

Experience Victoria 2033

PROGRESS REPORT 2023 – 2026

VICTORIA
State Government



Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum

Acknowledgement of Country

The diverse landscapes of Victoria have been the home of, and of significance to, diverse Nations for more than 60,000 years. First Peoples in Victoria have cared for and nurtured Country throughout this time. The lands and waters on which Victorians and visitors draw enjoyment and inspiration continue to be a living cultural landscape.

We proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters throughout Victoria, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We recognise the rights and aspirations of Victorian First Peoples and acknowledge that First Peoples' Self Determination is a human right as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Building on this and guided by the 11 principles of First Peoples' self-determination, we are working together to ensure true self-determination for Victoria's First Peoples. Signing of Statewide Treaty and establishment of Gellung Warl, mark a new beginning with Traditional Owners and First Peoples in Victoria.

Through Experience Victoria 2033 we recognise the growing demand for experiences that celebrate Victoria's rich and diverse First Peoples' culture. The report reflects our ongoing commitment to working with Traditional Owners and the First Peoples of Victoria to deliver initiatives that support their aspirations and priorities, and are respectful to Treaty.

Minister's Foreword



Since the release of *Experience Victoria 2033* (EV33) in May 2023, Victoria's visitor economy has reached record highs, showing that our long-term vision is working to deliver real benefits for businesses, workers, communities and visitors across the state.

In the year ending June 2026, Victoria recorded $49.5 billion in visitor spend, and tourism's contribution, both direct and indirect, to Gross State Product reached a record $40.0 billion in 2024–25. Tourism employment also climbed to a new high, supporting 322,100 jobs in the year ending June 2025. These are outstanding results, and they reflect the resilience, innovation and ambition of Victoria's visitor economy.

The Victorian Government has played an important role in supporting this growth by investing in the sector, backing businesses and helping create confidence for investors. Through targeted support, we have assisted over 3,100 Victorian visitor economy businesses, workers and students with initiatives designed to build skills, strengthen resilience, encourage sustainable growth and help industry meet the changing expectations of visitors.

We have also invested in 217 tourism infrastructure projects across the state, helping create new reasons to visit, stay longer and spend more in destinations throughout Victoria. We have delivered a statewide reform of the Regional Tourism Network, establishing 13 Visitor Economy Partnerships across regional Victoria to strengthen local leadership and better support regional growth.

Our investment in destination marketing has also helped Victoria stand out in a highly competitive global environment. Through Visit Victoria, we have supported major initiatives including the new destination brand framework, *Every bit different,* and the global campaign *Come Winter in Victoria*, launched on 1 June 2026.

We are also proud to support First Peoples tourism, with investment in projects that build capability and capacity, support workforce development, promote industry excellence, strengthen planning, and advance cultural heritage stewardship. This work is essential to creating a richer, more inclusive visitor economy that better reflects Victoria's unique stories and strengths.

The progress achieved since EV33 was launched reflects the significant investment made across Victoria's visitor economy, helping to build a stronger, more resilient and globally competitive tourism sector that benefits all Victorians.

The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP
Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment

