



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science
Department of the
Environment and Energy

Business

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Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Communities Environment Program 2019-20

Opening date:	12 August 2019
Closing date and time:	0500pm AEDT on 10 th October 2019
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of the Environment and Energy
Administering entity	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	26 July 2019 (minor change made to section 5.2 – eligible locations, guidelines re-published 5 August 2019)
Type of grant opportunity:	Closed non-competitive

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1. Communities Environment Program 2019-20 processes

The Communities Environment Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment Program 1.1, which contributes to the Department of the Environment and Energy's Outcome 1. The Department of the Environment and Energy works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#).



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#).



MP undertakes community consultation

Federal Members of Parliament (MPs) may establish a community consultation committee or consult an existing committee to assist in identifying potential applicants and projects.



Nomination by MP and invitation

After consulting with the community, MPs will nominate projects to us. We, via the MP, will invite selected applicants to submit an application online via [business.gov.au](#).



Invited applicants complete and submit an online grant application

You complete the application form and address all of the eligibility criteria to be considered for a grant.



We assess all grant applications

We assess the applications for completeness and against the eligibility criteria as well as an overall consideration of value for money.



We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker (defined in section 7.2) on the merits of each application.



Grant decisions are made

The Program Delegate decides which applications are successful taking into consideration the proper use of public resources.



We notify you of the outcome

Your MP will advise you of the outcome of your application and we will then provide formal written confirmation. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants and pay the grant. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and will be proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We monitor your progress.



Evaluation of the Communities Environment Program 2019-20 grant opportunity

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Communities Environment Program 2019-20 as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

2. About the grant program

The Communities Environment Program (the program) will run over one year in 2019-20. The Australian Government announced the program in March 2019 prior to the 2019 Budget as a measure to support small scale, community-led environment projects that address local environmental priorities in each of the 151 federal electorates across Australia.

The program forms part of the Australian Government's 2019 environment policy election commitment, *Our Plan for a Cleaner Environment*. It aims to support the environmental priorities of local community and environment groups in their regions and neighbourhoods, to recover and strengthen the environment and to build and strengthen local communities.

This program will help the Australian Government meet its national and international obligations, including under the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act). The program complements other Australian Government environment programs, including the [Environment Restoration Fund](#), which focusses on larger scale projects, and existing investments delivered through the [National Landcare Program](#), such as Regional Land Partnerships.

The objectives of the program are to:

- deliver positive environmental and social outcomes
- give communities the resources, skills and knowledge to care for the environment.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- improved management of native species, including threatened species, and their habitat
- improved management of the environment, including coastal, wetland and riparian areas
- reduced levels of threats and risks to the environment, including from the impact of litter/waste, run-off to waterways, feral animals, diseases and weeds
- increased community knowledge of, and participation in, activities that protect and restore environmental assets
- increased community connection with the natural environment in their local area.

Community consultation is a critical element of the program. In consultation with their community, each Member of Parliament (MP) must identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate and invite them to apply for a grant. Invited applications will be assessed against the program's eligibility criteria through a closed non-competitive process.

The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (the department/we) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of the Environment and Energy.

We will publish the [opening and closing dates](#) and any other relevant information on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs)¹.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in appendix A.

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

2.1. Community Consultation

Each Federal Member of Parliament (MP) will be strongly encouraged to consult with their communities, and may consult with an existing consultation committee or establish a new consultation committee, with representatives from the local community, to identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate. To assist with identifying community groups and/or representatives within the electorate, MPs may contact their nearest Regional Land Partnerships service provider for information and advice.

The identified projects must be consistent with the intended program objectives and criteria. MPs must advise the department of the basis for project selection and provide a detailed list of nominated applicants and projects, and where relevant, project sponsors.

The MP will invite identified potential applicants (including project sponsors) to apply for a grant for identified projects by sending them a link to an online application form. Only applicants invited to apply can submit an application. Invited applicants must not forward the link to the application form to anyone else.

Invited applicants must submit a completed application to the department. We assess all applications for eligibility and completeness.

An invitation to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

3. Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$22.65 million in 2019-20 for the program, to provide up to \$150,000 in each of the 151 federal electorates.

3.1. Grants available

Each electorate has up to \$150,000 in funding that can be allocated to successful applications. A maximum of 20 projects will be funded in each electorate.

