

Program Guidelines for the
Vulnerable Road User Program
specific to Round 1 – 2023-24.

Vulnerable Road User Program

Round 1 2023-24



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Vulnerable Road User Program

Aim

The Vulnerable Road User Program (VRUP) aims to:

- provide an opportunity for local governments to develop and implement small-scale, low-cost, and effective infrastructure treatments targeting vulnerable road user safety issues
- minimise the opportunity for conflict between vulnerable road users and motor vehicles in primarily urban areas
- increase capacity in local government to apply Safe System treatments across their network
- increase road safety engagement across all local governments and communities.

Local governments may apply for VRUP grants up to the value of \$500,000.

Background

The VRUP is an initiative of the [Towards Zero Action Plan 2020-2024](#) (Action Plan).

The VRUP provides an opportunity for local government to improve road safety outcomes for pedestrians, motorcyclists, and cyclists.

Commonly referred to as vulnerable road users, these groups have a high risk of being severely injured when a crash with a motor vehicle occurs.

This is due to the inherent lack of physical protection that vulnerable road users have for absorbing crash energy when a crash occurs.

The VRUP provides funding for small-scale infrastructure treatments in locations where there are proven or identified safety issues. Treatments must improve vulnerable road user safety.

The VRUP focuses on supporting local governments, as local road safety issues are often best addressed at a local level. Local governments are well-positioned to identify specific problems and engage the community in their urban areas.

Eligible VRUP applications are competitively assessed by the Department of State Growth and successful applications are funded by the Tasmanian Government's Road Safety Levy.

The Safe System approach

The Safe System approach underpins the Tasmanian Government's [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026](#) and Action Plan. The approach represents a shift away from reactive road safety approaches to infrastructure treatments.

The core Safe System principles are:

- fatal and serious injuries are not acceptable on our roads
- humans are fallible
- humans are vulnerable
- road safety is a shared responsibility.

In applying the Safe System approach to project designs there are three key considerations:

- the **exposure** to risk
- the **likelihood** of a crash
- the injury **severity** in the event of a crash.

Important note

Projects should primarily aim to reduce the **exposure** of vulnerable road users to vehicles and the **likelihood** of crashes occurring between vulnerable road users and vehicles. Such treatments may include:

- separated bicycle lanes and/or shared paths
- kerb outstands
- pedestrian refuges.

Though separation is a key outcome of Safe System design, this approach is not always feasible. In this case, treatments that encourage a vehicle travel speed at or below the Safe System threshold (30km/h) are suitable to reduce the **severity** of crashes that occur. Such treatments may include:

- wombat crossings
- raised intersection treatments.

By progressively implementing small-scale improvements that work toward developing a Safe System, local governments can evolve their urban networks into areas more suited to vulnerable road users.

To ensure that local governments implement Safe System improvements, the Assessment Criteria of the VRUP considers the application of Safe System principles within the design of the proposed works.

Movement and Place framework

The Movement and Place Framework breaks down various road environments into several categories of either Movement, Place, or a combination of both.

This encourages infrastructure planners and designers to recognise the practical function of the location and implement infrastructure treatments that support the road users' use case for the infrastructure.

The framework supports the Safe System approach to road safety and directly supports the aim of the VRUP. The framework is also a key component of the [National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030](#).

By applying treatments that focus towards a higher 'Place' value (aim at supporting high pedestrian volumes over vehicle traffic), local governments can begin to transform their urban areas into locations suitable for vulnerable road users.

It is recommended that VRUP applicants consider how the framework applies to their proposed treatments in their applications, and more broadly, how a VRUP application can be a component of a larger network safety plan that considers the framework.

What projects will be funded?

Infrastructure grants

Tasmanian municipal Councils may apply for VRUP infrastructure grants up to the value of \$500,000 and no less than \$10,000.

Infrastructure grants are available for the implementation of planned infrastructure treatments that demonstrate safety improvements aligned with the aim of the VRUP.

Proposed treatments must align to sound research and/or established road safety design principles and safety treatments (i.e., Safe System Principles). Additionally, proposed treatments **must not** increase the risk of conflict for any type of road user.