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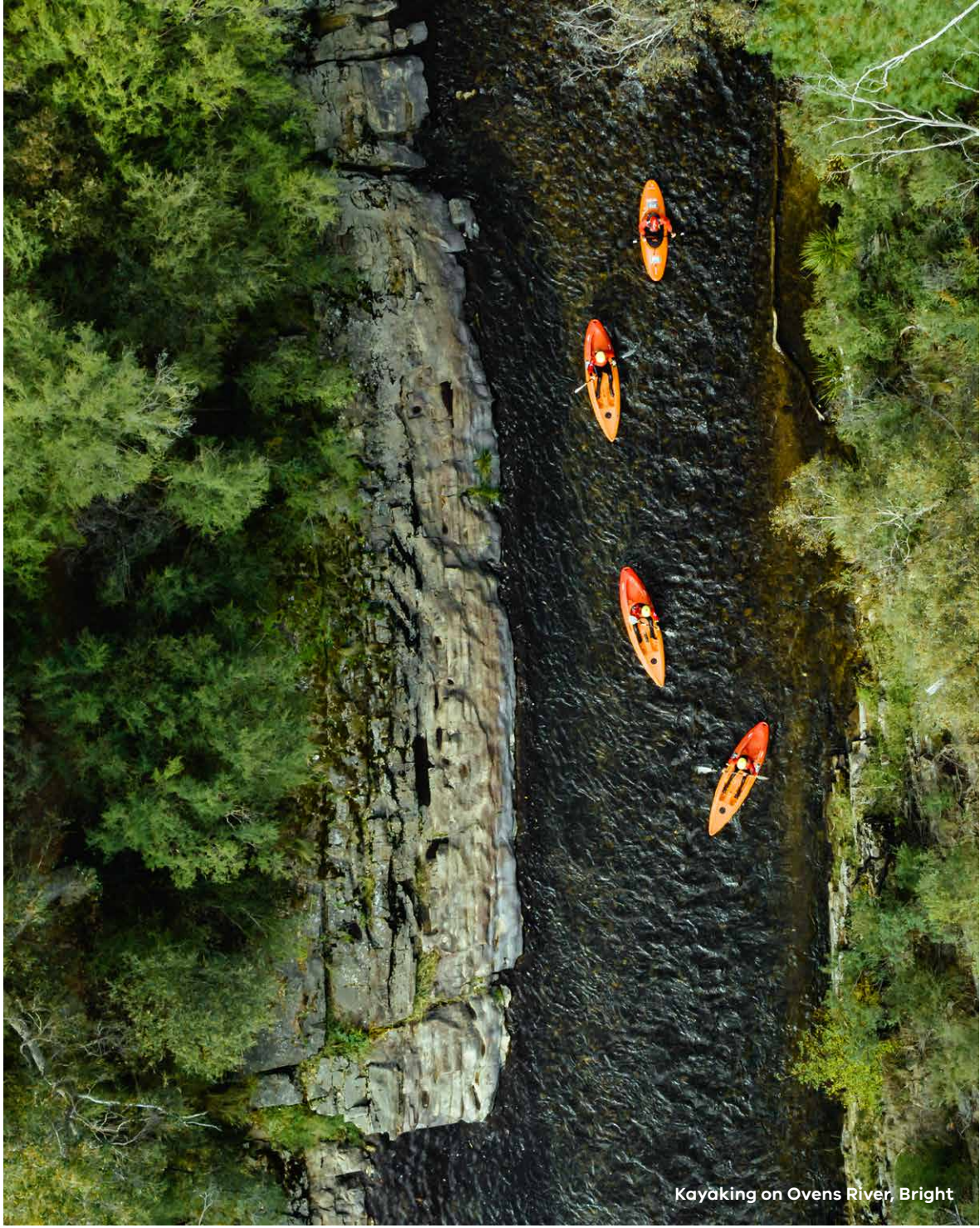
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Kayaking on Ovens River, Bright

Introduction



Halls Gap

Experience Victoria 2033 (EV33) is the Victorian Government's strategic plan to shape the future of Victoria's visitor economy over 10 years.

Released in May 2023, EV33 aims to strengthen Victoria's enviable tourism offering by building on the state's competitive advantages through 5 product priorities:

- First Peoples-led experiences
- Wellness
- Arts and culture
- Food and drink
- Nature.

This report provides a summary of key outcomes delivered since the launch over three years ago. Outcomes have been measured against the following themes:

- Visitor economy growth
- Experience and product development
- Industry capability and resilience
- First Peoples tourism
- Sustainability and stewardship
- Brand, marketing and events
- Policy and system reform.

The case studies featured in this report showcase a selection of outcomes delivered through EV33 and demonstrate the breadth of activity and impact across Victoria's visitor economy. They represent just some of the many investments, initiatives and achievements delivered since the strategy's launch.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Visitor economy growth



Red Feet Wines
CREDIT: JAMES DAVIDSON, TOURISM NORTH EAST

Growing the visitor economy for all Victorians

What we want to achieve

- **Growth in visitor expenditure and yield**

What has been delivered

Since EV33 was released, Victoria's visitor economy has reached record highs

- Tourism is an important driver of economic growth and job creation. Tourism's direct and indirect contribution to **Gross State Product (GSP)** hit a record peak of $40.0 billion in the year ending June 2025 , up 4.7% from the year ending June 2024.
- Tourism-filled jobs increased 3.5% to a new high of 322,100 in the year ending June 2025 [1].
- These results reinforce Victoria's tourism sector's strong performance in recent years, which reached a record-breaking $49.5 billion in **tourism expenditure** in the year ending June 2026. This reflected strong growth of 24.1% from year ending June 2023[2].
- There has been a strong rebound in the international market. International overnight spend reached $10.5 billion – an increase of 120.0% since the year ending June 2023. Spending from Victoria's major international tourism markets is at a record high, with six out of Victoria's top 10 international markets by expenditure reaching new records: China, the United Kingdom, Singapore, the United States of America, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.
- A total of 37.0 million people travelled through Melbourne Airport in year ending June 2026, up 2.3% from the previous year.[3]
- In 2025, Greater Melbourne sold a record 12.1 million hotel room nights, an increase of approximately 680,000 rooms on 2024 levels, with 11 out of 12 months of the year setting records for monthly demand.[4]



Mildura Riverfront
© PETER FOSTER. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

1. State Tourism Satellite Account 2024-25 from Tourism Research Australia Released July 2026
2. Combined Tourism Research Australia (TRA) International Visitor Survey (IVS) and new Domestic Tourism Statistics (DoTS) data for the year ending June 2026.
3. Melbourne Airport media release: Australia's 24-hour global gateway sets new international record, 13 July 2026, for year ending June 2026.
4. CoStar, data to end of 2025 calendar year.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Experience and product development



Meyers Place
© PETER FOSTER. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

