

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Minister for Industry Support and Recovery
Minister for Trade
Minister for Business Precincts
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Racing



Thursday, 11 November 2021

BACKING GREAT IDEAS TO DRIVE REGIONAL TOURISM RECOVERY

A major Andrews Labor Government investment fund will back compelling tourism projects across the state that will drive the recovery of regional tourism and grow jobs.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today called for great projects to be put forward that could elevate Victoria's renowned and varied regional tourism offerings, building on a platform of excellence in four key areas.

Up to \$100 million will be allocated through the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* to support the creation of new experiences and attractions and the reimagining and revitalisation of existing favourites – focusing on nature, epicurean, arts and culture, and First Peoples' experiences.

These four priority areas were identified in the Government's *Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan* unveiled in April which set out a strategy to grow annual visitor spending to \$35 billion by June 2024 – supporting 300,000 jobs in the sector.

The Fund will deliver grants up to \$10 million per project, with a minimum funding amount of \$150,000 per project.

Applications are encouraged from private businesses, local and state government entities, incorporated associations, not-for-profits, Traditional Owner Corporations and Aboriginal organisations and groups.

The Government has invested consistently in tourism infrastructure in recent budgets, with the \$149 million *Flagship Tourism Projects* program including more than \$47.5 million to build better visitor infrastructure along the Great Ocean Road and \$4.3 million to enable the continued growth of the Prosecco Road winery district, including helping to establish accommodation at Dal Zotto Wines in Whitfield.

This round of the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* follows an earlier stimulus round that injected \$46 million into 30 small-scale infrastructure projects across the state, kickstarting the sector's recovery.

Several of these projects are under construction, including a \$500,000 upgrade of the cellar door at All Saints Estate in Rutherglen to create an immersive food and wine experience, \$2 million to redevelop more than 70 kilometres of Mt Buller's and Mt Stirling's mountain bike and walking trails, and a \$3.3 million Eco-Tourism development at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne.

For further details on the Fund visit business.vic.gov.au – registrations of interest close on 7 January 2022.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"Victoria stands out from the pack and we're looking for projects that fit the same bill – inspirational thinking that will translate into more visitors and jobs across the state."

"As we reopen, the recovery in our regional tourism businesses will gather pace. These projects will help to ensure the sector can plan for the future with confidence."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"We're backing concepts like Prosecco Road with concrete support to attract more visitors and provide the facilities that will encourage people to come back again – and that's great for local jobs."

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