

Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens grants program Round Two 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long will the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens grants program be running for?

A. The grant program is being delivered over two years, in two competitive rounds: 2019-20 and 2020-21. Close to \$4 million is available for grants to botanic gardens. Round Two opens on 21 May 2020 with a budget of \$1.88 million available. The Program will be administered by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Q. What is the purpose of the program?

A. The program aims to rejuvenate Victoria's botanic gardens by upgrading and enhancing the physical assets and amenities of the gardens and by growing the gardens' important role in research, conservation and education. The program also seeks to address the risks posed by climate related rainfall and temperature changes. Overall, the program will assist botanic gardens to be innovative in growing visitation and use and in meeting changing community needs.

Q. How do I know if my garden is an eligible botanic garden?

A. Botanic gardens are generally recognised as being gardens that are open to the public and which grow plants for public enjoyment and for scientific, horticultural, conservation or educational purposes. These gardens may include institutions holding documented collections of living plants for scientific research, sharing of seed and plant material, and educational display and interpretation.

An arboretum may also be eligible if it is open to the public and grows plants for public enjoyment and for scientific, horticultural, conservation or educational purposes.

For the purpose of this grants program, botanic gardens eligible for funding are those gardens considered to have been established primarily for the purpose of a botanic garden, educational, horticultural or system garden, or arboretum and which have an ongoing botanic garden or arboretum function that meets the criteria set out above.

As the focus of the grants program is to assist rural and metropolitan botanic gardens, which may be less well-resourced, the Royal Botanic Gardens (Melbourne and Cranbourne) is not participating in this grants program.

Botanic gardens must also provide free public access to be eligible.

Membership of Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) and/or the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) is not considered to automatically confer eligibility for this grants program for member gardens.

See further information on the definition of botanic gardens in Appendix 1. Botanic Garden definition and information sources.

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Q. Is a 'new' or proposed botanic garden eligible for funding?

A. There is widespread interest and support for botanic gardens in Victoria and some municipal councils, committees of management or community organisations may be seeking to establish a new botanic garden. Creating a new botanic garden may have been recommended in a local strategic plan or represent a long-standing community aspiration.

A project to establish a new botanic garden may be considered for funding but would need to meet the following requirements:

- The purpose of the garden is consistent with the accepted definition of a botanic garden.
- Public access is offered.
- The applicants are eligible to apply, consistent with the Funding Guidelines (see "Who can Apply?").
- Detailed planning for the new or proposed botanic garden has been undertaken already, including a defined vision and concept for the garden, feasibility and economic analysis, site and plant collection planning, and costings.
- There is a defined site set aside for the botanic garden owned or managed by the applicant.
- Proponents have carried out appropriate consultations (eg Royal Botanic Gardens, Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand) and/or commissioned professional horticultural expertise.
- Be focused on works on the ground.

Q. What type of projects will be considered for funding?

A. The following types of activities and projects are eligible for funding:

- Upgrades that respond to risks to tree collections and plantings posed by climate change.
- Activities that develop, guide and promote the scientific and horticultural functions of botanic gardens.
- Initiatives that foster the enhancement of botanic gardens with indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse collections and connections.
- Initiatives that foster the development or enhancement of records and collections management, including training and capacity building opportunities.
- Activities that support future-proofing initiatives that address botanical, conservation and heritage needs, including required conservation, irrigation or structural works.
- Initiatives that promote sustainable use of resources such as reduced energy or water use, and adaptive water management practices.
- Activities that support enhancements and accessibility to community assets such as plantings, gardens, picnic facilities, trails and nature play areas, catering to visitors including local, indigenous and culturally diverse communities.
- Initiatives that deliver increased community understanding and appreciation of botanic garden values including therapeutic and well-being benefits, heritage conservation, biodiversity, 'garden to table' opportunities and connections to indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Collaborations and partnerships between stakeholders such as friends and community groups and including indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Q. I received a grant in Round One (2019) of the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens grants program. Can I apply for a grant in Round Two?

A. Yes. However, satisfactory progress in the completion of a Round One project must be demonstrated, to be considered eligible. You will need to supply documentation confirming this progress in your application.

Q. Can I submit more than one application?

A. Yes. You are able to submit more than one application. Each application will be for a different project. All supporting documents need to be submitted for each application, see the funding guidelines for more information.

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Q. What will not be considered for funding?

