



COMMUNITY **SUSTAINABILITY** ACTION GRANTS

ROUND 8 | CONSERVATION OUTCOMES FOR WATERCOURSE ECOSYSTEMS

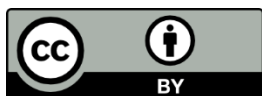
Prepared by: Grants Administration Unit, Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

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Overview

The *Community Sustainability Action Grants – Round 8 Conservation Outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems* provides grants of between \$50,000 and \$200,000 (excluding GST) for eligible applicants. A total of \$1.04 million in funding is available in this round of the grant program.

Projects funded will be those that undertake on-ground activities that directly generate conservation outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems within certain locations across Queensland (eligible bioregions). Activities should also encourage community participation and engagement.

This includes, but is not limited to, projects which seek to undertake activities like revegetation, weed control, pest control, fire management, riverbank stabilisation or erosion control.

Details regarding eligible applicants and eligible activities are provided in these guidelines.

All projects must be completed within three years of the signing of the grant agreement.

The funding round is competitive with all eligible projects competitively assessed against the assessment criteria and not all applications may be funded.

Applications close at 4pm on 16 July 2024.

Community Sustainability Action Grants – Round 8 Conservation Outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems is funded from the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation's Environmental Offsets Account and seeks to achieve a conservation outcome (as defined in the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014*) for Watercourse Ecosystems.

For more information, please email CSAGrants@des.qld.gov.au or contact the grant program office on (07) 3330 6360.

Guidelines for applicants

Applicants must read these guidelines in full before applying for funding and are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the SmartyGrants online application system and other supporting documentation before beginning the application. Application information is available at www.qld.gov.au/CSAgrants.

Program Objective

This grant program provides funding to achieve a conservation outcome for Watercourse Ecosystems within certain bioregions in Queensland. The funded activities will be required to demonstrate progress towards achievable conservation outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems throughout the grant term.

Under this *Community Sustainable Action Grants - Round 8 Conservation Outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems* a "Watercourse Ecosystem" is a riparian ecosystem that has direct connectivity to a river, creek or other stream (refer to the 'Definitions' section of this guideline for detailed definition).

The total funding available and eligible bioregions are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1

Grant Category	Bioregion	Total Funding Available (excl. GST)
Watercourse Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Brigalow Belt▪ Cape York Peninsula▪ Channel Country▪ Desert Uplands▪ Einasleigh Uplands▪ Gulf Plains▪ Mitchell Grass Downs▪ Mulga Lands▪ Northwest Highlands▪ Wet Tropics	Up to \$1.04 million

More than one application per eligible applicant can be submitted. Up to a maximum of two grants per eligible applicant can be awarded provided each project funded is in a separate location (for example, a different bioregion, property or watercourse).

Application eligibility

The following are eligible to apply for a grant in their own right:

- properly established incorporated associations (incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*)
- properly established not-for-profit organisations including those registered under the *Corporations Act 2001* or the *Co-operatives National Law Act* (must include evidence attached of constitution for non-for-profit organisations)
- Australian charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- Indigenous corporations incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cwlth)
- Natural Resource Management (NRM) bodies.

Project sponsor eligibility

The following entities are eligible to apply for a grant with a project sponsor:

- unincorporated organisations
- unregistered charities and not-for-profit organisations.

Project sponsors must be one of the following organisations:

- an organisation eligible to apply for funding in its own right
- a school (government and non-government school)
- a local government authority.

Project sponsors must take full responsibility for the legal and financial accountability of the project, including signing the grant agreement and/or any declarations, and are required to approve all project-related reporting. They are required to provide evidence of insurance for the lifetime of the grant period.

A letter from the project sponsor, signed by an accountable officer, must be included with the application which specifies that the organisation is willing to be the sponsor for the duration of the project and that it accepts full responsibility of the project.

