

New and Upgraded Dog Parks - Round 1



Program Guidelines

What is the New and Upgraded Dog Parks program?

The Victorian Government has committed \$13.4 million to build and upgrade dog parks across Victoria. This investment will be delivered as a combination of both:

- Grants to councils to design and deliver new and upgraded dog parks in targeted locations (round 1).
- Grants to councils to design and deliver dog park upgrades based upon the needs of local communities (round 2 – note: *additional guidelines will be released for round 2*).

This investment will provide funding to local councils to design and deliver new or upgraded dog parks in designated locations across Victoria. This program also supports the continued implementation of the Victorian Government's Open Space for Everyone Strategy 2021.

The first round of this program will focus on targeted grants to councils for the delivery of six new dog parks and up to 13 dog park upgrades across Victoria with total funding available of up to \$10 million.

The second round of the program will be a competitive grants process for local councils to design and deliver dog park upgrades in areas of greatest need. Eligible local councils will be provided further information regarding the second round of the program in early 2024.

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Gordon Barnard Reserve Dog Park, Balwyn North. Wurundjeri Country.
Photo credit: Marcia Riederer.

This Program aims to:

- Invest in underutilised public land for Victorians to connect with their communities and exercise their dogs;
- Invest in informal and formal off-leash areas to meet the growing demand for people to socialise and exercise their dog off-leash;
- Contribute to urban greening, cooling and shading of local neighbourhoods; and
- Improve connectivity of open spaces with other points of interest and activity.

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 new and upgraded dog parks. Identified public land managers can apply for funding in accordance with the two tables below.

Table 1: Eligible organisations, project detail and maximum available funding for new dog parks

Eligible organisation	Project detail	Available funding (ex GST)
City of Greater Geelong	Design and delivery of a new dog park in Armstrong Creek or Charlemont	Up to \$800,000
City of Whittlesea	Design and delivery of a new dog park in Wollert	Up to \$800,000
Brimbank City Council	Design and delivery of a new dog park in Sydenham	Up to \$800,000
City of Casey	Design and delivery of a new dog park in Endeavour Hills	Up to \$800,000
City of Monash	Design and delivery of a new dog park in Mount Waverley	Up to \$800,000
Knox City Council¹	Design and delivery of a new dog park and playspace in Wantirna	Up to \$800,000

Note: Eligible organisations can only submit one application

¹ Cash co-contribution requirements do not apply for Knox City Council because the available funding includes delivery of a new dog park and a new playspace in Wantirna.

Co-contribution requirements for projects outlined in Table 1

Applicants can apply for funding of up to \$500,000 with no cash co-contribution requirement.

For additional funding sought above \$500,000 up to the maximum funding available of \$800,000 applicants are required to provide a cash contribution towards the cost of the project at a funding ratio of 2:1 (\$2 for every additional \$1 sought in funding).

Examples of indicative cash co-contributions:

Applicant request	Cash co-contribution required
Up to \$500,000	Nil
\$600,000	\$200,000
\$800,000 (maximum grant amount)	\$600,000

Note: In-kind contributions are encouraged (such as providing in-house project management) but are not eligible towards meeting the cash co-contribution requirements outlined above.

Table 2: Eligible organisations, project detail and maximum available funding for upgraded dog parks

Eligible organisation	Project detail	Available funding (ex GST)
Moonee Valley City Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Flemington or surrounds	Up to \$400,000
Yarra City Council	Design and delivery of two dog park upgrades in the City of Yarra	Up to \$400,000 (per project)
City of Whittlesea	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Lalor	Up to \$400,000
Moorabool Shire Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Bacchus Marsh	Up to \$400,000
Hume City Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Meadow Heights or Greenvale	Up to \$400,000
Cardinia Shire Council	Design and delivery of two dog park upgrades in Cockatoo and Officer	Up to \$400,000 (per project)
Wyndham City Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Hoppers Crossing	Up to \$400,000

Eligible organisation	Project detail	Available funding (ex GST)
Manningham City Council	Design and delivery of two dog park upgrades in Warrandyte and Doncaster	Up to \$400,000 (per project)
Glen Eira City Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Caulfield	Up to \$400,000
Nillumbik Shire Council	Design and delivery of a dog park upgrade in Diamond Creek	Up to \$400,000

Note: Yarra City Council, Cardinia Shire Council and Manningham City Council are eligible to apply for funding for two projects. All other eligible organisations can only submit one application.

