



Regional Waste Management Plan Coordination

Program guidelines



**Queensland
Government**

Prepared by: Partnerships and Governance, Office of Circular Economy, Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

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March 2024

Program guidelines

Regional Waste Management Plan Coordination program

Key information

Opening date:	4 March 2024
Closing date and time:	5pm, 30 June 2024
Funding period:	From commencement date of funding agreement to 30 June 2027
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact: The Partnerships and Governance team at the Office of Circular Economy, Department of Environment, Science and Innovation email: wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au

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Program Guidelines

1 Introduction

The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (the department) is responsible for administering the Regional Waste Management Plan Coordination Grant program (Grant Program), which is a grant program available to Queensland Local Governments, either groups of geographically aligned councils, or lead councils for a region.

In July 2019, the Queensland Government released the *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy*, underpinned by a waste levy which was introduced on 1 July 2019.

On 11 December 2021, the Queensland Government announced a \$2.1 billion waste package, including a \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund, which is administered by the department. This Grant Program is part of the Recycling and Jobs Fund.

The Grant Program will be administered as a non-competitive program, which aims to support groups of geographically aligned councils in the following regional areas to implement regional waste management plans:

- Far North Queensland
- North Queensland
- North West Queensland
- Greater Whitsundays
- Central Queensland
- Wide Bay Burnett
- Darling Downs
- South West Queensland
- Western Queensland.

The program is open to a regional group of councils where it is a legal entity. The program is also open to councils, where the regional group of councils is not a legal entity and/or the regional group of councils has nominated and agreed a lead council will be the grant applicant.

The program will provide grants to eligible grant applicants to engage a coordinator to implement a regional waste management plan. The grants complement the previous grants provided by the department for the development of regional waste management plans.

This document sets out the guidelines for applicants for the Grant Program.

2 The Grant Program

2.1 Program aim

The aim of the program is to better manage waste and facilitate economic growth and job creation across regional Queensland by supporting eligible grant applicants to implement regional waste management plans.

2.2 Program objectives

The objectives of the grant program are of equal priority and are to:

- support groups of geographically aligned councils to deliver coordinated implementation of regional waste management plans
- facilitate engagement across councils within a region regarding implementation of a regional waste management plan
- facilitate delivery of projects in a regional waste management plan, which will contribute to achieving the targets in the *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy*.

The program will support eligible grant applicants to engage a coordinator to implement a regional waste management plan. The desired outcome is to advance achievement of targets in the *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* and facilitate delivery of economic and environmental benefits in regional Queensland.

2.3 Eligibility criteria

This Grant Program is for funding that will benefit multiple local government areas in a region and regional collaboration is essential. To be eligible for funding under the Grant Program, an applicant must be:

- (a) a regional group of councils, which is a legal entity.

If a group of councils wishes to apply for funding which will benefit multiple local government areas in a region, however the group of councils is not a legal entity, then:

- (b) all councils must be identified in the application for funding; but
- (c) a single council constituted under the *Local Government Act 2009* must be nominated as the lead contact, who will be the contracting party and will be responsible for contract management and delivery.

The applicant must have internal approval¹ to make the application.

Only one application will be accepted per region, including where the applicant is a lead council for a regional group of councils.

2.4 Joint applications

There are a range of options for how the coordinator activities are delivered. Each application should be tailored to meet the specific needs of the region. Grant applicants can apply jointly to fund a coordinator shared across neighbouring regions. Grant applicants considering submitting a joint application should contact the Partnerships and Governance team at the Office of Circular Economy on wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au or telephone: 0436 837 418. A joint application must have internal approval from both groups of councils.

2.5 Eligible project activities

To be eligible for Project Funding under the Grant Program, a project must:

- a) be consistent with the objectives of the Grant Program
- b) be to resource coordinated implementation of a regional waste management plan
- c) be capable of being completed by 30 June 2027
- d) be undertaken in an identified region.

