

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



Thursday, 16 May 2024

HELPING MORE TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TAKE OFF

The Allan Labor Government is making sure Victorian tourism operators have the support they need to build and upgrade infrastructure projects, with new grants to ensure operators can thrive for generations to come.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today visited Penguin Parade at Phillip Island to open applications for a new round of the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund*.

The Fund provides grants of up to \$5 million for small and large-scale projects and accommodation improvement projects, with the Labor Government's investment of up to \$62 million creating more jobs and a strong pipeline of demand-driven tourism infrastructure projects across the state.

Phillip Island Nature Parks is one of Australia's most popular wildlife attractions with more than 900,000 visitors a year – and works are underway on the iconic Penguin Parade, thanks to a \$5 million upgrade through a previous round of the Fund.

A new accessible boardwalk with penguin viewing stands and additional seating will improve the visitor experience, ensuring more people from across Victoria and interstate can enjoy this tourist attraction for years to come.

The works will also protect the penguins' habitat by reducing erosion from visitors walking in the area, minimising the impact of visitors on the species.

Grants between \$100,000 and \$5 million are open to tourism businesses, not-for-profit and Traditional Owner organisations.

The grants will be delivered in three streams – between \$100,000 and \$1 million for small-scale projects, grants between \$1 million and \$5 million for large scale projects, and grants between \$500,000 and \$2 million for accommodation improvement projects.

The Fund is guided by the five priorities identified in the *Experience Victoria 2033* strategic plan – First People's led experiences, wellness, arts and culture, food and drink, and nature.

Applications for the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* are open from Thursday, 16 May 2024 until Friday, 19 July 2024. To learn more about the Fund visit tourism.vic.gov.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"Victoria's visitor economy is growing, and we want to ensure that tourism businesses right across the state have the support they need to create projects that attract visitors, boost jobs and secure their future."

Quote attributable to the Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale

"Every community across regional Victoria has a story to tell and beautiful cultural, creative, culinary and nature-based experiences to share. This helps tourism operators, businesses, Traditional Owner organisations to showcase our offerings to more locals and visitors."