



Sunshine Coast Council has a strong history of partnering with the community to achieve the environmental goals set out in its Corporate Plan and environmental strategies/plans, including the Biodiversity Strategy, Waterways and Coastal Management Strategy and the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area Pest Management Plan.

The Environment Levy Partnerships and Grants Program offers three levels of funding to assist private rural landholders and not-for-profit community groups to achieve a landscape approach to protecting and enhancing the region's natural assets.

For all three categories these guidelines should be read in conjunction with council's *Community Grants Policy* and *Environment Levy Policy*. You can view the policies at [www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/grants](http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/grants)

## Environment Levy Partnerships

The Environment Levy Partnerships funding program provides up to three-year funding towards operational expenses to community organisations whose operations or services contribute to the protection of the Sunshine Coast environment, and whose activities are closely aligned to Council's vision for the future as described in the Corporate Plan.

The inclusion of an Expression of Interest (EOI) period provides the opportunity to develop collaborative partnerships with agreed outcomes for natural resource management of the region.

### Eligibility

#### Who can apply?

Community organisations who meet all of the following criteria:

- operate within the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area or are able to demonstrate that the program will benefit

residents and environment of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area

- are able to demonstrate viability
- are willing to participate with Council in defining, through the EOI period, mutually agreed partnership deliverables, measures and reporting requirements
- have no debt to Council, or have entered into scheduled payment arrangements with council which are being adhered to, and/or have met acquittal conditions for previous Council grants
- are solely based in and focused on the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area (not state or Australia wide)
- are Incorporated, or are an Australian Public Company-Limited by Guarantee
- have appropriate insurance and adhere to sound Workplace Health and Safety practices
- are working towards becoming self-sufficient

Priority will be given to applications where Council funding can be used to leverage funding from other tiers of government.

### 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
- Organisations eligible under the Sports Field Maintenance Funding Program
- Organisations seeking funding for Festive Season activities
- Organisations where the application is connected to political activities.

### What is eligible for funding?

Up to \$5,000 funding is available as a contribution to support the organisation's general administration and operational expenses.

Applications for amounts greater than \$5,000 can be made, but will be subject to mutually agreed deliverables negotiated during the collaborative Expression of Interest process.

## Application

The Environment Levy Partnership application is a three stage process.

1. Expression of Interest (EOI) – applicants must submit an EOI form during the expression of interest period to be eligible to apply.
2. Discussions with council – upon receipt of the EOI, a Council Senior Conservation Partnerships Officer will contact the applicant to arrange a meeting to discuss the partnership proposal.
3. Online application form – following the discussions with council, applicants must complete an online application form.

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

### Expression of interest (EOI) form

Applicants must use the Environment Levy Partnerships Expression of Interest form to initially submit their interest. The form is available to download from council's website, or it can be emailed/posted upon request.

### Online application form

Applicants must use the online process to submit a valid application. Supporting documentation should also be uploaded to the online application. If you are unable to upload your supporting documentation, it can be lodged at a Council office, or posted, no later than 5.00 pm on the closing date.

## Assessment

Applications are assessed by a panel of experienced staff using the following criteria:

- Achievement of one or more of council's Corporate Plan priorities
- Ability to demonstrate a clear and identified community need for the services
- Ability to demonstrate clear evidence of community support for the services, facilities or programs
- Proven engagement with the community;
- A collaborative approach to the development of the service, facilities or program
- A well-planned and achievable strategic/operational/business plan for delivery
- Demonstrated capacity to deliver for the duration of the partnership
- Evidence of:
  - Sound financial management
  - Sustainable budgeting
  - Effective business planning processes
  - Clear risk assessment
  - Principles of good governance
  - Working towards becoming self sufficient
- Appropriate budget allocation reflecting the importance of community benefit/service provision over operational expenditure

- Contribute to the achievement of environmental outcomes which assist with the realization of council's vision for the region
- Contribute to the implementation of strategies and actions outlined in Council's environment policy and strategic documents related to biodiversity, waterways, climate change, sustainability, peak oil and energy transition
- Contribute to landscape protection, monitoring and rehabilitation of biodiversity and address major ecological threatening processes (e.g. rural & urban runoff, clearing of vegetation, riparian corridors and linkages, pest management)
- Promote waterways and catchment health and reduce erosion and sediment runoff into waterways;
- Establish partnerships and links with external agencies and residents which improve the protection, restoration and/or management of the region's environment (particularly on lands adjoining or lying within the immediate vicinity of existing conservation areas, Land for Wildlife properties, conservation/vegetation protection covenants and VCA properties) and extension activities, e.g. property vegetation management planning;
- Facilitate investment by state government, regional bodies for natural resource management, research organisations, community groups and industry in priority environmental projects in the region;
- Manage environmental research projects that are directly relevant to improving the protection, restoration or management of the region's environment and are guided by existing environmental strategies.

