

Coastcare Victoria Community Grants Program 2017

Guidelines for Community Groups

What is the Coastcare Victoria Community Grants Program?

The Coastcare Victoria Community Grants Program supports community organisations to take practical local action to protect and enhance the coastal and near-shore marine environment.

The grants support the conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems and environments across the State through rehabilitation, restoration and preventative conservation actions. The program also seeks to:

- Support community conservation works that align with current Victorian environmental priorities and strategies;
- Promote involvement of community volunteers in coastal natural resource management;
- Enhance community skills in, and knowledge of, coastal protection;
- Increase the engagement of Victoria's Indigenous people in the management and protection of the State's coast; and
- Foster new partnerships between community groups and organisations working to protect the coast.

Projects should focus on issues such as:

- Biodiversity and habitat monitoring and preservation
- Threatened species recovery
- Revegetation
- Long term monitoring of beach condition
- Control of weeds and pest animals
- Community engagement
- Marine and coastal awareness and education

What funding is available?

Applications are being sought for small grants of up to \$10,000 for one-year projects and \$15,000 for two-year projects.

Projects that will be completed by 31 December 2019 (one-year projects) or 31 December 2020 (two-year projects) are eligible for funding.

Applications open on 6 December 2017 and close at midnight on 20 February 2018.

Who is eligible?

All incorporated community groups can apply for a grant.

Applicant groups must either be:

- an incorporated association registered through Consumer Affairs Victoria or be incorporated through an umbrella group such as the Farm Tree and Landcare Association; or
- a registered as a not-for-profit organisation with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC).

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These groups include:

- Coastcare, Landcare, 'Friends of' groups, field naturalist groups, Coastal Committees of Management and non-government community organisations;
- Aboriginal groups and organisations, land councils, trusts and co-operatives working on-country;
- Community service organisations and clubs; and
- education institutions including schools and universities.

Can non-incorporated groups apply for a Coastcare Victoria Community Grant?

Yes, non-incorporated community groups can apply if they have a sponsor who agrees to enter into a contract on their behalf. This sponsor must be an incorporated body. In some cases, the project sponsor may also be the land manager (eg. local government).

Who can be a sponsor?

The following organisations can participate as a sponsor, but are NOT eligible to apply in their own right:

- Catchment Management Authorities
- Water Authorities
- Industry Bodies
- State Government statutory bodies/authorities
- State government agencies (except for schools)
- Local government

The following are NOT eligible to apply for or sponsor a project:

- Commonwealth Government agencies
- Private individuals
- Private companies or trusts

The sponsoring group or organisation must:

- be either incorporated, a State Government body or registered as a not-for-profit with ACNC;
- hold personal accident insurance and a minimum of \$10 million public liability;
- agree to take responsibility for the management and safety of your group's volunteers and participants;
- sign the funding agreement;
- receive the grant payment to ensure the project can proceed; and
- be responsible for the delivery and reporting of the project.

What might be funded?

Applications are being called for practical local actions that protect and enhance the coastal and near-shore marine environment. Priority will be given to applications for projects that:

- Protect, rehabilitate and enhance coastal and marine habitats, waterways and wetlands by stabilising dunes, preventing coastal erosion, establishing wildlife corridors and enhancing/protecting high quality remnant native coastal habitat.
- Establish long term community based beach condition monitoring or use 'citizen science' for monitoring other aspects of coastal or marine environments

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- Protect critical habitat for coastal and marine species, e.g. nesting sites, feeding sites, roosting sites, aggregation sites, from the impacts of threats including pest animals, domestic animal disturbance etc.
- Increase participation of individuals and communities in coastal and marine conservation projects, including enhancing skills and knowledge and raising community awareness.
- Directly involve indigenous organisations or groups in protecting, rehabilitating and enhancing coastal sites.
- Reduce or control marine plastic pollution.

Applications must demonstrate all of the following:

- Delivery of practical local action that protects or enhances the coastal or near-shore marine environment.
- Involvement and support of the site/land managers.
- Involvement of volunteers or the local community.
- A plan for maintaining outcomes beyond the life of the project.

