



Department of  
Primary Industries and  
Regional Development

Protect  
Grow  
Innovate

# 2026 Community Stewardship Grants

## Guidelines for Applicants

Applications close: Wednesday 29 April 2026 at 12 noon AWST



**Cover image:** Banksia spp. with Pink Lake in background (image reversed). Credit: Sally Forbes

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

DPIRD acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country, the Aboriginal people of the many lands that we work on and their language groups throughout Western Australia and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waters.

We respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of our regions, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

## **Sensitivity disclaimer**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that these guidelines may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs, or printed material.

## **Content disclaimer**

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# 1. Natural Resource Management in Western Australia

**Natural resource management (NRM)** is the sustainable management of the land, water, atmosphere, and biodiversity resources for the benefit of existing and future generations, and for the maintenance of life support capability of the biosphere.

By taking a landscape approach, the management of production and conservation can be integrated across land and water boundaries. This recognises the importance of managing our natural resources to deliver economic and social wellbeing for people and industry for the long term, while maintaining integral habitat for native species that rely on that habitat for their survival.

**Natural resources** include soil, water and marine resources, geological features and landscapes, native flora and fauna, and other native organisms and ecosystems.

A significant cause of natural resource degradation is unsustainable human use and management practices. This arises from our socio-cultural systems where frequently there is inadequate understanding of the importance of natural resources and a lack of knowledge concerning their use and management.

Western Australia's future long-term prosperity is intrinsically linked with the sustainable use of our natural resources and effective management of our natural landscapes.

To achieve ongoing prosperity, community, industry and government need to work together in partnership to ensure a balanced approach to conserving and developing our natural resources for the long term.

To realise these goals, several WA Government documents work together to provide strategic direction for NRM activity across the state. Relevant to all of State government investment, the *WA Government Priorities 2025-2029* identifies the WA government's priorities. Specifically, the Community Stewardship Grants directly deliver to the following:

- Developing a skilled and productive workforce
- Investing in a more inclusive community
- Promoting active, healthy lifestyles,
- Protecting and restoring of land and oceans,
- Protecting and restoring the Swan and Canning Rivers,
- Increasing urban tree canopy,
- Helping people appreciate and enjoy nature.

The *Western Australian Natural Resource Management Framework* (WA NRM Framework) outlines the State Government's direction for working together in partnership to manage Western Australia's natural resources for the future.

The WA NRM Framework sets out the priorities that guide the Community Stewardship Grants. These priorities are further defined in the Community Stewardship Grants Outcomes at **Section 2.1** below.

## 2. Community Stewardship Grants

The Community Stewardship Grants are an initiative of the Western Australian Government managed through the State NRM Program at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). The grants are designed to facilitate the conservation and sustainable management of the State's natural resources by supporting local community groups to undertake stewardship of natural resources in their local area.

Community-based NRM is directed and driven by local, catchment, or regional scale needs and priorities. It recognises the value of local knowledge, volunteer efforts and strong partnerships. The Community Stewardship Grants prioritise the direct involvement of local community groups in all project stages of design, planning and implementation, through which efficient and effective partnerships between government, industry, and community can be fostered.

Over the past 8 years, over \$60 million worth of Community Stewardship Grants, including \$46 million in Royalties for Regions funding, has supported over 450 grassroots not-for-profit and volunteer groups that care for the State's diverse and valuable natural assets, from the Kimberley to the Great Southern.

The WA NRM Framework priorities guide the Community Stewardship Grants program and are further defined in the Community Stewardship Grants Outcomes below.

### 2.1. Community Stewardship Grant Outcomes

Priority	Outcome
Priority 1 <b>Sustainable management of land resources</b>	Agricultural landscapes will be maintained or improved by driving sustainable and/or regenerative agricultural practices, focusing on soil biology and landscape management, to produce healthier food, a healthier environment, and improved bottom line to enable enduring prosperity.
Priority 2 <b>Maintain and enhance water assets</b>	Water assets will be maintained, improved, and protected through activities that support ecosystem health, water availability, biodiversity, and spiritual and cultural values for Aboriginal people. Water assets include estuaries, floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater systems.
Priority 3 <b>Protect and enhance the marine and coastal environment</b>	Marine and coastal environments, species, and habitats will be maintained, improved, and protected from biological and physical threats including the declining numbers of some species, introduction of pests and diseases, and the impacts of climate change and sea level rise.
Priority 4	Western Australia's rich, diverse, and unique biodiversity and its economic, cultural, scientific,

