Sport and active recreation is an essential part of Victoria’s culture and our sense of identity.

Sport and active recreation makes us healthier—by providing the improved wellbeing and physical and mental health that comes from physical activity. It creates economic growth and jobs and brings resources into the Victorian economy. Sport and active recreation builds community cohesion and provides people with social networks. It makes a significant contribution to Victoria’s liveability.

Sport and active recreation is a key priority for the Victorian Government.
The Victorian Government is getting on with the job of building Victoria’s sport and active recreation system and delivering tangible benefits to the Victorian community.

Since November 2014, the government has committed **$1 billion** to building a stronger sport and active recreation system that creates better health, social and liveability outcomes for the entire community.

This investment is made up of over:

- **$130 million** for sport and recreation programs to support Victorians to play sport and be physically active, and reinforce the sustainability of the sport and recreation sector.
- **$420 million** towards community infrastructure to ensure Victorians have access to local and regional sports grounds, leisure facilities, parks, playgrounds, trails and other sport and recreation infrastructure.
- **$445 million** towards major event and high performance facilities to create a world class home for Victoria’s teams and athletes and a competitive environment that Victorians can be proud of.

On top of this $1 billion, the government has committed a further **$325 million** since November 2014, made available to the sport and recreation sector to develop a sustainable community sector. A significant part will be spent on sport and recreation programs.

This combined investment has strengthened Victoria’s sport and recreation system and reinforced Victoria’s reputation as the sport and recreation capital of Australia.
Meeting demand

A rapidly changing population means more demand for sport and active recreation and more demand for different options for participation. The Victorian Government is supporting the sport and active recreation system to adopt new approaches and resources to respond to these changes. Examples of investment include:

VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Sport

The VicHealth Innovation Challenge: Sport provides $500,000 in grants to change-makers and innovators to test new ideas, concepts and innovations that tackle obstacles blocking people from playing sport. The Innovation Challenge: Sport focuses on getting more Victorians off the couch and playing more sport more often, with a focus on those with low physical activity levels. The challenge creates more flexible and fun sport, more places to play, and more sport for everyone.

$500K granted towards tackling obstacles blocking people from playing sport

Inner City Netball Program

The Victorian Government’s new $9.6 million Inner City Netball Program is building 64 netball courts in inner-Melbourne, ensuring nobody is turned away from playing the game they love. Netball is booming in Victoria, but more court space is needed to accommodate this growth and attract even more Victorians to the court.

With more than 300,000 participants across the state, new courts are being built in Melbourne, Darebin, Moreland and Yarra. Projects such as the Darebin Community Sports Stadium in Reservoir feature a safer acrylic surface for players, more seating and shelter for participants and spectators, and provide a base for the local clubs.

$9.6 million invested in building 64 netball courts in inner-Melbourne
Growing Suburbs Fund

Sport and recreation throughout the state is supported through the Victorian Government’s *Growing Suburbs Fund*, which is providing $150 million in critical local infrastructure for communities in Melbourne’s diverse and fast-growing outer suburbs. It invests in community infrastructure priorities, such as community centres and open spaces improvements, delivering projects that reinforce the liveability and resilience of rapidly growing communities and provide local jobs. Sport and active recreation infrastructure projects form a significant proportion of this fund. Examples include the Craigieburn Park Inclusive Play Space, which will address the need for inclusive children’s play opportunities and encourage physical activity in growing communities, and the Lalor Tennis Community Pavilion Development Project, which will build additional tennis courts and a multi-purpose court.

Community Sport Infrastructure Fund

The $120 million *Community Sport Infrastructure Fund* gives local clubs the facilities they need to grow. It helps create high quality, accessible community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria by providing grants for planning, building or upgrading facilities. The fund has helped revitalise cricket pitches, install women’s change rooms, improve courts, build fields and develop better pools. Other initiatives include upgrading cricket grounds and training facilities to keep up with the growth in participation rates, aquatic centres, minor facilities works and planning grants.

