



TIDY TOWNS & CITIES 2026

Entry Pack



Pictured: 2025 Dame Phyllis Frost Winner – Gidja Walker.



Table of Contents



01 Key Program Dates	10 UN Sustainable Development Goals
02 Welcome Message	11 Entering the Awards
03 About Tidy Towns & Cities - Sustainability Awards	12 Tidy Town or City of the Year
03 What's New for 2024?	12 National Tidy Towns Awards
03 Award Streams	13 Assessment Guide
04 Entry Guidelines	14 FAQs and Answers
05 Our 10 Sustainable Categories	16 Contact

Key Program Dates 2026

Entries Close	Judging Period	Finalists Announced	Awards Ceremony
15 Jul	Jul/ Sep	Aug	30 Sept

Welcome Message



Welcome to the Tidy Towns & Cities Sustainability Awards for 2026!

This year marks Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria's 44th year of rewarding and recognising the councils, communities, organisations, and individuals that are working tirelessly towards a more sustainable future.

Over the years we have met with and celebrated thousands of people, projects and programs around litter, waste, indigenous heritage, education, community, environment, energy, heritage and culture, wellbeing and individual achievement. These initiatives empower people, change behaviour, protect the environment, reduce waste, engage youth and indigenous communities, and promote community spirit and resiliency across Victoria.

So, what does a sustainable future look like for Victoria?

While sustainability means different things to different people, we here at KABV take a holistic approach in its definition and say that sustainability is the consistent drive to improve our relationship with the environment while creating a better way of life for all.

Keeping this front of mind, the defining and most crucial element of any winning initiative is that it achieves harmony between economic, social, and environmental needs, and that it is innovative in its design, inclusive in its planning, and effective in its approach.

When we think about sustainability in this way, we are capturing the true essence of what it means to be crowned the next Tidy Town, City, or the next category winner.

These awards are an opportunity to reflect on all the amazing achievements from our entrants as much as they are an opportunity to learn from each other's experiences. I wish all the entrants the best for their future sustainability endeavours, and we look forward to showcasing the fantastic projects happening across our state.

Kindest regards

Josh Reid Jones
CEO
Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria



About Tidy Towns & Cities – Sustainability Awards



The Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Tidy Towns & Cities – Sustainability Awards have been recognising and rewarding projects and actions in Victoria since 1982. The Awards have grown to be much more than about keeping a community “tidy”. The awards have adapted over the years into the holistic awards program it is today and we recognise achievements across 10 categories that contribute to a sustainable, resilient and beautiful town or city.

Towns and cities are encouraged to enter into as many categories as they can to be in the running to be the overall Tidy Town or City of the Year. This award is based off judge's scores for individual community projects that are entered.

Award Streams



Tidy Towns & Cities is open to any organisation or individual in Victoria. The program is divided into two award streams:



TIDY TOWNS SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

For initiatives delivered by an individual or an organisation located in a regional or rural shire council.

STREAM 1



TIDY CITIES SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

For initiatives delivered by an individual or an organisation in a city or rural city council.

STREAM 2

Thank you to our sponsors, partners and supporters



The Tidy Towns and Cities Sustainability Awards is not possible without the support of our amazing partners – who not only help us put together this celebration of Victorian excellence, and community spirit – but are themselves committed to a more sustainable, connected and healthy state.

All of our supporters have our deepest thanks for their ongoing support.



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria



R Y D G E S

MELBOURNE



We look forward to seeing everyone at the awards night. One of the most inspirational evenings of the year!

30th September 2026
Rydges Melbourne – 7.00pm – 10.00pm

Tickets available [here](#).



Entry Guidelines



The awards are open to any project whether it is a new or ongoing project. However, if it has been entered into the awards before there should be evidence of new additions or improvements that have been made since its last submission.

Entries open 27 April 2026 and will close on 15 July 2026 at midnight. After this time no further updates, entries or nominations can be made.

