



Updated January 2024

Environment Levy Grants Guidelines

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with council's [Community Grants Policy](#) and [Environment Levy Policy](#). You can view these documents at www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Sunshine Coast Council has a strong history of partnering with the community to achieve the environmental goals set out in council's strategies, plans and policy positions, including:

- **Sunshine Coast Council Corporate Plan 2023-2027**
- **Environment & Liveability Strategy 2023**
- **Sunshine Coast Council Local Government Area Biosecurity Plan 2017.**

Not-for-profit community based organisations can apply for up to \$5,000 to assist with projects that make a positive and ongoing contribution to the region's biodiversity and waterways values.

Priorities

Priority is given to one-off projects that:

- contribute to landscape scale protection, monitoring and rehabilitation of biodiversity, which include native plants and animals and waterways
- build community capacity, engagement and participation in biodiversity, waterways and pest management
- adapt and respond to environmental challenges and emerging issues, e.g. pest plants and animals, pollution and climate change.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Community organisations which meet all of the following criteria:

- are a legal entity with not-for-profit status or are registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC)*
- operate within the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area (LGA) or are able to demonstrate that the project or program will benefit residents and environment of the Sunshine Coast LGA
- have appropriate insurance and adhere to sound Workplace Health and Safety practices
- are able to demonstrate viability
- have no debt to council, or have entered into scheduled payment arrangements with council which are being adhered to
- have met acquittal conditions for previous council grants.



*If a community organisation is not a legal entity or registered with the ACNC , then the application must be auspiced and administered by such a group.

Applicants may submit only one grant application per round.

Who cannot apply?

- Government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government
- Educational, religious or medical organisations, where the application is for the organisation's core business
- Businesses
- Individuals.

Projects eligible for funding

To be eligible for funding, applications must:

- demonstrate a purpose that is in the public interest
- be consistent with council's Environment Levy Policy
- link to council's Corporate Plan and environmental strategies, specifically Environment and Liveability Strategy 2023 and Sunshine Coast Local Government Area Biosecurity Plan 2017
- adhere to the specific terms and conditions of this funding program.

Projects not eligible for funding

- The development of privately-owned facilities
- Projects run solely for commercial profit
- Activities that have already commenced prior to a grant application being submitted
- Payment of debt
- Political activities
- Core business of educational, religious or medical organisations
- Items included in another council grant application
- Ongoing operational or recurrent costs including salaries, rent and fuel
- Prize money, prizes or trophies
- Projects run solely for fundraising purposes, without broader community benefit.

Lower priority

Lower priority is given to:

- applicants who have been funded within the previous 12 months

Assessment

The Environment Levy Grants are assessed by panels, which include council staff with expertise in natural area management.

In some instances part funding may be offered.

Panel recommendations for Environment Levy Grants are reported to the CEO for approval.



Assessment Criteria

Environment Levy Grants will be assessed against the program priorities and the following criteria:

- demonstrated need for the project/activity
- linkage to Sunshine Coast Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027
- alignment to the Environment and Liveability Strategy 2023 and Sunshine Coast Local Government Area Biosecurity Plan 2017
- benefit to the people and environment of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area
- evidence of consultation and community partnerships
- capacity of the applicant to successfully complete the project
- a balanced, realistic and complete project budget
- evidence that the organisation has inclusive participation policies and practices
- level of funding contributed by the applicant and/or others towards the project
- evidence of any qualifications and approvals required to undertake project.

Application

Application forms for Environment Levy Grants are available on council's website and must be submitted online.

Quotes are required for all items over \$500 and must be submitted with the application.

The delivery of the Environment Levy Grants is subject to annual budget allocations.

Payment

Environment Levy Grants funds must be claimed within two months of notification, except where an extension has been granted.

If the applicant is being auspiced, payment will be made to the auspicing organisation.

Acknowledgment

As a condition of funding, successful applicants are required to actively and publicly acknowledge council's support. The level of acknowledgment is determined by the amount funded and outlined in the acknowledgement guidelines.

In addition, funding recipients must also ensure council's positive reputation is maintained at all times.

Acquittal

Once the project has been completed, applicants are required to complete an online acquittal form detailing the outcome of their project and how they have expended the funds.

Copies of invoices or receipts are to be included with the acquittal as evidence of expenditure and should match the approved items. Acquittals are due within eight weeks of project completion.

A refund of grant funds may be requested when expenditure falls short of the funding amount, or if funds are spent on items not approved.

Applicant Support

For further information or help completing on-line applications, please contact council's grants team on (07) 5420 8616 or email grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.

Note: Office hours are 8.30 am – 4.30 pm, Monday – Friday (excluding public holidays).

If you do not have your own computer, you can access one at any of council's libraries at no cost.

Please let us know if you have difficulty speaking English and we can organise an interpreter to assist you.