In some instances, part-funding may be offered.

Panel recommendations are reported to council for endorsement.

Applicants will subsequently be notified in writing of the outcomes of their application.

## Payment

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

In some instances, there may be specific funding conditions that need to be met before payment can be made.

## Acquittal

All Environment Levy Partnership funding must be acquitted annually by 31 August.

Organisations will not be considered for further funding from Council where previous acquittals conditions have not been met.

Recipients of multiple-year Environment Levy Partnership funding will receive yearly payments contingent on the satisfactory completion of a yearly progress report and subject to Council's annual budget allocations.



## Environment Levy Grant

The Environment Levy Grants provide the opportunity for not-for-profit community based organisations to apply for up to \$5,000 for projects that make a positive and ongoing contribution to the region's biodiversity and waterways values.

Priority is given to non-recurrent 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, eg pest plants and animals.

### Eligibility for Environment Levy Grant

#### Who can apply?

Community organisations which meet all of the following criteria:

- Operate within the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area or are able to demonstrate that the project or program will benefit residents and environment of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area;
- 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; and
- Have met acquittal conditions for previous council grants.

If a community organisation is not a legal entity or recognised by the Australian Taxation Office as a not-for-profit type, 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

#### Projects eligible for funding

To be eligible to apply 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, and
- 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
- The core business of educational, religious or medical organisations
- Items included in another Council grant application
- Ongoing operational or recurrent costs including salaries, rent, fuel,
- Funding for prize money, prizes or trophies;
- Projects run solely for fundraising purposes, without broader community benefit.

#### Lower priority is given to

- Applicants who have been funded within the previous 12 months
- Projects or events that have previously received council funding.

## Environment Levy Landholder Environment Grant (LEG)

The Landholder Environment Grant (LEG) provides financial assistance for private rural landholders to undertake on-ground projects on their properties, which protect and enhance the natural assets and biodiversity of the Sunshine Coast and promote ecologically sustainable management of the region's environmental values.

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

### Who can apply?

Private rural landholders of the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area, who have satisfactorily met all acquittal conditions of previous council grants.

### Priority is given to projects that:

- will achieve cost effective on-ground outcomes
- have high ecological value
- have at least matching co-contribution
- will deliver benefits to the wider community.

### Low priority is given to:

- projects that have previously received council funding, unless the project is clearly well planned with a staged approach.

**Note:** Landholders can apply for only one grant each round.

### Projects eligible for funding

Projects must be on privately owned rural land within the Sunshine Coast Council Local Government Area.

Landholders can apply for assistance to carry out natural resource management activities such as:

- fencing to restrict stock access to significant vegetation, wetlands or waterways
- installing off-stream stock watering points and stock crossings
- revegetation of degraded areas, establish vegetation corridors and buffer zones
- reducing sediment loss on farms
- control of environmental weeds to rehabilitate native vegetation areas
- modification of existing fencing to make it more wildlife friendly.

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 Council or State Government Development Approval
- are the legal responsibility of the landholder (e.g. control of Class 1 or 2 declared weeds, boundary fencing, property rates, and approval fees)
- 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.

Claiming funds for:

- your own, or a relative's, labour
- the purchase, servicing and/or associated costs (e.g. fuel, oil etc.) of equipment

- works or purchases that have already been undertaken prior to submitting an application.

### Funding Details

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.

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

The following costs are eligible for funding:

- purchase of materials such as herbicide, tubestock, mulch, fencing wire, posts etc.
- fees for engagement of a suitably qualified and experienced contractor
- hire of specialised equipment, essential for the completion of the project.

The following costs are not eligible for funding:

- 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).

**Note:** It is generally expected that landowners will undertake revegetation unless physically unable to do so.

### Application

The Landholder Environment Grant application is a three stage process.

1. Expression of Interest (EOI) – applicants **must** submit an EOI 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 on-site visit to discuss the project
3. Online application form – following the site visit, applicants must complete an online application form before the closing date.

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

### Expression of interest (EOI) form

Applicants must use the Landholder Environment Grant Expression of Interest form to initially submit their interest. The form is available to download from the website, or it can be emailed/posted to you upon request.

