



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program 2019-20 to 2020-21

Opening date:	1 April 2020
Closing date and time:	<p>This grant opportunity will be available in tranches. The closing date and time for each tranche will be as follows:</p> <p>Tranche 1: 11.30 pm AEST 22 April 2020</p> <p>Tranche 2: 11.30 pm AEST 28 May 2020</p> <p>If there are unallocated funds remaining at the end of Tranche 2, the Department may (at its sole discretion) choose to run a third tranche. If this occurs, the availability of Tranche 3 will be advertised on GrantConnect and the closing date for Tranche 3 will be as follows:</p> <p>Tranche 3: 11.30 pm AEST TBD</p>
Commonwealth policy entity:	The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
Administering entity	N/A
Enquiries:	<p>If you have any questions, contact the Bushfire Recovery Implementation Team in the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment:</p> <p>Telephone: 1800 803 772</p> <p>Email: BRIT@environment.gov.au</p> <p>Questions should be submitted no later than the day prior to the closing time for each tranche.</p>
Date guidelines released:	1 April 2020
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program

A Message from the Minister

I am pleased to announce that conservation groups, wildlife carers and community land managers can now access grants of up to \$1 million for on-ground action to help bushfire affected wildlife and plants.

The Australian Government is continuing to support environmental recovery in the wake of recent devastating bushfires.

As part of our initial commitment of \$50 million for emergency wildlife and habitat bushfire recovery, up to \$12 million is available through this open, competitive grants process.

COVID-19 hasn't taken away the challenges we face in bushfire recovery. With the advice of the Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel, we are continuing to direct funds to the areas of highest priority. Work may need to be modified to protect people but we are staying focussed on the challenge.

Since the fires, the Government has received many offers of help and proposals for ways communities, government and non-government sectors can work together on recovery. These grants will help some of these great local projects swing into action.

Grants will be available over two or more tranches so emerging priorities can be addressed as we understand more about bushfire impacts.

Despite COVID-19 precautions restricting some field work, significant work is taking place under the Morrison Government's \$50 million Wildlife and Habitat Recovery Package.

This includes feral animal control, pest and weed control, animal relocation and zoo programs, habitat stabilisation, using camera traps to detect native species and predators alike, and detailed recovery planning through the Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel.

The scale and intensity of these fires means recovery will take time. We are resolute in supporting the recovery for our unique and precious native wildlife—I encourage all eligible groups to apply for this important next step in the recovery effort.

More information about work to support bushfire recovery for wildlife and habitat is on the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment website at www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/bushfire-recovery or email: BRIT@environment.gov.au

SUSSAN LEY

The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment



Contents

1	Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program process	5
1.1	Introduction	6
1.2	Impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19)	6
2	About the grant program	6
2.1	Objectives	7
3	Grant amount and grant period	8
3.1	Grants available	8
3.2	Grant activity period	8
4	Eligibility criteria	8
4.1	Who is eligible to apply for a grant?	8
4.2	Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?	9
4.3	Proposals must not duplicate activities already underway	9
5	What the grant money can be used for	9
5.1	Eligible grant activities	9
5.2	Eligible expenditure	10
5.3	What the grant money cannot be used for	10
6	The assessment criteria	11
7	How to apply	13
7.1	Attachments to the application	13
7.2	Joint (consortia) applications	14
7.3	Timing of grant opportunity processes	14
7.4	Questions during the application process	15
8	The grant selection process	15
8.1	Assessment of grant applications	15
8.2	Assessment by the Department	16
8.3	Advice from the Expert Panel	17
8.4	Approval of the grants	17
9	Notification of application outcomes	17
9.1	Feedback on your application	17
10	Successful grant applications	18
10.1	The grant agreement	18
10.2	Specific legislation, policies and industry standards	18
10.3	How we pay the grant	19
10.4	Grants Payments and GST	20
11	Announcement of grants	20
12	How we monitor your grant activity	20
12.1	Keeping us informed	20
12.2	Reporting	20