Delivering innovative offerings and enhanced products to create vibrant and welcoming destinations and experiences

What we want to achieve

- **Investment attraction and infrastructure delivery**
- **Quality uplift and innovation in offerings**
- **New or enhanced tourism products and experiences**

What has been delivered

- The Victorian Government allocated over $380.5 million to support infrastructure development in regional Victoria. These investments help to build sector capacity, create jobs, leverage private investment, and maximise visitor economy benefits, such as increased visitation, length of stay and yield. Delivered through initiatives such as the ***Regional Tourism Investment Fund*** and the ***Enabling Tourism Fund*** and aligning with the product priorities and settings identified in EV33, 217 projects have been funded with 142 projects completed.
- The Victorian Government released an investment guide toolkit – ***A guide to tourism investment: from concept to reality***. The toolkit showcases Victoria's tourism investment potential and serves as a guiding document to support new tourism ideas to progress through the investment lifecycle.
- To support the growing wellness tourism sector the Victorian Government has also created ***A guide to wellness tourism investment: from concept to reality***, a step-by-step guide to support businesses and investors to create vibrant and sustainable wellness tourism destinations. Designed to complement *A guide to tourism investment*, the wellness tourism investment guide aims to help tourism operators, developers and investors through the process of developing, planning and operating wellness tourism businesses.
- The Victorian Government has also provided facilitation support for the progression of tourism investment ideas from the concept stage through to delivery. This has involved more than 300 targeted engagements with the tourism industry, investors and business owners and a forward potential investment pipeline of more than 600 tourism projects across the state.

CASE STUDY



The Monty Motel

The Monty Motel project delivered a complete refurbishment of a boutique accommodation offering in Anglesea, supported through the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

Launched in late 2025, the refurbishment introduced a Palm Springs-inspired redesign across the motel, including the reception area, a full renovation of all 16 guest rooms, including two fully accessible rooms, a new commercial kitchen for the onsite Mexican cantina, and sustainability upgrades to enhance the visitor experience along the Great Ocean Road.

Comparing Winter 2024 (pre-renovation) to Winter 2026, occupancy has increased by 12%, average daily rates increased by 15%, and average length of stay increased by 10%. The motel's accessible rooms also achieved a 7% higher average daily rate, highlighting the value of inclusive tourism infrastructure.

The project also generated significant local economic benefits during construction, supporting 39 full-time jobs in the region.



Re'em – Helen and Joey Estate – Yarra Valley

The Re'em project at Helen and Joey Estate delivered a major tourism redevelopment in the Yarra Valley, supported by a $3.5 million investment from the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

Opened in 2024, the project delivered a new premium tourism offering featuring a 16-room boutique hotel, a 110-seat restaurant, cellar door retail space and landscaped outdoor areas for weddings and events.

Since opening, Re'em has generated increased visitation across its key tourism products. Between the 2023-24 and 2025-26 financial years, accommodation demand grew from 930 to 2,111 room nights, restaurant patronage increased from 2,785 to 7,066 covers, and cellar door visitation rose from 9,351 to 15,930 visitors. The development has also increased regional event capacity, hosting 103 events, including weddings, private lunches and dinners, and small conferences, attracting an additional 4,058 guests.

The project created more than 80 jobs during construction and has supported a further 54 ongoing roles since opening.

Re'em has also strengthened the Yarra Valley's reputation as a premium food, wine and accommodation destination. In 2024, during its first year of operation, the restaurant was awarded one Chef Hat by *The Age Good Food Guide* and was shortlisted for Regional Restaurant of the Year 2024. The restaurant retained its Chef Hat in the following year's *The Age Good Food Guide*.

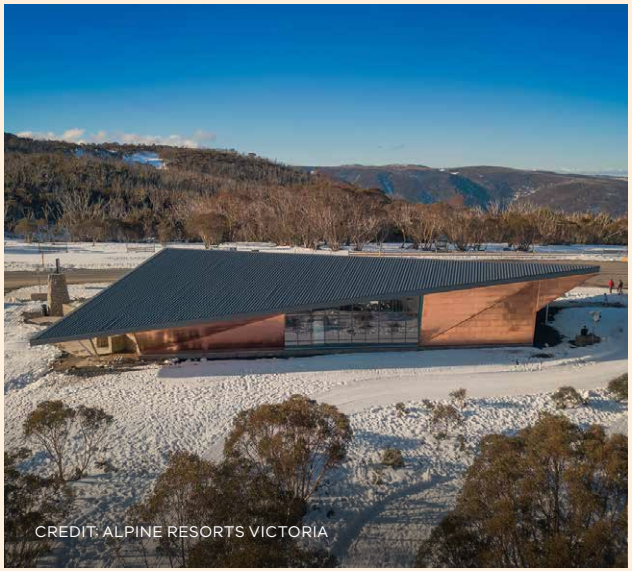


Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Enhancements

Supported by an $8.5 million investment from the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Infrastructure Projects funding program, the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail project delivered new art installations and upgraded visitor infrastructure across the Hume region.

