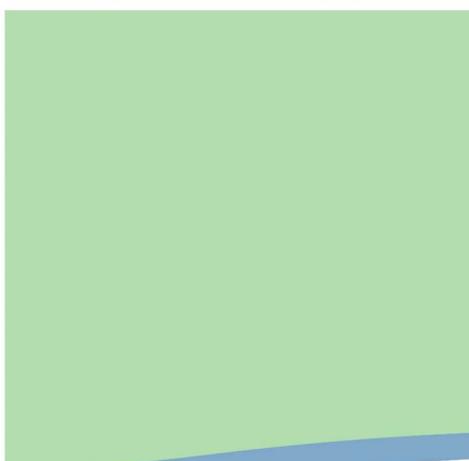
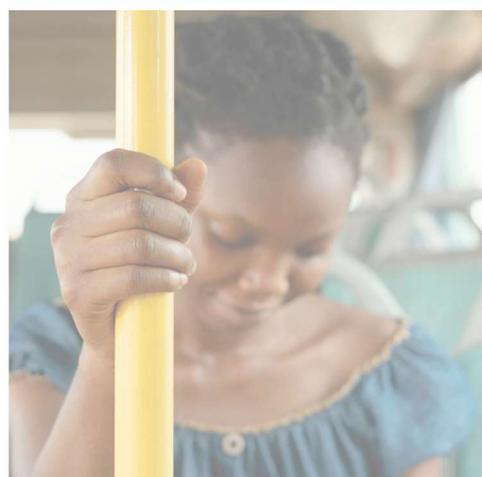


Grant Program Guidelines



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All Access All Weather Bus Stop Upgrade Program

1. Aim

The All Access All Weather Bus Stop Upgrade Program has the following aims.

1. To provide an opportunity for Tasmanian local governments to upgrade bus stops at priority locations to comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), including the provision of new and upgraded bus shelters.
2. To increase bus stop accessibility to improve passenger amenity and enhance the journey experience, leading to greater public transport patronage and reduced traffic congestion.
3. To increase local government capacity to upgrade bus stops on their roads across the network.
4. To improve recognition and understanding of DDA compliance issues across all Tasmanian local governments and communities.

Background

In recognition of the importance of bus stop upgrades and compliance with the DDA, the Tasmanian Government has made a commitment of up to \$10 million over the next four years to provide all access all weather bus stops at priority locations.

While the program will primarily focus on resolving accessibility issues, providing and upgrading bus stop shelters is an important consideration that will deliver improved passenger amenity.

It is a requirement that all general access bus stops need to be DDA compliant by the end of 2022.

State Growth has identified a total of 3,483 general access bus stops in Tasmania. At this stage, State Growth is unable to quantify how many general access bus stops are currently DDA compliant. Local governments have a critical role to play in working with State Growth to undertake an audit of high priority bus stop infrastructure in their Local Government Area (LGA) to feed into the bus stop prioritisation process.

2. Which projects will be funded?

It is proposed that Tasmanian local governments apply for the bus stop upgrade grants to assist with

upgrading existing bus stop infrastructure to meet DDA compliance standards. This does not include:

- the construction of new bus stops (unless it is agreed to relocate an existing bus stop to a more suitable location)
- upgrades outside the scope of minimum DDA compliance (such as smart bus stops and bespoke shelters)
- major bus interchange upgrades (funded through separate schemes), or
- bus stops located on State Government owned roads (including State Government owned roads where the footpath is under local government jurisdiction).

Grants are available for the implementation of DDA compliant bus stop upgrades as outlined in the priority list and standard drawings, and includes:

- tactile ground surface indicators (TGS)
- bus stop signage including pole and blade
- firm and level boarding points with sufficient width for manoeuvring
- seamless and unobstructed transition between the bus stop and footpath and/or road.

Where a shelter is provided, the following upgrades are also considered:

- provision for two wheelchairs within the shelter on a firm level space
- seats of appropriate height
- unobstructed boarding points.