Projects are expected to:

- be on public and/or private land and have consent of the land owner/manager (for activities on private land, project works must demonstrate community benefits and contribute to wider landscape scale improvements transcending boundaries);
- manage weed and pest animal control activities which must go beyond a landowner's duty of care under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994;
- ensure capital items purchased are related to the project's on-ground components and become a registered asset with the entity;
- ensure revegetation works use local indigenous species only; and
- clearly define project costs and show transparent application of funds.

The grants program will support the following categories of expenditure (this list is not exhaustive so please discuss your project and items to be funded with your local Coastcare facilitator):

- advertising;
- contractors;**
- environmental assessments;**
- equipment hire or purchase (if directly related to the project's on ground components);
- exclusion fencing;
- materials (chemicals, plants, etc);
- personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, goggles and masks);
- postage;
- printing/design;
- project coordination;*
- rubbish removal (if necessary prior to site restoration);
- signage;
- site preparation;
- site security (landholder agreements);
- training and certification (if directly related to funded activity);

* A maximum of 15% of a grant can be allocated to project coordination.

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There is no limit to the percentage that can be allocated to environmental assessment or contractors. However, you will need to demonstrate that project coordination, environmental assessment or contractors are essential to facilitate the on-ground works component of the project and, in the case of contractors, are for works which your group is unable to carry out.

NOTE:

Please ensure that the cost of all the project activities is fully costed, including GST. The funding total detailed in the application should include GST, where GST is included in costing. If your organisation's application is successful, it will **NOT** receive GST in addition to the total funds requested in its application. As the Coastcare grants are not a taxable supply, payment of a grant by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) does not incur GST on top of the grant (i.e. it is GST free) regardless of the GST status of the recipient organisation.

What won't be funded

Investment is not available for the following:

- Development of recreation facilities or projects primarily focused on improving amenity.
- Any activity involving clearing of native vegetation, unless it is a declared environmental weed in your area. In this instance, a permit for removal of vegetation may still be required.
- Removal of exotic trees from coastal foreshore areas where there is little or no remnant vegetation.
- Large infrastructure or engineering works.
- Activities (or components of projects) that have been funded by other funding bodies.
- The purchase of goods for competitions, prizes, give-aways, or alcohol for any events.
- General operating or travel costs not directly associated with a project/event.
- Projects assessed as not meeting the eligibility and assessment criteria.
- High-risk activities involving the use of fire-arms, tranquilisers, or explosives for vermin control.
- Any activity required as an offset (as a condition of a permit to clear native vegetation).

Do groups need to contribute to their project's budget?

You do not need to contribute funding to your project, however, as there is likely to be strong competition for funds, projects that can demonstrate additional contributions will be prioritised. A project that can demonstrate significant in-kind contributions provides greater value for money to Coastcare. Contributions can be in-kind or in the form of funds. The volunteer time of community group members can be costed at \$30 per person per hour.

Things to check early when planning a project:

Contact your local Coastcare facilitator as soon as possible to discuss your project ideas. Your facilitator will tell you if the project fits the guidelines, may elect to visit the project site with you and can assist you in developing your project idea and application.

You need to identify the public and private land managers for all project sites and discuss the project with them. Check if they would agree to your project, and if other further approvals or permits are required. Give them adequate time to consider your project.

Approvals and permits take time and sometimes include additional unexpected expenses. It is wise to check early whether they apply to your project, and then factor this into your project timeframe and budget.

Plan to meet other requirements and know your legal responsibilities, such as Occupational Health and Safety and child safety.

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How do I apply?

Applications must be submitted through an online grant application system called SmartyGrants. You can save your application and work on it until you are ready to submit it.

Your application can only be accessed by one set of login details. We recommend signing up to SmartyGrants with a group email, if you have one. We encourage you to start your application as early as possible.

To apply, click on the application link (<https://delwp.smartygrants.com.au/Coastcare2018>) to create a login address and draft your application. Your draft can be saved until you are ready to submit.