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project costs (grant percentage).

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

Additional cash and/or in-kind contributions towards the project costs are strongly encouraged. Where you provide in-kind contributions including labour, goods or services, you must calculate the dollar value. In-kind labour/volunteer hours should be estimated at \$39/hour and professional advice should be estimated at \$45/hour. Provision of goods is to be calculated at the retail or market price that the goods would have been bought for.

We cannot fund your project if it receives funding from another Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government grant. 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.

3.2. Project period

You must complete your project no later than 31 December 2020.

You may start your project from the date you submit your application. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. You must incur your project expenditure between the project start and end dates to be eligible.

Please note, when calculating the duration of the project, you should factor in additional time for obtaining approvals, contracting tradespeople, possible weather delays and any other unforeseen circumstances that may prevent you completing your project on time.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible?

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 but not limited to:
 - community associations, including
 - Parents and Citizens, Parents and Friends groups and equivalent bodies*
 - non-distributing co-operatives
 - companies limited by guarantee
 - Indigenous not for profit corporations
- 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 (see section 4.2)
- a local governing body as defined by the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*

* This includes Queensland Parents and Citizens' Associations which are prevented from incorporation by their governing legislation but are still considered legal entities.

For the purpose of this program, we also consider the following organisations to be local governing bodies:

- Anangu Pitjantjatjara, Maralinga, Gerard, Nepabunna and Yalata local governing bodies in SA
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council
- Lord Howe Island Board

- Norfolk Island Regional Council
- The Outback Communities Authority
- The Shire of Christmas Island
- The Silverton and Tibooburra villages in NSW
- The Trust Account in the NT, and
- The ACT Government.

For the avoidance of doubt, unincorporated entities are not eligible for a grant under the Communities Environment Program unless an eligible project sponsor (see section 4.2 below) applies on their behalf.

If applying as a not for profit organisation you must demonstrate your 'not for profit' status through one of the following:

- State or Territory incorporated association registration number or certificate of incorporation, e.g. clubs and other associations
- current Australian Charities and Not for profits Commission's (ACNC) registration, e.g. for organisations registered as a charity
- constitutional documents that demonstrate the not for profit character of the organisation
- legislation that demonstrates the not for profit nature of the organisation, e.g. religious organisations incorporated under legislation.

If applying as an incorporated trustee of a trust you must provide relevant trust documents confirming the trust's responsibility for community property and your ability to act on behalf of the trust.

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 6.2.

4.2. Project sponsor

If you are an organisation that may not be able to incorporate, such as Landcare, Coastcare or Bushcare groups or equivalent bodies (excluding individuals and partnerships), or Parents and Citizens or Parents and Friends groups in some states, you may nominate a project sponsor to apply on your behalf. Your project sponsor will need to meet all of the eligibility criteria and be nominated by your MP. The project sponsor will need to submit the application on behalf of your organisation, enter into a grant agreement and be responsible for any obligations under the agreement with the Commonwealth.

Project sponsors may act as a sponsor for more than one project, provided they have capacity to support delivery of the applicant group(s) projects within the project period.

Please note, individuals and partnerships cannot be sponsored under this program.

4.3. Additional eligibility requirements

In order to be eligible you must also:

- apply for the project and grant amount as agreed to and nominated by your MP
- have a plan for how you will carry out the project
- provide the relevant mandatory attachments as outlined in section 6.1.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.4. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a for profit organisation
- an individual
- a partnership
- an unincorporated association (unless sponsored, see section 4.2)
- 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.
- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity
- a political party, political organisation or lobbyist
- an organisation that is not based in Australia.

4.5. What qualifications or skills are required?

If you are successful, relevant personnel working on the project must maintain the following registration/checks:

- Working with Children check
- Working with Vulnerable People registration.

5. What you can use the grant for

5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be nominated by your MP
- be aimed at the program objectives outlined at section 2
- direct the majority of grant funding to an on-ground eligible activity
- have at least \$2,500 in eligible expenditure
- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- be undertaken in an eligible location (see section 5.2)
- be completed by 31 December 2020.

