$618K DELIVERED TO GRASSROOTS CLUBS TO BOOST PARTICIPATION ACROSS AUSTRALIA

More than 28,700 young Australians will benefit from new equipment and uniforms as 171 community sports clubs across Australia receive a share of over $618,000 through the 2026 Active Kids Grant program.

Funded by The Dickinson Foundation and delivered in partnership with the Australian Sports Foundation, the program supports volunteer-run grassroots clubs working to create more opportunities for Australians aged 20 and under to take part in sport.

This year's recipients span 28 sports, with football (soccer), netball, AFL and cricket among the most represented, alongside a wide range of community-led programs reaching metro, regional and remote communities.

2026 Active Kid Grant program at a glance:

- 171 clubs funded nationwide
- $618,000 worth of equipment and uniforms granted
- 28,752 participants supported
- 28 sports represented
    - 40 Football (soccer) clubs
    - 22 Netball clubs
    - 21 AFL clubs
    - 13 Cricket clubs

Australian Sports Foundation CEO Jerril Rechter said participation at the grassroots level remains the single biggest lever in Australian sport, and that access is still the barrier that stops too many kids from getting involved.

“The barrier is rarely interest - it’s the practical realities that can get in the way, from equipment clubs can’t replace to the broader pressures families are navigating. The volume of applications we receive each year is a clear signal of the ongoing demand,” Ms Rechter said.

“Through the support of The Dickinson Foundation, the Active Kids Grant is addressing this challenge in a practical and meaningful way. We’re proud to partner on this initiative - connecting philanthropy with Australian sport and ensuring support reaches the clubs and families who need it most.”

David Dickinson, founder of The Dickinson Foundation, said the program was designed to put resources where they would have the most immediate impact on children's lives and sporting careers.

"Equipment and uniforms might seem like small things, but for a club operating on a volunteer committee and a tight budget, they're the difference between a child joining a team or not," Mr Dickinson said. "We fund this program because we believe every young Australian deserves the chance to play, regardless of postcode or circumstance.”

Among the 2026 recipients are:

- **Frame Running Wollongong Inc. (NSW)**
  Frame running is a Paralympic discipline making its Games debut in 2028, and this Illawarra club delivers free weekly sessions for children with physical impairments. The grant funds sensory and tactile equipment for vision-impaired participants alongside throwing implements and goal sets, ensuring every child has a genuine sporting pathway, at no cost.
- **Floorball Broome Inc. (WA)**
  Floorball Broome brings a fast-growing but little-known sport to one of Australia’s most remote communities, running weekly junior programs and school outreach sessions for around 200 young players. The grant funds junior-specific balls, protective eyewear and goalie equipment, with plans to extend the program to Indigenous young people in the region.
- **Brothers Australian Football Club Inc. (QLD)**
  Back-to-back flooding events in 2025 destroyed much of the club’s junior equipment while participation continued to grow. The grant helps replace what was lost and funds a dedicated playing kit for a new standalone Under 9 girls’ team – the first in AFL Capricornia’s competition.
- **Sunbury Softball Association (VIC)**
  Junior participation at this Melbourne-fringe club has grown 300% in under two years, from 20 players to more than 80 across T-ball, Under 12 and Under 14 teams. Equipment borrowed from Softball Victoria has kept the program running, but it’s not a long-term solution. The grant funds helmets, gloves, bats and training gear so every child has safe, age-appropriate equipment from day one, without cost to their family.

More case studies and quotes available upon request.

Since the program's launch in 2020, the Dickinson Foundation, in partnership with the ASF and through initiatives including the Active Kids Grant, has provided more than $5.5 million in equipment and uniform support to over 1,000 community clubs and organisations, reaching hundreds of thousands of young Australians.

The 2026 grant round attracted approximately 600 applications, a figure that reflects both the reach of the program and the scale of need at club level. Grants are fulfilled through ASF's supply partners, ISC Sport and HART Sport, and are open to volunteer-run community clubs and organisations supporting members aged 20 and under.

Applications for the next Active Kids Grant round will be announced in early 2027. In the meantime, community clubs can raise their own funds through the Australian Sports Foundation's donation platform at https://www.asf.org.au

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