

More Trees for a Cooler, Greener West



Phase 5 Program Guidelines



What is the More Trees for a Cooler, Greener West program?

The Victorian Government's 'More Trees for a Cooler, Greener West' program seeks to plant 500,000 trees in Melbourne's west - creating cooler spaces for communities in the western suburbs to enjoy for generations to come.

This program will provide more shade and green spaces, drive down pollution, reduce the impacts of urban heat and improve air quality.

The new trees will assist Victoria in achieving world-leading targets to cut the state's greenhouse gas emissions and achieve net zero emissions by 2045. The trees will also complement the thousands of hectares of new open space being delivered under the \$315 million [Suburban Parks Program](#).

The rollout of this program is being completed in several phases. At the completion of Phase 4, a total of approximately 410,000 trees will have been planted.

In Phase 5 of the program, further funding is available for eligible organisations to deliver tree planting projects throughout 2025-2026.

The program is overseen by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

This Program aims to:

- Contribute to urban cooling and greening in the west of Melbourne by planting more trees;
- Leverage and accelerate existing and potential investment in urban forests by local governments and networks such as Greening the West;
- Collaborate with Traditional Owners to design and deliver tree planting projects on Country; and
- Support local communities to participate in tree planting projects.

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We acknowledge Victorian Traditional Owners and their Elders past and present as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters and commit to genuinely partnering with them and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



Program Working Group, Cherry Lake. Bunurong Country.
Photo credit: Georgia Harrison, DEECA.

Who can apply?

This program provides funds for tree planting projects located within any of the six Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Melbourne's west:

- Brimbank;
- Hobsons Bay;
- Maribyrnong;
- Melton;
- Moonee Valley; and
- Wyndham.

These areas were selected because the **western region has the lowest tree canopy cover across metropolitan Melbourne**, as well as significant areas of population growth.

The following organisations can apply for funding:

- Local government authorities of the above areas;
- Melbourne Water;
- Greater Western Water;
- Parks Victoria;
- Zoos Victoria;
- Victoria University and other tertiary institutions with campuses within the program boundary;
- Department of Transport and Planning;
- Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust;
- Local environment organisations with agreements to plant on land within the program boundary; and
- Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) of:
 - Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation;
 - Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation; and
 - Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

In addition, to be eligible for funding applicants must:

- be an incorporated body, cooperative or association (including business associations); and
- be financially solvent.

Who cannot apply?

The following cannot apply for funding (please contact [Open Space](#) to check eligibility):

- Individuals;
- Private sector businesses and agencies other than those listed above; and
- Local government authorities not located within the program boundary.

What might be funded?

Eligible organisations can apply for funding as outlined below.

- Funding is available for delivery partners to purchase tubestock (trees and large shrubs) to be planted in agreed locations and associated funding for site preparation, planting, and establishment maintenance (up to a total cost of \$15 per tubestock).
- Funding is available for planting semi-advanced and advanced trees (capped at a maximum rate of \$350 per tree) in priority local streets, roads, and reserves that can be procured by applicants.
- RAPs can also apply for funding in the project area for Planting on Country projects. Funding available is negotiable with DEECA dependent upon applications made by RAPs, and includes an allocation of up to \$10,000 for project management costs.

Airport West. Wurundjeri Country.
Photo credit: Stephanie Way, Moonee Valley City Council.



What will not be funded?

The program will **not** fund the following activities:

- Tree planting activities that were already planned and funded;
- The purchase of land;
- Routine or ongoing maintenance activities (outside the two-year program maintenance period as part of the capped funding per tree that is provided);
- Tree planting activities that have already commenced; and
- Tree planting activities located outside the program boundary.

What are the funding details?

Use of rigid biodegradable guards or equivalent sustainable options is preferred.

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 spent planning and delivering the projects) as well as cash contributions (such as planting and maintenance costs).

Funding opportunities are detailed in the following table:

Funding category	Tubestock planting	Advanced tree planting	Planting on Country
What can be applied for	Funding for purchase of tubestock procured by delivery partner, stakes and guards, site preparation, planting labour and maintenance.	Funding for planting semi-advanced and advanced tree stock procured by delivery partner.	Tubestock planting on Country.
Funding available	Maximum rate of \$15 per tubestock tree.	Maximum rate of \$350 per advanced tree (capped up to 150 trees and a total value of \$52,500).	Maximum rate of \$15 per tubestock tree. Capped up to an additional \$10,000 per RAP.
Timing	Projects must be complete by no later than 31 August 2026.		
Eligible organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local councils of: Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham; • Water authorities of: Melbourne Water (incorporating Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority) and Greater Western Water; • Parks Victoria; • Victoria University and other tertiary institutions with campuses within the program boundary; • Department of Transport and Planning; • Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust; • Zoos Victoria; and • Local environment organisations with agreements to plant on public land within the program boundary 		Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation • Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation • Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

What are the assessment criteria?

