

2026 Leaders for Geelong

Key Elements of the 2026 Leaders for Geelong Program

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Program Welcome	We'll gather on Wadawurrung Country to meet for the first time and take part in a Smoking Ceremony – an act of welcome, cleansing and connection to place.
Strengths Profile	We use the Cappfinity Strengths Profile to provide detailed insights into your realised and unrealised strengths, learned behaviours, and areas for development.
Opening Retreat	A two-day retreat to connect as the 2026 Leaders for Geelong cohort, explore Geelong's past, present and future, and lay the foundations for the year ahead. You'll get to know each other, discover how your strengths shape the way you lead, and learn about the 2026 Community Projects.
Individual Coaching Session (Online)	This optional coaching session can help you gain deeper insight into your Strengths Profile, articulate your aspirations for the year ahead, and explore the community projects that align with your aspirations.
Community Days x 3	Immersive in person experiences designed to offer opportunities to explore the region's identity, challenges and possibilities. Each day is shaped around a core theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring for Country, People and Future Generations • Designing a Thriving City • Connecting People and Places
Future Fit Leadership Days x 3	These in person sessions focus on developing the leadership mindsets, skills and behaviours needed to lead in a rapidly changing world. Each day offers a blend of learning, reflection and practice in a safe and supportive environment focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems and Strategic Leadership • Inclusive and Caring Leadership • Innovative and Courageous Leadership
State Parliament Melbourne Visit	A visit to the State Parliament in Melbourne to broaden your understanding of the structures and processes of the Victorian Parliament and experience Parliament in action.
Federal Parliament Canberra Visit	A two-day trip to Federal Parliament in Canberra to discuss leadership with key political and government leaders and gain an insight into how Australia's political and decision-making system works – past, present and future.

2026 Community Projects

Leaders for Geelong Community Projects are a core component of the Leaders for Geelong Program. You will work with a local community focused organisation to address a specific challenge and enable meaningful change through the work you do.

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Project Selection and Project Team Establishment	You nominate your preferred community projects. Teams will be formed based on these preferences, along with your aspirations for the year, Strengths Profile, and experience.
Project Launch Event	An event that brings together Project Teams, Project Champions and Mentors to celebrate the beginning of the community project journey and foster early connections.
Skill Development: Managing Great Projects (Online)	A 2-hour online session covering the essentials of effective Leaders for Geelong project management, including scoping, project planning, status reporting and stakeholder management.
Open Space Days x 3	Dedicated days for project teams to collaborate, plan and problem solve. We provide the space, butchers paper and coaching support – your team decides what to focus on.
Project Connect Sessions (Online) x 3	1-hour online conversations for project teams to share progress, exchange insights and learn from each other's experiences.
Skill Development: Writing Great Reports (Online)	A 2-hour online session designed to strengthen your skills in crafting clear, compelling reports. The session includes practical guidance on accessible writing and visual storytelling. A session led by graphic designers focused on learning how to use Canva will also be conducted separately.
Skill Development: Delivering Great Presentations	3 x in-person sessions designed to help you deliver a compelling project presentation. Includes practical skills development (Presentations to Inspire), a presentation rehearsal with feedback, and final venue rehearsal ahead of the Project Presentation and Graduation event.
Closing Retreat	We will come together for the last time as the 2026 Leaders for Geelong cohort. The Closing Retreat includes a whole program reflection, offering space to acknowledge growth and explore what's next in your leadership journey. You'll present your community projects to an audience of local leaders and formally Graduate from the Leaders for Geelong Program!

Key Dates

These dates, times and session names are correct at the time of publication however are subject to change. It is a requirement to attend at least 80% of the program as less than this will impact your learning experience.

DATE	TIME	SESSION NAME
JANUARY		
Monday 19 th	1.30pm – 4pm	Program Welcome on Wadawurrung Country
Late January		Strengths Profile Assessment (online)
FEBRUARY		
Tuesday 3 rd	9am to 7pm	Opening Retreat – Day 1
Wednesday 4 th	9am to 5pm	Opening Retreat – Day 2
Early to mid Feb		Individual Coaching Session (optional)
Wednesday 18 th	9am to 5pm	Community Day #1
Friday 27 th	5pm	Project Preferences Due
MARCH		
Thursday 5 th	9am to 5pm	Future Fit Leadership #1
Wednesday 18 th	2pm to 5pm	Project Launch
Monday 23 rd	10am to 12noon	Managing Great Projects (online)
APRIL		
Wednesday 15 th	9am to 5pm	Future Fit Leadership #2
MAY		
Friday 1 st	9am to 5pm	Open Space Day #1
Monday 18 th	5pm	Project Scopes due
Wednesday 20 th	9am to 5pm	Future Fit Leadership #3
JUNE		
Tuesday 2 nd	9am to 5pm	Community Day #2
Wednesday 17 th	9am to 5pm	State Parliament Day

Key Dates cont.

DATE	TIME	SESSION NAME
JULY		
Friday 3 rd	9am to 5pm	Open Space Day #2
Monday 27 th	12noon – 1pm	Project Connect Session (online)
AUGUST		
Wednesday 12 th	9am to 5pm	Community Day #3
Monday 17 th	12noon – 1pm	Project Connect Session (online)
Monday 24 th	10am – 12noon	Writing Great Reports (online)
SEPTEMBER		
Friday 11 th	9am to 5pm	Open Space Day #3
Monday 28 th	12noon – 1pm	Project Connect Session (online)
OCTOBER		
Wednesday 7 th	2pm to 5pm	Presentations to Inspire
Wednesday 14 th	12noon to 1pm	Canberra Briefing
NOVEMBER		
Monday 2 nd	5pm	Project Reports due
Tuesday 3 rd and Wednesday 4 th TBC	9am to 5pm	Canberra Delegation ⁺
Wednesday 18 th	2pm to 5pm	Project Presentation Rehearsal
DECEMBER		
Wednesday 2 nd	9am to 5pm	Closing Retreat - Day 1
Thursday 3 rd	7am to 1pm	Closing Retreat – Day 2 (Includes Project Presentation Event and Graduation)

+ Dates to be confirmed once the Australian Federal Parliament's sitting calendar is released