

Candidate search: 2026 Victorian election

Croydon and Ringwood state districts

In the first half of 2026 Voices of Deakin (VoD) undertook an extensive candidate search process, resulting in one candidate being interviewed for Croydon and one for Ringwood.

Search and identification process summary

A subcommittee of three Steering Committee (SC) members was formed. Selection criteria and candidate attributes were developed and published on the VoD website.

Recommendations were sought from survey respondents¹, and databases of local community leaders were searched – including council award recipients, high achievers in business and sport, well-known volunteers, and local Councillors. Several people from each district were approached, and one candidate per district was shortlisted and recommended to the SC for interview.

Interview and candidate assessment process

Each candidate was interviewed and assessed by a six-member interview panel comprising two SC members from each district and one general VoD member from each district. All panel members completed conflict-of-interest declarations for both applicants, with no material conflicts identified.

Panel members used a scoring template to assess each candidate's responses and performance. Notes were compiled and consolidated into a summary. The panel agreed to proceed to reference checks and social media reviews for both candidates.

Reference checks confirmed both candidates were suitable for endorsement. Social media reviews raised no concerns regarding reputation, independence, or potential impact on VoD.

Endorsement confirmation

Both candidates were viewed by the panel as credible and potentially strong candidates. A detailed summary was provided to the SC, who agreed they were suitable for endorsement. A meeting of VoD members was then convened as a final check – no concerns were identified. All members present supported the endorsements and both applicants were publicly endorsed on Sunday 26 July 2026.

¹ After indicating the qualities they would like in their MP, respondents were asked if they knew anyone who might make a suitable candidate.