Eligible activities must be undertaken for a public purpose and represent value for money. The primary objective must not be directed at making a profit, nor should the applicant (or lead applicant/sponsor) receive sole benefit from the project.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

- citizen science activities that encourage people to collect and contribute information about their local environment, such as monitoring local flora, fauna, water quality and marine debris
- activities that protect or enhance the natural environment and/or support recovery of native species/communities, such as:
 - actions identified in recovery plans or conservation advices for threatened species
 - collection and propagation of seed from native species

- revegetation using locally appropriate native species (e.g. to increase suitable habitat and available food sources for native animals, to increase biodiversity or provide bio-linkages to reduce the impact of climate change)
- removal of barriers to species traversing landscapes and waterways (e.g. fish ladders)
- habitat support for species (e.g. provision of nesting boxes or artificial burrows)
- activities that reduce threats and risks to the natural environment, such as:
 - managing invasive weeds, pest animals or diseases (e.g. construction of wash-down stations)
 - fencing to support environmental protection and/or restoration (e.g. control access to sensitive sites, remnant vegetation or revegetation sites)
 - management of access to sensitive areas, including installation of infrastructure, such as boardwalks and sand ladders
 - managing erosion (e.g. to reduce impacts on environmentally sensitive areas/waterways and/or to directly improve the ecological condition of a site)
 - reducing sediment, contaminant and nutrient run-off to waterways.
- activities that reduce the impact of waste and litter, such as litter clean-up events (including marine debris collection), and litter management infrastructure
- activities that encourage re-use and recycling, such as new or enhanced recycling drop-off facilities, and community-based initiatives to repair, share, re-use or recycle products.
- activities that improve carbon sequestration (e.g. improved ground cover)
- educational activities that build community knowledge about their local environment and how the community can conserve, protect, monitor, and/or manage it sustainably

You must have, or be able to obtain during the project, all relevant and required permissions, approvals, licences, and/or permits required to undertake the project within the project period. For example, the support of the relevant site owner(s) where works are proposed, approvals for any structures to be erected, and permits related to undertaking burns or threatened species related interventions.

Participation of Indigenous people in the program and activities is encouraged, including the sharing of their ecological knowledge to support achievement of the project and program outcomes.

Portable equipment must be housed in your MP's electorate.

A Member of Parliament may nominate an applicant/sponsor to deliver more than one project if they have capacity to deliver these within the project period.

We may also approve other activities.

5.2. Eligible locations

Your project must be located in your MP's electorate. You may undertake your project at more than one site within your MP's electorate. Federal electorate boundaries² for the purposes of this program are as at the 2019 Federal election, except in relation to coastal boundaries, which will be taken to be the further distance offshore of either the electorate boundary or Coastal Waters (3

² <https://www.aec.gov.au/Electorates/maps.htm>

nautical mile limit)³ boundary. Complementary works by groups in their respective electorates to address an issue broader than one electorate is encouraged.

If you are undertaking on-ground works on a property, monitoring/surveying a species, or addressing other environmental issues that partly cross over into an adjoining electorate and requires works to be undertaken in that electorate to achieve satisfactory environmental outcomes, you must undertake the majority of work in your MP's electorate.

5.3. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement. You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

Eligible expenditure items are:

- the costs of project related planning, administration, consultation, coordination, monitoring and reporting
- the costs of suppliers, consultants, specialists/experts and contracted labour undertaking eligible project activities
- the purchase of materials required to deliver eligible project activities (e.g. herbicides, seed, tubestock, planting hardware, plant propagation materials, fencing materials, rock, nesting boxes, litter collection bags, etc.)
- the costs of obtaining required permissions, licences, permits, and/or planning, environmental, heritage or other regulatory approvals
- the purchase, lease or hire of equipment required to deliver eligible project activities
- the installation of equipment and infrastructure as part of eligible project activities (e.g. boardwalks, interpretive signage, litter traps, recycling drop-off /sorting infrastructure)
- project related mapping, surveying and monitoring activities
- design and production of educational materials and project/event communications, including event advertising materials, workshop materials, fact sheets, web materials, interpretive or other project related signage
- venue/facility hire required to deliver eligible project activities
- provision of light refreshments/drinks (excluding alcohol) to maintain hydration and support safe community participation at community events
- personal protective equipment required to deliver eligible project activities
- project related insurance costs required to deliver eligible project activities.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

