GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS

Round 1: Koala Habitat Restoration

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The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The department is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights, and our obligations under the Human Rights Act 2019.

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March 2026

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Overview

The Grassroots Environmental Grants - **Round 1:** *Koala Habitat Restoration* will provide grants of up to $75,000 (excluding GST) to eligible recipients for on-ground projects which seek to revegetate koala habitat and increase landscape connectivity in a [Koala Priority Area](#) (KPA) or an [Area of Regional Koala Significance](#) (ARKS). A total of $1 million in funding is available in this round of the grant program.

Projects funded will be those which encourage community participation and engagement and that:

- revegetate cleared or regrowth koala habitat; and

- increase landscape connectivity for koalas.

Grant funding will only be provided for eligible locations within a KPA or an ARKS area, and which are identified as Koala Habitat or Koala Habitat Restoration areas. Further information on the **Priority Spatial Areas Criteria** can be found on page 5 of these guidelines.

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

All projects must be completed within two years of the project start date.

Applications close at 4pm on 31 March 2026

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

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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/grassroots.

Program objective—restoring koala habitat

This grant program provides funding to eligible recipients to undertake community-based on-ground activities which seek to revegetate koala habitat and increase landscape connectivity on eligible locations located within a priority spatial area (as defined in Table 1 – Priority Spatial Areas Criteria).

Projects funded will be those that:

- revegetate cleared or regrowth koala habitat; and

- increase landscape connectivity for koalas.

Priority Spatial Areas Criteria

To be eligible, projects need to fall within Priority Spatial Areas Criteria mapping. Projects need to be able to meet both criterion 1 and criterion 2 set out below:

Table 1 – Priority Spatial Areas Criteria

Criterion 1 – Priority landscape location	Criterion 2 – Koala Habitat
Projects must fall within, or less than 1km from one of the mapped areas that are considered priorities for koala habitat protection and restoration. a) a Koala Priority Area (KPA), as shown on the Department's Koala Priority Area Mapping ;or b) in an area/s defined on the Areas of Regional Koala Significance (ARKS) Mapping, as shown on the Healthy Land and Water ARKS mapping product.	Projects must demonstrate they are within an area that can sustain koala habitat food trees, and therefore need to be within either: a) a mapped Koala Habitat Restoration area; or b) a mapped Koala Habitat area (where it can be demonstrated that on-ground habitat would benefit from revegetation or regeneration). Instructions for accessing these layers are available here.

Applicants can email GEGrants@detsi.qld.gov.au for verification assistance of spatial criteria for their projects.

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*)

- Australian charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

- properly established not-for-profit organisations including those registered under the *Corporations Act 2001* or Co-operatives National Law (Queensland) (must include evidence attached of constitution for not-for-profit organisations)

- Indigenous corporations incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cwlth)

- Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations

- River Improvement Trusts constituted under the *River Improvement Trust Act 1940*.

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 accept the full responsibility of the project.

Project sponsors cannot 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.

The applicant organisation is to take the lead on project management and monitoring and be involved in the budget management and reporting requirements for the duration of the funding agreement activities.

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).

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.

Owners of properties are encouraged to collaborate with their local Landcare, Coastcare, Bushcare or Rivercare group.

Ineligible applicants

The following applicants are ineligible to apply for funding:

- Individuals
- Commercial entities established for profit
- statutory bodies and authorities (other than those entities listed under eligible applicants)
- Australian Government agencies
- Queensland Government agencies
- political parties or lobbyists
- local government authorities (other than as a sponsor)
- schools (government and non-government schools) (other than as a sponsor)
- tertiary education institutions administered by the Commonwealth or State.

Available funding

Applicants may seek funding for grants of up to $75,000 (excluding GST).

A successful organisation will not receive more than one grant per round of the program (other than as a sponsor).

Project timeframes

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

Eligible projects and activities

Projects funded will be those that undertake on-ground activities that engage the community to revegetate koala habitat and increase landscape connectivity within a priority spatial area (as defined in Table 1 – Priority Spatial Areas Criteria on page 5 of these guidelines).