12.3	Financial declaration	21
12.4	Grant agreement variations	21
12.5	Compliance visits	22
12.6	Record keeping.....	22
12.7	Evaluation	22
12.8	Acknowledgement.....	22
13	Probity.....	22
13.1	Enquiries and feedback	23
13.2	Conflicts of interest	23
13.3	Privacy	23
13.4	Confidential Information.....	24
13.5	Freedom of information.....	25
14	Glossary.....	25

**** Warning: Health and safety is paramount ****

- A fireground is dangerous. Even after a fire has passed, these are still dangerous areas.
- You must put in place relevant Work Health Safety policies and procedures to ensure the safety of those undertaking grant activities.
- You must comply with any government measures and requirements in relation to COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

1 Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program process

The Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's Outcome 1. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 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 [GrantConnect](#). The priority matters to be addressed in grant applications for each Tranche are published on GrantConnect and the department's website.

Note that the Panel's priorities are subject to change over the life of the grant program.



You complete and submit a grant application

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



The Department assesses all grant applications

We assess the applications against the eligibility criteria. We assess your eligible application against all the assessment criteria, and rank your application against other applications as a part of the overall consideration of value with relevant money. The Expert Panel will provide advice to the Department about the Department's assessment.



The Department makes grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker based on eligibility, assessment and value with relevant money considerations.



Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



The Department notifies you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application and notify unsuccessful applicants.



The Department enters into a grant agreement with you

We will enter into a grant agreement with you if you are successful. 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 manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of grant activities and program as a whole

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for applicants for funding under the Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

1.2 Impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Applicants need to take into consideration time frames and constraints on delivery resulting from COVID-19, when preparing their application.

Projects need to be designed to ensure participants' safety and health. Once the crisis has passed, the Department will discuss with grantees whether there are modifications to the project that could be made that would improve its effectiveness.

2 About the grant program

The bushfires of 2019–20 have had a devastating impact on Australia's wildlife and habitat.

On 6 January 2020, the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, announced \$2 billion for a national bushfire recovery fund. This includes a commitment of \$50 million for an emergency wildlife and habitat recovery package, as announced by the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP and the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, on 13 January 2020.

Of this, \$25 million has been made available to support wildlife rescue, zoos, natural resource management organisations, Greening Australia and Conservation Volunteers Australia with on-ground activities. This will include:

- up to \$7 million for natural resource management organisations in bushfire affected areas to carry out emergency interventions including control of feral predators, other pest animals and weeds, and habitat protection measures (such as fencing and nest boxes).
- up to \$7.5 million to support on-ground wildlife rescue, protection and care services and address emerging needs on the frontline. A \$1 million grant to the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife will support its Wildlife Heroes program.
- up to \$5 million for Greening Australia to increase supply of seed and native plants for revegetation.
- up to \$3 million for Taronga Zoo, Zoos South Australia and Zoos Victoria for treatment of injured wildlife and the establishment of insurance populations of at-risk species.
- up to \$2.5 million for Conservation Volunteers Australia to mobilise volunteers through a national coordination point.

As part of the package, \$25 million has been provided for emergency interventions to help with the immediate survival of affected animals, plants and ecological communities and to control pests and weeds. Of this \$25 million:

- \$13 million has been set aside for activities to be delivered by State and Territory governments
- up to \$12 million is available under this Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program grant opportunity.

The Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program is being delivered through the Environment Restoration Fund and contributes to Outcome 1 of the Department's Portfolio Budget Statement:

Conserve, protect and sustainably manage Australia's biodiversity, ecosystems, environment and heritage through research, information management, supporting natural resource management, establishing and managing Commonwealth protected areas, and reducing and regulating the use of pollutants and hazardous substances.

The purpose of Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Program is to support immediate survival and long-term recovery and resilience for fire-affected Australian animals, plants, ecological communities and other natural assets and their cultural values for Indigenous Australians.

A [Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel](#) (Expert Panel) has been charged with advising the Australian Government on prioritising recovery actions for native species, ecological communities, natural assets and their cultural value for Indigenous Australians, which have been affected by recent extreme fire events.

