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NEW RESEARCH PROMPTS ELECTION CALL TO FUND THE MEN'S SHEDS THAT STRENGTHEN VICTORIA

Victoria's political parties and candidates are being asked to commit \$3 million a year, indexed going forward, over four years to strengthen the state's network of more than 300 Men's Sheds, following the release of an independent Curtin University evaluation.

The evaluation finds that Men's Sheds contribute well beyond workshop activities, creating value through connection, health promotion, inclusion, volunteering, local partnerships, practical community projects and economic activity.

Among its Victorian findings, more than 80% of responding Sheds provided health-information sessions. Of the 76 Sheds answering a question about major life challenges, 98% were at least somewhat confident their Shed had helped members navigate major health crises, bereavement, family loss or trauma.

The report estimates that a typical Shed contributes approximately \$16,223 in annual direct expenditure. Extrapolated across approximately 300 Sheds, this exceeds \$5.8 million a year. Volunteer activity among the 149 Sheds covered by the analysis was estimated at 384,420 hours annually, valued at between \$7.7 million and \$17.3 million.

Ashley Gardiner from VMSA, said the report demonstrated why the next Victorian Government should make a stronger, secure investment in the network.

"Men's Sheds are more than workshops. They are trusted community infrastructure where people find connection and purpose, share skills and contribute to schools, charities, aged-care services and community organisations," Ashley said.

"With more than 300 Sheds across Victoria, the current funding model does not reflect the network's reach, responsibilities or potential. We are asking every party and candidate to back a practical four-year package covering facilities, operations, statewide support and better Victorian outcome measurement."

VMSA will approach parties and candidates on equal terms and publish written responses to the funding proposal through a public commitment tracker.

The summary is available here https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/VMSA_Mens-Sheds-Contributions-to-Victoria-SUMMARY.pdf

The link to the full report is available here https://www.vmsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/VMSA_Mens-Sheds-Contributions-to-Victoria.pdf

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ABOUT VMSA

The Victorian Men's Shed Association (VMSA) is the peak body representing and advocating for Men's Sheds across Victoria. VMSA works to enhance the wellbeing of men in our communities by fostering connection, camaraderie and a sense of belonging. Men's Sheds provide a welcoming space where men feel safe, valued and included, and VMSA proudly supports organisations across

the state dedicated to promoting men's health. Through representation, advocacy, and support, VMSA is committed to strengthening the Shed movement across Victoria.