5.4. What you cannot use the grant for

Expenditure items or activities that are not eligible are:

- activities that do not lie within the eligible locations (see section 5.2)

³ as defined under the Australian Marine Spatial Information System (or AMSIS) at <https://www.ga.gov.au/scientific-topics/marine/jurisdiction/maritime-boundary-definitions>

- the cost of provision of goods, services or support activities not related to the eligible project activities
- activities already funded through another Australian, state or territory, or local government program
- the cost of business as usual activities, including staff salaries and consumables recurring or ongoing expenditure (e.g. annual maintenance)
- retrospective costs (incurred prior to submission of an application), including costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- alcohol expenses
- catering expenses, except for provision of light refreshments/drinks that support safe community participation at community events (e.g. to maintain hydration)
- activities where the primary purpose is to beautify or improve amenity (e.g. picnic tables, shelters, paving, landscaping, and gardening), with no (or limited) benefit to the natural environment
- planting of species that are known to be, or have the potential to become, an agricultural or environmental weed, this may include some native Australian species when planted out of region
- revegetation activities using species which are not locally appropriate
- broad scale clearing of native vegetation, including native grasslands
- willow removal where professional advice has not been sought
- activities that deliver primarily a private benefit or are the normal responsibility of landholders
- business activities where the primary purpose is for profit
- purchase or acquisition of land or buildings
- activities involving political advocacy
- overseas travel
- production of clothing, equipment or merchandise for distribution
- fencing of property boundaries.

6. How to apply

Before applying, you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

You can only submit an application during a funding round.

To apply, you must:

- be invited by your MP to submit an application
- complete the online application form
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

We may ask you to substantiate your project costs. You should have evidence for the costs that you include in your project budget to provide upon request. If there is an in-kind contribution of labour, equipment or materials you will also need to be able to provide a breakdown of this contribution to the project costs.

You will be asked to provide mapping of the spatial location of your project site(s) in a tool provided by the Department of the Environment and Energy.

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application. You should retain a copy of your application for your own records.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would materially change your submission after the application closing time.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you are unable to submit an application online, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

6.1. Attachments to the application

We may require the following documents with your application:

- evidence of your not-for-profit status (if applicable)
- trust deed (if applicable)
- letters of support from project partners for joint applications (if applicable).

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

6.2. Joint applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a project. In these circumstances, you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The application should identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners. Each letter of support should include:

- details of the project partner
- an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

6.3. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	4-6 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4-6 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	1-3 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	The date you submit your application
End date of grant commitment	31 December 2020

7. The grant selection process

Your MP, with the help of community consultation, will identify potential projects, with a total value of up to \$150,000, in their electorate that are consistent with the program objectives and eligibility criteria.

The MP will invite identified potential applicants to apply and send them a link to the online application form. It is important to note that an invitation to submit an application by your MP does not guarantee that your application will be successful.

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

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition to your application.

7.1. Replacement projects

If an application is not eligible, we will seek a further nomination from the relevant MP for an alternative project in their electorate to replace the ineligible project.

The nominated replacement project must meet all the eligibility criteria to be recommended for funding.

7.2. Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate (who is an AusIndustry Senior Responsible Officer with responsibility for the program) decides which grants to approve taking into account the application assessment, availability of grant funds and whether funding a project will be a proper use of public resources. When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, the Program Delegate will have regard to the overall objectives of the grant opportunity, the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives and the relative value of the grant sought.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval of applications for funding
- the amount of grant funding awarded
- the terms and conditions of funding.

We cannot review decisions about your application.

The Program Delegate will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

8. Notification of application outcomes

If you are successful, you will receive notification from your MP and a letter of approval from the department, including any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing.

9. Successful grant applications

9.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We use two types of grant agreements in this program. Our selection will depend on the size and complexity of your project. Each grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. Sample [grant agreements](#) are available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of funding.

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

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

9.2. Approval letter grant agreement

We may use an approval letter grant agreement when we have no need to clarify or amend any details in your application form. This grant agreement comprises your completed application form and the approval letter we send advising that your application has been successful. We consider the agreement to be executed (take effect) from the date of our approval letter.