A. The program will not fund the following activities:

- Purchase of land and equipment.
- Employment or remuneration of staff.
- Routine or ongoing maintenance activities that should normally be carried out to keep the gardens in good condition or repair.
- Projects or activities that have already started.
- Demolition or other works that may affect the heritage significance of the garden, or heritage feature or object.
- Relocation of heritage buildings or objects.
- Works to places that have no general public access or where access to the general public is limited.
- Recurrent operating costs and/or activities establishing expectations of ongoing funding.
- Projects or activities located outside the State of Victoria.

Q. Can documentation projects, such as strategy or conservation management plans, be funded?

A. While there is a preference to fund works on the ground or initiatives that support botanic garden function and greater community use of gardens, in some cases a documentation project may be funded. Conservation management and other strategic plans, including master plans and comprehensive tree management plans, may be funded, to provide an essential reference that will guide the future management and operation of a garden, or conservation of key garden and built assets.

Projects comprising only detailed "stand alone" architectural or landscape plans for new or upgraded assets, without an associated physical works component, are unlikely to be supported. However, as a component of a project that will deliver a completed improvement on the ground in accordance with a funding agreement, detailed plans may be considered for funding.

If including detailed landscape and architectural design in a grant application, applicants should provide copies of quotes and details of scope and costs so that this component can be evaluated for its contribution to the project and eligibility.

Q. Can arboricultural projects, such as tree surgery, be funded?

A. It is not intended that grants be applied towards activities comprising routine annual maintenance of trees and other plants. However, a major arboricultural project, for example, a comprehensive program of tree surgery and other remedial actions to rejuvenate, protect and conserve collections of trees, may be eligible. Such arboricultural work will need to be based on a detailed tree management strategy and work plan and be consistent with the appropriate Australian Standards relating to tree management and work.

Q. What is routine garden maintenance?

A. Maintenance can be defined as the continuous protective care of the physical fabric (elements, materials, fixtures and contents) of a place and its setting. In the case of gardens, this might include regular pruning of trees and plants, replanting of certain species to conserve the character of the garden, and routine activities such as mowing, edging and weed control. It may also involve minor repairs to garden elements such as paths, structures, fences, gates and water infrastructure, repainting or resurfacing of carpark areas.

Routine and ongoing maintenance activities that should normally be carried out to keep the gardens in good condition and repair will not be funded.

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Q. Who can apply?

A. The following parties can apply for funding:

- A committee of management appointed under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. Groups must meet the conditions of clause 14(4)(a) any three or more persons or 14(4)(e) any board, committee, commission, trust or other body corporate or unincorporated established by or under any Act for any public purpose.
- A Victorian municipal council.
- A trust appointed pursuant to a restricted Crown grant.
- A community or not-for-profit organisation, associated with and auspiced by a botanic garden owner or manager, and that is a legal entity (for example an incorporated association, incorporated cooperative or indigenous corporation) – please note that an incorporated not-for-profit organisation must provide proof of not-for-profit status.

In addition, to be eligible for funding, applicants must be an incorporated body, cooperative or association (including business associations) and be financially solvent.

Individuals, government agencies and statutory authorities, and private sector businesses and agencies are not eligible to apply.

Q. My project has already started. Can I still apply for funding?

A. No. Projects that have commenced are not eligible for funding.

Q. How much money may I apply for?

A. Applicants may apply for an amount of between \$20,000 and \$300,000 per project.

Note: Botanic garden owners and managers can apply for more than one project in the funding round. If projects include two or more discrete and different projects, it is preferable to submit an application for each project rather than one application covering all projects.

Q. What is co-contribution?

A. The funding guidelines encourage co-contributions from applicants. Co-contribution is sought as a means of generating a larger budget for projects and achieving improved outcomes from the grants program.

While co-contribution is not mandatory, applications with a greater level of co-contribution are likely to be ranked higher during assessment.

It is recognised that applicants may have varying capacity to provide co-contributions and the following contributions can be offered by applicants:

- financial contribution
- a mix of financial or in-kind contribution
- in-kind contribution.

For the purpose of this grant, **in-kind contribution** means a contribution other than money that supports the implementation or delivery of the project and that otherwise would need to be paid for.

It includes:

- voluntary labour (eg supplied by a friends group or by a community organisation)
- donated goods or services (including equipment, materials, professional services that might be provided by an architect, engineer, horticulturalist, etc.)

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These need to be expressed in a dollar value. Appropriate types and costings are indicated below, based on rates used by various Victorian government agencies.

