



Good Practice Guide

Collaborative Approaches
to Multicultural Business
Precinct Planning & Activation



Cover photo: Eaton Mall, Oakleigh

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About this Guide

Business precincts are an important feature of Victoria's economy and communities, shaped by the people that live, work and visit these places.

These precincts are dynamic. They grow and evolve as businesses invest, local communities change, public spaces improve and events and other offerings attract people to visit.

This Good Practice Guide provides guidance on how traders, business associations, local councils and other partners can collaborate to attract more visitors and enable precincts to continue to thrive, while celebrating diverse cultures.

The Guide has 3 main parts:

- A. Outline of the **key partners** involved in enabling strong multicultural precincts.
- B. Guidance on **precinct placemaking and activation** and case studies showing how these can be actioned.
- C. Key ingredients for **working together**, along with examples of good practice to achieve common aims.

We acknowledge and thank everyone for their input into the development of this Guide including trader groups, businesses, and local and state government representatives.

This Guide has been developed with Victorian Government funding from the *Supporting our Multicultural Traders and Precincts* initiative through Small Business Victoria.



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Case Study Collection

This Guide includes case studies and examples illustrating collaborative projects delivered by business associations, local councils and other organisations related to precincts across Victoria, as follows:

Placemaking & activation

- Outdoor activation, **Mordialloc**
- 'Gateway' mural, **Central Coburg**
- Chinese Golden Dragon Museum Precinct, **Bendigo**
- Town centre revitalisation, **Melton**
- Shopfront and business promotion, **Sunshine**
- **St Albans** Lunar New Year Festival
- Festive art on windows, Sydney Road, **Brunswick**
- Victoria Street Lunar Festival, **Richmond**
- Night trading pilot, **Springvale**
- #lovefootscray campaign, **Footscray**
- **Northcote** Rise promotions
- Tramoo Street shopping precinct upgrade, **Lalor**

Working together

- Business surveys, **Glen Eira**
- Measuring visitation, **Noble Park**
- **Mildura** City Heart governance
- Jackson Court vision & plan, **Doncaster East**
- Precinct business association funding, **City of Melbourne**
- Precinct development grants, **Maribyrnong, Cardinia & Bass Coast**
- Reporting achievements, **Bendigo**



Minister's Foreword

From Box Hill to Springvale, Oakleigh to Footscray, St Albans to Richmond, our state's multicultural business precincts are hubs of trade, activity, food and culture.

These precincts are the cornerstone of local economies and communities, providing unique places where people gather, shop, work and build cultural connections and friendships.

The many small businesses and traders that operate in these precincts proudly reflect Victoria's history and evolving multicultural identity. They each have their own stories, cultures and experiences and create the energy and vitality that brings a neighbourhood to life.

Through the decades, these precincts have been shaped and enriched by successive waves of migration, each contributing to the vibrant communities we see today. As we celebrate this rich history, we are also committed to taking bold steps towards a future that embraces diversity, innovation and growth.

We all have an important role to play to ensure these business precincts continue to thrive. That is why I am delighted to release the Good Practice Guide – the first of its kind in Australia.

This Guide is designed to assist business associations, local councils and state government agencies to work together to strengthen multicultural business precincts across Victoria.

The Guide provides many practical ideas about how to do this, ranging from promotional campaigns and pop-up activations to cultural festivals and infrastructure improvements.

I want to extend my thanks to all the business owners, local councils and trader groups who have generously shared their time and expert knowledge to help develop this Guide.

Let's collaborate, be creative and ambitious so that we can realise our vision for these dynamic precincts to flourish.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Natalie Suleyman'.

The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP
MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS
AND EMPLOYMENT

Key partners



Victoria's multicultural businesses

Victoria is one of Australia's most culturally diverse states, with 35.1% of small business owners born overseas and 56.3% with one or more parent born overseas. It comes as no surprise that Victoria is well-recognised as a successful multicultural society.

The diversity and entrepreneurship of Victorians has enabled the development of unique businesses and precincts. From an economic perspective, measures show that cultural diversity adds around \$1 billion to the Victorian economy every year.

The multicultural identity of our precincts is often reflected in retail, hospitality and services offered by businesses, in local events and the urban realm.

Placemaking and activation activities that bring together key partners and celebrate a precinct's history and evolving cultural identity will ensure these activity centres and businesses continue to thrive well into the future.



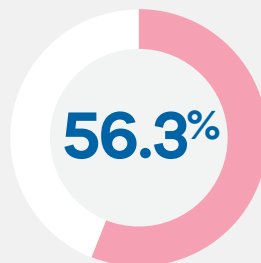
718,864

Small businesses
in Victoria in 2023-24

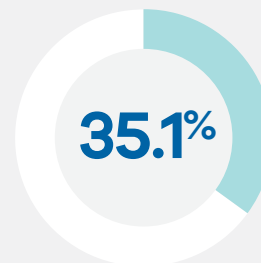


424,500

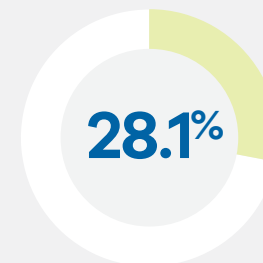
Small business owners
in Victoria (2021)



Have one or more parent
born outside Australia



Were born outside
Australia



Speak a language other
than English at home



Cultural diversity
adds around

\$1 billion

to the Victorian economy
every year, through greater
innovation and productivity



53%

Higher revenue than
non-migrant owned
businesses



Migrant owned businesses
make significant contributions
to Victoria's economy through
job creation, innovation,
revenue and growth aspirations

Business associations

Business associations play a vital role as trusted representatives of like-minded traders in particular locations and industries, or with similar cultural backgrounds or interests. These associations are typically run by a committee of dedicated volunteers from the business community. They can vary in size, depending on the resources and maturity of the group, and rely on collaboration to achieve their goals.

Business associations provide many benefits for traders and local and state governments:

- **Connections:** a trusted and representative forum for connecting with businesses to engage with, learn from, plan and activate a precinct, especially where language and cultural capabilities are needed.
- **Capacity building:** can access networks to help identify what support businesses need and connect businesses to resources to help develop their skills and capabilities.
- **Insights:** bring an understanding of business needs, concerns and their aspirations for the precinct.
- **Advocacy and influence:** can help set the direction for a precinct, combining resources and advocating for precinct improvements.
- **Business resilience:** supported and connected traders are more able to withstand economic and other shocks, with associations also providing a ready point of contact to deploy messages and resources in the event of a disruption or emergency.
- **Collective vision:** ability to work with traders to develop a collective vision and informed activity plans for a precinct.



Local government

Local government is a key connector for businesses and key partner for the State's many activity centres.

It creates a conducive precinct ecosystem in a variety of ways, such as:

- precinct planning, including council plans, strategic statements and other municipal plans
- business development, including networks, capability building and training, information sharing and business support
- marketing, promotion and brand management
- events
- grant programs and other funding initiatives
- business investment and attraction
- long-term strategic planning for the precinct, along with data collection and analysis
- engaging with state government agencies on initiatives to shape precincts and support the communities that live, create, work in and visit these important centres.