Co-contribution requirements for projects outlined in Table 2

Applicants can apply for funding of up to \$300,000 with no cash co-contribution requirement.

For additional funding sought above \$300,000 up to the maximum funding available of \$400,000 applicants are required to provide a cash contribution towards the cost of the project at a funding ratio of 2:1 (\$2 for every additional \$1 sought in funding).

Examples of indicative cash co-contributions:

Applicant request	Cash co-contribution required
Up to \$300,000	Nil
\$350,000	\$100,000
\$400,000 (maximum grant amount)	\$200,000

Note: In-kind contributions are encouraged (such as providing in-house project management) but are not eligible towards meeting the cash co-contribution requirements outlined above.

What might be funded?

The program will provide capped funding to eligible organisations for existing parks, reserves and underutilised public land in the identified locations up to the maximum amounts as outlined in Tables 1 and 2. These areas may include locations currently serving as off-leash areas or be identified by local councils as a location they intend to designate as an off-leash area in the future.

Eligible organisations may use a component of the grant funding to complete:

- project planning and approvals
- concept and detailed design
- community consultation (including engagement with Traditional Custodians)
- 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). Provided the minimum cash co-contributions are met (if applicable), those cash-contributions can be allocated towards the total project budget at the discretion of the applicant.

Funding will primarily be for purpose-built facilities for dogs and their owners to enjoy (e.g. play features, water bowls, fencing, shelter, bins, paths, shade). A component of funding may also be used for supporting infrastructure (e.g. paths to improve connectivity, lighting, all abilities access, tree planting and landscaping for cooling and greening of the open space).

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 support or are considered works that are not complementary to the primary purpose of the project delivering a new or upgraded dog park.



Barwon River Dog Park, Belmont.
Wadawurrung Country.
Photo credit: City of Greater Geelong.

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 first funding round of the New and Upgraded Dog Parks Program is a package of 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;
- demonstrating how the project has incorporated the following into the design:
 - elements that contribute to the wellbeing, safety and enjoyment of dogs and their owners in the local area;
 - safety and sustainability so that the location can be accessed equitably by park users with different needs;

- a focus on cooling, shading and greening through landscaping or other physical enhancements; and
 - paths or other features that can improve the connectivity of the location with other surrounding points of interest and activity.
- 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, including cash co-contributions (if applicable). A template 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.

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.



Gordon Barnard Reserve Dog Park, Balwyn North. Wurundjeri Country.

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 location map;
- design concept;
- information relating to any community consultation undertaken at the site and/or related to dog park or off-leash area planning more broadly across the Local Government Area;
- 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, Domestic Animal Management Plan, Dog Off-leash Plan, etc);
- evidence of confirmation of other funding sources;
- evidence of relevant works permit/s and/or approvals.

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 www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement.

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



Cliff Whitworth Reserve Dog Park, Essendon West. Wurundjeri Country.
Photo credit: Daniel at Artificial Studio.

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)*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994 (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 (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.

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@delwp.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Applications must be submitted via the Grants Online Portal by 5 March 2024.

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:

www.environment.vic.gov.au/dog-parks

The Open Space Programs team can be contacted at Open.Space@deeca.vic.gov.au.

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	Early January 2024
Program Briefing	Early February 2024
Applications open	Early February 2024
Applications close	Early March 2024
Applicants notified	April 2024
Project funding agreements established and finalised	April/May 2024
Projects formally commence	May 2024 onwards
Projects completed with final reports and financial acquittals submitted to DEECA	No later than 30 June 2026

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

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?



Barwon River Dog Park, Belmont. Wadawurrung Country.
Photo credit: City of Greater Geelong.

Cover image: Gordon Barnard Reserve Dog Park, Balwyn North. Wurundjeri Country.

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