See the reference documents at the end of the Program Guide for further information about road safety design principles.

1. Eligibility criteria

Applicants may be asked to supply documentation to support their eligibility claims, as part of the application process, or as part of an audit process.

Infrastructure grant eligibility

To be eligible for a VRUP infrastructure grant, applicants must:

- be a Tasmanian Municipal Council (i.e., a local government in Tasmania)
- support an application with a co-contribution or provide an explanation on why providing a co-contribution is not appropriate or viable
- provide a community engagement plan and/or evidence of existing community support for the proposed works.

For an infrastructure grant application to be eligible, it must propose works:

1. that are infrastructure treatments
2. on a road that is owned by either the Tasmanian Government or the local government (as the applicant)
3. with detailed designs and a schedule for delivery
4. that are a new project
 - a. example: works must not have commenced or be extensions of a current project
5. that are not infrastructure maintenance activities
6. that require a Tasmanian Government co-contribution of less than or equal to \$500,000 and more than or equal to \$10,000
7. that do not include an allocation for the funding of administration costs, either directly or incurred.

1.1 Note on legislative compliance

The applicant will need to consider if the proposed works are subject to any legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935*.

1.2 Note on urban areas

The Department of State Growth acknowledges that, in the context of the VRUP, no standardised definition of an 'urban' area is suitable for all local government areas. For the purposes of this program, the department has developed a framework to identify 'urban' areas in each municipality.

If an applicant wishes to confirm the suitability of a project location, please contact the department on 03 6166 3241.

1.3 Note on projects in rural areas

Depending on the type of treatment, rural treatments may be eligible for funding under the Safer Rural Roads Program (SRRP). Details of the SRRP are available at: https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road_safety_and_rules/Grants_programs

2. Assessment criteria

The VRUP applies a risk management approach to competitively assessing applications.

Applications that include plausible and credible supporting evidence that the proposed project will prove effective in reducing the risk of serious casualties occurring, will receive funding priority.

Not all eligible applications will receive funding.

Infrastructure grant assessment criteria

Infrastructure grant applications will be competitively assessed, based on the quality of information provided, against the following criteria.

No.	Criteria	Weight
1	The likelihood of a crash occurring, based on exposure rates (i.e., traffic volume data), and the likely consequence of such a crash.	20%
2	The potential crash reduction benefit(s) of the proposed infrastructure treatment.	20%
2a	Application of the <i>Austroads Safe System Assessment Framework</i> (refer to Reference Document 5).	10%
3	Level of co-contribution from the applicant, or validity of explanation for why co-contribution is not appropriate or viable.	25%
4	Cost-effectiveness of the project.	25%

Examples of suitable treatments

The types of infrastructure treatments which are generally delivered through the VRUP include:

- wombat or pedestrian crossings
- footpaths and line marking
- refuge islands and kerb ramps
- on-road bicycle lanes
- motorcyclist protection rails.

It is encouraged that applications include multiple treatments that best reduce collective road user risk, rather than any single treatment.

Applicants should refer to the Austroads research report [AP-R560-18 Towards Safe System Infrastructure: Compendium of Current Knowledge \(2018\)](#) to assist in the selection of appropriate infrastructure treatments.

3. Assessment committee

The Department of State Growth assesses applications made under the VRUP. The Assessment Committee consists of representation from within the department, including traffic engineers, road safety crash data specialists and infrastructure managers.

The Assessment Committee competitively assesses applications against the Assessment Criteria and recommends applications for funding.

4. Timeframes

No applications will be accepted after the closing date.

Description	Date/time
Program opens	4 December 2023 10:00 am
Program closes	23 February 2024 5:00 pm
Applicants notified	By 30 April 2024
Delivery of Grant Deeds	May 2024

During the assessment process the department may, at its discretion, require further information to support or clarify an application.

This information must be provided within three working days, unless otherwise advised. Failure to provide further requested information within the timeframe may result in an unsuccessful application.

Finalising designs for funding

Final project designs must be provided to the department and approved by the department prior to funding for the project being released (see 10.).

