

2026

ANNUAL PROGRAM

INFORMATION
FOR APPLICANTS







Alpine Valleys Community Leadership

Driven by a shared vision, a group of passionate individuals launched a community leadership program in 1998 to develop local leadership in Victoria's Ovens-Murray region.

Though the program paused the following year, the founders' determination to sustain it led to relentless efforts in securing funding, ultimately giving rise to the establishment of our organisation, Alpine Valleys Community Leadership (AVCL).

Now, over twenty-five years later, AVCL remains steadfastly committed to delivering meaningful programs that foster vibrant and sustainable communities.

Through an intentional and transformative journey, we have revitalised our organisational structure, expanded our reach, and broadened our program offerings to increase the impact of our work.

We engage with grant funders and seek out partnership arrangements to resource initiatives that address known and emergent needs within our communities, building the individual and collective capacity of all people in North East Victoria, Southern NSW and the Border regions.

2026 Annual Program

Each year, a diverse group of promising leaders is selected to participate in the flagship Annual Program of Alpine Valleys Community Leadership.

“This process has profoundly impacted me, fostering personal growth and increasing my confidence in my actions, thoughts, and intentions. Professionally, it has sharpened my focus, and in my community involvement, it has enhanced my sense of purpose and direction.”

Olga Davis, 2024 AVCLP

Thank you to our 2025 Annual Program

Sponsors and Supporters



ALPINE
SHIRE COUNCIL

TRUST



GARDINER
FOUNDATION

gotafe



HANDBURY
FOUNDATION



Charles Sturt
University



Take the Leap

Since its inception in 1998, the Annual Program has equipped over 500 graduates with the tools necessary to grasp decision-making processes, understand community dynamics, and influence significant change. Utilising the North East and Border regions as a vibrant learning environment, participants visit each LGA and engage with change and decision makers from private, public, and nonprofit sectors, working collectively to hone their critical thinking, analytical, governance, and leadership skills.

The program features retreats, place-based program days, site visits, discussion groups, conversations with leaders and experts, and team based initiatives. Participants aim to deepen their understanding of the systems that influence regional functionality, while also reflecting on how personal values, biases, and collaborative approaches can impact their effectiveness and outcomes.

Together, participants explore pressing community issues, reflect on their roles within the community, and cultivate transformative relationships built on trust and collaboration.

Participants can expect to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of values-based leadership, including exploring motivations, personal strengths, biases and personality types
- Join a peer group of motivated, energised participants
- Experience dynamic program days, skills sessions, workshops, and retreats
- Achieve personal growth and professional development to make a meaningful difference
- Develop a greater understanding of the region's social, economic and environmental resources
- Build interpersonal skills and understand team dynamics through a collaborative activity during the program
- Strengthen skills and understanding of governance, systems thinking, working as a team, advocacy and public speaking



Foster

Innovation and creativity

Encourage yourself to think outside the box. What fresh perspectives or collaborations will help you address the unique opportunities and challenges in the North East Victoria and Border Regions? Innovation is key to driving meaningful change.



Enhance Self-Awareness and Broaden Horizons

Engage in reflective practices and ask yourself the tough questions. How do your values and biases influence your leadership? By gaining deeper self-awareness, you can enhance your effectiveness and impact as a leader.

“AVCLP has been incredible, an amazing chance to grow, reflect, and connect with such a beautiful group of people. I’m so grateful for this experience and excited to see where we all go from here.”

Rosie Suter, 2023 AVCLP



Identify and Tackle Community Issues

Examine our regional communities depth. What obstacles and barriers exist? How can we work together to overcome them? You’ll learn not only to identify challenges but understand what role we can each play in contributing to the solutions.



Commit to **Your Vision for Change**

You have the vision to influence positive change in your region. How will you maintain your commitment and perseverance through challenges? Learn strategies to stay focused and resilient in your leadership journey.



Sharpen **Critical Leadership Skills**

Engage with change-makers from various sectors and participate in activities like retreats, site visits, and community projects. Hone your critical thinking, analytical, governance, and leadership skills through practical, place-based learning.



Understand **Community Dynamics and Systems**

Delve into the systems that influence regional functionality and understand the dynamics at play. This comprehensive understanding will empower you to make informed decisions and drive impactful change within your community.



