



The ACT Environmental Grants Program

Environment Grants
Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Grants

2024–25 Guidelines

Acknowledgement of Country

The ACT Government acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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About the program

The Australian Capital Territory, while small geographically, is rich in environmental assets, values and significance. Our many reserves, parks, urban green spaces and rural lands offer protection for important local species and ecosystems. Our community plays an important role as stewards helping to conserve, promote and protect these environmental values.

The ACT Environmental Grants Program supports and empowers the community to fulfil this stewardship role. The program provides an opportunity for the community to address environmental issues they are concerned about, to restore and conserve natural places that are special to them, and to engage other community members to do the same.

With more than 25 years' history, the ACT Environment Grants help the community to deliver positive outcomes that align with ACT Government environmental priorities. The program builds community awareness and boosts the community's capacity to play a valuable role in caring for the environment of the ACT.

In 2024-25 program has two streams:

- Environment Grants
- Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Grants

These guidelines help the community apply for grants under any of the two streams.

Grants Coordinator

The Grants Coordinator is responsible for the coordination and administration of the ACT Environmental Grants Program. They are your first point of call for any assistance at any step of the process. You can contact them either by phone on 02 6205 9269 or via email at actnrm@act.gov.au.

Additional information

Additional information about the ACT Environmental Grants Program including access to the application form can be found via the [ACT NRM website](#) or by contacting the Grants Coordinator using the details above.

Available funding

While subject to change depending on the applications received, the below should be seen as an indicative total amount available under each stream. The assessment panel may also move applications between the funding streams if warranted.

- **Environment Grant Stream – \$300,000**
- **Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Stream – \$50,000**

Grant amounts

You can apply for up to:

- Environment Grant Stream – \$35,000
- Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Stream – \$5,000

Important dates

Applications open: **12:01am AEST on Thursday 15 February 2024**

Applications close: **11:59pm AEST on Thursday 28 March 2024**

Project period: 1 year from signing of the Deed of Grant

Acquittal of funds: 30 days after the completion date

Where project activities can be undertaken

ACT Environment Grants and Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Streams: All project activities must be undertaken within the ACT border.

Instances where funding will not be provided

Funding will not be provided for:

- projects undertaken outside the ACT
- reimbursements for previously completed activities
- on-going running costs of an organisation, including salaries
- existing and on-going activities, other than where it can be demonstrated they are additional to proposed work and directly address the priorities listed in these guidelines
- projects funded by another grant or funding source unless it can be demonstrated they are additional to the other funded work and directly address the priorities listed in these guidelines
- projects proposed by a group or organisation with an overdue acquittal for projects or programs administered by the ACT Government, unless agreed in writing by the grant superintendent (CEO ACT NRM).

Funding stream priorities

Environment Grants

This stream aligns with previous funding rounds and supports community projects that assist with the delivery of the [ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013-23](#).

Applications for under these streams need to select a **maximum of two** of the following **Funding Priorities for the 2024-2025 ACT Environment Grants**:

- **Enhancing ecological condition and connectivity** of woodlands, grasslands and/or aquatic ecosystems by
 - Protecting and conserving native plants and animals
 - Reducing threats to biodiversity, such as invasive species, erosion etc
 - Enhancing urban wildlife corridors
 - Establishing biodiverse plantings
 - Controlling invasive species
- **Connecting people with nature** through innovative initiatives like
 - Nature based health
 - Nature based education
 - Improving universal access
 - Citizen science
- **Caring for Country** promoting opportunities for Ngunnawal Traditional Custodians and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to share knowledge.

Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance Grants

This stream is designed to increase the capacity of environmental volunteer groups undertaking public land stewardship to seek environmental outcomes. Through this stream volunteer groups can build their capacity to:

- Understand the environmental issues important to their site
- Enhance their recruitment of new volunteers
- Increase their skills to tackle environmental issues
- Plan future works on the site.

Activities that could be funded under this stream include the following:

- Create landscape site plans to assist plans for future work.
- Create promotional material or events to recruit new members.
- Run environmental workshops on issues crucial to their site.
- Participate in group training to enhance skills.

Please note: Tools, equipment and infrastructure will not be funded under this grant stream.

Preparing an application

The following information will help you prepare an application for any of the funding streams of the ACT Environmental Grants Program. Please contact the Grants Coordinator if you have any further questions.

Eligibility

Not-for-profit community organisations, groups and owners' corporations are eligible to apply. An applicant must:

- Undertake project activities in the ACT
- Not be a government agency
- Not be a political party registered under the Electoral Act
- Be prepared to enter a Deed of Grant with the Territory.

Applicants will require an ABN and public liability insurance to apply for a grant.

Please note: applicants to the Environmental Volunteer Group Assistance stream must be a volunteer group within the ACT that undertake public land stewardship.

Individuals and non-incorporated groups may also apply but are required to apply through a sponsoring incorporated community organisation. For more information on sponsorship please contact the Grants Coordinator.

Community value

As funding for the grants is sourced from public funds, all projects must demonstrate significant public value to be successful.