Any delays in providing final designs to the department within 120 days (four months) of the execution of the Grant Deed may result in:

- delayed initial payment
- the project being withdrawn by the department.

5. Application process

Applications are received through SmartyGrants, the Department of State Growth's online grants management system. SmartyGrants 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. Review the Reference Documents to ensure familiarity with the Safe System approach to road safety, the Movement and Place Framework, and potential treatments for vulnerable road user safety improvements.
3. Complete and lodge an application online via SmartyGrants from the Transport Services website, https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road_safety_and_rules/Grants_programs
4. Check your email to confirm you have received an automatic receipt of your application. This receipt will include details of the application and a unique application ID.
5. Applications will be assessed by the Assessment Committee.
6. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application once considered by the Assessment Committee and endorsed.

Applicants should note that 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.

A summary of the application process that an applicant can expect is provided under Appendix A.

6. 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 General Manager of Road User Services.

Your request must be received within 28 days from the date the Department of State Growth notified you of the outcome of your application. For further information about this process contact (03) 6166 3241.

7. Grant payments

7.1 Payment information

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 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.

Payments to successful applicants will be made in two equal parts, comprising an Initial and Final payment.

- The Initial payment (50 per cent of total sum) will be made after the department receives approved finalised designs.
- The Final payment (50 per cent of total sum) will be made after the completion of the grant acquittal process (see 10.).

Applicants can also apply to the department for an early advance of the grant amount to support their delivery of works. For further information about this process contact (03) 6166 3241.

7.2 Provision of misinformation

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 Grant Deed, or 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.

8. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under the program attract Goods and Services Tax (GST). Grant payments to successful applicants, who are registered for GST, are increased to compensate for 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 applying, potential applicants seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications of receiving a grant.

9. Quarterly progress updates

Successful Applicants will be required to provide quarterly progress updates through SmartyGrants.

These updates will require applicants to report on their progress delivering approved works, expenditure and any delivery issues.

10. Acquittal

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

10.1 How to acquit a grant

An acquittal form will be provided to recipients using SmartyGrants. The acquittal form will ask for information relating to the delivery of the grant and associated expenditures. Evidence such as quotations, invoices, receipts, statements, reports, photos etc., are also 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.

10.2 Assessment by the department

As part of the acquittal process the department will undertake an assessment of the works, in respect to the Approved Purpose of the Grant Deed.

10.3 Failure to complete an acquittal

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

10.4 Unacquitted grants

The Assessment Panel may decline an application due to outstanding works.

11. Administration and contact details

The program will be administered by the Department of State Growth on behalf of the Crown in Right of Tasmania. Contact VRUP@stategrowth.tas.gov.au or the Road Safety Branch on (03) 6166 3241.

10.1 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 with some or all of already provided grant funds required to be repaid to the department.

12. 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.

13. 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*.

14. Confidentiality

The Tasmanian Government may use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging its respective functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the program 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.

15. 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.

16. 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) or the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth) still apply.

17. 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.

18. Reference documents

The following documents can be utilised to inform applications.