Judging begins in July. Each individual category is assessed by a panel of three expert judges via Microsoft Teams. Once the dates of the assessments have been determined, please ensure a representative of your project is available at the time scheduled. Judging will take 20 minutes per project.

To help us promote your projects and to give the judges as much context as possible, please provide 2-4 high resolution photos (min of 2MB). You will also be given the opportunity to attach a video, larger video files will need to be shared via a link. Please ensure you have permission from anyone featured in your photo's or video's. If you do not have permission we ask that you upload images without people in them.

Any photos with children under the age of 18 will be required to upload a document giving us permission to use. If you are not the parent/legal guardian, you must obtain their permission and have them sign the form to be uploaded. If you do not have their permission, please do NOT upload the image.



Our 10 Sustainable Categories



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE CAMPAIGNS & EDUCATION

An educational campaign or program that results in empowerment and behaviour change that builds community.

Example of previous eligible initiatives:

- The Sea is My Best Friend - St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Crib Point
- No Limits Program - Mornington Peninsula Foundation
- Environmental Education - Athol Road Primary School



COMMUNITY

A project that leads towards a stronger, more resilient and thriving community or economy.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Mallacoota Evacuation - Mornington Peninsula Shire Municipal Emergency
- Transforming surplus food into nutritious meals - FareShare
- Western Emergency Relief Network - WERN



Our 10 Sustainable Categories



EPA WASTE REDUCTION AND PREVENTION

Projects that focus on reducing and preventing what goes into landfill.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Give a Scrap - Campaspe Shire Council
- Polyrok Soft Plastic Reuse- Coles Carpark Horsham - Horsham Tidy Towns Committee
- Sending food and garden waste to a better place - Mildura Rural City Council



Proudly Sponsored by



EPA
VICTORIA



ENERGY

A project that shows leadership and innovation in conservation, production and distribution of energy.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Horsham Regional Livestock Exchange (HRLE) Roofing - Horsham Rural City Council
- Casey Aquatic and Recreation Centre (ARC) Energy Savers - City of Casey
- Euroa Environment Group - Strathbogie Shire Council

Our 10 Sustainable Categories



ENVIRONMENT

Projects that protect, enhance, restore biodiversity, water conservation, and prevent damage to the natural environment.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- I sea I care Marine Ambassadors - Dolphin Research Institute
- Bees and Seeds kits - City of Monash
- Restoring a Grassy Woodland - Euroa Arboretum



INDIGENOUS CULTURE

A project that recognises outstanding commitment to the conservation and celebration of the rich diverse culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Goolum Goolum NAIDOC Art Exhibition 2019 - Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative
- Balit Bagurrk: Strong women of the Yarra Ranges - Creative Communities
- Marmungun Rock Ceremony - Dirrawarra Indigenous Network



Our 10 Sustainable Categories



LITTER

A project that takes action to prevent, reduce and enforce local litter issues.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- AdvanceTeam - A Team
- The Ops System Initiative - City of Port Phillip
- Better Buds Campaign - Better Buds



WELLBEING

A project that contributes to an accessible community with resilient, healthy and happy people.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Connect9 mentoring program - Tomorrow Today Education Foundation
- Be Kind - City of Ballarat
- Alex Makes Meals - Alex Dekker

Our 10 Sustainable Categories



YOUNG LEGENDS

An individual or group of people all 25 years or younger who demonstrate outstanding contribution to any of the categories.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- Harrison Hansen – School and Community Leader
- Bart Turgoose – Worm King
- Libby Fisher – Koala & Wildlife Crusade



HERITAGE AND CULTURE

A project that recognises outstanding commitment to the conservation and celebration of a community's heritage and culture.

Examples of previous eligible initiatives:

- HE(ART)BEAT of Willaura
- Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2018–2029 – City of Stonnington
- Our Country, Our Future, Our Responsibility – Yarra Ranges Council



UN Sustainable Development Goals Aligned



KABV aligns each of our individual categories with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). The UNSDG's are a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all."

Below we've highlighted where each category aligns to a particular UNSDG. It's a way for us all to remind one another of how crucial community effort is in ensuring a safe, sustainable, and equitable world. To learn more [click through to the UNSDG](#).