$150 million invested in critical local infrastructure for Melbourne’s growing outer suburbs

$120 million towards building community sport infrastructure across Victoria
Participation in sport and active recreation is not evenly spread across our community. This comes at a cost, not only to people who are not participating but to the Victorian community as a whole. The Victorian Government is tackling this issue to ensure all Victorians can be active and included. Examples of investment include:

**Howmans Gap Alpine Centre**

The Victorian Government is investing an additional $1.2 million into Victoria’s first ever accessible sport and recreation alpine accommodation. This is on top of existing government investment of $2 million. The Howmans Gap Alpine Centre is being developed with universal design principles at its heart, making sure people living with a disability can participate in the activities they love while feeling safe and independent. The state-of-the-art facility will come complete with 36 beds, so that participants of all abilities can get out and challenge themselves on Victoria’s ski fields, ensuring more Victorians can embrace the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle.

$1.2 million invested in Victoria’s first ever accessible alpine accommodation

**Multicultural Sports Fund**

The Victorian Government’s $4 million Multicultural Sports Fund aims to reduce barriers to sports participation for those from multicultural backgrounds. The fund will support the Victorian sports sector to better understand, reach and positively engage with culturally diverse communities. It will increase social inclusion by building strong and lasting connections between culturally diverse communities and the wider Victorian community and improve mental and physical health outcomes for culturally diverse communities.

$4 million invested in encouraging culturally diverse participation in sport
Latrobe Valley Sport and Recreation Package

The $85 million Latrobe Valley Sport and Recreation Package will deliver the very best community sporting infrastructure for Latrobe Valley’s many sporting clubs and athletes, with over 500 jobs to be created along the way. The package will build new sport and recreation infrastructure and upgrade existing infrastructure throughout the Latrobe Valley, including a new Gippsland Regional Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Traralgon and upgrades for 9 local reserves. It will also deliver an extensive program of major events and community sporting activities across the valley, including coaching clinics and community carnivals. Major clubs including the Collingwood Football Club have been enlisted to partner with local community organisations to support the critically important work they do in tackling disadvantage, boosting health outcomes and dealing with issues such as family violence, drug abuse and youth disengagement.

Sport and recreation for Aboriginal communities

The Victorian Government’s $600,000 Aboriginal Sport Package will create more accessible and inclusive grassroots sports clubs for Aboriginal children and help bridge cultural divides through sport. It will deliver cultural and recreational camps for Aboriginal youth, grants to address cost barriers to participation such as travel, uniforms and equipment for Aboriginal youth, a cultural education program for sporting clubs, and additional investment to build cultural capacity in sport. The Victorian Government invests a further $220,000 per year to support Aboriginal communities, sporting groups, state sporting associations and national sports organisations to deliver programs that improve access and participation in activities for Aboriginal Victorians.

$1 million invested in building inclusive sport and recreation for Aboriginal communities

$85 million invested in improving community sporting infrastructure, events and programs for Central Gippsland’s local clubs and athletes
#Change our Game

The $7.22 million Change our Game campaign focuses on increasing female leadership and participation in sport. The Victorian Government is implementing the recommendations of the 2015 inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation to improve equality in sport and active recreation. The campaign works with state sporting associations to meet the Inquiry target of 40 per cent of women in board positions in three years’ time. Key state sporting association chief executives are encouraged to use their positions as Change Our Game Champions to empower more women and girls to secure the sport leadership roles they deserve. The campaign features a new toolkit for sports organisations, complete with recruitment guidelines to help attract more women and girls to sports leadership roles.

The Victorian Government is also contributing an additional $14 million through the Female Friendly Facilities fund towards women’s change rooms at grassroots clubs all over Victoria. A further $550,000, provided through the Office of Prevention and Women’s Equality, will promote gender equality in grass roots sporting clubs across Victoria and celebrate women and girls’ sport.