In addition, local government provides important services for business precincts, such as waste and cleaning services, and street and precinct asset and infrastructure improvements.



How can local government help business associations?

Promote: profile local business associations on council's website.

Engage: recognise the vital role of business associations in economic development strategies and council plans.

Capability: build the capability of business associations through guidance, training and in-kind support.

Collaboration: work together as a delivery partner in the planning and activation of a business precinct.

Finance: work with business associations to identify funding opportunities to action common priorities.

Data and Plans: provide information, tools and other guidance to assist associations to plan and develop priorities.

Connect: bring business associations in the municipality together, so they can learn from each other, collaborate and collectively grow.

Refer to the Victorian Government's **directory to find current key contacts at your local council:**

vic.gov.au/local-government-contacts-and-information

The Victorian Small Business Commission's **Small Business Friendly Charter** sets out shared goals to create a fair and competitive trading environment for small businesses, encouraging council participation:

vsbc.vic.gov.au/small-business-friendly-councils

State government agencies

State government provides a wide range of policies, programs and services important to the well-being of people and places across Victoria.

State government agencies support this in many ways, including:

- business training and skill development
- business information and support services
- funding and grant opportunities
- promotion, marketing, events and programs
- strategic planning
- precinct upgrades, improvements and revitalisation projects.

Key Victorian government organisations with a role in business precinct planning and activation are listed on this page.



Key organisations include:

- **Small Business Victoria:** supports capability building in partnership with councils and business associations, and provides grants, information, tools and templates to support small businesses.
- **Land Use Planning:** creates the policies and plans to guide the use of land and the development of buildings, infrastructure and public spaces.
- **Regional Development Victoria:** leads on rural and regional economic development, including place-based planning and infrastructure investment.
- **Multicultural Affairs:** works to foster an inclusive, engaged and harmonious multicultural Victoria, and provides grants to support multicultural communities.
- **Local Government Victoria:** engages with businesses on the design of policies and legislation related to local government services.
- **Transport:** enables movement via roads, public transport and active transport. Many precincts are important transport hubs, bringing visitors and workers into centres. Transport includes specialised agencies, such as Public Transport Victoria and the Major Transport Infrastructure Authority.

Placemaking & activation

Source: Constantly Flashing Photography

Good Practice Guide

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Placemaking & activation

Through placemaking, quality places can be created that people want to live, invest, work and visit.

This section of the Guide looks at successful placemaking and what business associations and local government can do to create vibrant multicultural business precincts.

Case studies highlight the many successful collaborations across Victoria that make precincts more attractive, improve amenity and increase visitation.

Activations can be small, such as shopfront window improvements or wayfinding signage that reflects the culture and character of local businesses or the community. They can also include pilot, pop-up and other events, as well as infrastructure improvements such as parks, green planter boxes, and pedestrian and bike paths.

Placemaking activities can deliver a range of economic benefits, such as:



People who walk
spend up to

40%
more than drivers



Public realm
improvements increase
business visitation up to

30%
more



Retail vacancies
decrease by up to

22%



Walking and cycling
projects have up to

13:1
benefit to cost ratio

Source: Transport for London (2018) Economic Benefits of Walking & Cycling;
Claris S & Scopelliti D (2016) Cities Alive – Towards a walking world.

Placemaking & activation

The Victorian Government has established clear urban design guidance materials to help councils and others create high quality places that support the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of our communities, while enabling the development of competitive and efficient cities and towns.

This includes guidance on:

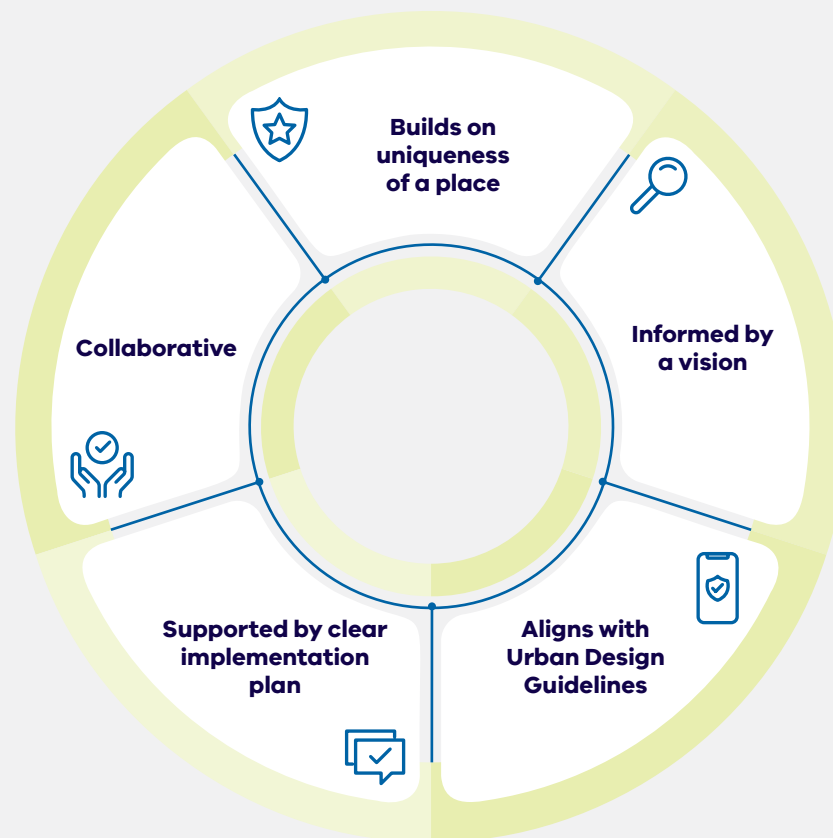
- the **layout of precincts**, as activity centres that enable enterprise and social interaction
- **movement networks**, including pedestrian and bicycle paths and crossings, parking and roads
- **public spaces**, such as parks, plazas and communal open spaces
- **objects in the public realm**, such as street furniture, trees, walls and other barriers, lighting, signage and wayfinding, shelters, toilets and kiosks.

Working together and within this framework, councils and business associations can collaborate, plan, activate and revitalise business precincts in many ways, as outlined in this section of the Guide.

The **Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria** are a key reference for planning and activating business precincts:

planning.vic.gov.au/urban-design-guidelines

Effective Precinct Placemaking



1. Improving amenity, public spaces & visitation

Getting started: place-based pilots and mini activations

Thriving and vibrant precincts have a clear identity and sense of place.

Often, small scale place-based pilot projects are a good way to get started on revitalising a precinct, such as outdoor dining, special trading events, pop-up parks, or novel features like artwork.

These types of developments can allow traders, business associations, councils and others to test an idea and demonstrate what is possible, or just to get started at a scale that is easier to deliver.

They are also a great, relatively simple way to showcase what a precinct has to offer and attract new visitors or celebrate the multicultural history of the precinct.

Planned local council projects can often be seen in annual municipal precinct plans, as well as state government agency development plans.



Outdoor activation in the Mordialloc business precinct, including visitor seating, lighting, signage and other physical and visual improvements. Delivered by the City of Kingston with Victorian Government support from the Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund.

