provided by the Applicant for the purpose of this application will be used by the Department and other State Departments and Agencies for the assessment of the application, program administration and program evaluation or review.

In making an application the Applicant consents to the provision of their information, including personal information and supporting evidence to State Departments and Agencies for the purpose of assessing their application and to verify, confirm or audit information provided.

If there is an intention to include personal information about third parties in the application, please ensure they are aware of and consent to the contents of this privacy statement.

Project Proposals require the Department to share applicants and/or third-party personal information with the Suburban Revitalisation Boards for their endorsement.

For us to administer your application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal details with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include departmental staff, Members of Parliament and their staff, external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other government departments.

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.

Demographic information is collected by the Department for economic reporting purposes. No personal information is used in reporting; all reports are presented with aggregated data.

The Department will publish a list of successful grants on their website at <https://www.suburbandevlopment.vic.gov.au/suburban-revitalisation>

Any personal information about the Applicant or about a third party will be collected, held, managed, used, securely store, disclosed, or shared in accordance with the Privacy and *Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

Enquires about the access to personal information or for other concerns regarding the privacy of personal information can be emailed to the Department's Privacy unit by emailing privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The Department's privacy policy is also available by emailing the Department's Privacy Unit or can be obtained from the Department's website at <https://djsir.vic.gov.au/privacy>.

Freedom of Information

Applications to the Program and associated documentation may be subject to requests under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*. Enquiries about access to information held by the Department should be directed to:

Freedom of Information Manager,

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne, VIC, 3001, AUS

Email: foi@ecodev.vic.gov.au

8. Terms of Applying

The decisions on all matters on recommending and awarding of the grant funding is at the absolute discretion of the Department and the Minister for Suburban Development.

The Department reserves the right to request the applicant provide further information should it be deemed necessary.

The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and the application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.

Authorised by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
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