

Environment Levy

Landholder Environment Grants

June 2025

Guidelines

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with council's [Community Grants Policy](#) and [Strategic Environment Levy Policy](#).

It is also highly recommended that you consult with the [Landholder Environment Grant Tips](#) for a successful application prior to commencing your application.

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

- [Sunshine Coast Corporate Plan 2025-2030](#)
- [Environment and Liveability Strategy 2023](#)
- [Sunshine Coast Biosecurity Plan 2024](#)

Landholder Environment Grants (LEG) provide financial assistance for private rural landholders to undertake on-ground projects on their properties. The purpose of the grants are to:

- protect and enhance the natural assets and biodiversity of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area (LGA)
- promote ecologically sustainable management of the region's environmental values.

Sunshine Coast rural landholders are invited to submit expressions of interest for assistance to undertake environmental works on private property.

Applicants may apply for up to \$15,000 assistance towards their project.

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

As funds are limited and it is anticipated that many worthwhile projects will be submitted, applications seeking a modest amount of funding are more likely to be successful.

ENVIRONMENT LEVY FUNDED

Priority

Priority is given to projects that:

- will achieve cost effective on-ground outcomes
- have high ecological value
- have at least a matching landholder contribution
- will deliver benefits to the wider community
- demonstrate commitment to maintaining the work into the future.

Low priority is given to projects that are not cost-effective or do not demonstrate sufficient planning.

Eligibility

Who can apply

Private rural landholders of the Sunshine Coast LGA who have satisfactorily met all acquittal conditions of previous council grants are eligible to apply. Applications must be submitted by the landholder. Landholders can apply for only one grant per round. A single application must only address one project.

To be eligible for assistance, a landholder will need to contribute to the project. The landholder contribution can be cash, in-kind or a combination of both.

Cash contributions are where the landholder pays for materials and/or labour with their own money. An in-kind contribution is where the landholder contributes their own physical labour, the use of their own machinery, or project materials (e.g. fence posts, herbicide, mulch).

This is calculated over the life span of the project up to acquittal (usually 12 months from receipt of grant funds) and within the project area.

- in-kind contributions are valued at \$43.30/hour for the landholder's labour
- when calculating in-kind contributions for use of your own materials, equipment and/or running costs, you should use reasonable market prices for materials and reasonable market hire rates for machinery.

Proposed funding*	Landholder Contribution
Up to \$5,000	Priority will be given to projects with at least a matching landholder co-contribution. Matching co-contribution may be any combination of in-kind or cash.
\$5,000-\$10,000	Landholder must at least match funding amount being requested from council and at least 25% of that matching amount must be in the form of cash.
\$10,001-\$15,000	Landholder must at least match funding amount being requested from council and at least 50% of that matching amount must be in the form of cash.

* The proposed funding amount and landholder contribution should be discussed with a Conservation Partnerships Officer during the site visit.

Projects eligible for funding

Projects must be on privately-owned rural land within the Sunshine Coast Council LGA. Landholders can apply for assistance to carry out natural resource management activities such as:

- fencing to restrict stock access to significant areas of native vegetation, wetlands or waterways
- installing off-stream stock watering points and stock crossings
- revegetating degraded areas and establishing native vegetation corridors and buffer zones
- reducing sediment and nutrient runoff on farms
- controlling invasive plants to rehabilitate native vegetation areas
- modifying existing fencing to make it more wildlife friendly (note that installation or modification of boundary fencing is not eligible).

Costs eligible for funding

- purchase of materials such as herbicide, tubestock, mulch, and fencing materials
- costs to engage a suitably qualified and experienced contractor
- hire of specialised equipment which is essential for the completion of the project.

Other activities may be considered after consultation with a Conservation Partnerships Officer during the site visit.

Projects not eligible for funding

Works or activities that:

- are not on private land
- are a condition of a local government or state government development approval
- have previously received Council funding
- are the legal responsibility of the landholder, e.g. control of restricted matter, (ie invasive plants in Categories 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7, Schedule 2, Part 2) in the [Biosecurity Act 2014](#), property rates and approval fees
- are for control of free floating and submerged aquatic weeds
- installation or modification of boundary fencing
- are the normal responsibility of the landholder (e.g. upgrades, maintenance or repairs to property infrastructure such as dams, weirs, drains, fences and tracks)
- contravene any local, state or commonwealth legislation or policy
- are focussed on providing private or scenic amenity e.g. landscaping
- involve projects on urban properties
- multiple projects on one property in a single application.

Costs not eligible for funding

- the applicant's or a relative's labour

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- claiming wages for employees
- the purchase, servicing and/or associated costs of equipment (e.g. fuel, oil)
- reimbursement for works or purchases that have already been undertaken prior to submitting an application
- weed management activities in production or domestic areas (e.g. orchards, pastures, crops, gardens, lawns or around dwellings)
- contractor fees for the purposes of planting tubestock granted from another Council incentive program (e.g. Land for Wildlife)
- maintenance of projects established with previous Landholder Environment Grant funding
- consultancy fees, work reports or administration fees
- herbicides that are restricted from use on the Sunshine Coast.

Application

Expression of Interest (EOI) Forms are available at www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/grants and must be submitted online by the closing date.

The Landholder Environment Grants application is a three-stage process:

- 1. Expression of Interest (EOI)** - Applicants must submit a Landholder Environment Grants Expression of Interest form during the expression of interest period to be eligible to apply.
- 2. Site Visit** - Upon receipt of the EOI, a Conservation Partnerships Officer will contact the applicant to arrange an onsite visit to discuss the project and provide advice.
- 3. Online application** - Following the site visit, applicants must complete an online application form that reflects what was agreed upon during the site visit.

Quotes are required for all items which cost equal to or over \$1000 and must be included with your application.

A property map, showing the location and extent of project activities must be included with your application. If you are unable to upload your documentation, it can be delivered to a council office, emailed to grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au, or posted (no later than 5.00 pm) on the closing date.

Landholder Environment Grant applicants may start their project as soon as they submit their application, but need to be aware that funding is very competitive and council cannot guarantee that the application will be successful.

Assessment

Landholder Environment Grants are assessed by a panel which includes Council employees with expertise in natural area management before being approved by Senior Management.

All applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, will be notified of the outcome via email. In some instances, part funding may be offered.

Conditions for successful grant applications

Successful applicants must:

- claim funds within 2 months of notification, unless written permission for an extension has been obtained from Council
- use funds for the purpose for which the grant was awarded, unless written permission for a variation has been obtained from Council
- allow Council officers to conduct an on-site visit to inspect the progress of the project, if requested
- obtain all appropriate permits, approvals and insurance relating to the project for which the grant has been awarded
- allow Council to use photographs and marketing material relating to the project in the promotion of Council's grants and funding programs
- provide Council, upon request, with information on the progress of the project
- complete the project within 12 months of receiving funding
- submit an acquittal form (including receipts) within eight weeks of the project completion date, as nominated in the application

Successful applicants who fail to comply with any of the above conditions may have their grant funding offer withdrawn or may not be eligible for future funding from Council

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.

Applicants will not be considered for further funding from council where previous acquittal conditions have not been met.

Applicant Support

For further information or questions about this program, please contact a Conservation Partnerships Officer on (07) 5475 7272 or LFW@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.

For technical support (e.g. assistance with logging in or submitting applications), please contact Council's Grants Team at grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.

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

Free computer access is available at [Sunshine Coast Libraries](#). Details on translating and interpreting services can be found on [Council's website](#).