### Online application form

Supporting documentation should be uploaded to the online application. If you are unable to upload your documentation, it can be lodged at a council office, 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.

### Tips for a successful project

To be successful you will need a well-planned project. When planning your project you should do the following:

- discuss your project with a conservation partnerships officer during the site visit
- ensure project outcomes are clear and well-defined
- ensure project can be easily completed within a reasonable timeframe (usually 12 months)
- understand that applications for a large amount of funding may require the project area to be subject to a protective mechanism, e.g. tree preservation order or conservation covenant
- divide larger projects into smaller easily-achieved and maintainable stages
- if possible discuss your project with other landholders who have undertaken similar projects.

### Contractors

Council strongly recommends that any contractors you engage for control of



environmental weeds, bush regeneration, revegetation and fencing activities are recognised providers, with proven experience in this field. A list of contractors utilised by Council can be supplied if required or you may wish to seek quotes from other businesses with similar skills and experience.

If you are planning to engage contractors, please provide details of the contractor/s in the application (company, contact person, phone number etc.).

#### Fencing to restrict stock access to significant vegetation, wetlands, or riparian areas

Fencing must be for the prevention or restriction of livestock access to revegetation plots, remnant vegetation, wetlands or waterways - creek or river banks.

Please include in your application the type of fencing and an estimate of the length of fencing you wish to install.

The proposed location of the fence line must be clearly shown on your project map. It is preferred that fencing be of 'wildlife-friendly' design. In most cases this can be achieved simply by using a plain wire for the top and bottom strands. There are also other techniques for minimising the impact of fencing on wildlife, which can be discussed with a conservation partnership officer during the site visit.

If engaging a contractor, fencing costs should generally be less than \$15/metre, depending on the type of fence and the terrain. Some landholders are able to erect the fence themselves, but need assistance with material costs. This is usually approximately \$3-7/metres, depending on the type of fence and terrain.

Some additional points for fencing with particular regard to fencing along waterways:

- Generally or where practical fences should be situated on the high bank to reduce the likelihood of damage by flooding
- Permanent fencing is preferable, however funding for electric fencing (except charging units) will be considered for staged projects or areas that are subjected to repeated flooding.

#### Installing off-stream stock watering points and stock crossings

The project design must demonstrate the potential for mitigation or prevention of erosion on a waterway. Access to the waterway by stock must be prevented by existing fence or fencing as part of this project.

It is important to ensure that relevant permits regarding in-stream works and waterway barrier works have been obtained from the relevant State government department.

#### Revegetation of degraded areas and to establish vegetation corridors and buffer zones

Plants used for revegetation must be locally native, appropriate for the area being revegetated and no larger than tubestock. Tubestock is sometimes called Native Tube or Forestry Tube and is generally 50 mm square and 125 mm deep in size. Exception will be made for certain species that are difficult to obtain in tubestock size.

A Conservation Partnerships Officer can assist you in developing an appropriate species list for your revegetation project after the site visit.

In order to be successful, a revegetation project needs to be well-planned, as each stage often depends on good timing to coincide with favourable weather conditions or other factors. It is essential to consider elements such as frost, flooding, seasonal rainfall, availability of contractors and availability of suitable tubestock for your planting.

Typically if you are purchasing large numbers of tubestock, you should expect to pay \$1.65/plant or less. If you are seeking high cost revegetation materials in addition to tubestock (eg tree guards or contract labour) the cost effectiveness of your revegetation will be taken into consideration by the assessment panel.

### Reducing sediment loss on farms

Projects to help reduce the loss of soil from farms and thereby mitigate the negative impacts on our waterways often require site specific advice from experts. Please contact a Conservation Partnerships Officer to help you design your project.

### Management of environmental weeds and bush regeneration

Control techniques should be appropriate for the area being rehabilitated. A Conservation Partnerships Officer can assist you with determining appropriate strategies and techniques for control of environmental weeds during the site visit.

If you are applying for funds to purchase herbicide for the control of environmental weeds, please undertake the necessary research to ensure that the herbicide is registered for that use and the most appropriate.

Applications should list the main types of weeds to be controlled and give an indication of the area of weed control to be undertaken.

Weed management activities need to be directed at protecting remnant vegetation areas or rehabilitating degraded areas.

### Modification of fencing to make it wildlife friendly

The fence must be located in or adjacent to an area of natural vegetation and have a history of or be considered likely to kill or injure wildlife.