Precinct revitalisation activities

Improving business precincts can range from small localised projects to major infrastructure investments, and include:

Activation	Benefits
 Outdoor dining	Provides a place for people to gather and connect, enhances the visibility of dining venues and provides for passive surveillance.
 Pop-up parks	Creates places for people to stop and spend time, provides spaces for other activations and for new ideas to be tested.
 Open public spaces	Strengthens the amenity of an area, encourages people to visit the precinct, creates places people want to spend time in.
 Walking & cycling infrastructure	Encourages people to walk and ride to and within the precinct, allowing them to slow down and discover new and different offerings. Bollards, street and footpath treatments can also be used to manage pedestrian and bicycle traffic flows and enhance accessibility.
 Street furniture	Encourages people to sit, rest and stay in the precinct and provides important infrastructure for older people, people with a disability and people with young children.
 Lighting	Creates atmosphere and helps to increase visibility and safety across the precinct.
 Greening	Street trees and planters improve the look and feel of the precinct and can help reduce urban heat, encouraging people to stay and walk.
 Wayfinding signage	Helps people navigate the precinct while also reflecting its unique character and strengths.
 Street art, murals and sculptures	Adds to the atmosphere and look of the precinct, can help attract people to a precinct and become part of the precinct's identity.
 Shopfront improvements	Improves visual appeal, cleanliness and provides an opportunity to reflect the unique character and offerings of local businesses.
 Cleaning	Regular street cleaning, waste removal, graffiti removal, and street and shop front repairs can improve the perceptions of safety and encourage visitation.

Improving amenity, public spaces & visitation



What can business associations do?

Business associations can contribute to and help shape the future of the precinct in many ways.

Start by asking:

- What plans do state and local governments have for the precinct, how are businesses reflected in those plans and how is cultural diversity recognised?
- What changes could make the precinct a more pleasant and inclusive place to visit and spend time in?
- What services and infrastructure would make it a more useful place to visit?
- How could we activate the business precinct by celebrating cultural diversity and other important qualities, including physical improvements and digital approaches?
- What are the opportunities and challenges that businesses are prioritising for the precinct?

This knowledge will help traders and business associations to engage with local and state governments and to understand potential partnership opportunities, including the delivery of pilot projects and larger revitalisation activities.



How can local government help?

Local councils can work with business associations and other partners to help shape placemaking and activation and increase visitation.

Actions include:

- Actively engage with the local business association for the precinct, or if there isn't one, with local businesses in the planning of the precinct and projects.
- Consider what transport infrastructure would make it easier to get to or to move around the precinct.
- Share draft plans in ways that can enable local traders from diverse cultures to engage and provide feedback on ideas to improve the precinct and attract visitors, including as part of broader structure planning processes.
- Provide input into a business association's strategic planning process to help identify opportunities and planned or potential activations.

The Victorian Government provides **planning guidance for activity centres**:
planning.vic.gov.au/activity-centre-guidance

Case Study

'Gateway' Mural Central Coburg

Central Coburg Business Association's street art project has reinvigorated walls and roller shutters in the business precinct, addressing graffiti while also adding visual attractions and character to the suburb.

The installation on the Vizzini Social Club, has created a highly recognisable 'gateway' to the precinct.

The association worked with Vizzini Social Club to explore elements of regional Italian and Coburg culture and see how they might combine to pay homage to each.

Painted by local artists, the mural incorporates the traditional Sicilian horse and cart, and diverse portraits and images that celebrate both areas.

Its unique and meaningful design has captured the eye and imagination of both locals and visitors afar, with the mural now featuring on local and international sites promoting Central Coburg as a street art city destination.

Delivered with funding support from the Central Coburg Business Association and Merri-bek City Council, this project highlights the way street art can be designed to reflect the history and culture of a precinct, build connections and attract more visitors.



Case Study

Chinese Golden Dragon Museum Precinct Bendigo

The Golden Dragon Museum is one of Bendigo's primary cultural and tourism institutions. Originally established by Bendigo's Chinese community, the museum hosts a collection that has world significance with a focus on Bendigo's regional Chinese heritage and offering exhibitions and other programs for all visitors to experience.

In recognition of the significance of the museum and its potential to contribute to social and economic outcomes, the Greater Bendigo City Council developed a staged redevelopment and activation plan for the precinct.

The first stage involved enhancing key front and back of house areas of the Golden Dragon Museum Restaurant, including retail spaces, entry foyer, commercial kitchen, restaurant seating, and creating a new outdoor dining experience to link the Golden Dragon Museum with the adjoining Chinese Gardens.

These upgrades have helped revive an underutilised area of the Bendigo CBD, while supporting the sustainability of the Golden Dragon Museum.

The project was supported by Victorian Government funding provided through Regional Development Victoria.



Source: Jess White Photography



Case Study

Melton town centre revitalisation Melton

Home to 200 businesses, the Melton town centre was faced with several challenges including increased vacancies and perceptions that the area wasn't safe.

In response, the Melton Suburban Revitalisation Board advocated for a number of short- and medium-term projects that have transformed the town centre into a 'place for the people' offering a range of experiences to live, invest, work, shop and eat.

Projects included shopfront improvement grants, incubators to attract entrepreneurs, town centre brand and marketing, outdoor dining furniture and lighting, as well as a buy local campaign.

The Melton Town Centre Trader Group, established to help communicate the shopfront activations, continues to support the precinct. 66% of businesses surveyed agreed the upgrade to their shop has resulted in more customers and that the upgrades have helped to increase foot traffic in the area.

This project was provided Victorian Government funding through the Suburban Revitalisation Program.



Case Study

Shopfront and business promotion Sunshine

The City of Brimbank works with local businesses and the Sunshine Business Association to help improve and promote businesses in this vibrant and diverse activity centre. Through the Shop Front Improvement initiative, the council's place manager worked with businesses, such as Nepalese restaurant Tinkune Momo and Sekuwa House, to develop more inviting shop exteriors and create a more unified look.

Working with a designer, window decals inspired by Nepalese wooden window carvings were created, adding warmth and character, while keeping the windows mostly transparent. The transformation helped distinguish the shopfront from previous offerings, while celebrating Nepalese culture. To enable continuous improvement, the council's *Keeping Sunshine safe, beautiful and vibrant* webpage has information on shopfront presentation and downloadable resources in English and Vietnamese to guide shopfront maintenance.

Added to this, the Sunshine Business Association actively promotes the precinct, such as through the successful *Love Sunshine Shop Local* campaign and Star Business Awards.

Receiving 11,630 votes for Sunshine businesses during an 8-week public voting period in 2024, the association continues to demonstrate its strong local community and business following, further driving the success of the precinct.



"Working with the Brimbank City Council allows our committee to achieve far more for our time and resources than we ever could on our own in the Sunshine CBD. Their support is invaluable to our success."

VU DU, PRESIDENT, SUNSHINE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

2. Promotional events & celebrating culture

Promotional events & celebrating culture

The Victorian Government supports a range of festivals and promotional events across Victoria. Many of these have now become major annual attractions on the event calendar, including Lunar New Year, Diwali, Eid al-Fitr, the Antipodes Festival and the Melbourne Italian Festa – just to name a few. Promotional events and cultural activities can celebrate the character of a business precinct and bring people together for memorable days of festivities, fun and community.