- Public value projects benefit the wider community or regional priorities.
- Low public value projects focus more on private benefit with a smaller number of beneficiaries.

Completing your application form

Applicants must:

- Complete the online application for the 2024-25 ACT Environmental Grants Program application form, available at www.environment.act.gov.au/environment-grants
- Complete all sections of the application form and address all five selection criteria
- Include all mandatory approvals, authorisations and other supporting documentation needed to undertake the proposed project
- Lodge the application before the closing date

Please allow a reasonable time for the approval/authorisation process by the land manager for the assessment of your project.

If you are unable to submit your application electronically, please contact the Grants Coordinator in advance to seek advice on submitting your application within the lodgement period.

Declaring a conflict of interest

It is important that applications/applicants are transparent regarding any private interests and/or relationships that may create a conflict of interest or be perceived to create a conflict of interest.

Potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed at the time of lodgment of an application or immediately after a potential conflict of interest becomes apparent.

Insurance

Applicants must provide evidence:

- They have, or their sponsor has, a current public liability insurance policy with a minimum of \$10 million in cover **and**
- If their project utilises a volunteer base, they have a current Voluntary Workers Insurance policy or Certificate of Insurance with a minimum of \$10 million in cover **or**
- They have obtained a quote from an insurance company for that level of cover for the required insurances.

Applicants may also need additional types of insurance depending on their activities. Applicants who are registered ParkCare or Urban Parks and Places Volunteering groups will be able to get this from their volunteer program.

Project budgeting

Applicants need to provide a budget that fully shows the entire cost of the proposed project.

Claiming an administrative cost

There is a maximum claimable limit of 10% for administrative costs per grant application. Where an individual or non-incorporated organisation uses a sponsor for the application, the 10% needs to include both the administrative costs of the individual or non-incorporated organisation and the sponsor organisation.

Applicant contributions

Applicants are encouraged to contribute towards their proposed project through cash and/or in-kind contributions. Labour cost for projects will not be funded except where specialist labour is required, for example a specialist contractor or trainer.

Volunteer in kind

If labour is included as an in-kind contribution, it can be costed at \$41.72/hour.

Other funding sources

If applicants are seeking additional but separately related funds from other sources, costs need to be clearly defined and show transparent application of project funds to reflect activities (or components of projects) that have been funded through other sources.

ABN and GST registration

Funding for all project applications should be applied for as a GST exclusive amount.

Applicants registered for GST

All successful grant recipients with an Australian Business Number (ABN) and registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) will be funded as a GST exclusive amount based on the budget submitted in the application and agreed to by the assessment panel. The Territory will pay the recipient the amount applied for and the GST will be added to the funding as per the invoice supplied.

Applicants not registered for GST

If the recipient has an ABN registration but does not have GST registration, the grant will be funded as a GST exclusive amount based on the budget submitted in the application and agreed to by the assessment panel.

Financial acquittal

At the conclusion of the project, you will need to acquit your project. To do this you will need to provide a signed statement from an appropriate financial representative from your organization or sponsor that you spent for project funds according to your project budget or subsequent variation. For more on project acquittals see [Acquittal, Evaluation and Reporting](#).

Approvals, authorisations and licencing

When submitted, your application will require appropriate approvals, authorisation, and licencing. Where your application commits a third party to an action you must provide of their agreement to undertake the action. Please contact the relevant organisation/s early enough to give them adequate time to respond.

The following tables give an indication of the most likely organisations to contact and in what circumstance but are not an exhaustive list. For more information or advice please contact the Grants Coordinator.

Land manager letter of support

Your project will require approvals from the relevant land manager or landowner to proceed. Due to the timeframes involved in the application process, this should initially be a letter of support for your application. If your application is subsequently successful, then you will need to obtain the required approval before your project proceeds. See below for land manager contact details:

Land Tenure	Land Manager/Owner	Contact Detail
Nature reserves	ACT Parks and Conservation Service	Please email ParkCare@act.gov.au referencing Environment Grants and highlighting the specific sites and activities that you propose as part of your project.
Urban open spaces	Transport Canberra and City Services	Please email TCCS.CPUrbanPrograms@act.gov.au referencing Environment Grants and highlighting the specific sites and activities that you propose as part of your project.

Private land	Legal leaseholder	Written approval from the legal leaseholder, referencing Environment Grants for the specific sites and activities that you propose as part of your project.
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Authorisations and licencing

Your project may also require further authorisations or licencing to proceed. If you are unsure, please contact the Grants Coordinator.

Issue	Appropriate body	Contact Details
Sites of cultural or heritage significance	ACT Heritage	Please email heritage@act.gov.au referencing Environment Grants and highlighting the specific sites and activities that you propose as part of your project. All works must be guided and undertaken with respect for cultural values and protocols and the requirements of the ACT Heritage Act 2004.
Involving native plants or animals	ACT Parks and Conservation Service	If your project involves interacting with native plants and animals, you will need to comply with the permits and licensing requirements of the ACT Nature Conservation Act 2014. The ACT Parks and Conservation Service is responsible for licencing these activities. For more information, go to the website or email pcs.licensingandcompliance@act.gov.au

Work health and safety

Work Health and Safety legislation imposes a duty on employers to protect the health and safety of workers (including volunteers) and people exposed to risks arising from the work being carried out. Through the grant process the successful applicant has the responsibility to address all work health and safety issues arising from their activity.

