



Factsheet

Communities Environment Program

The Communities Environment Program supports small scale, community-led environment projects that address local environmental priorities in each of the 151 federal electorates across Australia.

What does it offer?

Each federal electorate will receive up to \$150,000 for allocation to successful project applications. A maximum of 20 projects will be funded in each electorate.

For each project, the grant amount can cover all eligible project costs. However, additional cash and/or in-kind contributions towards the project costs are strongly encouraged.

- The minimum grant amount is \$2,500.
- The maximum grant amount is \$20,000.

We cannot fund your project if it receives funding from another Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government grant for the same activities. You can apply for a grant for your project under more than one government program, but if your application is successful, you must choose either the Communities Environment Program grant or the other government grant.

How does it work?

If your local Federal Member of Parliament (MP) chooses to participate in the program, they will be encouraged to consult with their community to identify suitable projects. Your MP has discretion in how they consult. In some cases this may mean your project will be reviewed by a consultation committee with representatives from the local community.

The identified projects must be consistent with the intended program objectives and criteria to be eligible for funding.

Once suitable projects and potential applicant organisations are identified, your MP will nominate these to the department and advise the department of the basis for their project nominations. Your MP will then invite the nominated organisations to apply for a grant.

The invitation will include a link to an online application form, along with details on how to lodge their project application.

To be eligible for a grant you must be invited by your MP to apply and your project must:

- be a small scale, community-led environmental project
- give communities the resources, skills and knowledge to care for the environment
- deliver positive environmental and social outcomes
- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- direct the majority of grant funding to on-ground eligible activities
- undertake the majority of the project in the nominating MP's electorate
- request a grant amount between \$2,500 and \$20,000
- have at least \$2,500 in eligible expenditure.

Your project should be completed by 31 December 2020.

During the online application process, you will be asked to provide the spatial location of your project site(s) using a geospatial mapping tool.

The grant amount and project in your application must be the same as that which was detailed in your invitation to apply and reported by your local MP to the department.

Who can apply?

To be eligible you must:

- be invited to apply by your MP
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following incorporated entities:

- an incorporated not for profit organisation, including Parents and Citizens or Parents and Friends groups (the [grant opportunity guidelines](#) provide detail on how you must demonstrate your 'not for profit' status)
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust with responsibility for a community property
- an Australian State/Territory Government agency or body that is:
 - a registered school that is a legal entity (with its own unique ABN) and that can enter into a grant agreement in its own right
 - a legal entity applying on behalf of a registered school
 - a legal entity applying on behalf of a Western Australian Land Conservation District Committee
- a Regional Land Partnerships service provider acting as a project sponsor to enable a community group to undertake their project
- a local governing body as defined by the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995* or listed in the guidelines.

Joint applications (from a number of organisations joining together as a group) are acceptable, provided there is a lead applicant organisation who can act on behalf of the group and is eligible to apply.

For further information on program eligibility refer to the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).

Who is not eligible to apply?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a for profit organisation
- an individual
- a partnership
- an unincorporated association (unless sponsored, see below)
- a Regional Development Australia Committee
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a Commonwealth, State or Territory government agency or body (including government business enterprises) unless

listed in section 4.1 of the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).

- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity
- a political party, political organisation or lobbyist
- an organisation that is not based in Australia.

Can I apply if my organisation is not an incorporated entity?

If your organisation is not an incorporated entity you are not eligible to apply. However, you may nominate a project sponsor (that is an incorporated entity) to apply on your behalf, provided they also meet the program's eligibility criteria.

The project sponsor applying on your behalf must:

- be invited to apply by your MP
- meet the program's eligibility criteria
- be the main driver of the project
- submit the Communities Environment Program online application
- if successful, enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth
- ensure that the grant is spent on the project and in accordance with the agreement.

In areas where school Parents and Citizens or Parents and Friends groups are unable to incorporate, a registered school or other body may be able to act as a sponsor for their application in accordance with the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).

What activities are eligible?

Eligible activities are defined in the [grant opportunity guidelines](#). The following activities are a guide to the types of projects that may be suitable for a grant under the program:

- monitoring local flora, fauna, water quality and marine debris (including on land, in freshwater or in estuarine/marine areas)
- supporting recovery of threatened species (including terrestrial, aquatic and marine species), such as providing nest boxes or artificial burrows
- seed collection and propagation to support revegetation of habitats and threatened ecological communities
- planting trees and understorey to rehabilitate degraded habitats / riverbanks / wetlands; control erosion; or to increase suitable habitat, vegetation linkages and available food sources for native animals

- reducing the impact of invasive weeds, pest animals, and diseases on the environment
- fencing to control access to sensitive sites, remnant vegetation or revegetation sites
- installation of infrastructure, such as boardwalks, to manage access to sensitive natural habitats
- reducing sediment, contaminant and nutrient run-off to waterways
- litter clean-up events, marine debris collection or litter management infrastructure
- new or enhanced recycling drop-off facilities, and community-based initiatives to repair, share, re-use or recycle products
- workshops to increase community skills in monitoring, conserving, and/or protecting threatened species, ecological communities or other important environmental assets.

Note: Activities must be mostly on-ground and be undertaken in an eligible location, which includes your MP's electorate and adjacent Coastal Waters (3 nautical mile limit). Refer to section 5.2 of the [grant opportunity guidelines](#).

How will my application be assessed?

It is important to note that being invited to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

We will assess your application is complete and meets all the eligibility criteria. To be recommended for funding, your project must meet all eligibility criteria, provide value for money and be a proper use of public funding.

The Program Delegate (who is an AusIndustry Senior Responsible Officer with responsibility for the program) decides which grants to approve and takes into account the eligibility assessment of the department, any reputational risk to the Australian Government, information you provide, and the availability of grant funds.

When can I start my project?

You may start your project from the date you submit your application online and receive an automatic confirmation from the department. You may also start your project at a later time (which you indicate in your application form).

If you choose to start your project before you enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth, any costs incurred are at your own risk.

You must incur your project expenditure between the date of application submission and the project end date (by 31 December 2020 or

earlier) for the costs to be considered eligible expenditure.

You will not receive any funding if your application is unsuccessful.

What will I need to do if successful?

You (or where relevant, the lead applicant of a joint application or a project sponsor) must enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage).

We will pay all of the grant up front after execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the project and provide photographic evidence of the project site(s) before and after completion of project activities.

You should familiarise yourself with the final report template available in the sample agreement on our website prior to project commencement to ensure you collect relevant details throughout your project.

If you enter an agreement under the Communities Environment Program, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities from other Commonwealth granting programs.

How do I apply?

You should read the [grant opportunity guidelines](#) before you apply.

To apply you must

- be invited by your MP to submit a formal application for your project
- complete the online Communities Environment Program application form (accessed by a link in an email you will receive from your MP)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all requested attachments.

Where can I find more information?

Visit business.gov.au or call 13 28 46.