Priority	Outcome
<b>Conserve and recover biodiversity</b>	educational, and recreational values will be maintained, improved, and protected from biological and physical threats and processes including the declining numbers of some species, introduction of pests and diseases, and the impacts of climate change.
Priority 5 <b>Enhance skills, capacity, and engagement</b>	The capacity, knowledge, skills, engagement, and participation of stakeholders including volunteers, community groups, Aboriginal people, and the broader community will be maintained or improved. Values, beliefs, and behaviours of stakeholders will be respected.
Priority 6 <b>Deliver high quality planning that leads to effective action</b>	High quality and strategic planning that leads to coordinated and effective actions will be facilitated and delivered to conserve, prevent further deterioration of condition and provide opportunities for remediation of our natural resources.

## 2.2. Available funding

In 2026, \$7 million in funding from the Western Australian Government is available to support community-driven natural resource management projects across the State.

The 2026 Community Stewardship Grants involve two rounds:

1. Small grants which are valued from \$1,000 to \$50,000 and are up to 18 months duration.
2. Large grants which are intended for more strategic, complex projects; are valued between \$50,001 and \$450,000 and are up to 36 months duration.

## 2.3. How many grants can I apply for and how many could be successful?

There is no limit to the number of applications an organisation can submit to the current grant rounds.

However, only one (1) large and two (2) small applications from an organisation can be successful in receiving funding in 2026.

Please note that successful applications as a Sponsor on behalf of an unincorporated group (see **Section 6.2** below) do not count toward the maximum number of successful applications that an organisation can have.

## 3. Application

### 3.1. Application form

Applications must be submitted using the online application form in SmartyGrants available at [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#). Applications will not be accepted in any other format. SmartyGrants is the online grants management tool used by DPIRD and the State NRM Program.

You will find the Community Stewardship Grants rounds on the DPIRD SmartyGrants page under Current Rounds listed as:

- Community Stewardship Grants 2026 – Large
- Community Stewardship Grants 2026 – Small

Once you have found and selected the round you wish to apply for, you will be taken to the round information page 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN'. Please read this carefully and note that there are links to downloadable information which may be useful to your application.

A Microsoft Word version of the application form can be downloaded from the grant round information page 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN'. This may assist applicants in drafting responses to the application questions prior to entering information into the online application form. Please note that formatting such as dot points will transfer into the online form as Plain Text, so may not appear as expected.

You may begin an application by selecting Fill Out Now. There are also options to Preview the form (in a new page) or Download the preview form.

Remember to save your progress as you go. You may save and close the application, then re-enter at a later time using *My Submissions* at the top of the landing page once you have logged in.

To download a PDF of your application at any time, go to the 'Review and Submit' page in Form Navigation and select Download PDF, or do this from the *My Submissions* page.

Previous applicants have advised that the application process is quite time intensive, so please allow plenty of time to gather supporting evidence and complete your submission.

### 3.2. Application deadline

All applications, together with any supporting documentation, must be **submitted by 12 noon AWST on Wednesday 29 April 2026**.

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances which will need to be negotiated with and approved by the State NRM team.

### 3.3 Contact details

Please contact the State NRM Program on **6551 4428** or at [snrmo@dpiird.wa.gov.au](mailto:snrmo@dpiird.wa.gov.au) for any queries or assistance with planning or preparing an application.

## 4. Assessment

### 4.1. Assessment criteria

The merit of each application is assessed against the following essential criteria:

- alignment with Community Stewardship Grant outcomes (30%)
- evidence of local community involvement in each phase of the project lifecycle at design, planning and implementation, including engagement with Aboriginal people (30%)
- a reasonable and well justified funding request that demonstrates value for money (30%)
- sound planning and demonstrated ability to manage the project (10%).

### 4.2. Assessment process

The assessment is based on the information contained in the submitted application form and supporting information provided. The assessment process will also consider the geographical distribution and capacity of applicants to ensure equity across the state.