The project included landscaping, improved public amenities, signage and visitor information, alongside installations in Rutherglen, Bright, Porepunkah, Yackandandah, Beechworth, Eurobin, Oxley, Milawa and Wangaratta. Highlights include the Colour Bridge in Porepunkah, Mindful Tunnel between Beechworth and Yackandandah, True Horizons at Eurobin Station, the *Birds of Season* silo art in Rutherglen, and Magpie Family sculptures along sections of the trail.

Completed in 2025, the upgrades support a stronger visitor experience and are expected to attract more than 17,500 additional visitors each year, generate $12.3 million in economic activity and support 65 new jobs across the region.



CREDIT: ALPINE RESORTS VICTORIA

Mount Hotham Snowplay and Activity Hub Phase 2

The Wire Plain project delivered a new tourism hub at Mount Hotham, supported by a $4.5 million investment from the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

Completed in 2025, the purpose-built facility was designed to enhance the visitor experience through an integrated visitor services precinct. The project delivered a new visitor facility with dedicated spaces for retail, equipment hire, food and beverage services, visitor information and public amenities, as well as snowmaking infrastructure and an outdoor amphitheatre, strengthening Mount Hotham's appeal as a year-round destination.

In winter, the hub supports snowplay experiences including beginner ski lessons, tobogganing, snowmobile rides, snowshoeing, dog sledding and snow glamping. In summer, it provides access to hiking and biking trails, tours, equipment hire, and community events and performances.

Accessible via the resort's free village shuttle service, the hub has established itself as a key visitor gateway. During the 2026 winter season, it attracted more than 30,000 visitors, including over 16,000 tobogganing participants. A significant proportion of visitors were first-time guests to the resort, demonstrating the hub's role in broadening participation in alpine recreation.

The project created 28 jobs during construction and has supported 8 ongoing positions since opening, contributing to local employment and year-round economic activity, and strengthening Mount Hotham's position as a premier alpine destination.



© EMILY GODFREY. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

Metung Hot Springs

Supported by a $1.5 million investment from the Victorian Government's Tourism Infrastructure Program, the Metung Hot Springs project established a new wellness tourism attraction in East Gippsland.

Opened in late 2022, the 10-hectare site offers bathing, relaxation and glamping experiences from a hilltop location overlooking the Gippsland Lakes. The project has strengthened the region's visitor economy and contributed to local economic activity.

Since completion, Metung Hot Springs has demonstrated sustained year-on-year growth. Bathing visitation increased by 33% in financial year 2024–25 and a further 11% in financial year 2025–26, reaching 52,364 annual bathers. In financial year 2025–26, average glamping occupancy increased from 57% to 64%, supporting overnight stays in the region. Metung Hot Springs now supports a local workforce of approximately 52 people.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Industry capability and resilience



Pillar Point, Wilsons Promontory

Ensuring industry capability and resilience to meet modern visitor expectations

What we want to achieve

- **Workforce and skills development**
- **Operator participation in programs**
- **Business capability uplift**

What has been delivered

The Victorian Government has invested $11.4 million since 2023 in industry strengthening initiatives to support the sustainable growth and resilience of Victoria's visitor economy. This includes the $10 million **Regional Tourism Industry Development Program**, which is helping Victoria's regional tourism businesses to build skills, strengthen resilience, grow sustainably, and meet modern visitor expectations. Delivered through a suite of targeted programs, this investment has reached over 3,100 businesses, workers and students through more than 388 training workshops, mentoring sessions, industry events and capability programs across Victoria. Initiatives include:

- The Victorian Government delivered the **Choose Tourism Careers Expo** in 2024 and 2025, promoting the visitor economy as a career of choice and connecting students, job seekers and industry across Victoria. In 2025, the expo attracted 814 attendees and 48 exhibitors, achieved a 79% satisfaction rating, and helped to improve perceptions of visitor economy career pathways.
- The Victorian Government is also supporting the **Young Tourism Network (YTN)** to deliver programs, events and advisory services that attract and develop Victoria's future tourism leaders.
  - Funding has supported the establishment of YTN's first paid Business Development Officer role. Since then, YTN membership has grown by 37.7% and 12 commercial partnerships have been established.
  - Some key programs delivered include the **Trusted Advisor Program**, with 31 mentor/mentee pairings to support early career development and the **Tourism Ambassador Program**, showcasing young tourism professionals to encourage careers in tourism.
- Food + Drink Victoria delivered the **Hospitality Now** industry forum in 2025 and 2026, bringing together food and drink professionals and hospitality students to learn, share knowledge and build practical skills. The sold-out 2025 event was held at Pt Leo Estate on the Mornington Peninsula, while the 2026 event at Lake House Daylesford attracted more than 200 professionals and students, demonstrating strong demand for industry capability building and connection. At its core, Hospitality Now is designed to translate industry knowledge, experience and emerging trends into practical, actionable insights that participants can take back to their businesses and implement immediately. The program combines expert-led sessions, peer learning and networking to give participants tangible ideas, tools and approaches they can apply in their day-to-day businesses, strengthening individual capability and contributing to a more resilient and innovative hospitality sector.