The Expert Panel is identifying animals, plants, ecological communities and other natural assets in need of urgent management intervention (priority matters). For example, on 11 February 2020, on the advice of the Expert Panel, the Australian Government released a provisional list of animal species requiring urgent management intervention.

Further priority matters will be identified as analysis is completed and further information about on ground impacts is compiled.

The "Australian Government's List of Priority Matters" relevant to each tranche will be made available alongside these guidelines on GrantConnect (www.grants.gov.au) and on the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's bushfire recovery website (<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/bushfire-recovery>).

The Australian Government is keen to have a better understanding of what is happening on the ground, based on local knowledge. Therefore, the grant program does not preclude applications that include or solely relate to species or ecological communities or other natural assets that have not yet been identified by the Expert Panel as priority matters, provided there is sufficient context and justification.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is responsible for administering the grant program in accordance with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* (CGRGs)¹. Any person involved in administering the program, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs. This includes the Expert Panel.

2.1 Objectives

The program objectives are designed to guide immediate recovery efforts. The objectives include:

- prevent extinction and limit decline of native species and ecological communities

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

- maximise the chances for long term recovery of native species and ecological communities
- ensure learning and continual improvement is at the core of the response.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- improved prospects for species and ecological communities—by limiting decline or preventing extinction
- improved prospects for cultural values of Indigenous Australians, in relation to species, ecological communities and other natural assets
- natural values of heritage places are maintained or restored
- improved understanding of future actions required to ensure recovery.

3 Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Grants available

For this grant opportunity up to \$12 million is available for projects commencing as soon as possible. It is anticipated that up to 60 per cent of available funds will be allocated through Tranche 1, with the balance available for Tranche 2 and any subsequent tranches.

- The grant opportunity will be run in at least two tranches.
- If there are unallocated funds remaining at the end of Tranche 2, the Department may (at its sole discretion) choose to run a third tranche. If this occurs, the availability of Tranche 3 will be advertised on GrantConnect.
- The minimum grant amount is \$100,000.
- The maximum grant amount is \$1 million.
- Applicants can submit multiple (different) applications over the life of the grant opportunity.

The grant amount will cover up to 100 per cent of eligible expenditure. However other contributions are encouraged, and will be considered as part of the value with relevant money assessment.

3.2 Grant activity period

You must complete your grant activity by 30 June 2021, regardless of whether you receive funding for your grant activity through Tranche 1, Tranche 2 or Tranche 3 (if the latter occurs).

You must incur your grant activity expenditure on or after the grant activity start date, as set out in the grant agreement.

4 Eligibility criteria

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

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must:

- have an account with an Australian financial institution
- and
- be an Australian legal entity, for instance
 - an individual
 - an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust

- a company incorporated in Australia
- a partnership where each of the partners are legal entities
- an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander corporation, council or incorporated association
- a local government authority in Australia
- an incorporated organisation or cooperative society

and either:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST, if required to be registered by the Australian Tax Office (ATO), or
- supply a completed Statement by a Supplier form if you do not have an ABN, explaining why you are not required to have an ABN. The template is available on the ATO website at <https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/statement-by-a-supplier-not-quoting-an-abn/>.

Applications from consortia are encouraged, as long as there is a lead applicant who is solely accountable to the Commonwealth for the delivery of grant activities and the lead applicant and proposed contracting entity is an eligible entity as per the above. See Section 7.2 for further information on joint (consortia) applications.

4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an overseas resident/organisation, or
- a State, Territory or Commonwealth Government (a separate funding process applies) with the exception of natural resource management organisations that are government entities (for example, catchment management authorities or local land services).

4.3 Proposals must not duplicate activities already underway

Your application may be deemed ineligible if you are unable to clearly demonstrate that the proposal does not duplicate other government-funded management actions that are already underway in the location you are proposing to undertake activities.

However, proposals can be designed to complement, extend or expand existing activities or designed to be stand-alone projects. Activities that are complementary to work that is already underway may demonstrate alignment, for example:

- by filling a critical gap
- by expanding or supplementing an existing activity, or
- by extending the timeframe of an existing activity.