$21 million invested in increasing female participation in sport
Additional focus on active recreation

More Victorians participate in active recreation than organised sport. Adult Victorians spend 736 million hours a year on physical recreation, exercise and sport. Eighty per cent of these hours are spent in active recreation. This means that increasing participation in active recreation offers the best opportunity to increase overall levels of physical activity and improvements in health and wellbeing. It’s why the Victorian Government is getting on with investing in active recreation programs and infrastructure. Examples of investment include:

Premier’s Active April

The Premier’s Active April campaign, the flagship program of the $14 million Active Communities Participation Package, encourages all Victorians to do 30 minutes of physical activity a day during April. Premier’s Active April is part of the Victorian Government’s commitment to promote healthy and active lifestyles and get Victorians to join in the fun of increased physical activity. In 2017, a record 110,000 Victorians signed up to take the pledge. Participants can log their daily activity in the mobile or web app and chart their progress throughout the month. They can also create and join teams, track the progress of team members and discover sport and active recreation events in their local area.

Lilydale Lake Park

The Victorian Government contributed $1 million through the Growing Suburbs Fund towards the Yarra Ranges Council’s construction of Lilydale Lake Park. The park was created in consultation with local primary school children, resulting in a play space that reflected their interests, created a strong connection with nature and encouraged play and physical activity. The park equipment was designed to be multifunctional and to be used in different ways by people of different ages and abilities.

$14 million invested in the Active Communities package, including Active April

$1 million invested in spaces that encourage play and physical activity in Lilydale Lake Park
The ability of the sport and active recreation system to create participation opportunities and its capacity to maintain and grow these opportunities relies on systems and structures that support its day-to-day business and underpins the system. That is why the Victorian Government is investing in strengthening the sport and active recreation system and its workforce. Examples of investment include:

**Love The Game Sporting Club Program**

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation's Love The Game Sporting Club Program aims to counter the growing culture of gambling in sport and to create safe and healthy sporting clubs. It helps over 270 participating clubs preserve the essence of their sport by separating gambling from the game, and shifting the focus back to the love of the game, not the odds. Participating clubs are equipped with the knowledge to avoid gambling harm through information sessions and ongoing, personalised support from the foundation.

270+ clubs supported in shifting focus away from gambling and back on to the love of their sport

**Supporting Victorian Sport and Recreation**

The Victorian Government invests $7 million annually into the sport and recreation system through the Supporting Victorian Sport and Recreation program. The program supports initiatives that increase participation in sport and active recreation. It also aims to build a more sustainable sport and recreation sector in Victoria and increase the equity, diversity and inclusiveness of the sport and recreation industry in Victoria. Examples of funded initiatives include governance reform, sport programs for people with disabilities and development programs to support volunteers and train coaches, administrators and other officials.

$7 million every year invested in the sport and recreation industry
The Victorian Government has granted over $500,000 to 20 Life Saving Victoria clubs through the $35 million Emergency Services Volunteer Sustainability Grants Program, which provides funding to volunteers and clubs from volunteer emergency service organisations. The grants go towards rescue and safety equipment, generators, facility upgrades and maintenance, training and development, and other needs that assist volunteers and improve services to the community. Through the program Life Saving Victoria clubs will be able to get the equipment and facilities they need to keep communities safe in the water. The grants also help increase the leadership, skills and capability of volunteers and encourage the retention and growth of volunteers in Life Saving Victoria clubs.
Victoria is the major events capital of Australia. We are the envy of our interstate and international competitors due to our infrastructure, high performance programs and events calendar. The Victorian Government is maximising the benefits from high performance sport and events to provide inspiration, entertainment and civic pride to Victorians. Examples of investment include:

**Victorian Asian Cup 2015 Legacy Fund**

The Victorian Government’s $2 million Victorian Asian Cup 2015 Legacy Fund leverages the momentum and financial windfall from hosting the 2015 AFC Asian Cup to build grassroots soccer across the state. Record numbers of boys and girls, men and women, are signing up to play soccer and they deserve modern, upgraded and safe infrastructure. The fund will make grassroots venues all over Victoria better for budding players and allow them to enjoy new pavilions, better lights and pitch upgrades.