Examples of promotional events and activities include:

- Festivals, expos, fairs and exhibitions around key events and milestones, including those relating to multicultural businesses and communities
- street performances to create a vibrant atmosphere
- pop-ups
- temporary art installations
- walking tours, showcasing local features, history or businesses
- night-time and other trading activations
- incentives, such as discount vouchers or free parking to attract people
- competitions or activities, such as asking visitors to 'nominate your favourite local business'.

Considerations when planning these activities include available resources and timing to maximise success.



Source: Perm Temp

The St Albans Lunar New Year Festival is now in its 27th year. Delivered by the St Albans Business Group Association Inc and stakeholders it attracts more than 50,000 visitors.

The most recent festival received funding support from local traders, the City of Brimbank and the Victorian Government through Small Business Victoria.

Promotional events & celebrating culture



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- What are the unique cultural characteristics of your precinct and businesses? How could you celebrate these to increase visitation?
- What are the key events and milestones that are important to your local multicultural communities? Are these already celebrated by the local community? Is there an opportunity for the business precinct to host complementary promotional activities?
- What have you seen other precincts do that you could adapt, and learn from?
- What resources and skills do you have available?
- Who could you partner with to help deliver and fund events and activities? Can you obtain any sponsorships or apply for grants?
- How are you going to monitor and report on your achievements from the activity?



How can local government help?

- Host events and support business associations through the event approval processes, such as helping to lodge forms or obtain permits.
- Promote planned events through council's communication channels, such as newsletters and digital.
- Waive fees, provide grant funding and in-kind support.
- Support business associations to connect with relevant state agencies and other bodies, for example Yarra Trams when there is a road closure.
- Facilitate connections and partnerships with relevant cultural organisations.
- Provide input into business associations strategic planning process to help identify opportunities.

Sign-up to and apply the **Victorian Small Business Commission's Small Business Friendly Charter**:
vsbc.vic.gov.au/small-business-friendly-councils

Case Study

Festive art on windows, Sydney Road Brunswick

Organised by the Sydney Road Brunswick Association, artists have been transforming shopfront windows along Sydney Road into a colourful interpretation of the festive season.

Each year the windows are promoted by the association through a downloadable map, encouraging people to visit and walk through the streets, enjoy the art creations and discover the breadth of offerings in the precinct.

People are also encouraged to see the artists in action on the two painting days when the art is applied onto the windows.

Sydney Road is a diverse multicultural business precinct. This seasonal activity provides an opportunity for the business association to connect with traders, the broader local community and a wider audience.

It demonstrates how these activities can have a positive impact on awareness of the precinct, visitation, customer traffic and spending.



Source: Sydney Road Business Association

“Sydney Road’s evolution from its 19th-century beginnings mirrors Melbourne’s own transformation into a multicultural metropolis. It stands as a testament to successive waves of migration that have shaped Melbourne’s cultural and business landscape. Our initiatives help us celebrate the precinct’s rich diversity and assist in driving visitation and communicating our unique destination.”

TROY STUCHBREE, ASSOCIATION MANAGER, SYDNEY ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



Case Study

Victoria Street Lunar Festival Richmond

The eastern stretch of Victoria Street is known colloquially as 'Little Saigon' or 'Little Vietnam' and has become famous as an Asian grocery and restaurant precinct with Japanese, Korean and Thai options, alongside longer-standing Vietnamese establishments.

In 2025, the Victoria Street Business Association celebrated 50 years of Vietnamese settlement, 10 years of the Victoria Street Gateway and 25 years of the association – all as part of the Victoria Street Lunar Festival.

The festival continues to be delivered with support from the City of Yarra and significant volunteer effort from local business owners and the Vietnamese and broader community.

Council's in-kind support includes promoting the festival, traffic management and organising road closures with key stakeholders such as the state road authority and tram operator.

Showcasing local food and dining offerings, the festival provides a way for visitors to engage with the precinct, amplified by cultural performances and entertainment.

This project received Victorian Government funding provided through the Multicultural Affairs Festivals Program.



Source: Victoria Street Business Association Inc

Case Study

Night trading pilot Springvale

Springvale Asian Business Association saw an opportunity to increase visitation and trade through a precinct wide night trading activation.

To test the concept and help traders build confidence and explore the benefits, night trading was initially run as a pilot.

Family friendly activities, live entertainment and performances were offered across the precinct to encourage people to visit after sunset.

Before starting, the association held a forum with traders to share information and provide an opportunity for traders to ask questions and provide suggestions. Information was translated into Vietnamese and Chinese.

The association was supported by the City of Greater Dandenong, who assisted with organising events and issuing permits. A stakeholder event was also held to further promote the initiative.

The association and council will work together to evaluate the outcomes of the pilot to help inform decisions on future activations.

The pilot was supported by Victorian Government funding provided through Small Business Victoria.



3. Marketing & branding

Marketing & branding

Marketing and branding can help promote business precincts and the activities and events happening within them, including:

- buy local campaigns, discount vouchers or 'vote for your favourite business' polling and awards to attract visitors
- social media promotions around an event, activity or groups of businesses



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- Do we have the marketing and promotional skills we need, and if not, can we build this capability through free training or resources, or by hiring someone?
- What's special about our precinct, our businesses and our events and how do we tell the story?
- How can social media and other marketing channels be used to reach new audiences and showcase the unique offerings of the precinct?
- What's the best way to engage businesses in marketing and promotion activities? Is it via online activities or physical outputs such as posters?
- Who else can you partner with to promote local businesses and the precinct as a whole?



How can local government help?

- Provide skills development workshops and connect business associations to training opportunities.
- Fund a part-time marketing position.
- Provide grant or other funding and in-kind support, such as printing promotional material or online support.
- Collaborate to connect precincts with international partnership schemes to increase visibility and trade, such as the Association of Town & City Management's 'Purple Flag' international accreditation programme for excellence in managing the night-time economy.

Business Victoria has **marketing tools and templates** to help you develop your plan:

business.vic.gov.au/tools-and-templates

The **Digital Jobs program** connects business to digitally savvy workers and other digital resources:

djsir.vic.gov.au/digital-jobs



Case Study

#lovefootscray campaign Footscray

The #lovefootscray campaign delivered by the Footscray Traders Association, with support from the Maribyrnong City Council and Victorian Government, encouraged people to support local businesses, share their positive experiences and “show the world just how much there is to love about Footscray”.

Using a hashtag for visitors to tag photos, the campaign promoted traders, while introducing the precinct to a new audience.

Footscray is a culturally diverse activity centre, featuring traders from many different countries. This initiative has gained its own momentum, with #lovefootscray still being used by traders and visitors alike to celebrate the diverse offerings in Footscray.

This case study highlights how social media can be used to reach a broader audience and create an enduring connection to a precinct through the celebration of experiences.

The campaign was initiated with support of Victorian Government funding provided through Small Business Victoria.



 Case Study

Northcote Rise promotions Northcote

“Northcote Rise” branding and promotions, created by the Northcote Business Association, is attracting people from far and wide to spend a day and explore High Street, Northcote.