For each bus stop applied for that meets the bus shelter provision guidelines, the applicant can choose to receive a lump sum bonus of \$13,000 for shelter fabrication and delivery. This bonus applies to each shelter in an application.

State Growth understands that given the topography of Tasmania and site constraints, it may not always be possible that compliance with the requirements of the DDA can be achieved at each bus stop. Local governments will need to consider detailed designs for each bus stop where required, to optimise funding and meet DDA compliance standards.

Funding is available for local governments to seek detailed designs from consultants or contractors for project delivery, if a shortage of internal resources is demonstrated. This does not include the design of

infrastructure outside the scope of the above DDA compliance upgrades.

Applications for bus stop upgrade grants will be assessed on a local government's capacity to manage and implement proposed bus stop upgrades within the round of application.

Grants will be paid in two instalments:

1. 50% of the total grant amount on execution of the grant deed
2. 50% on acquittal of the grant (submission of the completion report with photographic evidence of completing the bus stop works).

3. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a bus stop upgrade grant, applicants must:

1. be a Tasmanian local government entity.
2. support an application with at least a 50% contribution of the total upgrade value (that is a 50/50 split of funding). This contribution can be financial or in-kind.
3. participate with State Growth in the creation of bus stop priority lists and associated upgrade requirements and adhere to the agreed list, and
4. provide evidence of having completed an audit of existing conditions for each applied for bus stop. Audit requirements for applicants will be provided by State Growth.

The application must propose works that:

5. focus on DDA compliance upgrades at existing bus stops (as outlined in a priority list created by local government and State Growth).
6. are on a local government-owned road / footpath.
7. are not bus stop infrastructure maintenance activities.
8. can be fully implemented by the end of February 2025.

4. Assessment criteria

The purpose of the bus stop upgrade program is to fund as many bus stop upgrades within each LGA as possible. Therefore, each local government has been allocated an initial funding cap based on the number of general access bus stops located within the LGA. This funding is available only to the local government in

question in the first instance, provided that it makes co-contributions and meets the eligibility criteria.

However, to ensure effective use of this funding for each LGA, applications will be assessed against:

1. a bus stop priority list
2. required upgrades to meet DDA compliance
3. bus stop upgrade concept designs (where required)
4. estimated total cost of implementation, including high-level cost estimates for the upgrade of each applied for bus stop
5. a high-level project plan demonstrating an applicant's capacity to deliver upgrades within a grant round
6. co-contribution amount, including in-kind support – a higher co-contribution will result in a larger number of bus stops being upgraded
7. other funds / programs received by local governments for bus stop upgrades (State / Federal initiatives), and

5. Timeframes

Description	Date/time
Round 2 opens for applications	October 2023
Round 2 close	November 2023
Round 2 applicants notified	December 2023 / January 2024
Recipients to submit evidence of completing Round 2 works and a financial acquittal	End of February 2025

6. Bus stop prioritisation

The commitment of up to \$10 million for bus stop infrastructure represents a large injection of funding and will deliver a significant improvement to bus stop infrastructure in the state. However, upgrading all general access bus stops will exceed what can be achieved with the current allocation.

To ensure the bus stop upgrade funds are used effectively, State Growth has developed a bus stop 'prioritisation framework' to prioritise upgrades at stop locations of greatest need.

The framework is based on need and uses a selection of socio-economic, patronage and community measures to rank bus stops based on an LGA. Stops by

LGA will be further broken down into urban and rural stops to ensure balance.

This method will develop 'need scores' for bus stops that are then indexed to provide a hierarchical list that will enable the ranking of stops within each LGA.

The prioritisation framework is outlined below.

Bus Stop Prioritisation Framework	
Measures	Description
Patronage	Average weekday bus stop patronage
Density of population requiring care	The density of people requiring care (based upon ABS census variable 'core activity need for assistance')
Health facilities	The number of health facilities within a bus stop's 400m service area
Education facilities	The number of education facilities within a bus stop's 400m service area
Businesses	The number of businesses within a bus stop's 400m service area

In addition to establishing measurable need scores, additional factors will be considered which are difficult to quantify.