Build and Sustain **Strong Relationships**

Effective leadership is rooted in strong relationships. How are your connections formed and maintained? You'll learn the importance of nurturing these relationships and building trust and collaboration within your community.

Eligibility to

Apply for the Program

We actively recruit for a diverse cohort each year. We encourage applications from people of all abilities and from any of our extensive multicultural, indigenous, ethnic and religious communities.

People of all ages with a demonstrated eagerness to contribute to the community and develop leadership skills are encouraged to apply for the Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program.

To be eligible candidates will:

- Show a genuine interest and involvement in their community
- Have the time and energy to commit to the challenges of the Program year
- Commit to leading their community in the future

The program takes place across the North East and Border regions of Victoria, and whilst applicants may live or work in other local government areas, we encourage applicants who live, work or contribute to communities within the local government areas of: Alpine Shire, Albury City, Benalla Rural City, Indigo Shire, Mansfield Shire, Moira Shire, Rural City of Wangaratta, Towong Shire and the City of Wodonga.



All enquiries regarding participation can be directed to Program Manager: Irene Pritchard

leaders@avclp.org.au | 0437 827 548

Funding of individual participation in the Annual Program can be supported through:

- Your employer funding your participation, or
- Self funding, or
- One of our generous scholarship funders, who provide the opportunity to increase leadership capacity on the basis of their specified criteria, which can include geographic location, employment or community participation in different industries or interest groups, or ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for a diversity of individuals.

In completing your application, please indicate whether you have the financial support of your employer, or are seeking a scholarship. It is particularly important that you provide information about your community and workplace contributions where applying for a scholarship, ensuring we can assess your suitability to our scholarship funder criteria.

To apply, visit: www.avclp.org.au



Steps for the 2026

Program Selection

- 1 Applications open early August 2025
- 2 Applications close late September 2025
- 3 After applications close, all applicants will be contacted to attend an interview via Zoom during October
- 4 Following completion of all interviews, the selection panel will convene to determine suitability and funding allocations
- 5 All applicants will be informed of the outcome in late November
- 6 Formal offers and acceptance letters are sent in early December, with invoicing to be issued in December / January
- 7 The 2026 Program will then commence with a launch event on Thursday 12 February, and the Opening Retreat taking place Friday 20 and Saturday 21 February 2026

2026 Program Schedule:

Program days will take place across LGAs within North-East Victoria and Border Regions, locations to be confirmed.

Date	Mode	Type
Tues 3 Feb	Online, 6:30 – 8pm	Introduction & Connection
Thurs 12 Feb	In person, 4– 6pm	Launch Event
Fri 20 & Sat 21 Feb	In person	Opening Retreat
Fri 13 March	In person	Program Day
Fri 27 March	In person	Workshop
Wed 22 April	Online, 6:30 – 8:30pm	Skills Workshop
Mon 4 & Tue 5 May	In person	Melbourne Study Tour
Thurs 21 May	Online, 6:30 – 8:30pm	Skills Workshop
Fri 29 May	In person	Workshop
Fri 19 June	In person	Program Day
Thurs 25 June	Online, 6:30 – 8:30pm	Skills Workshop
Fri 17 July	In person	Program Day
Fri 7 August	In person	Mid-Point Reflection
Thurs 20 Aug	Online, 6:30 – 8:30pm	Skills Workshop
Fri 11 Sept	In person	Program Day
Fri 9 Oct	In person	Program Day
Fri 23 Oct	In person	Program Day
Fri 6 Nov & Sat 7 Nov	In person	Closing Retreat
Wed 11 Nov	In Person, 6pm – 10pm	Graduation

*Subject to confirmation

2026 Annual Program

Funding & Investment Opportunities

To ensure organisations can contribute in ways that align with their values, strategic intents, and are inclusive, we provide a diverse range of investment opportunities. This includes:

- Supporting the professional development of an employee to increase their leadership capacity, or uplifting a community member through funding a scholarship opportunity.
- Enabling the collective capacity of the 2026 cohort through sponsoring a program day, retreat, or event.



Please reach out to Executive Officer, Madeline Hines, to discuss your interest in investing in the program

eo@avclp.org.au | 0417 348 547

Participants each contribute \$1,000 ex GST; this may be payable by their funding organisation if agreed.

