

The Victorian Amateur Football Association (VAFA) is seeking funding support to upgrade the match and training lighting at Elsternwick Park No. 1 Oval.

The VAFA is the largest senior community sporting organisation in Australia, established in 1892 is home to more than 13,000 players; 10,000 men and 3,000 women.

We administer more than 300 teams from 73 clubs; including, senior men's and women's through to U19 youth teams. We are also home to the largest group of umpires in senior community football with 570.

The existing lights at Elsternwick Park No. 1 Oval are some of the oldest lights Melbourne metro area and were installed as training lights 30 years ago. They are not currently suitable for playing matches, and the light spill adversely impacts on the surrounding residential neighbours, and natural wildlife.

New LED lights will be far more energy efficient, significantly reduce our carbon footprint and minimise light spill.

Women were admitted in 2017 for the first time, forming an integral part of our Association and constituting the largest group of senior women's footballers in Australia. We need to provide flexible fixturing options for our clubs and having match quality and standard lighting to continue to support the growth and participation of women playing AFL. Future growth is limited by the finite supply of playing fields in the Melbourne metro region. Upgrading the current training lights to match quality lights, we enable night matches, which means the VAFA can continue to grow the competition – in particular Womens. Currently growth is limited to availability of sporting fields.

Furthermore, the VAFA has recently had our oval and pavilion (including changerooms) upgraded and the facility is first-class.

What we require now is an upgrade to our lights to ensure we can have our 570 umpires train twice a week under quality lighting to the same standard of the precinct, we can host regular night matches (men's and women's) to assist our clubs where the strain on local facilities is at an all-time high, and provide access to other associated community groups who may also require support and assistance in terms of ground usage.