These additional factors are outlined below.

Factors affecting bus stop prioritisation	
Factors	Context
Bus stop safety and amenity	Some stop upgrades may require additional supporting measures to make them safer. This may include pedestrian and traffic safety measures such as pedestrian crossings or median islands.
Existing DDA compliance	Bus stops which are already fully DDA compliant will not be included in the priority list.
Known DDA issues	Bus stops which have received DDA complaints will be given increased priority.
Existing road upgrade projects	Bus stop upgrades which are planned as part of existing planned road or streetscape upgrade projects will need to be undertaken as part of that project and will not be included in the priority list.
Cost of upgrades	Some bus stop upgrades may not be cost-effective and alternatives may need to be considered. This may include stops with challenging topography requiring substantial civil works or where road space availability is limited.

The bus stop prioritisation process will involve ongoing consultation between State Growth, each local government, bus operators and disability advocacy groups to ensure:

- a final bus stop priority list accurately reflects the DDA compliance and access needs of an LGA
- a final bus stop priority list agreed on by State Growth and local government
- value for money.

State Growth prepared a preliminary bus stop priority list before engaging with each local government, bus operators and state-wide disability advocacy groups individually to refine and amend the list.

Local governments are encouraged to engage with local access groups / clubs and community to understand existing bus stop access issues within the LGA.

7. Bus shelter provision principles

Bus shelters provide passengers with a safe and comfortable place to wait for public transport, including protection from wind, rain and the sun.

Bus stops are often the first point of contact a passenger has with public transport, so the provision and design of bus shelters contributes to the overall customer experience and enhances the attractiveness of the public transport system.

All new general access bus stops and shelters are required to be DDA compliant. There is also a requirement that if a bus stop is being substantially upgraded, any existing shelter should also be upgraded or replaced with a DDA compliant shelter, provided the site continues to warrant a shelter.

Typically, bus shelters should be provided at stops where there are high numbers of boarding passengers, such as CBD interchanges and major bus stops. They are not typically provided where the majority of passengers are getting off the bus.

State Growth has developed a bus shelter provision guideline based on:

- passenger boarding volumes (urban and rural areas are differentiated)
- site footprint and characteristics
- type of public transport service (interchange points and express services with larger catchments).

State Growth has developed a range of standard bus shelter designs / drawings which local governments can use as part of the grant program to ensure:

- applied for bus stops are cost effective to produce and install
- DDA compliance
- an expandable design to cater for high volume stops
- alignment with a future public transport brand
- passenger information is displayed where appropriate.

The standard shelter designs/drawings will be able to be accessed via the Transport Services website and on request:

https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/public_transport/bus_stop_upgrade_program

For each standard shelter applied for that meets the shelter provision guidelines, the applicant will receive a lump sum bonus of \$13,000 for shelter fabrication and delivery. This bonus applies to each shelter in an application.

For applicants wanting to pursue their own bespoke bus shelter designs, the design and cost for shelter provision is to be funded by local government.

8. Application process

Upon announcement of the program State Growth will contact all local governments via a letter of invitation to begin the application process.

It is expected that by this stage, local governments will be well aware of the program and its purpose, given the extensive consultation involved in preparing the bus stop priority lists.

The Department of State Growth uses an online grants management system called SmartyGrants. This system is easy to use and accessible via mobile phones, tablets, laptops and personal computers.

Applicants should follow the process below to complete an application:

1. Read the program guidelines carefully before starting an application.
2. Download / request the standard bus stop designs and drawings from the Transport Services website: https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/public_transport/bus_stop_upgrade_program
3. Review and complete your bus stop priority list (and associated upgrades) and project plan to ensure works can be managed and completed within the required timeframe.
4. Complete and lodge an application online via SmartyGrants.
5. Check your email to confirm you have received an automatic receipt for your application. This receipt will include details of the application and a unique application ID.
6. Applications will be assessed by Passenger Transport.
7. Applicants will be advised of the number of successfully funded bus stops once each application has been considered and endorsed.