Project sponsors are not able to financially benefit from the grant funding, however, a sponsor may be engaged by the applicant for any administration component of the project as outlined under eligible expenses in these guidelines.

An organisation may sponsor more than one project as well as submitting an application in their own right (subject to the criteria specified in the 'Application eligibility' section of these guidelines).

The term sponsor is interchangeable with the term auspice.

Collaborations

Two or more eligible organisations can work in collaboration on a single project. The applicant organisation is to take the lead on project management and monitoring, budget and reporting requirements for the duration of the funding agreement activities.

A letter of commitment will be required from the accountable officer of the collaborating organisation which provides details of the organisation's involvement in the project.

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with relevant Traditional Custodians, community groups or stakeholders.

Ineligible applicants

The following applicants are ineligible to apply for funding:

- individuals
- statutory bodies and authorities
- Australian Government agencies
- Queensland Government agencies
- political parties or lobbyists
- local government authorities (other than as a sponsor)
- tertiary education institutions administered by the Commonwealth or State
- schools (government and non-government schools) (other than as a sponsor).

Available funding

Applicants may seek funding for grants of between \$50,000 and \$200,000 (excluding GST).

Project timeframes

Projects must be completed within three years from execution of the grant agreement.

Eligible projects and activities

Applicants will need to demonstrate that project activities are able to be defined and are measurable in achieving a conservation outcome (an outcome that maintains or improves the viability of an impacted matter) being delivered for a Watercourse Ecosystem through the funded activities over the term of the grant. Project design may include engagement of conservation expertise to establish and/or deliver the monitoring and measurement of the project's conservation outcome.

Projects funded will be those that undertake on-ground activities that achieve a conservation outcome for a Watercourse Ecosystem within eligible bioregions in Queensland. Activities funded may include but are not limited to:

- Controlling stock access to watercourses or areas of environmental significance adjacent to a watercourse, and establishing off-stream watering points, as required.
- Fencing to protect environmentally sensitive areas from stock, pest animals or unauthorised access (does not include boundary fencing for wild dog exclusion).
- Revegetation and/or natural regeneration activities to enhance habitat values, stabilise soils and/or improve water quality.
- Engagement of conservation expertise including First Nations peoples to monitor and build management programs to appropriately conserve the natural resources of the area (including fire management, pest animal/pest plant control plans etc.) appropriate to Watercourse Ecosystem conservation.
- Targeted control of pest animals or pest plants.
- Fire management activities.
- Flora and fauna surveys for the purposes of guiding long-term conservation management activities and/or for establishing environmental baselines to demonstrate environmental gains.
- Other activities where a clear conservation outcome can be demonstrated.

Activities should encourage community participation.

Ineligible projects and activities

Projects and activities that will not be considered for funding under this round include:

- projects that do not have a primary aim of *achieving a conservation outcome for Watercourse Ecosystems*
- projects undertaken outside of Queensland
- projects undertaken on National Parks and State Forests
- specific activities at a particular location for which the landowner has previously received other Queensland or Australian Government funding for the same project. Note: funding applicants for multi-stage projects may be considered. For example, if stage 1 of a project has been completed, you may submit an application for stage 2 of the project.
- projects that are the normal or legal responsibility of the landowner (e.g. day-to-day property maintenance, building maintenance, maintenance of infrastructure previously funded under another Queensland Government administered grant)

- projects that are a condition of a development approval, rehabilitation order or an offset requirement under a government offset policy
- projects that are already required under legislation (e.g. taking reasonable steps to keep the land free of declared pest plants) – however, funding may be considered where the activity clearly exceeds legislative requirements or can deliver high-level strategic or accelerated control outcomes (e.g. control of a new weed infestation after a flooding event that has the potential to invade areas further downstream)
- projects that will increase overall grazing intensity or unsustainably expand grazing into sensitive areas, either inside or outside the property
- projects that have the potential to negatively impact the proposed site’s natural or cultural values
- projects that contravene legislation
- projects that require licences or permits that are not obtainable
- projects that are deemed to be landscaping for private or scenic amenity.

Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- purchase of equipment and associated supplies to undertake activities directly related to the grant project (items in excess of \$10,000 to be supported by quotes)
- purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) and tools to undertake activities related to the grant project
- capital works (supported by technical advice) for environmental benefits
- purchase of catering for project participants participating in project activities up to a reasonable value and where this can be demonstrated as a necessary expense
- up to 10% of project administration costs directly related to the grant project (e.g. stationery, postage, office supplies and audit fees). This excludes salaries for project administration. Where applicable, an applicant may engage their project sponsor for project-related administration costs (within 10% of the grant funding as outlined above).
- salaries and wages and other employee costs
- contractor fees where there is a clearly demonstrated need for the contractor’s services.

Additional information about project expenses

Please note the following information when preparing your budget.

Quotes

Applicants must submit two quotes for contractor costs, hire of vehicle or boats and any other expenditure items i.e. assets over \$10,000 (excluding GST) with their application. The quotes will assist the assessment panel to determine the project's value for money. If the applicant is unable to provide two quotes, a justifiable explanation must be provided in the application form as to why this requirement has not been met.

Applicants seeking funding for salaries and contractors

It is preferable that the majority of project activities are completed by the applicant organisation. However, it is acknowledged that some activities cannot be completed with internal resourcing and that contractors may need to be engaged to complete certain components of the work. As such, applicants seeking funding for salaries and contractors must demonstrate in the application form why these are vital to the completion of the project.

Applicants seeking funding for capital works

Applicants seeking funding for significant capital works including contour banks, diversion banks, and levees are required to seek professional technical advice prior to submitting the application. This advice must be provided with the application.

Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- contingencies
- insurances (e.g. public liability, volunteer, motor vehicle)
- purchase of motor vehicles including cars, trucks, tractors, dozers, boats (motorised), bikes (motorised and electric) and utilities (registered or unregistered)
- costs of servicing equipment (note that servicing costs can be counted towards your contribution)
- reimbursement of works that were commenced or completed prior to the submission of the funding application
- recurrent operational expenses (e.g. electricity, office rent/leases, rates, water rates, vehicle registration, office equipment hire and maintenance, equipment and motor vehicle repairs or maintenance)
- administration costs which exceed 10% of original grant funding
- entertainment, event, or celebration expenses
- purchase of alcohol/gift cards
- gifts/sponsorship/membership fees
- purchase of uniforms
- purchase of fuel cards
- purchase of land or buildings
- fees related to attending conferences, workshops, and events
- training expenses (i.e. qualifications)
- permits and licences (unless reasonably attributable to undertaking the specific project activities).

Landholder permission

Private or council land

Organisations seeking to undertake a project on private or council land must obtain written approval to conduct the project from the relevant landholder prior to submitting their application. The approval should also provide advice that the permission will remain in place for the expected duration of the project.

First Nations peoples

Applicants are encouraged to consult with, and consider collaborating with, the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which their project is proposed to occur. First Nations peoples have significant knowledge of Country which can provide valuable depth to projects. Details of any consultation undertaken should be included in the application documentation.

Queensland Globe (<https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au>) includes native title and cultural heritage layers to help locate contact details for the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which a project is to be located.

Other State land

Organisations seeking to undertake a project on State land (except on National Parks and State Forests) must obtain written approval to conduct the project from the relevant Queensland Government agency prior to submitting their application.

Application Guidance

When planning a project, applicants should ensure:

- these guidelines have been read and all application requirements and grant terms and conditions can be met
- project outcomes are clear and well-defined
- the project demonstrates a clear conservation outcome for a Watercourse Ecosystem
- the project can be realistically completed
- there is capacity to maintain the project outcomes once the project is completed.

Please contact the department if you require clarification or have any questions about the application process, or the suitability of your proposed project. Refer to the contact information section of these guidelines for details.

