

## Frequently Asked Questions (2019)

### Who can participate?

Applications for the Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program (RRCLP) are encouraged from men and women over the age of 18 (a driver's license is recommended) who have a broad range of backgrounds and experience, and who have not previously completed a Community Leadership Program. Participants are chosen to represent a diverse range of sectors including business, community, government, health services, agriculture and industry. No prior learning or qualifications are required. Those who live work or participate in community in the municipalities of Mitchell, Murrindindi, Nillumbik, City of Whittlesea or Yarra Ranges are eligible to apply. Soft borders to our program areas apply so speak to us if your community is close to the area and you would like to apply. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate in an application that they meet the selection criteria as outlined in the Applicant Information document.

### What are the main benefits of the program?

Graduates of the Community Leadership Programs across Victoria describe these programs as increasing their skills and confidence in leadership, increasing their awareness and understanding of regional issues and innovative change makers, and increasing their accessibility to an influential network of community leaders across the area. Many graduates go on to take on more advanced and influential leadership roles within the community or organisation in which they work.

### Is the RRCLP a management course?

No, the RRCLP is not an accredited training program. It is a program based on experiential learning about community leadership, and community capacity and resilience building principles. Learning occurs through existing leaders imparting their knowledge and experience of regional issues and their leadership experience, and connections. As participants are chosen for their diversity, learning from each other is enhanced. The program is a hands-on leadership experience but also covers self- reflection concepts, leadership styles and skills required to be an effective leader, through workshops, discussions and study tours. There are no exams or assignments. It is considered to be an honour and privilege to join the network of alumni that graduate from the program (and across Victoria every year) and this is signified in a graduation ceremony at the completion of the program.

### What is the time and other commitments to the program?

The program year involves a total of 13 program days, 3 retreats, and a Melbourne and Canberra Study Tour. There is also a Graduation ceremony at the end of the program year. Apart from the months with a study tour, there will be an average two (and in one case 3) Program Days. Participants are required to attend an 80% minimum of the Program and undertake all evaluation requirements. (Special circumstances will be considered) The Canberra Trip is a compulsory element of the year and must be completed in order to graduate.

Overnight stays will require participants to share accommodation and may include bunk style accommodation.

Participants must get themselves punctually to the venue organised and are required to stay until the day is finished. Where an extended day or long trip is required, participants are encouraged to consider staying overnight. Where this decision is taken it is the responsibility of the participant to cover these costs (unless this is a specific condition of your sponsorship) Retreats and Melbourne and Canberra trips include travel, accommodation and much of the food. Travel to Canberra will be by bus. There is some commitment required between Program Days to read background material and may involve some research.

Participants will be involved in running Program Days within their leadership groups and more work will be required at these times to prepare for the day. On most ordinary Program Days the Leadership team will be responsible for bringing morning and afternoon teas at their own cost to share with the group. There are a number of lunches paid for as part of the program year, however it is expected that participants plan for an allowance to cover some of these costs during the year as well. Participants will be given plenty of advance notice should this be the case.

### What happens after the application closing date?

Your application will be acknowledged via email. If you are short-listed for the program, you will be required to attend an interview between **28th January 2018 to 4th February 2019**. You will be notified by about your interview date and time within a week of your application. The interview is an opportunity for you to find out about the program and for the panel of three to determine your suitability for the program. The interview will run for about 30 to 40 minutes. You will be notified of your acceptance into the program in the first instance by phone within one week of your interview and later by a letter of confirmation. Signed documentation will need to be brought with you to the Opening Conference. The Opening Conference will be held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2019. Fees and sponsorships need to be paid by the first Program



## How much does the program cost?

The fee for the program is a participant contribution of \$570 (inc GST) and a workplace or sponsorship fee of \$5,700 (inc GST). Participants can pay the full fee themselves if they choose. Scholarship opportunities may also be available and this should be discussed with the Executive Officer. If your place is a sponsored or scholarship position you will be required to provide reports back to the sponsor, and you may be required to speak at sponsor functions, if requested by your sponsor. The program aims to be accessible to all community leaders therefore if a participant fee is a barrier to participation this should also be discussed with the Executive Officer.

## What does the community project involve?

As a way of consolidating learning's, participants will be involved in a collaborative community project throughout the program. One of our sponsors has provided funding to enable this to occur and in groups, program participants will work together to plan, implement and evaluate the project. Participants will report back to the sponsor as to the outcomes of the project. Much of the project work happens outside of the set program days in participant's own time.

## Do I need to be able to use the Internet and other technology?

There is a need for participants to be able to have access to the Internet on a regular basis between Program Days. Email and Internet sharing sites are used to share information between Program Days. There are a number of online learning tools that are used during the program. The Executive Officer is able to support you to access this technology if required.

## When will I know dates for the year?

Proposed dates will be supplied at interview and the final schedule will be distributed at the Opening Conference. There may be the chance that dates are adjusted due to factors such as Parliamentary sitting times, however this will be unlikely. If you have planned a special event during the year such as a wedding you will need to let us know at interview time to enable us to plan how this could be accommodated.

## How do I apply for a scholarship?

A number of scholarships are available to assist applicants. Please indicate on your application form that you would like to apply for a scholarship. After you have submitted your application for the program it will be assessed for eligibility for a scholarship.