The Rise celebrates Northcote’s diversity through its people and trade.

Using digital channels, the association promotes experiences and businesses through storytelling, campaigns and incentives, such as gift cards and family friendly festivals.

Trader spotlights showcase local business owners, their products and services, and helps traders market their business through a digital platform. The spotlights are engaging, warm and personable, reinforcing the association’s ambition to create positive and memorable connections for both virtual and in-person visitors.

The Northcote Rise festival held in 2024 to help promote the precinct was supported by Victorian Government funding provided through Small Business Victoria.



4. Managing disruptions

Managing disruptions

Most business precincts will at some stage need to manage disruptions from private and public construction works and infrastructure upgrades aimed at improving the precinct and offerings. When these works continue for an extended period, there may be ways to collaborate to reduce impacts and continue to attract visitors.



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- Who is the key contact managing the project? Develop a strong working relationship.
- How will a construction project impact the precinct – scope, timing, building access, transport, parking, disruptive elements such as noise or dust, and visual appeal of the works?
- Could we add additional signage and wayfinding to help customers access businesses?
- What activities or events could be run to support businesses?
- How can marketing channels be used to let customers know about changed conditions and that businesses are still open?
- Could businesses in the precinct provide goods or services to the project's workforce?
- Are there innovative ways to trial short-term initiatives, for example, through pilots or the creation of new temporary spaces for visitors or traders to use?

Some precincts may also be impacted by natural disasters, such as floods and bushfires. Resources can help businesses prepare for, build resilience and recover from these types of emergencies.



How can local government help?

- Reach out to traders and the business association early and often – the earlier you can advise them of the works or activities, and the more information you can provide around how they will be affected and timing, the better.
- Provide support to develop signage, wayfinding or marketing efforts to help visitors connect with businesses.
- If it is a state government project or response, support businesses to connect with the right agency and potential resources that may be available.

Victorian Small Business Commission's tips to **staying on track during disruptive infrastructure projects** is a helpful resource:

vsbc.vic.gov.au/business-disruption

A range of resources have been developed to help businesses and councils **manage possible impacts from larger construction projects**:
bigbuild.vic.gov.au/community/for-local-traders

Small Business Victoria provides information for businesses to **prepare and respond if a disaster occurs**:
business.vic.gov.au/disaster-resilience



Case Study

Tramoo Street shopping precinct upgrade Lalor

Engaging early, listening to feedback, adapting plans and putting in steps to minimise disruption were all important to the successful delivery of the Tramoo Street shopping precinct project.

Delivered by the City of Whittlesea, the upgrade of Tramoo Street was incorporated into the Lalor Master Plan following community consultation. Feedback was then sought in writing, online and face-to-face on the proposed upgrades before works commenced.

Encouraged by the positive response, the council progressed the project, incorporating suggestions to improve parking, safety and streetscape amenity into the final plan. Contractors were also required to work with shop owners to minimise disruption to businesses.

The council was upfront about changes to pedestrian access, road conditions and timing of works, with a commitment to minimise disruption. Engagement was designed to give a voice to local users, gain insights into challenges and opportunities and understand their fears and expectations. Data captured had demographic questions to enable deeper understanding of user needs and insights. Responses helped inform the project's design and ultimate delivery.

The project has created a safer and more attractive shopping destination, encouraging more people to visit for their shopping, business and personal needs.

The project was supported by Victorian Government funding provided through the Living Local Suburban Grants program.



Working together



Source: Constantly Flashing Photography

Working together

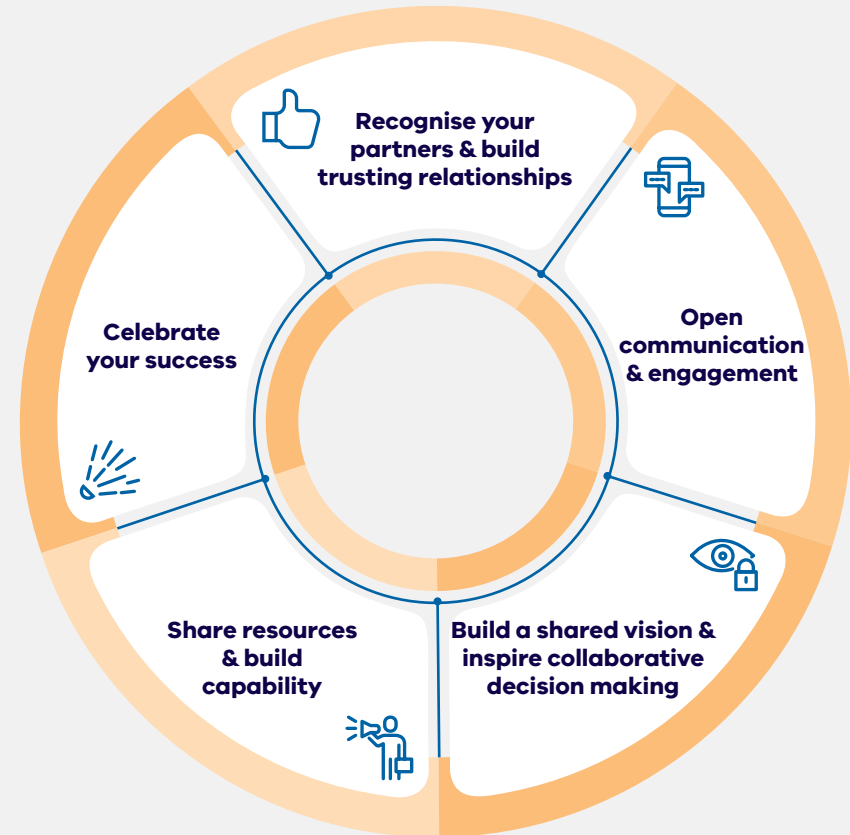
Everyone has a role to play in building strong multicultural business precincts and everyone benefits when this is done well.

Business associations, local and state government can support collaboration by:

- building a trusting, positive working relationship among partners through **open communication and engagement**
- encouraging **collaborative decision making** in setting a vision for the precinct, aligning action plans and longer-term strategic goals
- **developing the capability** of businesses and associations to plan for improvements and activate their precincts
- supporting and enabling business associations to **measure and celebrate success**.

This section of the Guide explores ways business associations, councils and other partners can work together on shared priorities.

Effective Collaboration



1. Engaging businesses

Engaging businesses

With more than 718,000 small businesses and 56.3% of business owners with one or more parent born overseas, it is important to ensure engagement is inclusive of small businesses and embraces cultural diversity.

Considerations for local government and other stakeholders looking to engage with businesses and associations include:

- **Ask** how they would like to engage e.g. email, phone, face-to-face, before or after hours, with someone who has relevant language capability.
- **Spend time** in the precinct and build trust – this takes openness and effort.
- **Identify a local champion** who can help you engage with traders – this could be the business association.
- **Be clear** in your engagement – What do you want to know? Why? Where can businesses have meaningful impact?
- **Engage early and often** to continue to build trust and relationships.
- **Understand the demands** of running a small business and the timing of key cultural or religious events when choosing when and how to engage – avoid busy periods and be respectful of people's time.
- Consider your **communication tools** – make guidance and resources available in relevant language(s) and use pictures and plans to show what you are trying to achieve.
- Use pilots and **start small** to showcase what you are trying to achieve.