**$2 million invested in grassroots soccer across Victoria by leveraging the success of hosting the 2015 AFC Asian Cup**

**Victoria’s Event Calendar**

A key component of Victoria’s capacity to attract major events is the Victorian Government’s $80 million Major Events Fund, backed by the $20 million Regional Events Fund and the Significant Sporting Events Program, which has been supplemented with an additional $3 million since November 2014. These funds have supported events such as the Victorian Open, the premier event on the Golf Victoria calendar, and the Football Federation Australia Cup final. Together the Regional Events Fund and the Significant Sporting Events Program have helped Ballarat secure the Cycling Australia Road National Championships until at least 2020. The championships pit Australia’s most talented cyclists against the very best in the world, as riders vie for glory and a spot on the Australian road, time trial and criterion teams.

**$80 million invested in supporting major sporting events in Victoria**
Melbourne Park Redevelopment

The Victorian Government’s recent $271 million investment in the Stage 3 redevelopment of Melbourne and Olympic Park, our sporting capital’s world-class tennis and entertainment precinct, is the latest phase of a $972 million investment to maintain its edge as an unbeatable sports and events precinct. Melbourne and Olympic Park is one of the most enviable sports and entertainment precincts in the world, hosting around 600 events, including the Australian Open, and attracting more than two and a half million patrons annually. The redevelopment places a strong emphasis on the comfort of patrons— with more open space and shade, increased seating capacity, better connections to public transport and the city, and easier movement into and within the precinct. The project is expected to create 600 jobs and will build a new show court, eastern entrance and other facilities needed to attract more visitors to Victoria.

Regional Infrastructure

The Victorian Government is making sure regional Victoria remains front and centre. The Victorian Government is supporting Victoria’s central highlands through the $33 million redevelopment of Eureka Stadium and the Ballarat Sports Precinct – including a new Stadium grandstand featuring 5000 undercover seats, expanding the total stadium capacity to 11,000, and an upgrade of the Wendouree Sports and Entertainment Centre, the Showgrounds and the redevelopment of CE Brown Reserve pavilion. The Victorian Government has also invested $93 million in Kardinia Park, Geelong to deliver the Stage 4 upgrade of Simonds Stadium, prepare a business case for the potential Stage 5 upgrade and establish the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust. The Stage 4 upgrade of Simonds Stadium improved spectator amenity, raised the stadium capacity to 36,000 and created a community rehabilitation centre. An additional $5 million will go towards developing a 4,000 seat indoor sports arena at Bendigo Stadium. These projects will attract more world class events to regional Victoria, creating jobs and bringing more sport and recreation participation opportunities.

$271 million invested in the Stage 3 redevelopment of Melbourne and Olympic Park

$131 million invested in upgrading facilities in regional Victoria
Work together for shared outcomes

The continued development of the sport and active recreation system depends on collaboration across the not-for-profit and private sectors and all three levels of government. The Victorian Government continues to collaborate and work with local councils and sport and recreation organisations by integrating sport and recreation planning across different policy areas. Examples of investment include:

**Shared Facilities Fund**

The $50 million Shared Facilities Fund will help schools and communities build shared facilities on school grounds. This fund can be used to implement a range of community infrastructure projects on school sites, including sporting facilities and community hubs. The Victorian Government will build on its partnerships with schools, local councils and communities to develop shared facilities arrangements. The aim is to develop Victorian schools into thriving community hubs with new libraries, sports facilities, performing arts centres and early learning centres to be shared with the whole community. As part of this fund, up to $4.7 million will be invested in establishing a sports oval at the new Edgars Creek Secondary College, which will be used by local clubs, and an additional $250,000 will go towards upgrading the netball courts at Laurimar Primary School, which will also be used by the Laurimar Power Netball Club.

**Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund**

The Victorian Government is working to support the growing rates of cycling and walking in Victoria with the launch of Active Transport Victoria and the establishment of the $100 million Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund. The government will work with local councils and communities right across Victoria to better coordinate the planning of infrastructure, and ensure projects are built where they are needed most, and delivered on time. It will also put active modes of transport such as walking and cycling front and centre, better connecting them to the broader transport network.

$50 million invested in helping schools and communities build shared facilities on school grounds

$100 million to be invested in encouraging active modes of transport including walking and cycling