For further information contact your Regional Coastcare Facilitator or the Statewide Coordinator.

Your applications must be submitted by midnight on 20 February 2018. Applications received after the closing date will not be assessed for this funding opportunity.

Assessment process:

Project applications will be assessed against the program criteria.

1. The project creates a lasting improvement or protection for natural coastal assets (30%)
2. The application outlines potential risks to the project and the actions to reduce the risks (20%)
3. The project engages volunteers or the local community in on-ground action or education (30%)
4. The project links to other projects, partner organisations and/or strategic plans. (10%)
5. Project demonstrates value for money and high public benefit (10%)

Successful projects are expected to be announced as soon as possible after completion of the assessment process. This is expected to be in May 2018, but please be patient if you have not received communications from us as approval processes can take some time.

Funding Agreements will need to be completed between successful project applicants and DELWP. Once these Funding Agreements are signed and the invoicing process is completed, funds will be paid to the grant recipients. We anticipate funds to be paid before 30 June 2018.

What are the application open and close dates?

Applications can be submitted from **6 December 2017**.

Applications must be submitted by the closing date: **midnight on 20 February 2018**.

When will I hear if I am successful?

Announcements of successful projects are anticipated in May 2018. Please note, this date is indicative only.

If I'm not successful?

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter advising them of the outcome. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Applicants not granted funding can ask for feedback on their application and are invited to re-apply for future funding rounds.

What are the conditions of funding?

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with DELWP, signed by the authorised representative of the group or sponsor organisation.

Agreements detail the obligations to use funding, meet performance against described activities, the expected timeline for project expenditure and project reporting requirements, and describe how grant recipients will be required to acknowledge the funding support from Coastcare Victoria Community grants.

The agreed project funding will be available upon the provision of:

- duplicate signed funding agreements
- A completed supplier's details form

Successful applicants are required to provide completion reports at the completion of projects.

Successful applicants must adhere to relevant Occupational Health and Safety requirements.

Investment Principles and Priorities

The following information is intended to help you understand what we consider to be the key principles for delivering a successful and lasting project. Please read carefully and think about how these principles apply to the project you wish to deliver.

Protect, Rehabilitate, Restore

The protection of high quality existing remnant habitats is considered a priority over rehabilitation and restoration of habitat. This is preferred for a number of reasons including cost effectiveness and providing continuity across the habitat. When protection is not possible, rehabilitation of degraded habitat may be the best option. Restoration projects should be seen as a means of linking existing remnants through appropriate mixed planting revegetation.

Ecosystem-Based Management

This funding program will give preference to projects that protect the integrity of ecosystems. Protecting the integrity of ecosystems by addressing known threats will lead to resilient coastal ecosystems better able to support a whole suite of species, and therefore represents good value.

Address Causes, Not Symptoms

It is more cost-effective in the long-term to address the root causes of environmental problems rather than to treat the symptoms of these problems.

Conservation, Not Amenity or Beautification

This funding program focuses on achieving conservation outcomes on the coast. The provision of public amenity facilities (such as walking tracks, boardwalks, buildings) is not considered a conservation outcome, unless it addresses a specific cause of environmental damage to coastal areas.

High Public Benefit

Projects that deliver benefits to the public are preferred to those that deliver outcomes to an individual. For this reason, projects delivered on public land, such as conservation reserves and foreshores will be highly regarded.

Value For Money

Projects that deliver multiple outcomes (eg. protecting the habitat of an endangered species and linking remnant vegetation) will be considered favourably.

Volunteer Involvement

One of the aims of this funding program is to engage more Victorians in coastal volunteering. Projects that engage potential new volunteers and volunteers from diverse backgrounds, or offer the opportunity for short-term volunteers will be viewed favourably.

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Community Engagement

Projects that engage the broader community in a conservation issue stand a better chance of long-term success. There are different degrees and methods of engagement. It is also your responsibility to engage the local Indigenous community and/or traditional owner body where relevant. Please consider the engagement needs of your project as you develop your proposal.

Who can I contact?

Coastcare Regional Facilitator Contacts:

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