




2016-17
Growing
Suburbs Fund
Application Guidelines

Growing Suburbs Fund
www.delwp.vic.gov.au/growing-suburbs-fund



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2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund Application Guidelines

The 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund (formerly the Interface Growth Fund) is a contribution towards meeting critical local infrastructure needs for communities in Melbourne's diverse and fast-growing outer suburbs. It is positioned to quickly respond to the pressures being experienced by interface communities by bringing forward local infrastructure projects that will make a big difference in the day-to-day lives of outer suburban families.

Note to users: These guidelines relate to the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF). If the fund is extended to future years, the focus and guidelines may be revised.

Message from the Minister



Melbourne's ten interface council areas are facing unprecedented growth and change. Together, they will accommodate 46 per cent of the state's population growth from now until 2031. They are diverse – home to some of the city's most vulnerable communities, and are also responsible for the management of 90 per cent of Melbourne's green wedge areas.

That's why the Victorian Government is helping councils to reduce the pressure on strained facilities and services and brings forward their critical community infrastructure priorities. This \$50 million investment targets critical local infrastructure needs and will be supported by and complement more than \$1.3 billion for growing communities announced in the 2016-17 Victorian Budget.

The initial \$50 million 2015-16 Interface Growth Fund provided much needed funding to assist interface councils begin the task of delivery of new local infrastructure that will make a big difference in the day-to-day lives of outer suburban families.

I am delighted that a further \$50 million investment through the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund will enable councils to continue a program of infrastructure investment to better meet the needs of their diverse communities. It will fund community infrastructure projects that improve the amenity, liveability and resilience of interface communities, support connections, enhance services and provide local jobs.

These guidelines provide information to applicants about the objectives, criteria and process for the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund. I am pleased that they have been developed in collaboration and consultation with interface councils, reflecting the strong partnership between state and local government to ensure the best possible outcomes for communities living in Melbourne's outer suburbs.

I welcome your interest and participation in the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund. Together we can deliver liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities.

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Local Government



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1. Overview

The Victorian Government recognises that Melbourne's interface councils are diverse and are home to some of the city's most vulnerable communities. They play a critical role in supporting Victoria's population growth and economy, contain productive rural land and are responsible for 90 per cent of Melbourne's Green Wedge areas.

As a group, the interface councils on Melbourne's urban fringe have been experiencing significant population growth over the last two decades, with growth consistently doubling the state's average. This is expected to continue with more than 1 million additional residents living in Melbourne's interface by 2031.

The Victorian Government is investing an additional \$50 million through the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF), formerly known as the Interface Growth Fund, to accelerate the delivery of critical infrastructure in Melbourne's interface.

The GSF will be delivered in coordination with other government infrastructure investments in interface communities. It is overseen by the Minister for Local Government and administered by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

2. Objectives

The 2016-17 GSF will contribute to a prosperous and liveable Melbourne by improving the quality of life for those living in the outer suburbs. It will fund infrastructure that improves the liveability, resilience and community and economic development of these communities.

Grants will be targeted at high priority community infrastructure projects in the interface councils that contribute to:

- healthier, more resilient and liveable communities
- improved local economies
- improved capacity for councils to respond to changing community needs and demands.

3. Who can apply

The 2016-17 GSF is open to Melbourne's ten interface councils.

The ten interface councils are: Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Mitchell¹, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Yarra Ranges.

While only interface councils can apply for funding and enter into a funding agreement with the department, not-for-profit or private sector organisations are encouraged to partner with these councils to put forward proposals for the 2016-17 GSF.

Applicants should review these guidelines to confirm their eligibility.

¹ Mitchell Shire Council is identified as a Regional Municipality in the Regional Growth Fund Act 2011 (Vic), however it is also considered an interface council for the GSF.

4. What will be funded

The 2016-17 GSF will fund new, expanded or upgraded infrastructure² projects within Melbourne's ten interface councils.

4.1 Scope

The 2016-17 GSF will fund a mix of projects that have a direct social or economic benefit for communities across these broad infrastructure categories:

- community health, well-being, and social interaction
- early education, and learning and training
- sport, recreation, and leisure
- environmental and climate change resilience
- placemaking, civic amenity, and community connecting.

All infrastructure projects must commence construction within 12 months of the grant being announced and must be completed within three years from the start of construction.

The 2016-17 GSF will not fund:

- land acquisition as an isolated activity, such as, purchasing land for future use (unless land acquisition forms part of the delivery of an implementation-ready³ infrastructure project) as the fund is designed to support delivery of urgently needed local infrastructure
- infrastructure that is fully scoped and funded through a development contributions plan, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that GSF funds will bring forward delivery, or that the actual costs of delivering the infrastructure materially exceed the total of development contributions
- routine or ongoing maintenance activities, cosmetic works, or repair of facilities damaged by vandalism, fire or other natural disasters where the damage should be covered by insurance
- recurrent operating costs, including for utilities and staffing resources
- drainage, waste, roads and associated footpaths, and public transport infrastructure
- construction of infrastructure that does not have a direct community benefit or address an identified community need
- service connections, noting that where these elements form part of construction, council's contributions should be used for these activities.