Hospitality Now
CREDIT: ASHLEY LUDKIN

- Small tourism businesses across regional Victoria are developing their competitive edge thanks to practical, personalised support through the **Business Skills Mentoring Program**. Delivered by Business Victoria between November 2025 and September 2026, the program has helped 136 small tourism business owners to build capability, plan for the future and strengthen their competitiveness through 254 mentoring sessions. Participant satisfaction averaged 90%, with most participants reporting strong optimism for their business over the next 12 months.
- The Victoria Tourism Industry Council **Victorian Tourism Awards Mentoring Program** supported 110 tourism businesses to submit award nominations through personalised mentoring, draft reviews and group support sessions delivered across regional Victoria. The program resulted in 105 finalists advancing to the 2025 Victorian Tourism Awards, up from 89 the previous year, with 93% of mentored businesses achieving a medal or finalist result. The program also supported strong results at the Australian Tourism Awards, where Victoria won 6 gold, 8 silver and 2 bronze awards across 26 categories.
- The **Regional Tourism Network Industry Strengthening Program** has supported Victoria's Visitor Economy Partnerships to deliver training and support to regional tourism businesses. As at July 2026, 3000+ businesses have engaged through 190+ training workshops, mentoring sessions and industry events. The training and support has included accessibility, sustainability, revenue management and artificial intelligence.
- The Victorian Government has supported initiatives to upskill regional Victorian business event operators. The program included 5 workshops and 10 webinars delivered by Business Events Victoria to over 600 attendees. Topics included international incentives, sales, business events marketing, sustainability and leveraging business events.

CASE STUDY

Regional Tourism Network Industry Strengthening Program

Tourism operators across the Murray region are building new skills and future-proofing their business through tailored capability training funded through the Program. The AI for Tourism Businesses course was attended by 58 businesses, achieving average time savings of 34% through AI-assisted content creation and customer service automation.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

Choose Tourism Careers Expo

'It was a really valuable opportunity for us to meet and connect with employment services and industry interested in becoming hosts for student work placements. Experiences like this help students to be work-ready upon graduation.' **VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**

Young Tourism Network (YTN)

'This will no doubt contribute significantly to the sustainable growth and development of our tourism industry and ensure our brightest and most passionate young tourism minds and leaders can work together to advocate for Victoria's visitor economy.' **YTN PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**

Hospitality Now

'Some really fantastic insights into other businesses regarding culture, development, and the need for training.' **ATTENDEE**

'Actual tangible tools and advice to take away and review within my business.' **ATTENDEE**

Business Skills Mentoring Program

'The program helped us to focus on where we get the most value. Instead of just advertising for the sake of it, it helped us understand where we get the best return on investment and refine our marketing strategies.' **GRANT WILLIAMS – CO-FOUNDER, ACCESSIBLE ACCOMMODATION**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

First Peoples tourism



Budj Bim
© PETER FOSTER. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

Creating a tourism sector that reflects the state's cultural richness

What we want to achieve

- **Growth in First Peoples-led tourism businesses and experiences**
- **Partnerships and cultural outcomes**
- **Protection and promotion of cultural heritage**

What has been delivered

The First Peoples Tourism Plan for Victoria 2025 – 2030 (Plan), a 5-year self-determined Plan to grow First Peoples tourism, was launched in September 2025. The Plan envisages a tourism sector that reflects the state's cultural richness and supports broader efforts towards First Peoples self-determination and progress towards Treaty. Developed through extensive community engagement, the Plan positions Victoria as a leading destination for diverse, First Peoples-led experiences.

The Victorian Government has supported First Peoples tourism businesses and Registered Aboriginal Parties through a range of initiatives including:

- The **First Peoples Tourism Growth Program** will support First Peoples businesses with grants of up to $125,000 in areas of workforce development, industry excellence, planning, cultural heritage stewardship and asset or equipment investment for existing or newly established tourism products.
- Through a $2.5 million investment, the Victorian Government is supporting a new industry partnership between Kinaway Chamber of Commerce and Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC). The **Quality First Peoples Tourism Business Program** will support First Peoples tourism businesses with accreditation, tailored mentoring, business promotion and participation in trade events. First Peoples tourism businesses and cultural leaders took part in a series of initial consultation and cultural governance workshops in mid-2026 to ensure the program is shaped by First Peoples voices, priorities and cultural authority from the outset—on Country and in community.
- The **First Peoples Tourism Industry Strengthening Program** is supporting Registered Aboriginal Parties with grants of up to $300,000 each to enhance their capability and capacity, through identification of tourism initiatives and opportunities or expansion of existing experiences on Country. Funded projects include development and implementation of Cultural Tourism Plans and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property frameworks, employment of tourism officers and guides, development of infrastructure feasibility studies, and piloting of cultural experiences on Country.