### Your application must include:

#### Quotes

For any materials or proposed use of a contractor, where the cost will exceed \$1000, a quote must be obtained and an electronic copy

provided with the on-line application, or hard copies may be posted to council. Quotes should be detailed and include hourly rates, number of hours of labour, methodology, equipment hire, materials, herbicides to be used, and any travel costs.

### Project maps

A property map with project clearly defined must be included with your application. Clearly show the location and extent of the project activities on the map. If your grant application is for a stage in a long-term project, please mark all the stages on the map and focus your planning on the current stage.

Maps may be hand-drawn and posted in to council or created online using applications such as Google Earth or council's [My Maps](#) mapping tool, and attached to your on-line application form.

(See Appendix 1 for Example Project Maps)

### Budget

Budgets must be detailed and realistic, and include a breakdown of all the items in your application. A detailed, well-researched budget demonstrates that you have planned your project and are committed to achieving the desired outcomes. Include details of materials and services and price per unit, e.g.:

- 250 tubestock @ \$1.65 each
- 1 x 10L Glyphosate
- 20 hours contractor @ \$..../hr.

(See Appendix 2 – Example Budget)

### Landholder contribution requirements

Priority is given to applicants with at least a matching co-contribution. 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.

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 etc). 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 \$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
- cash contributions are where the landholder pays for materials and/or labour with their own money.

*Jeff Weedsgone would like \$3,000 council funds for his project. He has a co-contribution of \$120 cash and \$3,200 in-kind for a total contribution of \$3,320.*

*Jenny Treegrower would like \$6,500 council funds. She has a co-contribution of \$1,800 cash (more than the 25% minimum) and \$5,000 in-kind for a total contribution of \$6800.*

*David Clearwater would like \$13,000 council funds. He has a co-contribution of \$6,500 cash (the 50% minimum) and \$8,000 in-kind for a total contribution of \$14,500.*

The following table charts the minimum contribution you are required to make for any project for which you are seeking a council grant. Example of various co-contribution amounts:

\$ Amount Requested from Council	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 <u>and</u> at least 25% of that matching amount must be in the form of cash.
\$10,000 - \$15,000	Landholder must at least match funding amount being requested from council <u>and</u> at least 50% of that matching amount must be in the form of cash.

## Assessment

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

Panel recommendations for Landholder Environment Grants are reported to the CEO for endorsement.

### What are the grant conditions, if successful?

Successful applicants must:

- claim funds within three 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 onsite visit to inspect the progress of the project, if requested
- obtain all appropriate permits, approvals, insurance etc. 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, information on the progress of the project
- complete the project within 12 months of receiving council 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 Council grant funding offer withdrawn or may not be eligible for future council funding.

### How will I find out if my grant is successful?

Grants are assessed by a panel of Council officers. Part-funding may be offered. All applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, will be notified of the outcome in writing.

### Applicant Support

For general enquiries, and help completing your online application form, please contact a Grants Officer on (07) 5475 7272 or email [grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](mailto:grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au).

If you do not have your own computer, you can access a computer at any of council's libraries [☑](#). You can use these computers at no cost. Interpreter services are also available for people who are having difficulty communicating in English. Contact council's customer service centre to organise an interpreter to assist you.



Appendix 1 - Example Project Map



Appendix 2 - Example Budget

Cost Item	Details (e.g. description, quantity, hours, price per unit)	Your contribution (cash only)	Your contribution (in-kind)	Funds sought from council	Total cost (including in-kind)
<b>FENCING</b>					
Contractor	Ace Fencing - see attached quote for 100 metres	\$600		\$600	\$1,200
Labour (self)				N/A	\$0
<b>WEED MANAGEMENT</b>					
Herbicide	10 litres glyphosate			\$80	\$80
Labour (self)	50 hrs x \$30		\$1,500	N/A	\$1,500
<b>REVEGETATION</b>					
Plants	400 tubestock @ \$1.65			\$660	\$660
Materials	100 bales mulch @ \$5, bamboo stakes, 1 litre fish & kelp			\$600	\$600
Labour (self)	40 hrs x \$30		\$1,200	N/A	\$1,200
<b>OTHER</b>					
Machinery hire	Hire of post hole digger for 1 day			\$77	\$77
Labour (self)	8 hrs x \$30		\$240	N/A	\$240
<b>Project Totals</b>		<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$2,940</b>	<b>\$2,2017</b>	<b>\$5,557</b>