Source: Sanya Captures

Learning about businesses from data

There are a number of key datasets that can help build an understanding of the profile of businesses and how the precinct is functioning. Some of these are collected by councils, while others may be collected by business associations, such as counts of visitors to precinct events.

Key datasets:



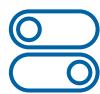
Annual vacancy survey to track changes in occupancy rates and help identify trends on the types and location of businesses that have high turnover. This information can help identify potential new tenants and innovative ways to fill vacancies.



Annual business survey of local businesses at a point in time. This information can be used to build an understanding of the business mix in a precinct, identify opportunities for partnerships and any gaps in the business mix to inform the types of new business to attract into the precinct.



Surveying visitors during key events and activities to understand what they value and whether the intended promotional outcomes have been achieved. These surveys can help decision-making about future events, so as to better meet the needs of visitors and businesses. If a partner provided funding to deliver the event or activity, this data can also be useful for outcome reporting and evaluation.



Survey traders after key events and activities to understand their views on what does and doesn't work. If formal surveys have a low response rate, you may need to go out and meet with traders to gain an appreciation of their views. Having cultural understanding and diverse language capabilities can help with engagement and longer-term relationships.



Current rents to monitor changes over time and the potential impacts on business tenants and occupancy of commercial premises.

Know your businesses



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- What data does council already collect about your precinct?
- Could your council help you collect the data you need (survey tools and processes, in-kind support)?
- Can local real estate agents help you better understand the local market and new tenant opportunities?
- What's the history of your precinct? Chat with long-established businesses, residents and local government to understand this from a range of perspectives.
- Are businesses aware of the business association? Are they encouraged to participate? Do they feel welcome and included? How can you grow participation with the association?
- How well represented is the membership of the business association? Does it reflect the cultural and industry diversity of businesses in the precinct?
- Are there local community organisations that you can partner with to help you to better connect with culturally diverse businesses?

Maintain a library of fact sheets, reports, data, reviews and plans for the precinct, make this available to your members and refer to it when developing your plans.



How can local government help?

- Provide guidance on best practice planning, reporting and evaluation – what data could business associations collect from the activities they are delivering and with the resources they have available?
- Assist with data collection and analysis, for example providing tools to count attendees at public events held in the precinct or providing guidance on setting up surveys.
- Proactively share information, resources and tools to support data collection and analysis.
- Connect business associations with local businesses via existing local government communication channels.
- Provide business associations with relevant data and historical knowledge of the precinct.
- Work with business associations to help ensure their membership is inclusive and representative of the diversity of traders in the precinct.
- Spend time in the precinct, engage in person with business association representatives and businesses to develop open and trusting relationships
- Make data accessible via your website and consider adding it to platforms like Digital Twin Victoria.

The Department of Families, Fairness & Housing's **mapping languages spoken in Victoria** can help identify the cultural groups within your local government area: dffh.vic.gov.au/mapping-languages-spoken-victoria

Case Study

Business surveys Glen Eira

With a commitment to business engagement and continuous improvement, the Glen Eira City Council conducts business surveys to better understand and meet the needs of local business owners.

Conducted annually, Glen Eira's survey asks businesses about their challenges and opportunities, to help inform whether council's business support programs and services are suitable. The survey gives a voice to businesses, lets council know if it's on track and identify areas for improvement.

With a commitment to transparency and collaboration, the council analyses and publishes findings on its website. For example, recent responses prioritise the following for further council effort:

- providing networking resources, events and mentoring
- delivering events and other activities that increase exposure and drive traffic to streets/centres
- providing more financial support and grant opportunities
- providing support with marketing and advertising
- increasing parking and waste collection
- improving town planning and building services.

Over time, trends can be measured, providing further insights into local businesses and helping shape future programs.



Case Study

Measuring visitation Noble Park

With a network of established and emerging family businesses, the Noble Park Business Precinct comprises more than 160 retail businesses, including traditional food specialist stores catering for a range of cultural groups including Indian, Asian, Eastern European, Persian, Italian, Sri Lankan, Thai, African and Mauritian.

To better measure the impact of improvements and activities offered in the Noble Park activity centre, five pedestrian counting devices were installed by the City of Greater Dandenong in key locations.

The data collected provides insights on footfall and pedestrian activity, including real time statistics on when the centre becomes busy, the gender distribution of visitors and the number of children walking through the area.

Each month the council publishes People Counter Reports on its website with data from each location in the activity centre, along with data for the Springvale and Dandenong business precincts.

The Noble Park project received Victorian Government funding provided through the Suburban Revitalisation program.



2. Good governance

Good governance

Good governance helps a business association to run smoothly and meet compliance and reporting requirements.

In Victoria, many business associations are established as an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (Vic).

It is important that associations:

- Are familiar with legislative requirements and ensure they have the skills and structures in place to meet these.
- Comply with required operating rules, adhere to the rights and responsibilities of members and office holders, and meet financial and other requirements.
- Provide all committee members with training and supporting information to help them understand their obligations and commit to working together to meet these.

Local councils can provide supporting information and advice to help associations with their governance.

Forming a business association

First you need to identify the group's purpose, members you are aiming to attract and who can support the management and governance of the group.

Ideally committee members will be representative of the target business community in culture, gender, age and business types. This will help the association understand and represent the needs of businesses.

Choosing the association's name

An association's name will influence people's perceptions of the organisation, who it represents and what it does.

Including the word "business" or "traders" in the association's name can make it easier for stakeholders and potential members to search and find the organisation. It also helps reinforce to businesses that the association is for them. This can also help avoid confusion with local community organisations also operating in the precinct.

Becoming incorporated

Once established, a group may want to consider whether or not to become incorporated.

An association doesn't have to be incorporated. Becoming incorporated can have benefits, such as an ability to apply for grants and funding. At the same time, being incorporated involves additional responsibilities such as ongoing reporting and disclosure obligations under law.

Good governance



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- Have all committee members undertaken governance and compliance training? If not, can your council or state government help you access governance training?
- Are committee members clear on the compliance, financial and reporting requirements associated with operating as a business association?
- Are committee members representative of the business community including the cultural diversity of businesses in the precinct? If not, how can you start to build relationships and encourage participation?



How can local government help?

- Build the capability of key committee members and office holders to ensure good governance via access to training and guidance support, including in-language.
- Create connections between business associations in the local government area and facilitate ways for them to share learnings with each other.
- Share governance and financial tools and templates with business associations.
- Promote good practice through networking events and communication activities.

Business Victoria has information about **things to know before registering** as an incorporated association:

business.vic.gov.au/incorporated-association

Consumer Affairs Victoria provides the **resources for organisations to become incorporated** in Victoria, including governance, and obligations:

consumer.vic.gov.au/associations



Case Study

Mildura City Heart governance Mildura

Representing 300 businesses in the business district, the Mildura City Heart Traders Association understands the importance of appointing the right people to their board to organise, advocate and enhance the business district and local trader and visitor experiences.