5 What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your grant activities should directly address a priority matter (or matters) relevant to the tranche you are applying for, as published on GrantConnect, or address a non-priority matter with sufficient context and justification.

There is a broad range of priority activities that will help to meet the objectives of the program. These may include:

- protecting unburnt areas within or adjacent to recently burnt ground that provide refugia
- feral predator and herbivore control to reduce the pressure on native species

- emergency salvage of plant and animal species for ex-situ conservation or wild-to-wild translocation
- rapid on-ground assessment for species and communities of concern
- supplementary shelter, food, and water for native animals where appropriate.

This list is not exhaustive and other activities may be more appropriate for some species, ecological communities and/or other natural assets.

For the avoidance of doubt:

- the Commonwealth will consider grant activities that expand or supplement existing activities or programs funded by other government entities
- the Commonwealth will consider grant activities that include or relate to non-priority matters, with sufficient context and justification for the inclusion of these matters. In such cases, the applications must still demonstrate that their proposed actions will contribute to preventing extinction, or contribute to recovery of fire-affected species or ecological communities.

5.2 Eligible expenditure

A critical aspect of grant administration is ensuring that funds are used properly (efficiently, effectively, economically and ethically) and adequate financial and non-financial records are kept. You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on eligible grant activities or agreed project activities.

Eligible expenditure items include:

- on-ground bushfire recovery activities for species, assets and places
- purchase (or hire) of equipment and supplies to support recovery activities
- administrative support and overheads additional to the normal day to day running costs of the organisation (maximum 10 per cent)
- reporting on project progress and outcomes in the form advised by the Department (maximum 5 per cent).

We may update the guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your grant activity.

Not all expenditure on your grant activity 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.

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start date and end or completion date for your grant agreement for it to be eligible.

5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- provision of goods, services or support for activities not directly related to eligible grant activities
- major capital expenditure, such as construction/capital works (excluding fencing) with a GST exclusive value of \$10,000 or more, unless identified in the application and agreed to by the Department in writing

- the purchase of land or the purchase of other assets (being an item of tangible property purchases, leased, hired, financed, created or otherwise brought into existence either wholly or in part with the use of the grant and which has a GST exclusive value of \$10,000 or more), unless identified in the application and agreed to by the Department in writing
- the covering of retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- administration costs and overheads related to the ongoing operations of an organisation
- activities likely to have a significant adverse impact on any matter of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
- activities likely to have a significant adverse impact on Indigenous cultural heritage without approval through relevant state or territory legislation
- lobbying activities and media campaigns that could be considered political in nature (whole or part)
- international travel, first or business class domestic travel
- activities outside of Australia, and
- any other activity or item determined during the assessment process by the Department to be an inappropriate or unsuitable use of the funds.

Note: If an item in your application is deemed ineligible this will not necessarily affect the rest of your application. The Department may choose to reduce the grant amount or negotiate alternative grant activity costs in its place.

6 The assessment criteria

You must address both of the following assessment criteria in the application. Criteria 1 and 2 are weighted equally.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Criterion 1

The application proposes one activity, or preferably more, likely to prevent extinction, limit decline and/or maximise the chances of recovery of a matter or matters

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- how the grant activities will improve prospects for species, ecological communities, other natural assets and their cultural values by identifying the action/s proposed, the threat/s being responded to and the location/s in which the action/s will take place
- alignment of grant activities with the priority matters as set out in the Australian Government's List of Priority Matters for the relevant Tranche the application is submitted in, or context and justification for the inclusion of non-priority matters (see Note 2 below)
- whether the grant activities will improve prospects for multiple species, ecological communities and other natural assets
- eligible activities and expenditure, consistent with the guidelines
- the urgency of the grant activities
- the relationship of the grant activities to other relevant management actions already underway.
- how the grant activity's impact will be monitored and measured

- the extent to which information arising from the project will or can be incorporated in broader reporting of recovery.