Projects funded will be those that:

- revegetate cleared or regrowth koala habitat; and
- increase landscape connectivity for koalas.

Types of activities funded may include but are not limited to:

- Revegetation through planting appropriate koala food and habitat trees endemic to the project area and designed to ensure koala habitat trees are no less than 250 stems per hectare.
- Site preparation associated with revegetation, such as, implementing changes to fire regimes, weeds, grazing or water management. Site preparation is a valid project activity if in support of revegetation through planting but will not be funded on a stand-alone basis.

Activities should encourage community/volunteer participation.

Ineligible projects and activities

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

- projects undertaken outside of Queensland
- projects undertaken outside of the priority spatial areas identified in Table 1 - Priority Spatial Areas Criteria on page 5 of these guidelines
- projects undertaken on areas managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service including a Queensland National Park or State Forest
- projects that do not have a primary aim of planting koala habitat trees, such as installation/upkeep of a public amenity, installation of public art, planting of ornamental plants, landscaping, laying turf or pasture improvement, or investments to improve farm operations
- the translocation of any animal
- captive breeding of a species or animal
- construction or upkeep of seawalls, bridges, car parks or roads
- academic research projects
- devolved grant funding (i.e. requests for funding to be provided to an applicant organisation who will then disseminate this funding to other organisations or individuals to complete work).
- projects or activities where work has already commenced or has been completed.

(Note: funding applications 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).

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

- purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) and tools to undertake activities related to the grant project

- purchase of catering for project participants participating in project activities

- capital works (supported by technical advice) for environmental benefits

- project administration costs of up to 10% of the grant funding amount. Funding will be for 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)

- fuel (purchase of fuel cards is ineligible) relevant to the project activities

- salaries and wages and other employee costs, where there is a demonstrated need

- contractor fees where there is a clearly demonstrated need for the contractor's services

- hire of vehicle or boats and associated costs to undertake activities directly related to the grant project, including the hire of organisation-owned vehicles or boats.

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 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 volunteers. However, it is acknowledged that some activities cannot be completed by volunteers and that contractors must 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)

- 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

- alcohol/gift cards

- gifts/sponsorship/membership fees

- organisational/personal branding (unless there is a clear link to the projects activities)

- international travel

- purchase of uniforms

- purchase of fuel cards

- purchase of land or buildings

- purchase of a motor vehicle or a boat (motorised) including bikes or scooters (motorised or electric) or all-terrain vehicles or ride on mowers

- fees related to attending conferences, workshops, and events

- school-based curriculum materials

- training expenses

- permits and licences

- consultancy fees.

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 located.

Other State land

Organisations seeking to undertake a project on State land must obtain written approval to conduct the project from the relevant Queensland Government agency prior to submitting their application.

Queensland national parks and state forests

Applicants seeking to undertake a project on areas managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) are not eligible to apply for grant funding. QPWS managed areas include national parks, conservation parks, state forests, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Fish Habitat Areas and state marine parks. More information on Queensland state parks and forests can be accessed on the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation's website https://www.parks.des.qld.gov.au.

Application guidance

Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their project provides a direct on-ground benefit to increase koala habitat, koala connectivity and koala conservation within a KPA, or an ARKS area.

The planned activities should link to existing koala habitat areas and preferably will also link to existing koala habitat restoration projects in the area. Projects will be considered highly favourable if they are contributing to the establishment of a corridor or movement opportunities for koalas, so that koalas are more able to occupy and move through the area. Details of how the project will contribute to this aim should be provided with the application.

Careful consideration should be given to the suitability of tree species proposed to be planted on the project site. Planting should be appropriate for the area and consist primarily of koala habitat trees.

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 Tax Office.

For more information, please email GEGrants@detsi.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 Queensland Government employees and external representatives with relevant expertise.

