



Local government battery collection program

Program guidelines

Prepared by: Office of Circular Economy
Department of the Environment, Tourism
Science and Innovation.

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Cover artwork by Navada Currie, Mununjali and Kabi Kabi woman at Gilimbaa.

May 2025

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1. Overview

The Local Government Battery Collection Program (the Program) provides grants of up to \$100,000 (excluding GST) for Queensland councils to reduce the instances of battery fires by expanding the battery collection network available within their communities and providing for safer and more convenient disposal of problem batteries that currently have limited options for disposal.

For the purpose of the Program, problem batteries include disposable and rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, including those that are embedded in items such as vapes, e-scooters, laptops, phones, power tools, children's toys, electric toothbrushes and cordless vacuums, and that currently have limited disposal options through existing stewardship schemes.

A total of \$2 million in funding is available to individual and groups of Queensland councils for initiatives that expand the current network of collection points for problem batteries.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- support Queensland councils to expand the number of collection points to allow for safer and more convenient disposal of problem batteries
- reduce human safety and environmental risks from fires caused by battery combustion in council waste collection trucks and waste facilities
- assist councils to deliver safe and convenient collection, separation and/or storage locations for problem batteries in their region

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

All projects must be completed within 12 months of contract execution.

Applications close at 4pm on 10 July 2025.

For more information, please email CEPrograms@des.qld.gov.au.

2. Background

Over the past year, the Queensland Fire Department has responded to more than 200 battery-related fires across Queensland, including in council waste collection trucks and waste facilities. Incorrect disposal of batteries and battery-operated items in kerbside bins and council-collected general waste is increasing the risk of battery related fires. When batteries are compacted or punctured in collection trucks or at resource recovery facilities, they can start fires that pose serious safety risks to council staff, cause significant damage to infrastructure, disrupt essential services and result in environmental harm.

Both the Queensland Government and councils have been releasing proactive community messaging to encourage safe disposal of batteries. However, battery collection points currently only accept removable batteries and are unable to accept problem batteries included in many items such as vapes, e-scooters, e-bikes, electric toothbrushes and toys.

There is an increasing prevalence of problem batteries in common household items. Relatively low community awareness of correct disposal methods and the risks associated with not disposing of these products appropriately, combined with an inadequate network of safe

disposal points, exacerbates the risk and highlights the need for an integrated approach to keeping these products out of household and other general waste.

On 13 February 2025, the Queensland Government announced a three-point plan to address the risks of battery fires to human safety, council infrastructure and the environment. The three-point plan includes:

1. Providing \$2 million in grants to support councils in expanding their battery collection points at convenient locations, including for problem batteries like those found in vapes and e-scooters.
2. Working closely with the waste industry on practical ways to reduce fire risks to protect workers and essential waste services.
3. Equipping Queenslanders with information to make informed decisions about safe battery disposal through education and awareness initiatives.

The Program establishes the platform for the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (department) to deliver \$2 million in council grants. The Program complements the other work being undertaken to implement the three-point plan by assisting councils to expand the network of collection points and encourage safe disposal of problem batteries.

3. Program objectives

The objectives of the Program are to:

- support Queensland councils to expand the number of collection points to allow for safer and more convenient disposal of problem batteries
- reduce human safety and environmental risks from fires caused by battery combustion in council waste collection trucks and waste facilities
- assist councils to deliver safe and convenient collection, separation and/or storage locations for problem batteries in their region

The Program is intended to complement existing programs for the collection of some types of batteries, addressing gaps for the safe collection of problem batteries, such as those embedded in vapes and toys or used for e-transport.

4. Eligibility

Applicant eligibility

To be eligible for funding, an applicant must be one of:

- an individual council constituted under the *Local Government Act 2009* or *City of Brisbane Act 2010*
- a regional group of councils which is a legal entity (i.e. a Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC)).

If a group of councils wish 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:

- all councils must be identified in the application for funding
- a single council must be nominated as the lead contact, who will be the contracting party and will be responsible for contract management and delivery.