The method of resourcing the coordinator role is at the discretion of the grant applicant and may include:

- a) employing a part time or full-time staff member
- b) seconding an existing staff member
- c) engaging a contractor
- d) apportioning wages across one or more existing staff, particularly where recruitment of a suitably experienced candidate may prove difficult.

The scope of activities to be undertaken by a coordinator is described at **Attachment 1**.

¹ For councils this will be endorsement of the project by elected members or relevant financial delegate. For regional groups of councils which are legal entities this may be endorsement from executive management or the board.

2.6 Eligible project costs

Project Funding may only be applied towards “Eligible project costs”. Eligible project costs:

(a) include only:

- (i) wages and on-costs (i.e., leave loading and superannuation guarantee payments, etc.) for employment of a coordinator, including for an employee or a secondee
- (ii) engagement of a contractor as a coordinator
- (iii) recruitment expenses to attract and engage a coordinator
- (iv) coordinator’s travel and accommodation expenses in accordance with the *Minister for Industrial Relations Directive: Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses (Directive 13/23)*, or applicable directive which supersedes Directive 13/23, or applicable council travel policy
- (v) leasing a vehicle and vehicle operating expenses
- (vi) a motor vehicle allowance in accordance with the *Minister for Industrial Relations Directive: Motor Vehicle Allowances (Directive 20/16)*, or applicable directive which supersedes Directive 20/16, or applicable council motor vehicle policy
- (vii) purchase or rent of a mobile telephone and operating expenses
- (viii) a mobile telephone allowance
- (ix) training expenses, including expenses for training programs, workshops, or courses that enhance the knowledge, skills and capacity of the coordinator to fulfil the role and responsibilities included at **Attachment 1**
- (x) workshop expenses, including expenses to conduct workshops to develop an implementation plan, including for venue hire, equipment hire, and catering.

(b) do not include:

- (i) costs associated with development of the grant application
- (ii) computers and computer equipment
- (iii) office rent and outgoings, including rates, electricity, water, equipment hire and maintenance
- (iv) project management or grant administration costs, including management of the coordinator
- (v) procurement expenses, including but not limited to completing feasibility studies or business cases
- (vi) engagement of a contractor, except:
 - i) engagement of a contractor as a coordinator
 - ii) engagement of a contractor to undertake recruitment to attract and engage a coordinator
- (vii) consultant’s² fees
- (viii) office consumables, including but not limited to stationery and printing
- (ix) financial auditor costs such as third-party accountants providing endorsement of the project’s expenditure
- (x) gifts, sponsorships, and membership fees
- (xi) purchase of publicity and advertising materials
- (xii) entertainment, event or celebration expenses

² A consultant is engaged as an individual or via an organisation, and all of the following apply: provides expert knowledge to analyse information, draw conclusions and make recommendations in the form of a written report or an intellectual product for further action; the nature of the output is not necessarily predictable, it tends to be open ended and is more complex; develops a new concept or process and where the organisation engaging the consultant requires critical judgement to consider the recommended course of action; is engaged for a fixed period at an agreed payment rate; and work is not directly supervised by the organisation engaging the consultant.

- (xiii) alcohol and catering
- (xiv) contingencies, including expressed as a percentage of the total project cost
- (xv) conference registration or expenses related to conference attendance
- (xvi) items already purchased or committed to before the opening of the program
- (xvii) items funded through other government programs
- (xviii) purchase of assets
- (xix) purchase of land or buildings.

Successful applicants must use Project Funding solely for eligible project costs specified in the Grant Agreement for the Project.

Generally, provision of grant funding to local governments is not considered a taxable supply and so Goods and Services Tax (GST) is not applicable.

2.7 Other requirements

Successful applicants are expected to make a financial and/or in-kind co-contribution to the Project.

2.8 Funding arrangements

Successful applicants will be required to execute a Grant Agreement with the State acting through the department.

The State has no obligation to provide Project Funding to an applicant until a Grant Agreement has been executed by the applicant and the State. Successful applicants should not make financial commitments until all necessary documents have been finalised and executed.

The Grant Agreement will set out the arrangements for payment of Project Funding to a successful applicant in accordance with a Milestone Schedule set out in the Grant Agreement.