- In-kind volunteer general labour is normally calculated at \$20 per hour.
- In-kind specialist labour is normally calculated at \$30-\$45 per hour. (Costings need to be based on reasonable commercial rates).
- In-kind provision of goods is normally calculated at the retail or market price that the goods would have been bought or hired for.

Note that where an applicant is not the owner or manager of a garden and in-kind contribution is offered, appropriate arrangements for supervision of proposed works or activity must be made.

Q. Do I need a project manager and are project management costs eligible to be funded?

A. For projects that total \$50,000 and over, you will need to engage a qualified project manager. The project manager will manage the administration of the grant, ensuring that all works are kept on track, that funding timelines are met, reports are made on time, and the project is delivered within the allocated budget. The project manager should be specified in your application and, in some cases, a percentage of the requested grant funds may be used to cover project management costs. Where applicable, this should be factored into your budget in your application.

Please note that Victorian municipal councils should use internal project management resources where possible and will not receive grant funds for internal project management expenses.

Where botanic gardens are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, a percentage of funding may be applied towards project management and supervision required for project implementation relating to heritage assets included in a project. In this case, where works or projects need to be managed or supervised by a horticultural or heritage professional engaged by garden owners and managers, up to 10% of the project cost may be applied towards this professional input and supervision.

Where it is necessary for a heritage permit to be obtained (under the *Heritage Act 2017*), the grant may also provide for the cost of the heritage permit fee.

Q. Do I need a heritage advisor/consultant?

A. Yes, if your botanic garden is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and the project includes a heritage component, advice from a suitable heritage professional is required. Such advice could be provided by a heritage architect or horticulturalist, heritage consultant or by your local heritage council's heritage advisor. Projects involving heritage assets will be assessed on whether an appropriate conservation approach with a clear methodology has been proposed. If the works relevant to your application have not been guided by a heritage advisor, then your application is unlikely to score highly against the heritage assessment criteria.

Q. How do I check if my botanic garden is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)?

A. You can find out if a place or object is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) by searching the Victorian Heritage Database (VHD) which can be accessed from the web site of the Heritage Council of Victoria, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>.

The VHD includes places and objects that are included on the VHR; archaeological places included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI); places and objects that are listed by the National Trust; and places and objects that are included in a local planning scheme heritage overlay.

Places and objects included on the VHR have a registration number beginning with the letter H, followed by four digits (i.e. H1234). If a place or object is included on the VHR, it means that the place has been assessed as being significant to the State of Victoria and is protected under the *Heritage Act 2017*.

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All applicants who are proposing new works and/or upgrades to existing buildings, structures, garden elements and landscape features must check whether statutory heritage protections apply to the garden. More information on supporting documentation and requirements for heritage listed gardens is available in the guidelines.

Q. My garden is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register - do I need a heritage permit from Heritage Victoria before I apply?

A. In the case of gardens listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, heritage permits or formal permit exemptions are not required to accompany an application at the time of submission. However, applicants **must** contact Heritage Victoria to arrange a **pre-application consultation** for advice on heritage permit exemptions and/or requirements to apply for a heritage permit. This standard preliminary service provided by Heritage Victoria will clarify those projects that have heritage conservation values and protection requirements.

Note that projects cannot proceed without a heritage permit if required by Heritage Victoria.

Q. How long do successful applicants have to complete their project?

A. Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with DELWP - the Victorian Common Funding Agreement (VCFA) which is used for funding agreements with not-for-profit organisations and local government authorities.

Projects must commence within six months of entering into an agreement and be completed by March 2022.

Q. How do I submit an application?

A. Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online portal on the department's web site.

To apply, go to the grant program web page <https://delwp1.force.com/publicform?id=a0h4P00001cgkno> and click on 'Start New Application'. To return to a saved draft application, click 'Access Saved Application'.

When you apply online you will receive an acknowledgement email with an application number. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

Applications must be submitted online by **5 PM 16 July 2020**.

Q. What are the assessment criteria for applications?

A. All applications will be checked first for eligibility, to ensure that the applicant and their projects are eligible for funding. Eligible applications will then be assessed using the criteria listed below.

Each criterion has been given a percentage weighting to indicate its relative importance in the assessment process.

Applications should address each of the relevant criteria.

Why? the project is needed to support and enhance the assets and values of the botanic garden or address risk(s) to the garden (**20%**).

Who? will benefit and how, and who will be guiding, conducting and overseeing the works (i.e. a suitably qualified project manager, horticulturalist or heritage professional) (**20%**).

