



The Place To Be

# Media release

From the Premier of Victoria

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## **\$4.5 MILLION TO HELP VICTORIA MAKE THE MOST OF THE GAMES**

Municipalities across Victoria will share in \$4.5 million to celebrate the 2006 Commonwealth Games in their own way, the Premier, Steve Bracks, announced today.

Launching *Getting Involved* – a guide to building stronger communities through Games-inspired activities – Mr Bracks said the Games would be the ideal backdrop to showcase what's special about Victoria's suburbs and towns.

“Much like the 1956 Olympics, the 2006 Commonwealth Games will be a defining moment for Victoria,” he said.

“Capitalising on the importance of the Games means local government, schools, sports clubs, community groups and individuals working together and planning ahead.

“The ideas in *Getting Involved*, and the \$4.5 million grants program that underpins them, will give every municipality practical support to make the Games a community event as well as a sporting event.”

Some of the activities suggested by *Getting Involved* include:

- welcoming the Queen's Baton Relay as it moves across the State;
- involving schools, local businesses and community groups in a week-long festival;
- organising 'come and try' events as a springboard to encourage people to be more physically active;
- adopting another Commonwealth nation to learn more about a different culture;
- creating a lasting reminder by upgrading civic infrastructure, like walking paths or street furniture or
- developing an exhibition of local sporting history or heroes.

“The Games are a celebration of inclusion, diversity and shared history. By supporting these activities, our goal is to showcase local expressions of these universal themes – and build stronger communities in the process,” Mr Bracks said.

Councils are invited to work with all sections of their community in coordinating ideas, funding applications and activities.

Up to \$20,000 is available for each municipality for smaller scale celebrations, with every council also able to seek up to another \$80,000 for larger scale celebrations.

There will also be funds available for overnight celebrations if municipalities are hosting the Queen's Baton Relay.

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**[www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au)**

Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Justin Madden, said *Getting Involved* joined the range of initiatives helping Victoria make the most of the Games.

“As other cities have discovered, hosting the Commonwealth Games is about more than sport. It’s about jobs, better facilities, cultural identity and bringing people together,” he said.

“Over the next 559 days, we’re planting native trees as part of the Games’ environment program, teaching students about other countries through our education program, and kick-starting careers through an employment and training program.”

Victorians are encouraged to contact their local Council to tap into support for their ideas. For more information on *Getting Involved*, visit [www.dvc.vic.gov.au/commonwealth\\_games](http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/commonwealth_games) or telephone (03) 9655 2006.

The XVIII Commonwealth Games will be held from 15 – 26 March 2006, and will bring together 4,500 athletes from 71 nations.