2.9 Application process

The dates set out in the following table are indicative only:

Key dates	Key activities/actions
4 March 2024	Release of program guidelines
4 March 2024	Application open date
30 June 2024	Application close date
Two months from receipt of application	Assessment of applications
Following approval of funding recommendation by delegate	Expected announcement date
Following commencement of the Grant Agreement	Date project can commence
31 August 2027	Final acquittal

2.10 How to apply

Funding under this grant program is awarded through a non-competitive application assessment process.

To apply you must:

- (a) complete the online application form. The department will provide grant applicants with a hyperlink to the online application form or to obtain the link, applicants should email wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au. A help guide for applicants is available at <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>
- (b) provide all the information requested

- (c) address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- (d) include all necessary attachments
- (e) submit your application to SmartyGrants by the closing date and time.

Your application must also include (in addition to the application form):

- (a) evidence of current public liability insurance of \$20 million
- (b) evidence of current worker's compensation insurance under the *Queensland Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- (c) a risk management plan (a risk management template is attached to the application form)
- (d) authorisation to submit the application (e.g., for councils this may be endorsement of the project by elected members or relevant financial delegate. For regional groups of councils which are legal entities this may require endorsement from executive management or the board)
- (e) governance arrangements (the management and reporting arrangements for the coordinator engaged to coordinate implementation of a regional waste management plan).

2.11 Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria	
Meets the objectives of the program (40%):	<p>The extent to which the application meets the program objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting a group of geographically aligned councils to deliver coordinated implementation of a regional waste management plan • facilitating engagement across councils within a region regarding implementation of a regional waste management plan • facilitating delivery of projects in a regional waste management plan, to contribute to achieving targets in the <i>Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy</i>.
Demonstrates a clear project management approach and governance arrangements (40%):	<p>The extent to which the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details the project's objectives and expected outcomes • provides a clear explanation of the proposed staffing arrangement • demonstrates organisational capability, including governance arrangements and capacity to deliver the project.
Represents value for money (20%):	<p>The extent to which the application demonstrates the best available outcome for money spent, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the applicant's capability such as management and financial viability • facilitating achievement of the desired economic and environmental outcomes • makes the case for the necessity of requested funding and individual line items identified in the budget, to successfully deliver the project • demonstrates that the applicant will contribute cash or in-kind support to the project.

2.12 Assessment process

Eligible applications will be assessed through a non-competitive grant process. If eligible, assessment of the application will be undertaken against the assessment criteria (see section 3.11). Consideration of the application on its merits will be based on:

- (a) how well it meets the criteria
- (b) whether it provides value with relevant money.

Nothing in this section 3.12 limits the State's discretions under section 7.1 (Reservation of rights) of these Guidelines.

Following assessment, the assessment panel will recommend applications for approval by the Director-General or delegated officer, who holds delegation for funding decisions.

Successful applicants will be notified in writing, following endorsement of applications by the Director-General or delegated officer. These applicants will then be contacted by the department regarding funding arrangements and next steps.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing by the Director-General or delegated officer of the department.

2.13 Payment claim requirements

The department will make payments according to the payment schedule included in the Grant Agreement.

Each claim for payment must be made on the prescribed payment claim form, which will be provided by the department.

Certification must be made by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer, or authorised delegated officer, that the relevant milestone has been satisfactorily completed.

2.14 Program monitoring, acquittal and evaluation

All projects will be monitored by the department to ensure that the Grant Program is achieving the program aim and objectives.

Annual progress reports are to be provided for endorsed projects. Progress reports are to be submitted via the department's online portal. A progress report template will be provided by the department.

Successful applications must comply with the reporting, records and audit obligations in the Grant Agreement.

Successful applicants will be required to acquit funds. Acquittal involves verifying funds were expended in accordance with the Program Guidelines and the Grant Agreement.

The department will provide an example acquittal report.

Reports and any supporting documents must be submitted to the department before the dates specified in the Grant Agreement.