Projects will be assessed on the following assessment criteria:

Criterion	Assessment elements
1. Meets the objectives of the program	This includes the extent to which the proposed project: • demonstrates a focus on engaging the community, including private landholders, to undertake projects that have a direct on-ground benefit for koala habitat restoration; and • aligns with Priority Spatial Areas Criteria for the program; and • demonstrates how the project activities revegetate cleared or regrowth koala habitat and increase landscape connectivity for koalas.
2. Demonstrates a clear project management approach and governance arrangements	This includes the extent to which the application: • clearly details the project's objectives and likely potential outcomes

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	• provides a clear explanation of the proposed project activities and provides a detailed and reasonable timeframe to complete the activities (within the timeframes provided) • demonstrates organisational capability and capacity for delivering the project • clearly details how the project will be monitored and how results will be evaluated • provides a commitment to maintain the project deliverables beyond the life of the project or can demonstrate there will be ongoing benefit.
3. Represents value for money	This includes: • the scale of the project and activities versus the funding sought • cost of the project versus the time and resources requested • whether there is a contribution of additional cash or in-kind support • whether the funding sought, and individual line items identified in the budget, are necessary for the successful completion of the project • whether two quotes have been provided for contractor costs, hire of vehicle or boats and any other expenditure items over $10,000 (excluding GST).
4. Encourages community/volunteer engagement	This includes the extent to which the proposed project: • encourages volunteers and the community in delivering project activities and demonstrates community engagement.

Projects that provide additional biodiversity benefits, such as habitat benefits for additional threatened species, or significantly improving natural area connectivity at a landscape scale will be highly regarded.

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

Application assessment

Eligible applications will be assessed by an assessment panel comprising of Queensland Government employees and external representatives with relevant expertise. The Panel will make funding recommendations to the Director-General, Department of the Environment, Tourism, 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 GEGrants@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Applicants may lodge an appeal with the department for any decisions made relating to their grant application by emailing GEGrants@detsi.qld.gov.au within two months of advice being received.

Funding availability

Funding is expected to be available mid-2026, 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) 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 (excluding 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 activities' location. The map should identify the latitude and longitude (in decimal) of the site 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, for organisations without an audited financial statement:

  b) 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:

- 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.

- 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 GEGrants@detsi.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 of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) is collecting personal information in the application for the Grassroots Environmental Grants - Round 1: ***Koala Habitat Restoration*** 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 provided to the following parties for the purpose of assessing your application:

- Authorised officers from DETSI and other Queensland Government agencies

- Approved external assessment panel members (e.g. industry experts).

Where necessary, relevant 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.

If your application is successful, the following information will be published on the Queensland Government website and potentially on the Queensland Environment social media channels:

- your organisation's name

- total amount of funding allocated

- project name, location and description.

The department will not otherwise use or disclose your personal information unless you provide your consent, or if the use or disclosure is authorised or required by law.

Applying online using SmartyGrants

DETSI has a contract service arrangement with 'Our Community', which operates SmartyGrants—a secure online grants administration system. For further information, please read: https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy.

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@detsi.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:
  a)   public liability insurance of a minimum of $20 million
  b)   workers and volunteers under the Queensland **Work Health and Safety Act 2011** (where applicable).

- 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.

- Only one grant per applicant will be provided however, more than one application per organisation can be submitted.

- A sponsor may sponsor one or more projects and may receive a grant in its own right (if eligible).

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 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 two 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.

- Grants exceeding $10,000 (excluding GST) may require an audited financial statement signed by an independent auditor, CPA or chartered accountant at the project's completion.

- 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 Funding Acknowledgment statement and/or 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 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.

Resources

- The Gurra Gurra Framework 2020–2026—the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation's commitment to working in partnership with Queensland's First Nations peoples: The Gurra Gurra Framework

- Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism contact details: https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/?id=136

- WetlandInfo: http://www.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

- Koala Mapping: https://environment.desi.qld.gov.au/wildlife/animals/living-with/koalas/mapping/koalamaps#toc-4

- QSpatial: https://qldspatial.information.qld.gov.au/catalogue/custom/index.page

- ARKS - Areas of Regional Koala Significance