

INCLUSIVE CLUBS PROGRAM

The Victorian Fisheries Authority is committed to supporting strong and healthy fishing and boating clubs across Victoria. We want to support thriving clubs into the future that are welcoming to all and are at the heart of local communities.

In 2027, we're excited to deliver the Inclusive Clubs Program to support clubs looking for new ways to attract new members and foster an inclusive culture.

This program will be designed to help fishing and boating clubs grow and diversify their membership through participation in a series of inclusive club development workshops led by an experienced facilitator. Diversity may include attracting more women or young people, or a greater variety of people more generally across age, gender, cultural background, sexuality and ability.

Participating clubs will gain practical ideas, tools and strategies to create a more inclusive environment, attract new members and strengthen club participation. Ongoing support will also be available to help clubs implement what they have learnt.

Who can participate?

- Any fishing or boating club in Victoria can participate and choose to opt into the program. Participation will be limited to a maximum of 30 clubs.
- Each club may nominate up to 2-3 representatives to attend.
- Representatives may include committee members, emerging leaders, respected club members and women within the club.

Program format and content

- Five interactive sessions delivered between February and June 2027.
- Sessions will be a mixture of online and in-person, however this may be negotiable especially for rural or remote clubs.
- Each session will include practical learning opportunities, facilitated discussions and collaborative workshop activities. Each session will involve multiple clubs, enabling clubs to share and brainstorm ideas with each other.
- Selected sessions will feature guest speakers and panellists who will share their experiences and insights on building inclusive sporting and recreation clubs.
- The content of the program will build on a similar initiative run by the VFA in 2020. This round of the program will incorporate the latest feedback on the challenges that fishing and boating clubs are facing in attracting and retaining diverse members and recent learnings on what is working best.

Outcomes for clubs

Throughout the program, each club will be supported to develop a tailored one-page action plan that includes practical steps to increase diversity and inclusion within their membership and club activities. Clubs will also be supported to develop a club charter to help promote the club's mission and values, to further attract and retain members and will be encouraged to display their club charter around the club.

Following the program, clubs will have the opportunity to reconnect with the program facilitators to review progress, discuss challenges and identify solutions to support ongoing implementation.

Every club that completes the program will receive a certificate, digital badge and social media tile to promote their club's completion of the training, amongst their local communities and to prospective members. The VFA will also help promote the clubs' participation and achievements through our social media and website.

How can I sign up

An expression of interest will open in late October 2026 for clubs to apply to be part of the program. Any club can nominate, regardless of whether they filled out the program design survey.

The expression of interest will be promoted on the VFA, Better Boating Victoria and WIRFAB website and socials. Clubs who participated in the program design survey will also be contacted directly to advise that applications are open.

Clubs will be selected on the principle of 'first-in best-dressed', don't hesitate to apply if you are interested!

We want your input into program design!

Below is a survey providing you with the opportunity to influence the design and content of our inclusive clubs program. We are seeking your feedback to better understand the challenges that fishing and boating clubs face with attracting and retaining diverse members, such as women or young people.

The short survey is open to anyone, whether you are a current, former or prospective member of a fishing/boating club. Your responses will directly inform the finalisation of our program, helping us to tailor it to the current needs of boaters and fishers around Victoria.

The survey will be open until midnight Friday 30 September 2026.

Fill out the form [here](#)

Further Information

Any questions about the program can be directed to Belinda Yim, Manager Events and Education in the VFA by email: belinda.yim@vfa.vic.gov.au or phone: 0459 887 675.