All Projects will be evaluated by the department to ensure that the Grant Program is achieving the program aim and objectives.

3 Communications

3.1 Communications with the media

All media enquiries or public announcements relating to the Grant Program will be coordinated and handled by the department's media team.

As far as practicable, all media and communications will be undertaken jointly with successful applicants.

Applicants must seek and obtain the State's approval before contacting the media to discuss any information regarding successful or unsuccessful applications for funding support under or in connection with the Grant Program.

3.2 Confidentiality, privacy and use of information

The State will maintain controls in relation to the management of confidential information provided by applicants. Applicants should specifically mark any information the applicant considers to be confidential.

During the application, assessment and approval process, an applicant must keep confidential its application/s and its dealings with the State about its application/s but may make disclosures if required by law or to its representatives or advisors who are under an obligation of confidentiality.

An applicant must also keep confidential any information designated by the State as confidential.

The State may disclose information, including confidential information, of or provided by an applicant:

- (a) to its representatives and advisors for any purpose
- (b) to any government agency or authority and its representatives and advisors, including for the purpose of assessing and verifying such information
- (c) to comply with or meet applicable standards of accountability of public money or established government policies, procedures or protocols or
- (d) if required to be disclosed by law.

The State intends to publicly disclose the names of applicants, information about projects, the amount of funding granted to each successful applicant and details about the anticipated economic outcomes and benefits of successful projects.

Any personal information submitted as part of an application will not be used by the State or disclosed to any third party for a purpose other than in connection with the assessment of the application without an applicant's consent, unless required by law or in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

For audit purposes, the State is required to retain applications and other supplied supporting material. Successful applications will be retained for seven years and unsuccessful applications retained for two years.

The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the State.

3.3 Complaints and appeals

An applicant whose grant application is deemed ineligible may appeal the decision. The applicant must appeal the decision within seven calendar days of receiving notice of the decision regarding the application's eligibility, by contacting: wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au.

If an applicant has any concerns in relation to the application or assessment process, an applicant may raise their concerns in writing by contacting: wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au.

Complaints may also be made via the department's website at: [feedback form - complaints](#).

All questions about decisions on applications for the Grant Program must be lodged in writing to: wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au where applicants can request feedback on application decisions.

4 Contact details

Applicants may contact the Contact Officer in relation to general questions, requests for clarification and requests for further information.

The contact for the Program is: Partnerships and Governance, Office of Circular Economy, email: wasteplanimplementation@des.qld.gov.au.

The department is not able to assist in the preparation of applications.

5 Acknowledgement of the funding

Funding recipients must acknowledge the contributions of the Queensland Government funding through the inclusion of an acknowledgement statement and where appropriate, the Queensland Government Coat of Arms and other visual elements:

- (a) in any public statements and promotional materials about the Project
- (b) in accordance with any additional requirements as requested in writing by the department.

Materials may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) media releases and speeches associated with the project
- (b) speeches for a launch or official event
- (c) invitations or registration brochures and conference programs
- (d) brochures and posters
- (e) project and event signage
- (f) television, radio and newspaper coverage by the media
- (g) printed documents associated with the project
- (h) annual reports
- (i) newsletters
- (j) social media
- (k) multimedia material including websites, videos, CDs and other promotional items.

Acknowledgement of the Queensland Government's support must be included in all relevant social media posts (including project updates, openings, etc.). This can include the appropriate departmental handle or program hashtag listed below. The department must be notified 10 business days in advance of the publication of social media to enable collaboration and sharing.

Handles:

Meta: @QueenslandEnvironment

X or Twitter: @QldEnvironment

Hashtags:

#Queensland Environment

Before the Recipient may release a public statement or publish promotional material in any media about the Project, the Recipient must

- (a) at least 10 business days before the proposed statement or publication, provide to the department a copy of the proposed statement or publication, and
- (b) comply with any requests, amendments or conditions that the department may reasonably require by written notice to the Recipient.

Further information on acknowledgement requirements is included in the Grant Agreement.