Councils may partner with a non-council organisation/s, however a council or ROC must be the applicant and the lead contact, who will be the contracting party and will be responsible for contract management and delivery.

Applicants must also:

- be able to complete the project and related reporting and acquittal requirements
- obtain council approval for the project, including any financial and co-contribution elements
- obtain all necessary building, safety and/or environmental permits/approvals for successful delivery of project activities
- hold the levels of public liability and workplace health and safety insurance specified in section 13 of these Program guidelines.

A council may only submit one application, whether as an individual council or as part of a ROC or group of councils.

Project eligibility

To be eligible, a project must:

- deliver on **all** objectives of the Program
- be capable of being delivered within 12 months of contract execution.

Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

- establishment of new permanent, temporary or mobile collection points, which must include the collection of problem batteries
- trials of new collection systems or methods including the collection of data to inform future council decisions.

5. Collaborations

ROCs or groups of councils are encouraged to collaborate on projects that maximise outcomes within their region.

Priority will be given to projects that involve multiple councils and/or have a regional focus.

6. Funding scope

Funding is provided for individual or groups of councils to meet the objectives of the Program.

Funding of up to \$100,000 (excluding GST) is available per approved project.

7. Project timeframes

Projects must be completed within 12 months of contract execution.

8. Project funding

The department is committed to providing flexibility to allow councils to design projects that best suit their needs and align with Program objectives. As such, eligible costs have been kept broad. Please contact the department if you have any questions about eligibility.

Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- costs associated with establishing new collection points for problem batteries at council facilities or other sites, including fireproof storage bins, signage and traffic control
- costs associated with safety preparedness of the new point/s established for accepting, separating, storing and/or processing problem batteries, including work health and safety costs, monitoring equipment and staff training
- costs associated with establishing or trialling new methods of collection, separation and/or storage of problem batteries
- safety equipment including personal protective equipment, lithium/other battery thermal runaway suppression drums and safety handling equipment.

The following expenses may be considered, but only where these are directly related to delivery of the project and involve the establishment of new collection locations or methods, or batteries collected through new collection locations or methods:

- funding appropriate to the scale of the project for production of specific community awareness collateral relevant to the project, e.g. production of materials advising of a new collection point or activity
- funding appropriate to the scale of the project for transport or disposal of batteries collected through the project
- contractor fees where there is a clearly demonstrated need for the contractor's services.

Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- staff wages and oncosts
- costs associated with general community awareness, paid advertising, education or behaviour change that is not specific advice to support project activities
- project management or grant administration costs
- council overheads
- costs associated with development of an application
- procurement expenses

- contingency costs
- insurances, e.g. public liability, volunteer, motor vehicle
- 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
- purchase of uniforms
- purchase of fuel cards
- purchase of land or buildings
- purchase of a motor vehicle
- fees related to attending conferences, workshops, and events
- permits and licences
- consultancy fees.

Applicant contribution

Successful applicants are expected to make a financial and/or in-kind co-contribution to the project. The department will take financial contributions into account in assessing project value for money. Ineligible project costs will be the responsibility of grant recipients.

Partner organisations that are not a council are also expected to make a financial and/or in-kind contribution to the project.

9. Application process

Key dates

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

Key activities / actions	Date
Release of Program guidelines	22 May 2025
Program opens for applications	22 May 2025
Program closes for applications	4pm Thursday 10 July 2025
Project completion date	Within 12 months of contract execution
Final project acquittal	Within 4 weeks of project completion

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.

10. Applications and GST

Financial assistance offered in the delivery of the Program will be subject to the Australian Tax Office determination [GSTR 2012/2](#). Activities funded under the Program do not involve the supply of goods or services to the department.

Grant funding provided under the Program is not subject to GST.

Additional funds will not be provided to cover applicant's GST obligations associated with their project. Applicants are responsible for their own GST obligations incurred through the delivery of their project.

Grants may be treated as assessable income for taxation purposes. The State does not provide tax advice to applicants and recommends applicants seek independent professional advice on their tax obligations.

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

11. Assessment criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria by an assessment panel established by the department.