How? the proposed project will be undertaken (project scoping and documentation, appropriate approach, alignment with government strategies and policies) (**20%**).

What? the intended outcome(s) of the project will be, including the environmental, conservation, heritage, community, economic and social benefits (**40%**).

Please see the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens Grants Program funding guidelines for more detailed information about each of the assessment criteria.

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Assessment of applications may also consider benefits to rural, regional, indigenous and multicultural communities, and metropolitan fringe or high growth areas, to ensure an equitable spread of support for botanic gardens across the state.

Q. Do I need to provide quotes?

A. Yes. Your application must include at least two written quotes (including GST) for each eligible component of the project. The supplied quotes should account for the full estimated cost of physical works. DELWP acknowledges that it may be difficult in rural areas to obtain two quotes and under some circumstances one quote may be acceptable. If so, please explain these circumstances.

Quotes must be current and have been obtained within the last six (6) months. Please ensure quotes are itemised, detailed, and are based on the same scope of works to allow for a clear comparison.

Due to the nature of heritage conservation works (where these are involved), cost estimates may vary widely, depending on the methodology and materials used. Sourcing at least two quotes will help you to determine the grant amount you are applying for.

Q. We propose to carry out works “in house”; do we still need to provide quotes for works?

A. External quotes for works are not necessary for work proposed to be carried out in house, providing a detailed budget breakdown for this work is provided, setting out the hours, rates and the costs for the work i.e. the basis for costs documented.

Q. Where can I find a heritage advisor or heritage tradesperson?

A. Heritage Victoria maintains a directory of heritage consultants, architects and contractors on its website. The directory can be accessed at <https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/consultants-directory>

Please note that consultants and businesses listed in this directory are not endorsed by Heritage Victoria, the Heritage Council of Victoria or DELWP. In addition, the directory does not include all available consultants, contractors or suppliers.

Many local councils also employ heritage advisors, who may be able to assist you in scoping your project. It is recommended that you enquire with your local council if you have trouble finding a heritage contractor in your area.

Q. Who can I contact for further information or help in completing my application?

A. The DELWP Botanic Gardens Grants team can be contacted on botanicgardens@delwp.vic.gov.au You can also contact the DELWP Grants information Line for matters relating to access and use of the online application portal.

Q. How will my application be assessed?

A. Once the application round closes, an expert panel will assess each application against the assessment criteria. You may be contacted during this process to clarify elements of your application. If you are contacted, it would be appreciated if you could respond quickly to ensure that your application can be assessed.

Please note that funding is awarded through a competitive process, and not all eligible applications will receive a grant offer.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment process is completed.

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Appendix 1. Botanic gardens definition and information sources

As noted by Australian botanic gardens organisations, there is no formal accreditation process for establishing and operating a botanic garden, nor legal rules on naming a garden a "botanic garden". The references below provide information on botanic garden definition.

[Information from BGANZ Collections Planning Toolkit Handbook \(Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand\)](#)

<https://www.bganz.org.au/assets/uploads/2017/05/BGANZ-BGCI-Collections-Planning-HANDBOOK.pdf>

Some important definitions to begin with: What are the elements or features of botanic gardens that defines them as being botanic gardens? We know that botanic gardens come in all shapes and sizes from major capital city gardens with many hundreds of staff through to regional gardens, which may be managed completely by volunteers. Without doubt the unifying features at the core of any botanic garden are its collections of plants.

Some definitions of a botanic garden are: "Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education." (Peter Wyse Jackson - Botanic Gardens Conservation International 2000).

The Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne defines a collection as "a managed group of plants demonstrating a particular theme(s). It serves one or more of the general goals of research, conservation, education or ornamental display".

BGANZ refers to a botanic garden as: "gardens open to the public, which grow plants for public enjoyment, scientific, horticultural, conservation, or educational purposes, and which have local, national or international roles". Different gardens will place more (or less) of an emphasis on the various elements associated with these definitions. Some gardens may facilitate all the elements; other gardens may focus on just one key element as their core objective.

[Australian National Botanic Gardens \(ANBG\)](#)

Additional information can be obtained from the ANBG website, at the following address.

<https://www.anbg.gov.au/gardens/about/management/what-is-a-botanic-gardens.html>

[International Agenda for Botanical Gardens in Conservation 2000](#)

Wyse Jackson, P.S. and Sutherland, L.A. (2000), International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, UK

https://www.bgci.org/files/All/Key_Publications/interagendaeng2580.pdf

Accessibility

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