Project applications will be checked for eligibility to make sure that the applicant and their proposed projects are eligible for funding and/or trees. Eligible applications will be assessed using the criteria listed below. Each criterion is given a percentage weighting to indicate its relative importance in the assessment process. Applications should address all relevant criterion.

Tubestock and advanced tree planting applications

Criterion 1: Why is this project required? (25%)

Applications must demonstrate why the project is required; for example by demonstrating:

- how the project contributes to urban greening in locations with particularly low tree canopy cover, adding to the urban forest and benefiting biodiversity values;
- how the project represents a priority for urban heat mitigation;
- how the project supports any relevant strategies or plans (e.g. urban forest strategies).

Criterion 2: Who will this project benefit and how? (25%)

Applications must demonstrate who will benefit from the project and how. For example:

- How the project contributes to urban cooling in locations of socio-economic vulnerability and high community use or public access, especially by those particularly vulnerable to the effects of urban heat (e.g. young children, older people, people with disabilities);
- How the project will meet the needs of a growing and/or changing population in a built-up area.

Criterion 3: What will this project deliver? (25%)

Applications must detail what the funding will be used for, and must demonstrate how it will:

- add to existing tree planting activities to deliver a net increase on existing canopy cover (funding will not be available for tree

planting activities that were already planned and funded);

- include tree species and sizes appropriate for the location and future climate conditions, and demonstrate that fire risk and any other hazards have been considered;
- consider passive watering/integrated water management principles to utilise all sources of water to increase survivability;
- include opportunities for local community involvement and volunteering, where practicable.

Criterion 4: How will this project be delivered? (25%)

Applications must:

- outline how the project can be delivered within program timeframes: planting to be completed by 31 August 2026 and final report and financial acquittal by 31 October 2026;
- demonstrate the project is financially viable and represents value for money;
- outline the proposed funding contributions for the project, including capacity for the applicant to manage its delivery;
- have all relevant planning, approvals and management plans (e.g. cultural heritage), or able to demonstrate that those planning considerations can be factored into the projects and still be delivered within the required timeframes;
- have considered and addressed any potential impacts on gender equity;
- have considered and addressed any potential impacts on Traditional Custodians.

Planting on Country applications

Criterion 1: What will this project deliver? (50%)

Applications must detail what the funding will be used for and must demonstrate how it will contribute to planting on Country aspirations.

Criterion 2: How will this project be delivered? (50%)

Applications must:

- outline how the project can be delivered within program timeframes: planting completed by 31 August 2026;
- demonstrate the project is financially viable;
- outline the proposed funding contributions for the project, including capacity for the applicant to manage its delivery.

Program-wide criteria

The following program-wide factors will also be considered:

- Equitable distribution: subject to the quality of the submitted applications and supporting documentation in terms of meeting the assessment criteria, the total available program funds will be distributed across eligible organisations as equitably as is reasonably possible;
- Projects that have delivery partners' contributions and attract further public, not-for-profit or private sector investment are desirable and strongly encouraged.

Delivery partners' previous performance in delivering DEECA projects, including projects funded under previous delivery phases of this program will also be considered in the assessment of this criterion.



Victoria University Werribee Campus. Bunurong Country.
Photo credit: Leah Wheatley, DEECA.



Truganina. Bunurong Country.
Photo credit: Lisa Field, Werribee River Association.

What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Please submit the following documents with your application as appropriate:

- Relevant templates relating to project budget and indication of tree numbers and species in the agreed format (this will be provided as part of the online application process);
- Evidence of confirmation of other funding sources;
- Written consent from the relevant public land manager or private landowner to undertake the activity (not required if the applicant owns and manages the land);
- Approval for appropriate works permit/s from councils or other authorities;
- Map/s of proposed planting locations;
- Any relevant supporting strategies or plans (e.g. Urban Forest, Urban Cooling or Vegetation strategies, etc).

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 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)*.

Tax implications

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

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form 'Statement by a Supplier' so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines (<http://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 <http://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](#).

What is the application process?

Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online Portal.

Additional information regarding the application and funding process for Phase 5 of this program will be provided through a program briefing with eligible organisations on 19 November 2024 (held via MS Teams).

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 [Grants Info](#), quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Applications must be submitted by 12pm noon on 3 December 2024.

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

Additional information

Additional information is available at the [program web page](#). The Open Space Programs team can be contacted at [Open Space](#).

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 briefing	19 November 2024
Applications open	19 November 2024
Applications close	3 December 2024
Applicants notified	Early 2025
Project funding agreements finalised and executed	Early 2025
Activities commence	May 2025 onwards
Planting activities completed	31 August 2026
Acquittal reports submitted	No later than 31 October 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?
- checked if your project is eligible for this funding?
- discussed your project with the DEECA - Open Space Programs team?
- checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your project?
- checked if you are, or your organisation is, eligible for this funding?
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents?

If you require assistance submitting your application online, email [Grants Info](#).



Tree planting at Blind Creek. Wurundjeri Country.
Photo credit: Marcia Riederer.

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