Note 1: Assessment considerations will include:

- *the breadth of the proposal including the number of matters addressed and/or the geographic extent covered, including regions and multiple regions*
- *the extent to which the proposal will contribute to meeting the grant program's objectives and delivering on its outcomes (i.e. demonstrates measurable improved prospects for species and ecological communities)*
- *the relationship of the activity to activities already underway will be examined by the extent to which the proposal fills a gap or complements other management actions underway*
- *the extent to which the proposal is consistent with recovery plans and conservation advices (where such plans and/or advices are in place)*
- *the social, technical and economic feasibility of the proposal*
- *the extent to which the proposal demonstrates strong Indigenous partnerships and Traditional Owner engagement*
- *the extent to which community and key stakeholder involvement has been incorporated into the proposal*
- *the extent to which the applicant is able to demonstrate how the intended outcomes for species, ecological communities and/or other natural assets will be directly measured and reported on.*

Note 2: While preference may be given to projects that target priority matters, applications that include non-priority matters will be fully assessed provided that sufficient context and justification for the non-priority matters is provided.

Criterion 2

The applicant has demonstrated that it has the capability and capacity to deliver the grant activities.

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- appropriate governance arrangements
- knowledge, skills and past experience in efficiently and effectively delivering environmental projects
- the extent to which relevant expertise has been incorporated into the project team
- approach to managing collaborations and partnerships, if relevant
- approach to managing land tenure considerations
- all relevant approvals, permits, licences etc
- all potential risks associated with the proposal, including Work Health and Safety risks, and approach to mitigating or managing these risks
- a project budget with an adequate level of detail that is cost-effective with respect to the project's scale and intended outcomes.
- any cash and in-kind contributions by you or project partners that will enhance the achievement the intended outcomes
- adequate resources to deliver the grant activities to a high standard, in accordance with all relevant legislation, policies and industry standards and within the required time frame and budget, while meeting all reporting requirements.

7 How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the application form and the sample grant agreement. You will also need to review the relevant priority matter list that is relevant to the tranche of the grant opportunity you are applying for.

These documents may be found at [GrantConnect \(www.grants.gov.au\)](http://www.grants.gov.au). Any alterations and addenda² will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

To apply you must:

- access the online grant opportunity application form via the GrantConnect website
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your completed application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately on **1800 803 772** or at BRIT@environment.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing date and time.

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 change your submission after the application closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

We will acknowledge that we have received your application within two working days.

If you need further guidance around the application process or if you are unable to submit an application via email, contact us by calling **1800 803 772** or email BRIT@environment.gov.au.

7.1 Attachments to the application

We require the following documents with your application (in either .doc, .pdf or .xls formats):

- signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations (if applicable)
- a completed Statement by a Supplier form, if you do not have an ABN
- letters of support if you are submitting a joint (consortia) application
- any other relevant supporting information.

You must indicate in your application whether:

- you have the required insurance(s) and insurance of sufficient value for the proposed grant activities.

² Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

7.2 Joint (consortia) applications

We encourage organisations to join together as a group to deliver a grant activity.

In these circumstances, you must appoint a 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the partners, or be able to provide a letter of support prior to contract signing.

Each letter of support should include:

- details of the partner organisation
- an overview of how the partner organisation will work with the lead organisation and any other partner organisations in the group to successfully complete the grant activity
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the partner organisation will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities of the partner organisation and the resources they 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.

7.3 Timing of grant opportunity processes

You can submit an application at any time before the closing date of each tranche.

The grant opportunity will be offered in at least two tranches.

If there are unallocated funds remaining at the end of Tranche 2, the Department may (at its sole discretion) choose to run a third tranche. If this occurs, the availability of Tranche 3 will be advertised on GrantConnect.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your grant activity as soon as possible (after entering into a grant agreement with the Department) and complete the work by 30 June 2021.