Resources

- [Regional Ecosystem descriptions](#)
- [Queensland River Rehabilitation Management Guideline](#)
- Information on Queensland state parks and forests: [Parks and forests](#)
- The Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026—the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation’s commitment to working in partnership with Queensland’s First Nations peoples: [The Gurra Gurra Framework](#)
- Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts: contact details: <https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/>
- WetlandInfo: <https://wetlandinfo.des.qld.gov.au/wetlands/>
- Weeds: <http://www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/weeds-pest-animals-ants/weeds>
- Atlas of Living Australia: www.ala.org.au
- Queensland Globe: <https://qldglobe.information.qld.gov.au>

Application process

Applicants are required to submit their application and all supporting documentation in full by the submission deadline.

All applications must be submitted using [SmartyGrants](#), the department's online grants administration program.

New users will need to set up a free online SmartyGrants account. If you already have a SmartyGrants account you can login using your existing details.

The [Help Guide for Applicants](#) explains the steps you need to take to complete and submit your form.

If you experience technical difficulties creating an account or completing an online form, contact SmartyGrants on (03) 9320 6888.

Deadlines for submitting an application are strict. No extensions will be provided.

Applications and GST

Applicants registered for GST will not be provided with funding to account for costs directly associated with GST and are required to provide the GST exclusive amount in their budget. Recipients registered for GST can claim the GST component for any expenditure that they incur back from the ATO.

Where an applicant is not registered for GST the budget may include the GST as a cost component of the grant.

For advice on GST, please seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#).

For more information, please email csagrants@des.qld.gov.au or contact the grants program office on (07) 3330 6360.

Assessment criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed by an assessment panel comprised of members with relevant expertise.

Projects will be assessed on the following assessment criteria:

1. Meets the program objectives

Taking into consideration the extent the application:

- demonstrates a clear conservation outcome for Watercourse Ecosystem/s at the project site
- demonstrates how the project activities contribute to a long-term conservation outcome for Watercourse Ecosystem/s
- enables on-ground activities that will protect, manage and improve the viability of natural and cultural values of the site.

2. Demonstrates a clear project management approach and governance arrangements

Taking into consideration the extent the application:

- clearly describes the project objectives, why the project is necessary and the anticipated conservation outcome/s to be derived from the project

- clearly details the project activities and the expected timeframes to complete each activity
- demonstrates the applicant's capability and capacity for delivering the project scope and administering the grant funding
- demonstrates the applicant's capacity to manage the project and maintain project outcomes into the future.

3. Demonstrates cost effectiveness and/or represents value for money

Taking into consideration:

- the scale of the proposed project and activities versus the funding sought
- the applicant's contribution of additional financial or in-kind support
- whether the funding sought, and individual line items identified in the budget, are necessary for successful completion of the project
- whether quotes have been provided for contractor costs and any other expenditure items.

4. Encourages community/volunteer engagement

This includes the extent to which the proposed project:

- engages volunteers and the community in delivering project activities and/or demonstrates community benefit.

Where relevant, an applicant's past performance under the *Community Sustainability Action Grant* program or any another grant program managed by the department, including if there are any outstanding reports, will be taken into consideration.

Application assessment

Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel consisting of departmental employees and external representatives with expertise in a relevant field. The Panel will make funding recommendations to the Director-General, Department of Environment, Science and Innovation, who is the decision maker for all funding recommendations.

Application outcome

All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their submission in writing. Details including the name of successful applicants, funding allocated, location of the project and a description of the project will be published on the Queensland Government website and may be announced through media including social media.

Successful applicants will be contacted by the Grants Coordinator regarding funding arrangements, grant agreements and other documentation/approvals that may be required (refer to the 'Required documents' section of this guideline).

Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback on their application by emailing csagrants@des.qld.gov.au.

Applicants may lodge an appeal with the department for any decisions made relating to their grant application by emailing csagrants@des.qld.gov.au.