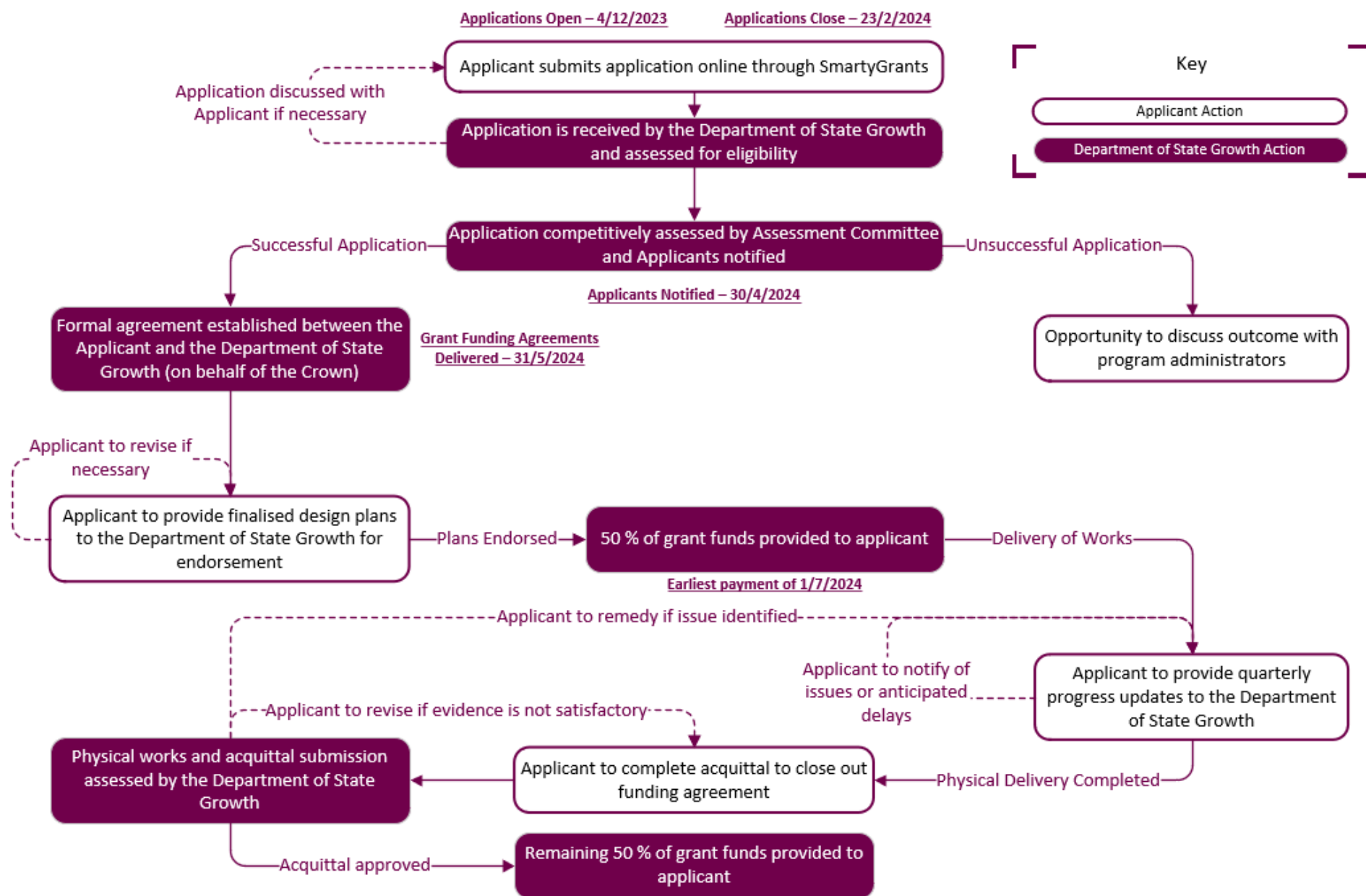
1. [National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30](#)
2. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026](#)
3. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024](#)
4. Austroads, AP-R560-18 *Towards Safe System Infrastructure. A compendium of current Knowledge* (2018)
 - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r560-18>
5. Austroads, AP-R509-16 *Safe System Assessment Framework* (2016)
 - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r509-16>
6. Austroads, AP-R595-19 *Embedding Safe System in the Guide to Traffic Management* (2019)
 - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/traffic-management/ap-r595-19>
 - ii. Webinar - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/traffic-management/web-r595-19>
7. Austroads, AP-6611-20 *Integrating Safe Systems with Movement and Place for Vulnerable Road Users* (2020)
 - i. PDF - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r611-20>
 - ii. Webinar - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/web-r611-20>

19. Other materials

In addition to the reference documents, the following free resources assist in understanding and implementing a Safe System. These resources should be utilised by persons engaged in developing and delivering a Safe System.

1. Austroads, Traffic Management Training
 - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/network-operations/traffic-management/traffic-management-training>
2. Austroads, Guide to Road Design
 - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-design/agrd-set>
3. Austroads, Guide to Road Safety
 - i. Online set - <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/agrs-set>

Appendix A – Vulnerable Road User Program – Round 1 2023-24 Process Map





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