There will be no opportunity to change an application or provide further information to support it once it has been submitted.

Applicants should, therefore, ensure that all supporting documentation provided is accurate and is attached correctly before submitting.

9. Appealing a decision

The appeals process is designed to ensure that all applicants have been treated fairly and consistently in applying for Department of State Growth grants. The Department will consider appeals relating to administrative process issues in grants management.

All requests must be in writing and should be addressed to the Director of the business unit where the application was assessed.

Your request must be received within 28 days from the date of the Department of State Growth notifying you of the decision about your application. For further information about the process, contact DDABusStops@stategrowth.tas.gov.au.

10. Grant payments

Successful applicants will be asked for their bank account details to process grant payments. This bank account must be in the same name as the individual, business or organisation that applied for the grant. Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of their bank statement or a letter from their bank to confirm their bank account details.

Providing incorrect bank account details may result in funds being paid to an incorrect account. These funds will need to be returned to us before we attempt another grant payment. This process may result in significant delays in funding being received. Additionally, we cannot guarantee that funds paid to an incorrect bank account will be returned to us.

If a grant recipient:

- does not complete the activities or tasks required under the funding agreement,
 - does not use any or all of the funding provided,
- the recipient will be required to return some or all of the funds to the department.

Similarly, if

- the information provided to us is found to be false or misleading, or

- the recipient's situation changes in a way that prevents completion of the agreed project

the recipient will be required to return some or all of the funds to the department.

11. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under the program attract GST. Grant payments to successful applicants, who are registered for GST, are increased to compensate for the amount of GST payable. Where GST applies to the grant funding, a valid tax invoice must be supplied by the successful applicant to the department.

The receipt of funding from this program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

It is strongly recommended that, prior to submitting an application, potential applicants seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications for receiving the grant.

12. Acquittal

An acquittal is a statement made by a grant recipient, confirming that the grant funding was used as per the funding agreement. Unless otherwise stated, it is a requirement that all Department of State Growth grants are acquitted.

12.1 How to acquit a grant

An acquittal form will be provided to recipients, asking for information about the activities and expenditure relating to the grant. Evidence such as photos, quotations, invoices, receipts, statements, reports, etc., may be required to support the acquittal.

The department may ask recipients to provide a Statement of Expenditure certified by an independent, professional auditor. In this situation the recipient will be responsible for the cost of obtaining the certified Statement of Expenditure.

12.2 Failure to complete an acquittal

Failure to lodge a valid acquittal by the due date will result in the recipient being required to return the funding to the department. In this situation the department will invoice the recipient.

13. Administration and contact details

The program will be administered by the Department of State Growth on behalf of the Crown in the Right of Tasmania. For any questions regarding the program, please contact us via:

DDABusStops@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

13.1 Note

All applicants must take care to provide true and accurate information. Any information that is found to be false or misleading may result in action being taken and grant funds, if already provided, will be required to be repaid to the department.

14. Publicity of grant assistance

The Department of State Growth disburses public funds and is therefore accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, the department may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, the purpose of the financial assistance, and any other details considered by the department to be appropriate.

15. Right to information

Information provided to the Department of State Growth may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

16. Confidentiality

The Tasmanian Government may use and disclose the information provided to it for the purposes of discharging its functions and related uses.

The department may also:

1. Use information received in applications for any other departmental business.
2. Use information received in applications and during the delivery of the project for reporting purposes.

17. Personal information protection

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*.

This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it related, on request to the Department of State Growth. A fee for this service may be charged.

18. Disclosure

The following applies to all successful applicants:

- Despite any confidentiality or intellectual property right subsisting in the grant funding agreement or deed, a party may publish all or any part of the grant funding agreement or deed without reference to another party.
- Please note that all obligations under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth) still apply.

19. Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Crown in Right of Tasmania, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from anything contained in or omitted from or that may arise from the use of this document, and any person relying on this document and the information it contains does so at their own risk absolutely.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by an applicant that are in any way related to the program.



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