4.2 Funding from other programs

The GSF should accelerate the delivery of critical community infrastructure and complement, rather than replace, other funding sources available to these communities. Some projects might be suitable for funding by multiple programs, including the Children's Facilities Capital Program, the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program.

Applications received for the 2016-17 GSF that are eligible for and primarily within the scope of other funding programs should clearly identify the additional value to be achieved through GSF funding. They should also identify any alternate sources of funding sought, including State and Commonwealth government programs, as well as eligibility for contributions from developers.

² Expansion or upgrades to leased premises may be considered based on cost-benefit over the length of the lease.

³ Implementation-ready infrastructure is defined as infrastructure for which, if funding were committed, construction works would commence within 12 months of funding announcement.

4.3 Assessment criteria

Percentage weightings are provided as a guide to the relative importance of different criteria in the assessment process. Applications should address all relevant criteria and provide relevant supporting documents as set out in section 4.4.

Information contained in the applications may be shared with other State Government agencies in order to assist with cross government coordination and enable the department to seek clarification on an application or applicants.

Individual project assessment

Applications for infrastructure will be assessed against five individual project assessment criteria:

Criterion 1 – Why is this project required? – 25%

Applications will be required to demonstrate the extent to which the project addresses an identified need in the community by:

- clearly identifying the need or gap in infrastructure provision that the project will address
- demonstrating (by quantifying) the breadth and depth of the need or gap in infrastructure provision.

Applications that directly address needs resulting from population growth will be favourably considered.

Criterion 2 – Who will benefit and how? – 25%

Applications must clearly demonstrate the extent to which the project will deliver benefits to the locality and must:

- clearly identify the expected benefits (social, economic, and/or environmental) that the project will deliver
- demonstrate the breadth and depth of the expected benefits including who will benefit and how
- demonstrate how the project will deliver on the purpose of the GSF and the desired outcomes.

Criterion 3 – What will be delivered – 20%

Applications must provide details of what the funding will be used for and:

- demonstrate the relationship between what the project will deliver, the need for the project, and the expected benefits
- demonstrate consistency with climate change, environmentally sustainable design, and universal design principles
- explain how the project benefits will be sustained once the infrastructure is delivered.

Criterion 4 – How will the project be delivered - 20%

Applications must provide details that:

- demonstrate a sound approach to delivering the project, providing realistic time-frames for delivery, and demonstrate that the project is financially viable and represents value for money
- demonstrate capacity to implement and/or source expertise to manage the delivery of the project
- outline the proposed funding contributions for the project.

Projects that have significant council contributions and attract further public, not-for-profit or private sector investment are desirable and strongly encouraged. Applicants must contribute resources and funding to any GSF funded project.

A council's previous performance in delivering state funded projects will also be taken into account in the assessment of this criterion.

Where there are concurrent funding applications, applications must identify how council will fund the difference if other applications are unsuccessful.

Criterion 5 – The extent of council and community support for the project – 10%

Applications must:

- demonstrate that the project is a recognised strategic council priority and is consistent with key council plans such as the current Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan, community plans or structure plans and/or policy documents
- demonstrate support at the community level. This could be demonstrated by engagement activities, co-contributions or in-kind support from community members or groups.

Program wide criteria

The program assessment panel will also consider four program-wide factors. These factors are:

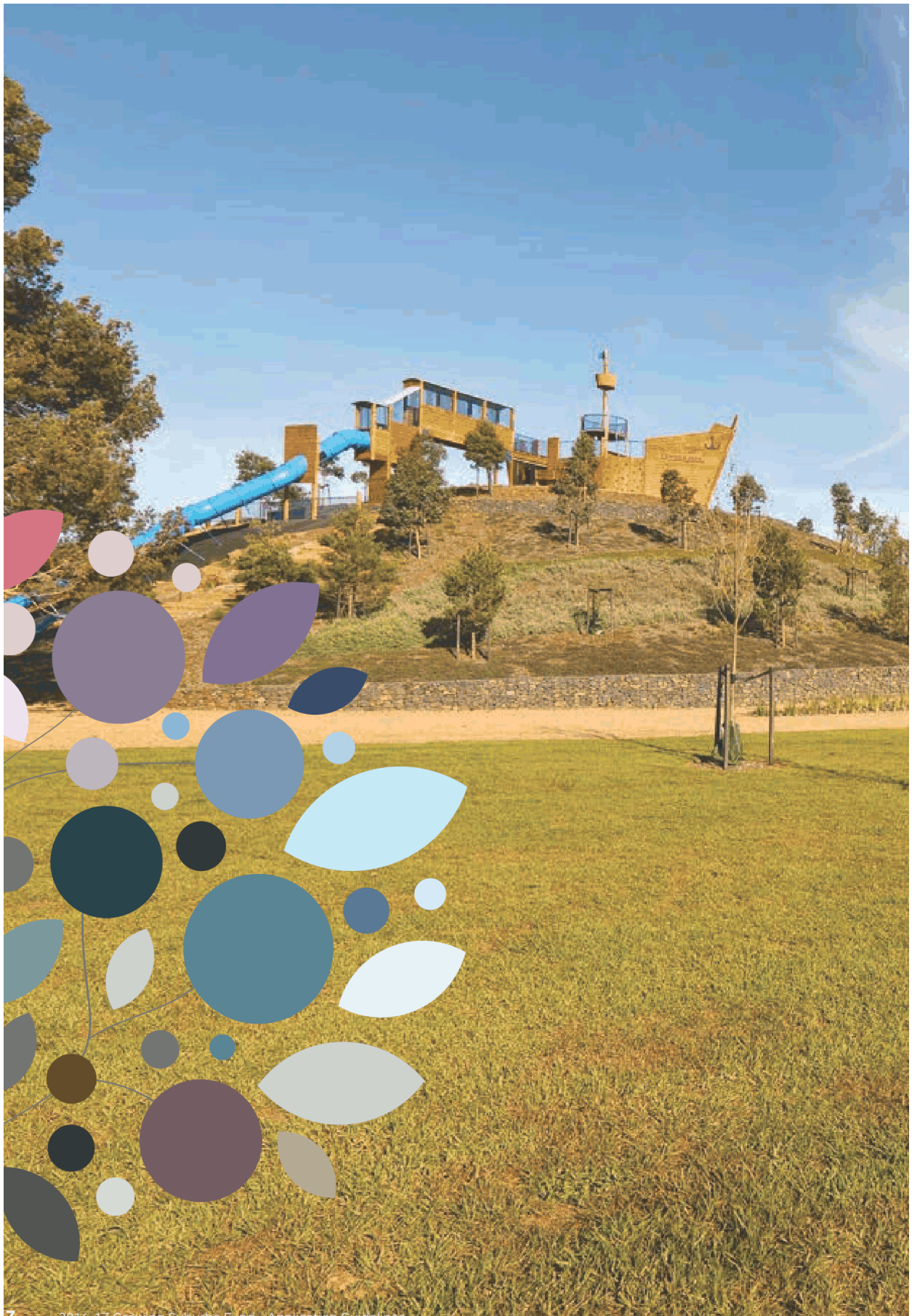
- leveraged funding - while single projects are not required to match state funding, a program wide target for funding leverage of \$1 for \$1 has been set. Councils are expected to contribute some funding to the delivery of projects
- geographic distribution - no more than 20 per cent of the total 2016-17 GSF funding pool will be allocated to a single council
- diversity of infrastructure/project types - the assessment will seek to ensure that funded projects represent a mix of targeted infrastructure
- consistency with State priorities – the panel will consider how each project aligns State as well as local priorities.

4.4 Supporting documentation

The following supporting documentation can be attached as part of your application:

- key project governance, management and milestone management documentation such as a project plan
- a business case or cost benefit analysis that may have been completed for the project
- relevant sections of council reports/plans/strategies/community consultation to support the project (please do not attach entire documents)
- concept or schematic plans for the project.





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5. How to apply

5.1 Application process and key timing

Applications for eligible projects will be received through a single application round, opening in June and closing in July. The assessment process is designed to ensure that fully scoped, eligible and high priority projects can be funded as soon as possible for works to commence.

A brief overview of the steps in the process for the 2016-17 GSF is summarised below:

Applications Open	3 June 2016
Applications Close	29 July 2016
Assessment and Decision Making	1 August to mid-October 2016
Announcements	From November 2016
Funding Agreements Executed	From November 2016

5.2 Application requirements

Applicants should:

- address the 2016-17 GSF project assessment criteria in their response to each question
- include all key information, data and evidence to support the responses
- provide a primary contact for any follow-up.

DELWP staff may make contact with applicants to seek further clarification of information submitted.

Some applicants may be requested to submit further information following initial assessment of applications by the department.

Applications must be submitted via the link at www.delwp.vic.gov.au/growing-suburbs-fund. These should be received by the department no later than **5pm, Friday 29 July 2016**.

If you have any queries, please contact DELWP on (03) 9948 8552 or email GSF@delwp.vic.gov.au.

5.3 Funding conditions

Funding agreement

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with DELWP. Funding agreements establish the parties and outline their commitments and obligations to each other, as well as setting out the general funding terms and conditions. It is recommended that applicants review the Common Funding Agreement standard terms and conditions before applying. No funding will be released until DELWP and the applicant have executed the funding agreement.

Project monitoring and delivery

Funding recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements to be outlined in the funding agreement.

Councils are responsible for project delivery, including any project cost overruns should they occur. In cases where applications are submitted in partnership with third party organisations, it is expected that councils will take responsibility for project delivery. Councils must also take full responsibility for the cost of ongoing operation and maintenance of any facilities through their asset management processes.

In cases where a project is delayed for an unreasonable length of time, where substantive changes to scope are made after funding has been approved, or where a project fails to be delivered, DELWP reserves the right to cancel the grant and, if applicable, recoup any payment that has already been provided.

Acknowledgement

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines 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.

Successful applicants may be required to contribute information on activity outcomes for use in program evaluation or in the department's communication materials.