Table 1: Indicative timing for this grant opportunity (dependent on numbers of applications)

Activity	Timeframe
Grant opportunity opens	As specified above (Opening date)
Submission of grant applications for consideration as part of Tranche 1	As specified above (Closing date and time)
Publication of List of Priority Matters for Tranche 2	As Tranche 2 opens (after Tranche 1 closes)
Assessment of Tranche 1 applications	Up to 3 weeks
Advice on Tranche 1 applications by the Expert Panel	Up to 2 weeks once assessed
Recommendations to the Minister	Up to 1 week
Notification to unsuccessful applicants Tranche 1	Immediately after Minister decision

Activity	Timeframe
Contracting and commencement of projects	Commences immediately after Minister decision
Closing date for submission of grant applications for consideration as part of Tranche 2	As specified above (Closing date and time)
Assessment of Tranche 2 applications	Up to 3 weeks
Advice on Tranche 2 applications by the Expert Panel	Up to 2 weeks once assessed
Recommendations to the Minister	Up to 1 week
Contracting and commencement of projects	Commences immediately after Minister decision
Notification to unsuccessful applicants Tranche 2	Immediately after contracting
<i>The Department may (at its sole discretion) choose to run a third tranche if not all funds have been allocated as part of Tranche 1 and Tranche 2.</i>	
Closing date for submission of grant applications for consideration as part of Tranche 3	As specified above (Closing date and time)
End date of grant agreement	30 June 2021

7.4 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, contact the Bushfire Recovery Implementation Team within the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment by calling **1800 803 772** or by emailing BRIT@environment.gov.au.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will respond to emailed questions within two working days. Answers to questions will be posted on [GrantConnect](#).

8 The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications

We will commence assessment of applications for each tranche after the closing date and time for that tranche.

We first review the application for completeness and against the eligibility criteria and may undertake additional due diligence checks. Only eligible applications will progress to the assessment stage.

If eligible, we will then assess your application against the assessment criteria (see Section 6), and against other applications. We consider your application on its merits based on:

- how well it meets the selection criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money³

³ See glossary for an explanation of 'value with relevant money'

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives.
- how the grant activities will engage key stakeholders.
- the risks associated with the grant, including risks of the activity and risks to the Commonwealth

8.2 Assessment by the Department

An assessment team consisting of staff of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will assess each application on its merit and rank it against other eligible applications.

The Department may seek advice from other Commonwealth, State or Territory agencies about matters that may be relevant to the assessment of applications.

Eligible applications with a score of 50 per cent or above in both criterion will be provided to the Expert Panel for advice, based on the below scoring matrix.

Eligible applications that score below 50 per cent in one or both criterion will not progress in the assessment process.

Scoring Range	Rating	Defining Characteristics
90-100%	Outstanding	Exceeds or clearly meets the criterion to a high standard. No identifiable weaknesses or deficiencies. The project is sound and represents negligible risk of not delivering the described outcomes. High probability of success.
70-89%	Good	Meets the criterion to a good standard. The project is sound in all key areas. Some minor weaknesses (e.g. indications some minor aspects of the project may not have been sufficiently thought through). Represents a low risk of not delivering the described outcomes. Good probability of success.
50-69%	Fair	Meets the criterion to a fair standard. Some requirements are not addressed in sufficient detail and weaknesses could indicate a low to moderate risk of not delivering the described outcomes. Acceptable probability of success.
30-49%	Poor	Criterion is poorly addressed. Projects at the lower end of this rating scale provide insufficient information to allow proper judgement that the proposed activities are unworkable. Major deficiencies indicate a high risk of not delivering the described outcomes. Low to very low probability of success.
0-29%	Very Poor	Criterion is very poorly addressed or not addressed at all. Little or no information is provided on the proposed activities or the project fundamentally misses the Program objectives. The project represents an extreme risk of not delivering the described outcomes. Almost no probability of success.

8.3 Advice from the Expert Panel

The Expert Panel will review the Department's assessment and provide specialist advice back to the Department. In preparing its advice, the Expert Panel will consider how each grant application contributes to achieving the program objectives.

In preparing its advice the Panel will take into account:

- the Panel's expertise and knowledge
- the Department's assessment of the proposal against the criteria
- resources and information published on the Department's website, including those related to the Panel
- whether there are risks or unintended consequences associated with the proposal that have not been identified, or have recently emerged,
- the context and justification for the inclusion of non-priority matters.