Funding availability

Funding is expected to be available towards late 2024, pending signing by both parties of a grant agreement, and the provision of all required documentation to the department.

The department reserves the right to determine specific project payment structures on a case-by-case basis and in negotiation with the recipient. In all cases a percentage of funds will be retained by the department until project acquittal.

Required documents

- Eligibility documentation for your organisation (or your project sponsor if relevant) is as follows:
 - a) Incorporated Association—a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation
 - b) Registered Charity—a copy of the charity certificate from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission
 - c) Not-for-profit entity (not registered with the ACNC)—a copy of the Certificate of Registration of Company from ASIC and a copy of the organisation's constitution.
 - d) Indigenous Corporation—a copy of the Certificate of Registration of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation
- A letter of support from the project sponsor (if applicable)
- A letter of support from the project collaborator (if applicable)
- A letter of commitment for maintenance (if applicable)
- Two quotes for expenses exceeding \$10,000 (ex GST)
- Evidence of commitment of cash contributions (such as letters from contributors)
- A detailed map and photographs of the project site location and the project activity's location. The map should identify the latitude and longitude (in decimal) of the site, lot/plan reference and include project boundaries and information which indicates where specific activities will occur.
- Where applicable, evidence to occupy and maintain a site or appropriate permission from landholders and/or Traditional Custodians to undertake the proposed activity on the site.
- Financial documentation for your organisation (or your project sponsor if relevant) as follows:
 - a) the latest signed, audited financial statement for the organisation and the latest bank statement showing the BSB and account number or;
 - b) for organisations without an audited financial statement, a balance sheet, income and expenditure statement, and the last two bank statements showing the BSB and account number.
- Successful applicants (or their sponsor where relevant) will be required to provide the following prior to release of any grant funding:
 - a) Evidence of public liability insurance coverage of at least \$20 million (in total and per event) that is current and remains current for the duration of the project.
 - b) Certificate of Currency for workplace health and safety insurance and evidence of adequate insurance coverage for workers and volunteers as required under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (where applicable).

Further information

If you have any questions relating to these guidelines or if you would like to discuss your application, please contact the Grants Coordinator by telephone on (07) 3330 6360 or by email at csagrants@des.qld.gov.au.

Please note: a Grants Coordinator can provide you with the best advice based on the information provided. All decisions relating to a grant application will be made based on the information contained in that application.

Privacy statement

The department is collecting personal information in the application for Community Sustainability Action Grant Round 8: Conservation Outcomes for Watercourse Ecosystems to assess your application for funding and prepare a grant agreement, should your application be successful.

All personal information you provide in this application form, including all attachments, will be routinely provided to the following parties for assessing the application:

- other Queensland Government agencies
- external assessment panel members.

Where necessary, information contained in your application may also be provided to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation and the Minister's members of staff for reporting purposes (except for that information which relates to the department's confidentiality obligations).

The department will seek your consent for any uses or disclosures outside of these specific terms.

If your application is successful, the following information will be routinely published on the Queensland Government website:

- your organisation's name
- total amount of funding allocated
- project name, location and description.

Your grant application and associated documentation is subject to the *Right to Information Act 2009*. If you wish to access your personal information that is in the control of the department, you may contact [Right to Information Services](#).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the privacy of your personal information, please contact the department's Privacy Services unit by email privacy@des.qld.gov.au.

Grant terms and conditions

Applying for the grant

- Applicants must provide all required information at the time of submission of their application. Required information is clearly identified in the application form by a red asterisk (*). Failure to submit all required documents may result in your application being deemed ineligible.
- By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to abide by all of the terms and conditions as specified in these guidelines.
- Applicants must be covered by at least the following insurance:
 - public liability insurance of a minimum of \$20 million
 - workers and volunteers under the Queensland Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Any approved sponsoring organisation must remain the project sponsor for the duration of the project or until a new sponsor is submitted and accepted by the department.
- Any liaison with an assessment panel member by an applicant or another person about a specific application may result in immediate disqualification.
- A maximum of two grants per applicant can be awarded providing each project funded is in a separate location (for example, a different bioregion, property or watercourse).
- A sponsor may sponsor one or more projects and may receive a grant in its own right, if eligible (up to two grants).