	BEHAVIOUR CHANGE CAMPAIGNS & EDUCATION					
	COMMUNITY					
	WASTE					
	ENERGY					
	ENVIRONMENT					
	INDIGENOUS CULTURE					
	LITTER					
	WELLBEING					
	YOUNG LEGENDS	 THE GLOBAL GOALS				
	HERITAGE AND CULTURE					

Entering the Awards



Below are the required fields when entering the Tidy Towns & Cities Awards through the AwardsOnline platform.

PROJECT DETAILS

- Select a Category
- Entrant or Group Name
- Project Name
- Postcode of Projects
- Name of town or suburb project is in
- City/Council area project is in

CONTACT DETAILS

- About You
- Project Representative

PROJECT SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn

ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER NUMBERS

- Number of Volunteers
- Number of Hours

LOCAL MEDIA INFORMATION

- What is the estimated audience reach of your project?
- Newspaper, Radio, Television, Social Media, Online Blogs in your local area

PROJECT SUMMARY

1. One sentence description of your project (max 50 words)
2. Summary of your project (max 200 words)
3. What have you done and why? (max 500 words)
4. What did you set out to achieve? (max 250 words)
5. What have you learned from implementing this initiative or approach? (max 250 words)
6. What are the results? (max 500 words)
7. What is your legacy? (max 250 words)
8. Describe your project's X-Factor? (max 200 words)
9. Which UN Sustainable Development Goals does your project connect with and why? (max 100 words)

SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

- Photos (minimum of 2)
- Supplemental Attachments (optional)
- Child Photo Release Form (if applicable)
- Video Attachment (optional)
- Website Links (optional)
- Authorisation

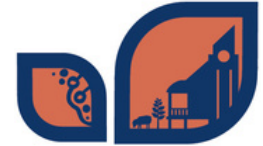


Tidy Town or City of the Year



Towns and cities are encouraged to enter into as many of the 10 categories as they can to be in the running to be the overall Tidy Town or City of the Year. This award is based off judges scores for individual community projects that are entered.

National Tidy Towns Awards



The Winner of the overall Victorian Tidy Towns Award will automatically be entered into the National Tidy Towns Awards. The categories for the National Awards are slightly different to the Victorian Tidy Towns Awards, however we have ensured that there is overlap.

National Categories	Victoria Corresponding Categories
Litter	Litter
Young Legends	Young Legends
Behavior Change Campaigns & Education	Behaviour Change Campaigns & Education
Circular Economy & Waste Reduction Plastic Free Communities	EPA Waste Prevention & Reduction
Heritage and Culture	Heritage and Culture/Indigenous Culture
Water Conservation and Protection Biodiversity Conservation	Energy/Environment
Dame Phyllis Frost (local legend)	Dame Phyllis Frost
Liveable Communities Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation	Community/Wellbeing/Indigenous Culture

The Victorian Tidy Town Award winner will automatically be entered into the 2026 National Tidy Towns Awards.

Assessment Guide



These questions and weightings are designed to structure the judges scoring of each project and will provide all entrants a better idea on what our judges are looking for. This guide is to help you identify the important aspects of your initiative, you are not required to answer all of the questions below.

Project Summary/Objective

(Worth 10% of the marks)

- Has the entrant properly defined their initiative?
- Has the entrant stated the driving forces to commence this initiative or approach?
- Does the entrant have an X Factor? The X-Factor is considered throughout Learnings, Results and Legacy.

Learnings

(Worth 30% of the marks)

- Has the entrant detailed their journey of achieving their sustainable approach?
- Has the entrant been transparent about the challenges, if any, and how they were able to overcome them?
- Has the entrant stated their goals, and have they been successful in achieving them?
- Has the entrant discussed the importance of partnerships, associations and consultation in achieving their goals? Where they transparent about any barriers they had to overcome?