In preparing its advice the Panel may:

- consider a species' or natural asset's uniqueness, traits or cultural values
- seek external advice about a proposal from within the Commonwealth, State or Territory governments.

The Department's assessment team may reconsider and revise the merit assessment and recommendations to the delegate, based on the advice from the Expert Panel.

8.4 Approval of the grants

The Department's delegate will make recommendations to the Minister on which applications to approve for a grant, based on the merit assessment.

The Minister for the Environment makes the final decision on which grants to approve, taking into account the Department's merit assessment, the recommendations of the Department's delegate, the Expert Panel's advice and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

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

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded
- the terms and conditions of the grant.

9 Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, you will be formally notified, receive an offer in writing and be advised of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing and give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome.

9.1 Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback within one month of being advised of the outcome. We will give feedback within one month of your request. If you meet eligibility and assessment criteria but are not recommended for approval under Tranche 1 you may be considered as part of a future tranche without needing to resubmit the application.

10 Successful grant applications

10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample grant agreement has been prepared based on the Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement template prepared by the Department of Finance, and has been made available on [GrantConnect](#).

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. 'Execute' means both you and the Commonwealth have properly signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed and the expenditure is in accordance with the executed grant agreement. If you choose to start your grant activity before you have an executed grant agreement, you do so at your own risk. We may ask you to verify grant activity costs (e.g. by providing quotes for major expenses) that you provided in your application before executing a grant agreement with you.

Your grant agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Minister. We will identify these in the agreement. At a minimum, you will be required to submit reports to the Department on a quarterly basis, in a form to be advised. The grant agreement may require sharing of data collected as part of the project. The Commonwealth reserves the right to use the data provided in any way it sees fit.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement and otherwise in accordance with the grant agreement.

Standard Grant Agreement

We will use the Commonwealth Standard Grant Agreement template as the basis for the grant agreement. The grant agreement is intended to be consistent across all grant recipients but may be tailored by the Department for the particular grant activities.

You will have 10 days from the date of a written offer to sign and return the grant agreement to the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if you do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application.

You may request changes to the grant agreement. We will review any requested changes to the grant agreement, including to ensure they do not impact the grant as approved by the Minister. We may not agree to any or all requested changes to the grant agreement.

10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your grant activity. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards set out below. 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:

- Commonwealth/State/Territory legislation in relation to:
 - workplace health and safety
 - animal care and protection, including prevention of cruelty to animals
 - management of wildlife and listed threatened species

- quarantine, national parks and wildlife, biosecurity, and biodiversity conservation
- agricultural and veterinary chemicals use, including the AgVet Codes
- biosecurity, to prevent the spread of pests and diseases
- native vegetation and environment protection.
- State/Territory legislation in relation to:
 - working with children and working with vulnerable people
 - interstate movement of native plants and animals
 - animal welfare.

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you must comply with the following requirements:

- have in place relevant Work Health Safety policies and procedures to ensure safety of those undertaking grant activities
- requirements relating to state/territory regulated activities, such as take from the wild.
- hold relevant permits or be otherwise accredited with, or authorised by, the relevant state or territory government(s) to undertake the proposed activities in those jurisdictions.
- relevant codes of practice, standards and guidelines, and threatened species conservation programs (where applicable).
- you and other people engaged in the grant activity must not trespass on property in the course of undertaking your grant activity nor endorse, sanction, or give comfort to acts of trespass or unauthorised access to private property.

You must also comply with any government measures and requirements in relation to COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

If the grant activity is proposing to directly affect Indigenous places, values or communities, the applicant must have the consent of the Traditional Owners.

10.3 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount to be paid
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any financial contributions you must make
- any in-kind contributions you will make
- any financial contribution provided by a third party
- reporting requirements
- data sharing requirements.

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

We will make an initial payment on execution of the grant agreement. We will make subsequent payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the grant activity.

10.4 Grants Payments and GST

If you are registered for the [Goods and Services Tax \(GST\)](#), where applicable, we will add GST to your grant payment and issue you with a [Recipient Created Tax Invoice](#). GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities⁴.