Grant agreements and the provision of funding

- A grant agreement will be developed using information provided in the application form and in negotiation with the approved recipient or their sponsor.
- The grant agreement will specify the financial and operational requirements of the grant.
- Funding will not be available until both parties sign the grant agreement and any additional required documentation has been provided to the department.
- The project activities cannot commence until both parties have signed the grant agreement and the additional required documentation is received by the department.
- Successful applicants must return a signed grant agreement within six weeks of the date of being issued by the department or the funding offer may be withdrawn.
- Successful applicants may be required to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration prior to the release of any funding. A conflict of interest exists in instances where a successful applicant has, or could be perceived to have, an interest (whether personal, financial or otherwise) which conflicts or which may reasonably be perceived as conflicting with the recipient's ability to meet the requirements and obligations of the project fairly, objectively and independently.
- Signing of the grant agreement indicates the recipient's acceptance of all funding terms and conditions in the guidelines and funding agreement.
- Funding may be provided in milestone payments with a final payment withheld until completion of the project and the department's acceptance of acquittal documentation.
- The date and value of the milestone payments will be negotiated however the final decision will be made by the department.
- Funding provided must be spent for the purposes stated in the grant agreement and in accordance with program guidelines.
- Variations to the agreed project activities should be applied for in writing to the department. It is at the absolute discretion of the department's delegated officer to provide approval. No variation is to be implemented without the applicant first receiving written approval from the department.
- In the event of cancellation of a funded activity, the department must be notified in writing. Any unspent funds can be returned to the department.
- All projects must be completed within three years from the signing of the grant agreement.

Reporting requirements

- All grant recipients will be required to submit periodic progress/milestone reports as per the department's requirements. Reports will be requested on at least a six-monthly basis.
- All grant recipients will be required to complete and submit a final report and acquittal within 30 calendar days after the completion date of the project activities.
- All grant recipients will be required to maintain full financial records of expenditure relating to the grant (including, but not limited to, profit and loss statement and receipts for expenditure). This documentation must be provided to the department on request.
- Provision of an audited financial statement, which is specific to the project related activities and expenditure, undertaken by an independent qualified auditor Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) or chartered accountant is required for the grant acquittals process. Any unspent funds will be required to be returned to the department.
- Any approved sponsoring organisation must remain the project sponsor for the duration of the project or until a new sponsor is submitted and accepted by the department.
- All promotional material relating to the project must acknowledge funding from the department. This includes promotional flyers, banners and any other promotional material. The final draft of any promotional material using the Queensland Government logo must be approved by the department before going to print in accordance with the timeframes provided in the funding agreement.

Announcement of successful applicants

- The Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation will announce successful applicants.
- Following the announcement, successful applicants will be listed on the Queensland Government website.
- All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.
- Successful recipients are to treat their funding as confidential prior to the Minister's announcement of the successful applicants, i.e. no media or public announcements of the project should be made until after the Minister's announcement.

Definitions

Watercourse Ecosystem: a riparian ecosystem that is located within a defined distance from the defining banks of a relevant watercourse or relevant drainage feature.

Defined distance, for a regional ecosystem, means a distance identified in the environmental offsets policy as the relevant distance from the defining banks of a relevant watercourse or relevant drainage feature.

Relevant watercourse means a watercourse identified on the vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map.

Relevant drainage feature means a drainage feature under the [Water Act 2000, schedule 4](#) that is identified on the vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map.

Vegetation management watercourse and drainage feature map see the [Vegetation Management Act 1999, section 20AB](#).

Vegetation management wetlands map see the [Vegetation Management Act 1999, section 20AA](#).