6 Terms and conditions

6.1 Reservation of rights

- (a) Despite any provision of these Guidelines to the contrary, the State reserves the right to administer the Grant Program and conduct the process for the assessment and approval of applications to the Grant Program in such manner as it thinks fit, in its absolute discretion.
- (b) Without limiting paragraph (a), the State retains all rights and powers to make all decisions and actions in order to achieve the program objectives and the State reserves the right, in its absolute discretion and at any time, to:
 - (i) change the structure, procedures, nature, scope or timing of, or alter the terms of participation in the process or overall Grant Program (including submission and compliance of applications), where in such circumstances notice will be provided to applicants
 - (ii) consider or accept, or refuse to consider or accept, any application which is lodged other than in accordance with these Guidelines or is lodged after the relevant date for lodgement, or which does not contain the information required by these Guidelines or is otherwise non-conforming in any respect
 - (iii) vary or amend the eligibility or assessment criteria
 - (iv) take into account any information from its own and other sources (including other Government agencies and other advisors)
 - (v) accept or reject any application, having regard to these Guidelines, the eligibility criteria, the assessment criteria or any other item, matter or thing which the State considers relevant, including the limitations on the funds available for the Grant Program

- (vi) give preference by allocating weighting to any one or more of the eligibility criteria or assessment criteria over other criteria
 - (vii) conduct due diligence investigations in respect of any applicant and subject applications to due diligence, technical, financial and economic appraisals
 - (viii) require an applicant to clarify or substantiate any claims, assumptions or commitment contained in an application or provide any additional information
 - (ix) terminate the further participation of any applicant in the application process
 - (x) terminate or reinstate the Grant Program or any process in the Grant Program
 - (xi) not proceed with the Grant Program in the manner outlined in these Guidelines, or at all
 - (xii) amend the nature, scope or timing of the Grant Program
 - (xiii) allow the withdrawal of an applicant
 - (xiv) seek presentations from or interviews with any applicant and conduct negotiations with any one or more applicants after the applications have been lodged
 - (xv) publish the names of applicants to the Grant Program and
 - (xvi) take such other action as it considers in its absolute discretion appropriate in relation to the Grant Program processes.
- (c) Where, under these Guidelines, it is stated that the State may exercise a right or discretion or perform any act or omit to perform any act, then unless stated otherwise the State may do so at its sole and absolute discretion and will not be required to act, or be restrained from acting, in any way or for any reason nor to take into account the interests of any third party (including an applicant).

6.2 No relationship

- (a) The State's obligations in connection with the application process are limited to those expressly stated in these Guidelines.
- (b) No contractual or legal relationship exists between the State and an applicant in connection with the Grant Program, these Guidelines or the application process or any stage of the Grant Program.
- (c) An applicant, or its representatives:
 - (i) has no authority or power, and must not purport to have the authority or power to bind the State, or make representations on behalf of the State
 - (ii) must not hold itself out or engage in any conduct or make any representation which may suggest to any person that the applicant is for any purpose an employee, agent, partner or joint venturer with the State and
 - (iii) must not represent to any person that the State is a party to the proposed project other than as a potential funder, subject to the application process detailed in these Guidelines.

6.3 No action

- (a) To the extent permitted by law, no applicant will have any claim of any kind whatsoever against the State (whether in contract, tort (including negligence), equity, under statute or otherwise) arising from or in connection with:
 - (i) any costs, expenses, losses or liabilities suffered or incurred by the applicant in preparing and submitting its application (including any amendments, requests for further information by the State, attendance at meetings or involvement in discussions) or otherwise in connection with the Grant Program
 - (ii) the State at any time exercising or failing to exercise, in its absolute discretion, any rights it has under or in connection with the Grant Program or
 - (iii) any of the matters or things relevant to its application or the Grant Program in respect of which the applicant must satisfy itself under these Guidelines.