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](#).⁵ We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

11 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the [GrantConnect](#) website 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by Section 5.3 of the [CGRGs](#).

12 How we monitor your grant activity

12.1 Keeping us informed

You must let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity or organisation, including your ability to meet the grant activity objectives on time and on budget.

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

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- ABN (if applicable)
- 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 significant events relating to your grant activities and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports on a quarterly basis, in a form to be advised. We may choose to remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against the agreed grant activities, outputs and outcomes
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant activity
- expenditure of the grant.

⁴ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

⁵ <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

You must discuss any reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

Ad-hoc reports

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

Final report

When you complete the grant activity, you must submit a final report.

Final reports must:

- summarise the grant activities, achievements and outcomes
- provide key grant activity statistics
- provide updated geospatial data on the location of the grant activity's area(s) of activity, if changed from that provided during the application process and not previously provided
- include the agreed evidence, as specified in the grant agreement
- be accompanied by a whole of grant activity financial report in the format specified by the Department showing:
 - the grant amount received and any grant activity generated income received
 - the total eligible expenditure incurred
 - the balance remaining (if any), and
 - a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement.
- be submitted by the due date.

12.3 Financial declaration

We will ask you to provide a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

12.4 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect your progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement. You can request a variation by contacting the Department's grant manager who will advise you on the process.

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

- provisions in the grant agreement
- the likely impact on achieving the grant activity and its outcomes
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- appropriate management of health and safety risks
- administrative impact on the department

- availability of program funds.

12.5 Compliance visits

We may visit you during, or at, the completion of your grant activity, to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.6 Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. This includes, but is not limited to, records of animals rescued and rehabilitated and/or of at risk threatened species in care.

12.7 Evaluation

We will evaluate the program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and 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 grant for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.8 Acknowledgement

The grantee must acknowledge the financial support received from the Australian Government all publications, websites, promotional and advertising materials, displays and signage, public announcements and activities relating to the grant:

The [activity] is funded by the Australian Government's Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery program

Tagging the Department on social media, where character limits allow, will help the Department cross-promote projects through Facebook and Twitter. Please use the following handles and hashtags:

Twitter - @envirogov #BushfireRecoveryAU

Facebook – Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
#BushfireRecoveryAU

All promotional materials, publications and websites should also include the Australian Government logo. The logo's colour, shape, form, font or design must not be modified in any way. It should never be placed over an image or heavily textured background or as a tint of a colour. The logo must not be used to give the impression the Australian Government has published a product or endorsed another organisation.

13 Probity

The Australian Government 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.

These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#).

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's [Service Charter](#)⁶ applies to complaints about this grant opportunity. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to BRIT@environment.gov.au.

If you do not agree with the way the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 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 the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's staff, any 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
- 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.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or 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 the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). 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 of Agriculture, Water and the Environment [website](#)⁷.

13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect

⁶ <https://www.environment.gov.au/about-us/publications/service-charter>

⁷ <https://www.environment.gov.au/about-us/accountability-reporting/conduct-ethical-behaviour-framework>

- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the [relevant Commonwealth entity] would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

13.4 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the expert panel and Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner

- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

13.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (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.

All [Freedom of Information requests](#) must be referred to the Freedom of Information Contact Officer in writing.

By mail: Freedom of Information Officer
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: foi@environment.gov.au

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013
administering entity	when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes
assessment criteria	are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity
completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by
co-sponsoring entity	when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.

Term	Definition
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Expert Panel	Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
geospatial data	Data describing location in a form suited for use in a Geographic Information System. Polygon data are required for all proposed activities, mapped at an appropriate fine scale. A web-based tool, deployed with the application form, will make this simple and rapid for applicants to provide.
grant	for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. under which relevant money⁸ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁹ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake
grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant

⁸ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

⁹ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
GrantConnect	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs
grant opportunity	refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
PBS Program	described within the entity's Portfolio Budget Statement , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs. A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
value with relevant money	<p>a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of the project proposal and activities; • fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives; • that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government's outcomes being achieved; and • the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.