9.3. Exchange of letters grant agreement

We may use an exchange of letters grant agreement when we need to clarify or amend details in your application form. We will send you a letter of offer advising that your application has been successful. You accept the offer by signing and returning it to us. We consider the agreement to be executed (take effect) from the date you sign the letter. You will have 21 days from the date of our letter to sign and return to us, otherwise the offer may lapse.

9.4. Project specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to workplace health and safety
- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children
- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with vulnerable people

- State/Territory legislation in relation to weed management
- State/Territory legislation in relation to biosecurity
- State/Territory legislation in relation to activities around waterways
- State/Territory legislation in relation to animal welfare and ethics
- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with Aboriginal relics
- State/Territory legislation in relation to agricultural and veterinary chemicals use
- Commonwealth/State/Territory legislation dealing with native vegetation and environment protection.

9.4.1. Child Safety Requirements

You must comply with all relevant legislation relating to the employment or engagement of anyone working on the project that may interact with children, including all necessary working with children checks.

You must implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations endorsed by the Commonwealth and available at: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>.

You will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse, and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You must update this risk assessment at least annually.

You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure personnel are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements, relevant legislation including mandatory reporting requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

9.5. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any in-kind contributions you will make
- any financial contribution provided by you or a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the project.

9.6. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities.⁴

⁴ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at ato.gov.au

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

10. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on business.gov.au. This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

11. How we monitor your project

11.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

11.2. Reporting

On completion of your report, you must submit an end of project report in line with the grant agreement. We will provide sample templates for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due.

11.2.1. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- report on project achievements against the agreed activities

- provide geospatial data on the location of the project site(s) (if different to that previously provided, or if not previously provided)
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project, including other contributions
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- photographic evidence of the project site(s) before and after completion of project activities including (where relevant):
 - at least two, good quality, representative photos (from different perspectives at the same location) taken before, and after, activities are undertaken
- be submitted by the report due date
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

11.2.2. Ad-hoc report

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

11.3. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

11.4. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement, including:

- extending the timeframe for completing the project
- changing project activities.

Note that the program does not allow for an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the project end date.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome(s)
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

11.5. Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

11.6. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This project received grant funding from the Australian Government’s Communities Environment Program.’

If you erect signage in relation to the project, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant.

12. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

12.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer, or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#)⁵ of the [Public Service Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)⁶. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the department’s [website](#)⁷.

12.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 12.2.1, or
- personal information as per 12.2.3,

⁵ https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00270/Html/Text#_Toc491767030

⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00270>

⁷ <https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/g/files/net3906/f/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf>

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

12.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

12.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

12.2.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁸ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

12.2.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

13. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division

AusIndustry – Support for Business

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

GPO Box 2013

CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)⁹ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

⁸ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

⁹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

Appendix A. Definitions of key terms

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
AusIndustry	The division of the same name within the department.
Department	The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.3.
Federal electorate	A geographical area of Australia (known as an electoral division) represented by a member of Parliament elected at a House of Representatives election.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.
In-kind contribution	In-kind contribution refers to goods, services and labour provided to deliver your project that have a monetary value, but do not involve a payment. For the purposes of the program, it does not include the cost of employees, volunteers or service delivery after project completion.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Energy.

Term	Definition
On-ground	<p>On-ground refers to Project activities that monitor, survey, or directly make a change to, the state of the natural biophysical environment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ land / soil; ▪ plants / animals and their habitats; or ▪ coasts / wetlands / waterways. <p>Educational activities where participant learning / training is undertaken as part of an on-ground activity, such as learning about tree planting while undertaking tree planting, is considered on-ground.</p> <p>Educational activities that involve participants visiting sites to learn how to appropriately address an environmental issue and where subsequent practice change forms part of the project may be considered on-ground.</p> <p>All costs associated with planning, advertising and undertaking an on-ground activity may be considered an on-ground cost.</p>
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Program Delegate	<p>An AusIndustry Senior Responsible Officer within the department with responsibility for the program.</p>
Program funding or Program funds	<p>The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.</p>
Project	<p>A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.</p>
Regional Land Partnerships service provider	<p>One of the formally recognised regional natural resource management organisations across Australia that have entered into a services agreement with the Commonwealth under the National Landcare Program's Regional Land Partnerships to deliver a range of core and project services to manage, protect and improve natural resources in their respective management unit area(s).</p>