- (b) Without limiting paragraph (a), if the State cancels or varies the Grant Program at any time or does not select any applicant following its assessment of the applications, or does (or fails to do) any other thing referred to under clause 6.1 of these Guidelines, no applicant will have any claim against the State arising from or in connection with any costs, expenses, losses or liabilities incurred by the applicant in preparing and submitting its application or otherwise in connection with or in relation to (whether directly or indirectly) the Grant Program.
- (c) For the avoidance of doubt, each applicant:
 - (i) participates in the Grant Program at its own risk and
 - (i) is wholly responsible for its costs of applying for, participating in, or otherwise in connection with, the Grant Program.

6.4 Non-exhaustive

- (a) These Guidelines do not contain all of the information that applicants may require in reaching decisions in relation to whether or not to submit an application. Applicants must form their own views as to what information is relevant to such decisions.
- (b) Applicants must make their own independent investigations of the information contained or referred to in these Guidelines. Applicants must obtain their own independent legal, financial, tax and other advice in relation to information in these Guidelines, or otherwise made available to them, during the application process.

6.5 Disclaimer

- (c) The State makes no warranty or representation express or implied, and does not assume any duty of care to the applicants that the information in these Guidelines, or supplied in connection with the Grant Program (Information) is accurate, adequate, current, suitable or complete, or that the Information has been independently verified.
- (d) The State accepts no responsibility whether arising from negligence or otherwise (except a liability that cannot lawfully be excluded) for any reliance placed upon the Information or interpretations placed on the Information by applicants.

6.6 Intellectual property

- (a) Any intellectual property rights that may exist in an application will remain the property of an applicant or the rightful owner of those intellectual property rights. Any part of an application considered to contain intellectual property rights should be clearly identified by an applicant.
- (b) The applicant grants to the State (and will ensure relevant third parties' grant) a non-exclusive, royalty free and irrevocable licence to use and reproduce the intellectual property for the purpose of administering the Grant Program.

6.7 Law

These guidelines are governed by the laws applicable in Queensland.

Attachment 1 – Coordinator activities

Purpose of coordinator position:

The coordinator will work cooperatively with councils across the region to implement the regional waste management plan (the plan). They will work to improve economics of resource recovery, encourage economic development, and help achieve the region's waste and resource recovery targets, which contribute to achievement of Queensland's targets in the *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy*, while improving environmental and social outcomes for the region.

Roles/responsibilities:

The roles/responsibilities of the coordinator include but are not limited to:

1. forming, and providing secretariat services for a regional working or technical group/s to ensure engagement, collaboration, consultation and communication to implement the plan, including developing agendas, minutes, following up on actions and providing reports and recommendations in relation to implementation of the plan
2. developing a forward schedule of activities to implement the plan and reporting to councils, the regional group of councils and the department on their delivery
3. developing and regularly reviewing and updating with the working group/technical group a Program Risk and Opportunities Register
4. engaging, consulting and communicating with industry about the forward schedule of prioritised projects and their opportunities
5. coordinating the process for priority projects to advance to investment decisions, including:
 - a. managing the application process, including feasibility studies and business cases
 - b. identifying appropriate funding opportunities from the private sector through collaboration or partnership arrangements
 - c. facilitating regional endorsement of priority projects advancing to the state investment review process
 - d. identifying Queensland and Australian Government funding opportunities
 - e. coordinating preparation of funding applications for assessment and approval
 - f. providing briefings to and responding to information requests from stakeholders.
6. coordinating the preparation and execution of project contracts and supporting provision of feedback to unsuccessful applicants
7. in liaison with officers from member councils, providing project delivery and contract management services, including project tender and/or funding documentation and processes
8. coordinating across councils to ensure project milestones/deliverables are met, and coordinating reporting on project delivery to councils, the group of councils and the department, including development of key performance indicators to report on priority projects' progress and outcomes at council and regional level
9. preparing reports and correspondence, including annual reporting to the regional group of councils on progress against the plan, including identifying progress and limitations or barriers
10. working closely with the working group/technical group to ensure clear and considered advice to the regional group of councils and member councils on matters relating to the plan
11. coordinating and liaising with other coordinators and Queensland and Australian Government agencies to share information and learnings.