Please note: As part of the submission, you are required to:

- develop a risk assessment
- identify, assess, and mitigate to the extent possible any relevant issues
- identify and document any residual risks and associated controls.

Assessing applications

Application assessment

All applications must:

- meet the eligibility requirements of the grants
- be within scope of the funding priorities for the 2024–25 ACT Environmental Grants Program ([See Grant Stream Funding Priorities](#))
- include evidence of required approvals and authorisations for project activities ([See Approvals, Authorisations and Licencing](#))
- be complete and include relevant supporting documents

- be received within the lodgement period ([See Important Dates](#)).

Merit criteria

If your application is assessed as eligible, your project proposal will be assessed based on the following merit criteria.

Merit Criterion	Description	Weight (%)
1	Alignment with funding priorities	20
2	Feasibility and effectiveness	20
3	Demonstrate sound project planning, including achievable milestones, timelines and project outcomes	20
4	Soundness of project budgeting and value for money	20
5	Level of community engagement and reach	20

The following prompts will help when writing your application:

Alignment with funding priorities

Are the project outcomes directly related to the funding priorities?

The program is looking for projects that align strongly with the funding priorities of the program stream you have applied for, as described earlier. Clearly identify the linkages and describe how your outcomes will achieve these priorities, focussing on a **maximum of two** priorities.

Feasibility and effectiveness

Are the project outcomes achievable? Can the project be done in the timeframe? Is it the most effective way to achieve your project outcomes?

The program is looking for you to clearly identify a problem and then provide a clear outline of how you will address that problem. Keep it simple, keep it clear. If your project includes on-ground activities, please provide information about the proposed scale and scope, preferably using quantifiable measures; for example, the number of hectares to be revegetated and number of stems to be planted. It is also useful to see the current condition of the site where activities will be undertaken. Extra information in the form of photos, maps, site plans or other documents can be provided to highlight your case.

Project planning

How comprehensive is the project planning? Does each step of the project appear logical? Are there clear end-of-project outcomes? How are you going to monitor and evaluate your project? How will you ensure your project outcomes are maintained?

The program is looking for clear projects that have logical and achievable milestones that can be achieved in a 12-month timeframe. Please also identify how your project will be maintained after its conclusion to ensure outcomes are maintained. The program is also looking for how you will monitor and evaluate your project to determine if it's successful.

Value for money

Is your budget well thought out? Are the item costs appropriate for what is required? Have you thought of all potential expenses? Have you included in-kind labour?

The program is looking for comprehensive budgets that consider all potential expenses and provide value for money. Please think about true value of your project including in-kind contributions and volunteer labour. Projects that have a large total value but only seek a small portion from the grant funding provide good value from the investment of public funds.

Community engagement

How many people are involved in your project? What are the different demographics that will be engaged? What other community groups may be involved? How will the project and its outcomes be communicated to a wider audience?

The program is looking for projects that engage the community and reach a range of demographics. Please identify the various community groups that may be involved in your project and what their roles are. How will you communicate the outcomes you achieve to the wider community?

Information for successful applicants

Deed of grant

Successful applicants or their sponsors will be required to enter a Deed of Grant with the Territory Government.

The Deed of Grant identifies legal obligations associated with the grant, including project activities, requirements concerning the use of grant funds (Project Plan and Project Budget), project evaluation and acquittal of grant funds.

The Deed of Grant for applications sponsored by an incorporated organisation will be between the sponsor and the Territory.

Acquittal, evaluation and reporting

The applicant is responsible for acquittal, evaluation and reporting of the project as agreed to in the Deed of Grant.

Within 30 days of the end of the grant period, a link will be supplied by the Grants Coordinator for access to the reporting and acquittal form. You are required to report the following:

- The delivery of the outcomes associated with your project, including documentary evidence (photos, receipts, data, promotional material), to substantiate this.
- An evaluation of the project.
- A financial statement, signed by an appropriate financial officer from your organisation or project sponsor.

The acquittal and reporting form is done online using the smarty grants system. If you encounter issues with the form, please contact the Grants Coordinator.

Project promotion

As part of the Deed of Grant, successful applicants are required to agree to the ACT Government promoting your project to the wider community. This includes via the ACT NRM website and through social media. The names, location and project details of all successful projects are posted on the ACT NRM website.

Additionally, when an applicant promotes their project, they must acknowledge the ACT Government as the source of the funding. For more information, please contact the Grants Coordinator.

Project delivery

Once you have signed your Deed of Grant and received your funds if, for any reason, you have issues or concerns related to project delivery, please contact the Grants Coordinator.