Individual Placement Opportunities	Tier	Investment	Your investment will enable:	You will receive
Scholarship Sponsorship	Major	\$9,000 ~	<p>An individual to participate in the program on the basis of your defined criteria; this could include participation in a specific industry, geographic location or focus area through their employment, involvement or volunteering.</p> <p>~Tax deductible donation available to support participant who meets criteria, such as where an individual is considered as experiencing disadvantage within the community; or, suffering from discrimination and social isolation, including those from indigenous, migrant or LGBTQI backgrounds or communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full naming rights and acknowledgement of placement • Large logo and written acknowledgement in promotions • Placement of your organisational pull-up banners at launch and end of year event (must be supplied to AVCL) • Invitation to attend launch and end of year annual event
	Significant	\$6,000*~	<p>As above, note that *Limited placements are available at this rate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming rights and acknowledgement of placement • Medium logo and written acknowledgement in promotions • Invitation to attend launch and end of year annual event
Employer Funded	Major	\$9,000	<p>An employee within your organisation to participate in the program. You are able to undertake an internal recruitment process, at the conclusion of which, the preferred participant is to then submit an application to the 2026 program as normal. Please note that participation in the program is highly sought after, and each applicant, regardless of any internal selection process, must still undertake an interview and be selected to participate in the program.</p> <p>Note that tax deductible donations are not available for employer funders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full naming rights and acknowledgement of placement • Large logo and written acknowledgement in promotions • Placement of your organisational pull-up banners at launch and end of year event (must be supplied to AVCL) • Invitation to attend launch and end of year annual event
	Significant	\$6,000*	<p>As above; lower rate provided at a discount, to ensure accessibility within the program.</p> <p>Note that *Limited placements available at this rate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming rights and acknowledgement of placement • Medium logo and written acknowledgement in promotions • Invitation to attend launch and end of year annual event

2026 Annual Program

Funding & Investment Opportunities

Program-Wide Opportunities	Value	Your investment will:	You will receive
Alumni Engagement	\$5,000 pool	Contribute to a pool of funding that supports ongoing engagement activities for our graduates. Your investment ensures that our alumni continue to grow, connect, and contribute to their communities through regular events, networking opportunities, and professional development sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition as an Alumni Engagement sponsor including on social media and within event communications. • Invitation to participate in alumni events and networking opportunities. • Acknowledgment in alumni engagement communications and materials.
Retreats or Regional Study Tours	\$7,000	Support equitable access for participants to engage in retreats / regional study tours, including overnight accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition as Sponsor including on social media, program materials and during the sponsored program day. • Inclusion in our annual report and program materials. • Acknowledgment in all promotional and follow-up communications related to the program day.
Program Day Sponsorship	\$3,000	Ensure that participants receive high-quality content, expert facilitation, and resources that enhance their learning and impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition as a Program Day Sponsor including on social media, program materials and during the sponsored program day. • Opportunity to contribute to session within program day, in alignment with learning objectives. • Inclusion in our annual report and program materials. • Acknowledgment in all promotional and follow-up communications related to the program day.
Launch Event Sponsorship	\$3,000	Invest in sponsoring our launch event, a pivotal occasion that marks the beginning of our Annual Program. This event brings together participants, alumni, partners, and community members, setting the tone for the year ahead and celebrating the start of new leadership journeys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition as a Launch Event Sponsor on our website, event materials, and press releases. • Opportunity to attend the launch event. • Prominent logo placement at the event and in related promotional materials. • Inclusion in our annual report and acknowledgment in all event-related communications.

“Taking part in the program has opened my eyes to the many different styles of leadership and when they can be applied to different situations within my community. This experience has shifted my mindset from a more confined way of thinking to one that is more open and versatile. Overall, the program has been instrumental in my growth as a leader, aligning well with my values of continuous learning and personal development.” Blake Edwards, 2024 AVCLP



Program Manager

0437 827 548 | leaders@avclp.org.au

Executive Officer

0417 348 547 | eo@avclp.org.au

avclp.org.au



Connect with us on Facebook
[@Alpine Valleys Community Leadership](https://www.facebook.com/AlpineValleysCommunityLeadership)

Our Mission

Grow the leadership capacity and
voice of people and communities