CASE STUDIES



CREDIT: COOPER SCAIFE ARCHITECTS
PHOTOGRAPHER: TESS KELLY

Budj Bim Visitor Experience at Lake Condah and the Tae Rak Traps

Supported by a $7 million investment from the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Infrastructure Projects fund, the Budj Bim project will enhance the visitor experience within the Budj Bim World Heritage Landscape through key visitor and cultural infrastructure.

This includes an amphitheatre, an outdoor barbecue area, cultural interpretation elements, improved car parking, and an operational building, along with initial planning for an international-standard boardwalk and Tae Rak eel trap interpretation, and the design of a yarning circle.

Construction is expected to be completed in 2027.

Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation is improving the Budj Bim and visitor experiences through a grant received through the First Peoples Tourism Industry Strengthening Program. This grant supports employment and training, art installations and interpretive signage at the Tae Rak Aquaculture Centre and Café.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Sustainability and stewardship



Warburton Adventure co

Building a strong foundation of sustainable, adaptable and accessible tourism

What we want to achieve

- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Climate resilience and adaptation**
- **Responsible tourism practices**

What has been delivered

- The increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events highlight the crucial need to build capacity in the Victorian tourism industry to better prepare and respond to natural and human-caused disasters, and this importance is reaffirmed in EV33. The Victorian Government is supporting the tourism industry to prepare for, respond to, and recover from extreme weather events such as bushfires and floods.
- The Victorian Government has supported a range of infrastructure development projects which are environmentally sustainable, minimise environmental impact and preserve natural resources.
- The Victorian Government has also supported accessible and inclusive tourism through the delivery of programs such as the Regional Tourism Network Industry Strengthening Program and Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

CASE STUDY

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism crisis media training workshops

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism delivered targeted crisis media training workshops for 12 tourism operators. The training focused on building a cohort of confident, media-ready spokespeople to support coordinated regional messaging during crisis events. Participants gave the training an 87% satisfaction rating and found the feedback and guidance helpful in an interview situation.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

'The feedback and guidance certainly helped me in an interview situation and the homework and training materials were super helpful.'
TOURISM OPERATOR

Ability Fest

Australia's most inclusive and accessible music festival, Ability Fest, was backed by the Victorian Government in 2024 and 2026 to showcase an accessible event, enabling people of all backgrounds and abilities to attend a one-day music festival.

The festival showcases how events can be inclusive and accessible and encourages the music industry to think about what inclusive events can look like.

The 2024 and 2026 combined events attracted over 8,000 people, with over 20% identifying as having a disability.



CREDIT: SHANE STRUDWICK

Elevate Luxury – All Seasons Accessible Houseboat

Supported by a $500,000 investment through the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund, the All Seasons Accessible Houseboat project in Mildura delivered *Elevate Luxury*, an accessible six-bedroom luxury houseboat designed to expand inclusive tourism on the Murray River.

Launched in July 2024, the project delivered a high-quality accessible visitor experience, with wheelchair access throughout, wider corridors, an accessible ensuite, adjustable-height kitchen benches, safety railings and the first wheelchair-accessible elevator on a houseboat in the Southern Hemisphere.

The project has demonstrated strong results. Occupancy increased from 66% in the financial year 2024-25 to 92% in the financial year 2025-26, while guest numbers rose from 386 to 538. Bookings requiring accessibility features also increased from 37% to 65% during this period, demonstrating strong demand for more inclusive visitor accommodation.

Houseboating attracts visitors who stay for multiple nights and contribute expenditure across accommodation, fuel, food, hospitality, attractions, retail and river communities. With an average length of stay of 5.6 nights, the project is supporting increased visitor yield in Mildura and the broader regional economy. It also supported 5 full-time jobs during construction. The project demonstrates the Victorian Government's support for tourism infrastructure that improves accessibility and inclusion, helping more people to enjoy Victoria's visitor experiences.



Tourism North East's Accessible Tourism Enhancements Program

Funded through the Regional Tourism Network Industry Strengthening Program, Tourism North-East supported 16 High Country businesses to improve accessibility, develop inclusive tourism experiences, and provide better online information for travellers with access and inclusion needs. The program delivered a new Accessible Holiday Guide for visitors and an Accessibility Industry Toolkit to help businesses enhance their marketing and communications.



YumaKiah Coastal Accommodation

The YumaKiah Coastal Accommodation project will deliver three luxury eco-friendly beach retreats in Warrnambool, supported by the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund. The development will provide a premium accommodation offering designed to encourage overnight visitation and longer stays in the Great Ocean Road region.

Each retreat will feature a king bedroom, bathroom, deck, living area, and kitchen and dining space. The project also includes landscaping and a 90kW solar power and battery system housed in a battery storage room and outbuilding.

The sustainable coastal accommodation aims to drive year-round tourism, to boost yield and contribute flow-on economic benefits to the region.



