

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Equality



Wednesday, 24 August 2022

STAGE SET FOR BENDIGO SHOWGROUNDS UPGRADE

Local concerts, markets and other events are returning to the Bendigo Showgrounds better and more accessible than ever thanks to support from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Regional Development Harriet Shing today visited Bendigo to announce the project's completion, supported by a \$680,000 grant from the Labor Government's *Regional Infrastructure Fund*.

The Minister also announced a new Government initiative for regional agriculture shows – like the Bendigo Agriculture Show – providing free entry to children. This will support more than 100 regional and rural shows this year, including the Melbourne Royal Show.

The program will provide free entry for kids and make it easier for families to see and learn about the world of agriculture. Applications for the grants are available to eligible Agricultural and Pastoral Societies and are now open and will be open until Monday, 26 September 2022.

The Bendigo Showgrounds project includes a new air conditioning system at the Bendigo Exhibition Centre, which will help attract events during summer.

The market area has also been revamped with power infrastructure, upgrades to building facades and painting adding to its appeal and opening the door to more power access for stalls and merchants. Other improvements include repaving to asphalt, an illuminated sign at the entrance and new all access toilets.

The Bendigo Showgrounds plays host to more than 600,000 people each year including through events such as live music festival Groovin' the Moo, the Australian Sheep and Wool Show and the Bendigo Agricultural Show.

The grounds are also home to the Bendigo Showgrounds Market – the largest market in regional Victoria – which features a wide range of goods, food and produce stalls each Sunday.

The *Regional Infrastructure Fund* is part of the Government's Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, which has played a key role in securing record investment of more than \$36 billion across regional Victoria since 2015.

Information and guidelines for the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund can be found at rdv.vic.gov.au/rjif. More information on the free Children Entry program is available at agriculture.vic.gov.au/childrenentrygrants.

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Harriet Shing

"These upgrades will make an already wonderful visitor experience even better for the 600,000 people who come to the Bendigo Showgrounds every year."

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Gayle Tierney

"This grants program recognises the significant role that agricultural shows play in educating children about the agricultural sector and showcasing the best of our state's world-class produce."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

“Today’s announcement is an exciting one for our community, for families to be able to bring their children for free to the upcoming Bendigo Show- is a real win for our community.”

Quote attributable to Executive Officer of Victorian Agricultural and Pastoral Societies Rod Bowles

“We are delighted to see the program open for applications today! The past two years have been challenging for the Societies and we’re looking forward to welcoming more families to the upcoming spring show season.”