To assist with this, the association produced a guide outlining the purpose, function, priorities, geographic area covered, and listing the responsibilities and skills required of directors.

The trader group is an incorporated association with an elected board of management made up of volunteers. It receives funding through a special rate charge collected by the Mildura Rural City Council.

The association has a five-year Strategic and Business Plan to guide its activities.

By being clear about the expectations of its board members, the association is positioning itself for strong governance and advocacy to realise its vision and to continue to improve Mildura's central business precinct.



"With the support and backing of a dedicated, progressive and proactive board – and traders who share a vision for what our town can be – it's been a joy to witness the transformation of our CBD across these seven years."

DANIELLE HOBBS, MANAGING DIRECTOR, MILDURA CITY HEART TRADERS ASSOCIATION

3.

Clear strategic vision & plan

Clear strategic vision & plan

A strategic plan is an important statement of a business association's vision and goals for their precinct and proposed actions to achieve these.

There are many examples of business associations across Victoria that have established a vision and strategic plan, such as Melbourne's Yarra River Business Association, Frankston Business Collective, Swan Hill Incorporated and Commerce Ballarat.

When a business association has a clear plan, it can help:

- show stakeholders your vision for the precinct, what you want to do, and the partners you will work with
- make sure funding and resources go to the actions and events that align with your goals for businesses and the precinct
- ensure volunteer time is well spent
- support grant and funding applications, showing how a proposed activity fits with your vision and goals.

It is important that business associations take the lead in developing their plan and try to do this in collaboration with all key stakeholders. This will help ensure the plan is well-informed, has broad support and a greater chance of actions being achieved.

What to include in a Strategic Plan

A strategic plan does not need to be long – it just needs to set out what the association is hoping to achieve for the business precinct and how it plans to get there.

It should include:

- the **vision** for the precinct
- your association's **purpose**
- a brief description of the key **features that define the precinct**, along with its **strengths, challenges and opportunities**
- the **long-term goals** and focus areas to help achieve the vision
- **key partners**, their role and how you will work with them
- **actions and initiatives**, what you will do, who will do it, when, and what resources are required. Ideally, this is supported by an annual action plan
- the data and indicators you will use to **track progress** and outcomes
- how you will share and promote your **achievements**.

Current and future funding partners may ask for evidence of outcomes – so keep good records of progress against actions. This might include photos, survey findings, visitation numbers, feedback and membership. More on this is provided under the monitoring and promoting achievements section of this Guide.

Clear strategic vision & plan

Developing a strategic vision and plan is an opportunity to explore the strengths of a precinct and build on these, based on a shared understanding of business priorities, the important qualities of an area and available resources to deliver improvements. The process creates an opportunity to connect businesses, trader groups and the local council and align their efforts to achieve positive change.



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- Does your business association have a clear vision and strategic plan to guide the work of the association?

If not, consider:

- Can your local council help you to develop a strategy?
- What are the strengths, challenges and opportunities facing your precinct?
- What are the key features of your precinct – multicultural heritage, the current mix of businesses, major tenants or other key features?
- Is there an existing activity centre plan under the Victorian Planning framework for the precinct?
- Who are your potential partners?
- What resources can you access, such as people, skills and funding?
- What can you realistically aim to do with the people and funding you can access?
- How will you measure success?

Use these findings to create your vision and plan. Publish and share this with businesses, local council and other partners and work together to achieve your common goals.



How can local government help?

- Encourage business associations to develop strategic plans.
- Provide guidance on how to develop a strategic plan, such as providing a framework or templates for business associations to use.
- Provide useful references about plans for the precinct, such as an existing activity centre plan.
- Facilitate strategy development – this may include providing funding for an expert to help develop the plan in collaboration with the business association.
- Look for opportunities to help business associations achieve plans for the precinct.

Institute of Company Directors Australia has tools and resources that help **navigate the strategic planning process**:

communitydirectors.com.au/tools-resources/strategic-planning

Mainstreet Australia's **resource library** offers relevant case studies and learnings from street trader groups:

mainstreetaustralia.org.au/mainstreet-resources



Case Study

Jackson Court vision & plan Doncaster East

Jackson Court Traders Association's strategic planning journey demonstrates the value of creating a vision and Strategic Plan.

Prepared with support from Manningham City Council, the plan was developed over four months. The plan sets out the association's purpose, commitments, partnerships, and the strengths, challenges and opportunities facing the precinct.

Council arranged for the Plan to be printed in English, Mandarin and Persian, further helping engagement with the many diverse businesses in the precinct.

An early win for the association was the development of a parklet in Jackson Court, with funding from council and the Victorian Government's Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund.

In addition, council has helped the association build an ongoing funding stream.

With the support of local businesses, council installed signage at the gateway to Jackson Court on Doncaster Road. This has helped signpost the precinct, while providing space for advertising that local businesses pay the association to access.

All advertising revenue goes to the association to support the delivery of actions aligned with its strategic plan.



"As a group, we have so many ideas on ways to continue improving this important shopping district. This new signage is a big step towards us achieving these goals."

CON VALSAMIS, PRESIDENT, JACKSON COURT TRADERS ASSOCIATION

4. Securing funding

Types of funding

There are several ways business associations can generate funds to support their work, as outlined here:

Membership fees

Many business associations charge an annual membership fee, with the fees determined by the association. This enables the association to meet basic operating costs, such as insurance and reporting obligations, and to potentially deliver priority activities. Considerations:

- Local businesses need to see the value in joining the association and renewing their membership.
- Income may change annually as membership numbers change and may make planning for activities challenging.
- Administrative burden of collecting funds.

Grant funding

State and local governments may offer grants that business associations may be eligible for to help deliver programs, events or urban realm improvements. Considerations:

- Grant applications can be resource intensive to prepare and once received, grants will have reporting and other obligations, which may present challenges, particularly for volunteer run organisations, therefore make sure you have the skills and resources available.
- Grant programs may not always align with the business association's priorities.
- No guarantee of recurring funding.

Alternative funding structures

Some business associations have established alternative ways to fund their activities with the support of sponsors, local councils and other partners. Considerations:

- Provides a stability of income for associations to progress their planned activities.
- Potential to secure funding from sources other than state and local governments.
- May require support from the local government to establish the funding mechanism.

Special rate charge

A charge applied to rateable commercial properties within an agreed precinct to fund the activities of a business association. Council collects, administers and allocates funds to the business association. Considerations:

- Establishing and renewing the charge can take time and requires support from property owners, tenants and councillors.
- Provides a guaranteed income for the association to progress their planned activities.
- Reporting requirements and meeting these.

Securing funding



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- Do we have the resources available to collect and manage funds? If not, how could we improve our capability and skills?
- What grants and funding opportunities could we apply for? How do available grants align with the actions in our strategic plan? Where are we most likely to be successful?
- Are there other ways we could raise revenue or attract sponsorship funding for our activities?
- Who could we partner with to pool funding and resources for shared outcomes? Are there multicultural and other local community groups that we could partner with?
- Is a special rate charge appropriate for my precinct? How do business owners feel about this? What is council's view? Is an application to implement a special rate charge likely to be successful?