Poombeeyt Koontapool (Loch Ard Blowhole Viewing Platform)

Supported by an $8 million investment from the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund, the Poombeeyt Koontapool (Loch Ard Blowhole Viewing Platform) project delivered a new nature-based tourism experience designed to enhance visitor access while protecting the surrounding coastal environment.

Opened in September 2025, the viewing platform was inspired by Koontapool, the Southern Right Whale, and the design was led by the Eastern Maar community. The blowhole symbolises the nostrils of the great whale, while the lookout and seating near the blowhole resemble the callosities on Koontapool's head. The project also delivered upgrades to paths, water bars to reduce erosion, and landscaping works.

The project reflects the Victorian Government's support for infrastructure that is environmentally sustainable, minimises environmental impact and helps preserve natural resources, while creating a world-class visitor attraction.

The new viewing platform project supported 44 local jobs during construction.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Brand, marketing and events



The Verandah Coffee Window
© PETER FOSTER. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

Every bit different reflects Victoria's identity as unique, creative, food-led, event-rich and inclusive

What we want to achieve

- **Campaign performance and reach**
- **Major and regional event outcomes**
- **Brand positioning and perception**

What has been delivered

Visit Victoria is the State's destination marketing organisation with a mandate to drive demand that optimises visitor numbers and economic value. Its scope spans all visitor markets – international, interstate, and intrastate – with a strong emphasis on regional dispersal.

Visit Victoria's 5-year organisational strategy ***Visit Victoria 2030*** was launched in October 2025. The strategy supports EV33 and outlines how Visit Victoria's work helps grow the State's visitor economy by creating, converting, and connecting demand.

This integrated framework has focused Visit Victoria's work to position Victoria to compete globally, grow visitation and yield, strengthen industry capability, and build on activity underway since EV33 was launched in 2023 to strengthen partnerships with Government and industry.

In January 2024, the destination brand framework for Victoria was launched – ***Every bit different*** – to become one of the State's most valuable brand assets. The brand is helping to elevate perceptions, attract visitors, unify the industries supporting the visitor economy, and deliver long-term economic success. The brand platform reflects Victoria's identity as unique, creative, food-led, event-rich and inclusive. Since the launch, 62% of the interstate market says the campaign makes them more likely to consider Melbourne, and 68% of Victorians say it makes them more likely to consider visiting regional Victoria[5].

Victoria's major events calendar continues to be one of the State's major tourism drivers. Annual events such as the Australian Open, Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne Winter Masterpieces and the AFL Grand Final are combined with blockbuster events like the National Football League regular season game in September 2026, world cups, theatre shows and festivals to produce a world-class calendar. A BDO report commissioned by Visit Victoria shows that Victoria's major events calendar generated $3.64 billion in economic impact, attracting 7.9m attendees and supporting almost 17,000 jobs[6].

5. Campaign tracking from research agency Hall and Partners, commissioned by Visit Victoria. Average of all research waves conducted since launch in January 2024 until August 2026.
6. BDO Eventful Year Report, Commissioned by Visit Victoria, released 2026.

Regional events are vital to the strategy of dispersal and sustainability. Since 2024, the **Regional Events Fund** has supported over 240 events through the distribution of over $30 million in grants to councils, community groups, promoters and sporting organisations. These events have achieved attendance of more than 1.1 million, delivering significant economic impact to regional economies. Visit Victoria consumer research shows that regional events encourage both first-time and repeat visitation, longer stays and more distant travel[7].

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) continues to attract high-value **international business events** that align with Victoria's priority sectors, reinforcing Melbourne's position as a leading global business events destination and showcasing our knowledge sectors internationally. Through close collaboration with industry partners, MCB also showcases the state's diverse tourism offerings and promotes Victoria's regions through tailored incentive programs and delegate experiences promoting dispersal into the regions. Since the launch of EV33, MCB has secured 688 events which will contribute more than $1 billion to Victoria's visitor economy. These events will bring 200,000 delegates and occupy over 412,000 hotel room nights.

Visit Victoria has undertaken **market development programs** designed to connect businesses with international markets. Nearly 100 businesses have been trained over the past 3 years, helping to create new opportunities to attract international tourists and grow their business. These development programs complement the 50,000 international agents that have been trained in cooperation with Tourism Australia to ensure product knowledge of Melbourne and Victoria helps potential tourists understand what we have to offer and make the decision to book.



Pelican feeding at San Remo
© PETER FOSTER. CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

7. Visit Victoria, Victorian attitudes towards regional events, published March 2025.



CREDIT: VISIT VICTORIA

Come Winter in Melbourne/Victoria

In June 2026, Visit Victoria launched a dedicated seasonal campaign 'Come Winter in Melbourne/Victoria' to drive visitation for Melbourne and Victoria in the off-peak period across intrastate, interstate and international markets.

The campaign was rolled out across advertising screens, social media, digital platforms and out of home, as well as cooperative campaigns with hotel and airline partners including Qantas, Singapore Airlines and Luxury Escapes.