Results

(Worth 40% of the marks including a 10% assessment against the Sustainable Development Goals)

- Has the entrant explained their results and how they have measured them?
- Has the entrant demonstrated real results over the past two years (this can be based on a build up from previous years)? Are they measurable and if possible proven?
- Has the entrant been successful at communicating their success and challenges and how they have generated interest in this area internally and externally?
- Does their initiative or approach exemplify disruption, innovation and leadership?
- Has the entrant explained how their initiative or approach effectively works towards the relevant SDG targets?

Sustainable Development Goals

(10% of the **Results** criteria)

- Are the SDGs just being used for branding or an aspirational exercise? Or have they understood and applied the SDGs/targets to what they are doing?
- Is there any evidence of specific indicators or metrics that relate to the SDGs/targets being used in their project/initiative/approach?
- Are results presented in terms of the SDGs/targets?
- Are they using the SDGs to push the boundaries and transform how they do things?
- Have they used the SDGs/targets to engage their stakeholders, namely staff, customers, community and others?

Legacy

(Worth 10% of the marks)

- Is the entrant's initiative or approach scalable, i.e., can it be further rolled out across their organisation, peers/sector, locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally?
- Has the entrant considered the future of this initiative? And what the type of legacy is that can come out of this initiative?
- Is this project restricted by budget, personnel, or passion?

FAQs + Answers



Question	Answer
<p>Why enter the awards?</p>	<p>Entering the awards has many benefits including increased community participation, pride, ownership and responsibility for local environments. The Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria awards provides an opportunity to promote the inspiring sustainability initiatives being carried out in communities across Victoria.</p>
<p>Who can enter?</p>	<p>These awards are open to community groups, businesses, government, individuals, educational institutions and not-for-profit groups. Anyone can enter a project or submit a nomination for the Dame Phyllis Frost Award.</p>
<p>How to enter?</p>	<p>All we need for you to submit your project is the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a login • Contact details of nominee and nominator (name, email, phone, organisation, website) • Project summary <p>Optional extras:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-4 Photos • Social media handles (optional) • Volunteer information • Local media (optional) • Video (optional) • Additional attachments (optional)
<p>What are we looking for in your project summary?</p>	<p>Judging is not based off your project summary; this is only used for marketing purposes. A few ideas for your description include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and why did the initiative start? • Who managed the project? • What challenges were faced and overcome? • Discuss collaboration between different groups • Describe the community engagement in the project • What was the overall outcome? • Is there ongoing commitment to maintain or expand the initiative?

FAQs + Answers



Question	Answer
Which stream should I be in, Cities or Tidy Towns?	<i>Your entries will be placed into the correct stream by KABV. This is determined whether you live in a Shire Council or City Council.</i>
If my initiative is multidisciplinary and I'm not sure which category it belongs in, can I enter the same initiative in multiple categories?	<i>You must choose the most appropriate category for your project to be entered into.</i>
Does my initiative have to be completed in order to enter?	<i>No! If your initiative is underway, we want to hear all about how it's progressing.</i>
If my program began over two years ago, but it is still operating, can I enter?	<i>Yes! We just require that something new has been implemented within the last two years.</i>
Can I enter the same category with multiple projects?	<i>Yes, as long as each project is uniquely different.</i>
Who can I contact if I have any questions relating to my entry?	<i>You can contact our Program Manager Emma White emma.white@kabvic.org.au</i>
My project is operating in multiple locations, which town do I say it's from?	<i>In this case, nominate the town in which you or your organisation are based, whether that's an office location or a place of residence. Please make a note in your description which towns/cities you operate in. We will ensure all towns/cities are scored appropriately when scoring overall winners.</i>
I entered a project last year, can I enter again this year?	<i>Yes! Just be sure to demonstrate that you have made progress on your project in the last 12 months.</i>

Contact



We look forward to hearing about all of the amazing things you have been doing in your community! If you have any questions related to the Tidy Towns & Cities Sustainability Awards, feel free to reach out to our Program and Partnership Manager.



tidytowns@kabvic.org.au



kabvic.org.au



In the spirit of reconciliation Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.