How can local government help?

- Provide support in building grant writing and reporting skills.
- Provide grant funding.
- Waive fees and charges for trader groups, such as for the use of public buildings or outdoor spaces to host promotional events, or event permit fees.
- Enact and administer a special rates charge, working with business associations to help build an understanding of what is required and decide whether this is a good fit for them.
- Work with business associations to explore innovative and sustainable sources of funding, and opportunities to pool activities across groups in a precinct to save costs.
- Apply for relevant state government grants aimed at precinct revitalisation in consultation with the local business associations.
- Connect business associations with relevant multicultural community organisations and encourage them to consider whether they could apply in partnership for available grants.

Subscribe to **Business Victoria's update newsletter** for the latest news about Victorian Government business services, grants and other supports:

business.vic.gov.au/about-us/subscribe



Case Study

Precinct business association funding City of Melbourne

Melbourne is renowned for being a vibrant multicultural city, with precincts like Chinatown, the Lonsdale Street Greek Quarter and the Lygon Street Precinct attracting tourists from around the world.

To help boost the city's economic activity, precinct attractions, innovation and community connections, the City of Melbourne provides support and annual funding to incorporated associations that represent businesses operating in these precincts.

Funded business associations must have a vision and 5-year strategic plan for the precinct, along with an annual business activity plan. Encouraged activities include networking and business seminars, precinct marketing, and localised events that promote the area and its traders.

Associations can also employ a part time executive officer or co-ordinator to support delivery.

The council also organises training for executive officers and committee members on the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* helping these organisations to operate successfully.



Case Study

Precinct development grants Maribyrnong, Cardinia & Bass Coast

Empowering business groups to deliver projects to strengthen precincts and boost local economic outcomes is a priority for many councils across Victoria. Here is a snapshot of some of these.

In **Maribyrnong**, registered business associations have been able to apply to their local council for Trader Association Business Improvement District Grants. Up to \$100,000 is provided to deliver projects, programs, events and initiatives consistent with their action plans.

In **Cardinia**, incorporated business and trader organisations operating in the shire could apply for up to \$10,000 under the Business Group Support Grant program. Projects focus on supporting the business community, stimulating growth and fostering economic prosperity.

In **Bass Coast**, the Economic Development Activation Grant Program provides up to \$5,000 in funding to trader groups to deliver projects with strong business and economic outcomes. This includes activities that foster collaboration, engage local businesses and increase visitation and spending.

These types of programs help to drive participation amongst business associations, encouraging collaboration and a strategic approach to the promotion of local businesses and precinct revitalisation.



5. Monitoring & promoting achievements

Monitoring & promoting achievements

Monitoring and evaluation provide important evidence that can help business associations and councils to assess progress, learn about what has been achieved, and make decisions about ways to support improvements to a business precinct.

Collecting evidence of delivery can also help build confidence in the business association's capability, its reach and impact, which in turn can help attract more members, resources, funding and other support. Current and future funding partners may also ask for evidence of outcomes

– so keep good records of progress against your agreed actions.

What should you consider?

It is important to plan early, so that opportunities to gather evidence are not missed. This could be at the time you are developing your Strategic Plan or when starting on the delivery of a new project or activity.

Things to consider when measuring your success include:

- What **data and other** evidence would help you understand what you are achieving and how well you are meeting your priorities?
- How can the information be **collected**, how often and who is responsible?
- Do you have **reporting obligations** to funding organisations or your members, and if so, what are these and when are these due?
- How will you **tell others** about your success and promote your achievements?

Demonstrating achievements

Evidence gathered can be used in your promotional activities, or to create case studies and reports showcasing achievements to your partners and members, and in submissions seeking funding and other support.

Remember to ask for consent if you intend to share information that identifies a person or business, such as a photo, video, or testimonial.

Gathering evidence

All activities intend to create change, and one way to demonstrate this is by comparing information before and after delivery. There are many types of evidence and data you can gather about activities, such as:

- photos and videos
- event registration or participant counts
- feedback and testimonials or quotes
- surveys, including digital and face-to-face with traders
- social media posts and user engagement.

Annual reporting

Annual reports are an excellent way of building trust and promoting your organisation, especially when produced at the same time each year and when made publicly available. Types of information these can include:

- purpose, vision, history and structure of the organisation
- key highlights, progress, challenges, outlook, teamwork, activities delivered and acknowledgements
- statements from the leadership team
- finances and other statutory compliance requirements.

Monitoring & promoting achievements



What can business associations do?

Start by asking:

- What type of information and evidence can your business association collect to demonstrate its value and promote its achievements?
- Do your partners have data requirements that you need to meet? What are they and when is the data needed?
- Are there ways you can recognise your partners as you deliver activities, such as #hashtags and logos you could add to your projects or joint media releases?
- How will you measure and promote your achievements and what types of skills do you need to do this?

After that:

- Put in place processes and check in regularly that these are being delivered, so that you have the information you need, when you need it.
- Develop an Evaluation Plan to add structure to your approach.
- Consider releasing regular bulletins or newsletters to stay in touch with members and other partners and provide a snapshot of recent achievements and upcoming activities.
- Release an annual report at the same time each year, highlighting your purpose, achievements, and your team and partners that contribute to these.



How can local government help?

- Support efforts on data collection as part of the Strategic Plan development process outlined in this Guide and to develop an evaluation plan.
- Provide guidance about ways to capture data and share resources to do this where possible, for example, collecting attendance data at events held in multicultural business precincts.

Australian Institute of Family Studies has a **practical guide on the steps to follow to develop an evaluation plan**:
aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides/planning-evaluation

CPA Australia provides **resources to assist not-for-profit organisation reporting**, including downloadable guides:
cpaaustralia.com.au/tools-and-resources/not-for-profit-and-public-sector/not-for-profits

Case Study

Reporting achievements Bendigo

With 13 annual reports published on its website, the Bendigo Business Council, trading as Be.Bendigo, has much to be celebrate.

Be.Bendigo has a focus on driving connections, providing information, services and advocacy to enable local businesses to grow.

Though its annual reports, the association reminds stakeholders its vision, purpose and values, showcases its achievements and recognises its team and partners that helped deliver these.

These reports demonstrate the effort that goes into a business association. They provide a record of what has been achieved in a way that is accessible to current and future readers, members, supporters and partners.

The annual reports also provide an opportunity for the leadership team to outline challenges facing the organisation and their members at a point in time, helping to create a shared understanding and opening opportunities for further dialogue.

This approach is a positive way for the association to build trust and confidence and enable collaboration.



Glossary of key terms

- **Multicultural business:** Multicultural business refers to businesses that identify as being of a specific ethnic, language or cultural community that has common needs, customs and traditions.
- **Business precincts:** These are centres of economic activity, located across Victoria. They typically include a variety of businesses – from retail and hospitality through to a range of professional service offerings. They may also be referred to as activity centres or business districts.
- **Multicultural business precincts:** For the purposes of this Guide, multicultural business precincts are centres of economic activity where a substantial proportion of the business owners and operators are either from a specific culture or a diverse range of cultures or countries of origin. These include precincts that have a history of cultural diversity and continuing connections to diverse communities.

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