CREDIT: NIC STEPHENS

Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Events Centre

The Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Events Centre officially opened on 21 June 2026. Events have been held since July 2026. 129 events have been secured to 2030 and around 32,000 delegates confirmed.

Nyaal Banyul will help grow regional Victoria's visitor economy by attracting high-value business events and more overnight visitors to Geelong and the Bellarine. The centre helps put regional Victoria on the map as a world-class destination for events, investment and regional growth.

The centre will employ more than 240 people in Geelong and more than 50 local businesses are engaged in delivering events, supplying local food, wine and equipment. Construction created 1,400 jobs, with 250 apprentices completing more than 150,000 hours of hands-on training.

Nyaal Banyul was made possible through a $416 million investment from the Victorian Government, alongside $30 million from the Australian Government and $3 million from the City of Greater Geelong.



Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME)

AIME is Asia Pacific's largest and longest running business events exhibition and learning platform. It connects a global community of business event professionals with industry suppliers.

Melbourne Convention Bureau owns AIME, which in 2026 generated $425 million for the business events industry and attracted more than 5,000 attendees from around the world.

In 2027 AIME will play host to 25,000+ meetings between 800+ exhibitors and 1,600+ vetted buyers.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Policy and system reform



Bendigo Visitor Centre, Pall Mall

Strengthening Victoria's tourism sector through collaboration, coordination and reform

What we want to achieve

- **Regional Tourism Network Reform**
- **Regulatory improvements**
- **Cross-government coordination**
- **Service delivery enhancements**

What has been delivered

Reform of the Regional Tourism Network was completed in January 2026, establishing 13 **Visitor Economy Partnerships** (VEPs) across regional Victoria. The statewide process, undertaken in partnership with regional tourism boards, local government and industry, created a more coordinated destination management model for regional Victoria. The reform also ensured inclusivity for all regions with 9 local government areas that were previously outside the regional tourism network now supported through a VEP.

- A key objective of EV33 was to strengthen Victoria's regional tourism network to better represent the needs of local communities and networks. VEPs are the peak official voice for regional Victoria's visitor economy to the Government.
- The VEP model has built regions' capacity to support tourism operators and will support the resilience of regional Victoria's visitor economy into the future.

DJSIR has delivered important outcomes and continues to advocate for reforms to support tourism investment and project development in Victoria, including:

- Securing the inclusion of tourism as a priority sector in the **Development Facilitation Program (DFP)**. The DFP expands access to streamlined planning pathways through the Department of Transport and Planning and provides planning application facilitation services for eligible projects that support investment in the Victorian economy.
- Advocating for regulatory reforms to improve event approvals, event information and capability.
- The **Victorian Wine Strategy**, released in September 2025, outlines how the Victorian wine industry can collaborate and innovate to deliver the vision – Victorian wine: Enjoyed locally, acclaimed globally. The strategy was developed by the Victorian wine industry and Victorian Government.
- Significant partnerships with industry have taken place, with **Visit Victoria's Industry Partnership Program** supporting 74 campaigns with 77 partners that targeted conversion from aspiration to action. The campaigns reached audiences throughout Australia and internationally and collectively achieved an increase in direct expenditure in Victoria by an estimated $145 million and helped to support more than 1,300 jobs. Importantly, it helped to support new inbound airline routes to Melbourne from China, Hong Kong, the United States and Finland. This has already resulted in 117,000 new seats and will see a further 107,000 seats per year from October 2026.
- The Victorian Government continues to support tourism infrastructure projects through a dedicated facilitation team within DJSIR to strengthen service delivery and assist project delivery. An enquiry portal for tourism investment and infrastructure matters enables enquiries to be triaged and directed for timely and effective project support.



Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism (GWMT)

As part of regional tourism network reform, GWMT completed a two-year trial of the VEP model. The trial brought the Wimmera Mallee councils into the existing Grampians tourism organisation, creating a stronger and more connected regional partnership.

The trial showed that a larger, combined organisation could improve collaboration, strengthen regional planning, and provide better support across both areas. Following its success, GWMT became an ongoing VEP.

The transition has led to increased investment from councils and stronger support from industry. It has also created a sustainable foundation for future growth in the region's visitor economy.

GWMT, with support from the Victorian Government's Visitor Servicing Fund, installed 3 off-grid digital information kiosks in Halls Gap, Dunkeld and Lake Tyrrell. The kiosks provide visitors with essential information about events, attractions, dining options and nature trails in the region, encouraging visitors to stay longer. Over 10,000 visitors have used the kiosks in their first 12 months of operation.



Goulburn Region Tourism VEP (GRT)

The previously unnetworked areas of Shepparton, Strathbogie and Mitchell were brought together to create a single entity with GRT established under the model.

GRT has provided local governments with a single source for focused tourism investment, reducing duplication and strengthening a more coordinated and strategic approach to growing the visitor economy.

Importantly, GRT has led several key regional initiatives including the creation of a regional brand, destination website and chatbot, delivery of industry programs and a range of marketing activities to increase visitation to the region.

Authorised by the Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP
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