Criterion	Assessment elements	Weighting
Meets the objectives of the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support Queensland councils to expand the number of collection points to allow for safer and more convenient disposal of problem batteries.• Reduce human safety and environmental risks from fires caused by battery combustion in council waste collection trucks and waste facilities.• Assist councils to deliver safe and convenient collection, separation and/or storage facilities for problem batteries in their region.	35%
Demonstrates clear project management and governance considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details the project's objectives, activities, timeframes, milestones, expected outcomes and key performance indicators.• Provides a clear explanation of the proposed project and why it was selected.	25%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates organisational capability, including governance arrangements and capacity to deliver the project to a high standard in the specified timeframes. 	
Represents value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a clearly defined project budget with appropriate breakdown of all cost elements. • Consideration of the applicants' financial capability to deliver the project, including co-contributions (cash and in-kind). • Project benefit, including achieving desired economic, environmental and social outcomes. • Ability of the applicant to maintain and/or extend project deliverables beyond the life of the funding arrangement. • Whether the funding sought, and individual line-item requests, are necessary to successfully deliver the project. 	25%
Demonstrates benefits across multiple councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the project provides direct or indirect benefits to multiple Queensland councils. 	15%

Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel established by the department. Departmental staff involved in the assessment will operate under the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct. Where necessary, technical advice will be sought from external representatives with expertise in a relevant field. External assessors will operate under confidentiality requirements.

Where relevant, an applicant's past performance in delivering grant funding administered by the department will be taken into consideration.

Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Chief Executive of the department.

12. How to apply

Funding under the Program is awarded through a targeted and competitive application process.

Applications for funding must be submitted through the SmartyGrants portal for the [Local Government Battery Collection Program](#) by 4pm 10 July 2025.

The SmartyGrants portal will also be used as the platform for Program reporting and acquittal.

Applicants are required to ensure the department receives the application and all supporting documentation in full by the time and date the application portal closes.

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to abide by all of the terms and conditions specified in these guidelines and in the application itself. Submissions or approval of an application will not guarantee that funding will be provided.

Late submissions are the responsibility of the applicant, and the Chief Executive of the department is under no obligation to consider applications submitted or received after the Program has closed. All decisions made are at the discretion of the Chief Executive of the department and are considered final.

The cost of preparing and submitting an application is the sole responsibility of the applicant.

13. Required documents

To apply you must:

- complete the [online application form](#)
- address all eligibility criteria and assessment criteria
- provide all the information requested
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your application to SmartyGrants by the closing date and time.

Your application must also include:

- evidence of public liability insurance of at least \$20 million (in total and per event) that is current and remains current for the duration of the project
- 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)
- authorisation to participate in the project from each partner council:
 - for individual councils (including those involved in a joint application) this may be endorsement of the project by the relevant financial delegate
 - for ROCS this may be endorsement from executive management or the board
- evidence of commitment of financial or in-kind contributions from participating councils and/or other project partner/s
- a minimum of two valid quotes for expenses exceeding \$5,000 (excl GST), or justification of quote absences and method for calculation of costs.

14. Further information

If you have any questions relating to these guidelines or if you would like to discuss your application please contact the Office of Circular Economy, Circular Economy Programs Team by email at CEPrograms@des.qld.gov.au.

15. Privacy statement

The department is collecting personal information in the application for the Local Government Battery Collection Program 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 Queensland Minister for the Environment and Tourism 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 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.

16. 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:
 - a) public liability insurance of a minimum of \$20 million
 - b) workers and volunteers under the Queensland Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Any liaison with an assessment panel member by an applicant or another person about a specific application may result in immediate disqualification.

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.
- 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.
- 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 details 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 12 months of contract execution.

Acknowledgement of funding

- 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.

- Details of how and where grant recipients will be expected to acknowledge funding, including approval requirements, will form conditions of the grant agreement and will be consistent with the [funding acknowledgement requirements](#) on the department's website.

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 a quarterly basis.
- All grant recipients will be required to complete and submit a final report and acquittal within 4 weeks 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.

Announcement of successful applicants

- The Minister for the Environment and Tourism 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 then.

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