The key stages in the assessment process are:

- Initial assessment: each assessment panel member individually reviews each application; eligibility and compliance checks are undertaken
- Panel convenes: all projects are assessed and prioritised by the panel as a group, seeking technical advice as required, resulting in a shortlist of recommended applications which is presented to Western Australian NRM Ministers
- Western Australian NRM Ministerial approval: it is anticipated that successful applications will be announced in October 2026 by the Minister for Agriculture and Food, as lead Minister for NRM
- Notification: all successful grants will be published on the State NRM Program website ([Apply for a Community Stewardship Grant | Western Australian Government](https://www.wa.gov.au) ([www.wa.gov.au](http://www.wa.gov.au))) with applicants notified by email on the outcome of their grant application.

## 5. Eligibility

### 5.1. Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply, applicants must be an incorporated not-for-profit organisation with an ABN.

Applicants from the following groups or organisations are encouraged to apply:

- Aboriginal community organisations including Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (RNTBC)
- incorporated associations and not-for profit companies or trusts, including most community, landcare, and NRM groups, Recognised Biosecurity Groups and grower groups
- Land Conservation District Committees (LCDC)
- local government authorities (LGA)
- primary and secondary schools.

### 5.2. Who can't apply?

The following groups are **not** eligible to apply:

- for profit organisations, businesses, partnerships, or companies including sole traders and primary producers
- individuals
- organisations that do not have a branch or base of operation in Western Australia
- tertiary education institutions such as universities (government or privately funded), monotronics, polytechnics or colleges
- unincorporated associations\*
- Western Australian or Australian Government agencies.

\*Unincorporated associations can seek funding via a project sponsor (an eligible organisation that applies on behalf of the unincorporated association). Refer to [Section 6](#) below for further information.

### 5.3. Applicants must be up to date with reporting

Applicants with existing State NRM Program grants must be up to date with all reporting and contractual requirements by the closing date of this grant round to be eligible to apply for new funds through the State NRM Program.

This includes progress reports, variation requests, and final reports/financial acquittals, including return of unspent funding. The status of these requirements can be checked through your DPIRD State NRM Program grants login at [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#).

### 5.4. Project location must be in Western Australia

Projects must be based within the state of Western Australia.

Applications for project activities in Australian territories such as Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands are ineligible.

### 5.5. Application must include a workplan

The workplan is critical part of the application. It is a Microsoft Excel template and must be used (see **Section 8.6**).

Your application will be considered ineligible for assessment if a workplan on the correct template is not attached.

In the workplan, all project costs, co-contributions, and calculations must be provided excluding GST.



## 6. Sponsorship

### 6.1. Do I need a sponsor?

Unincorporated associations, with or without an ABN, may be sponsored (auspiced) by an organisation that is eligible to apply (see **Section 5.1**).

Organisations eligible to apply in their own right are not able to be sponsored.

Entities that are ineligible to apply directly (see **Section 5.2**) are also not able to be sponsored, unless they are an unincorporated association.

The Sponsor organisation applies for and receives the grant funding (if successful) on behalf of the unincorporated group which undertakes the project activities. The nature of the arrangement is detailed in a Sponsorship Agreement, and this must also be reflected in the application and workplan (see **Section 6.4**).

### 6.2. How many projects can an organisation sponsor?

There is no limit to the number of applications an organisation can sponsor, either on behalf of one group, or on behalf of a collective of groups under a single application. Successful applications made by a Sponsor do not count toward the maximum number of successful applications that the sponsoring organisation can have.

### 6.3. Sponsorship fees

A Sponsor can charge up to 10% of the grant request for all other activities for their services. If the Sponsor is charging a fee, then the amount and services to be provided must be clearly identified in the workplan and signed Sponsorship Agreement.

If the Sponsor does not charge a fee, the value of these services may be included as an in-kind co-contribution to the project.

Sponsors cannot request funding directly for project coordination expenses such as salaries or on-costs (see **Section 7.4**) as this is usually a core project activity undertaken by the unincorporated organisation.

If a Sponsor organisation intends to provide consulting or contracting services to the project, such as project coordination, then this should be noted in the 'conflict of interest' section of the application. In the 'contractors and consultant' section of the application, Sponsors must justify why they should be considered the preferred provider of that service.

### 6.4. Sponsorship agreement

The Sponsor organisation applies for and receives the grant funding (if successful) on behalf of the unincorporated group which undertakes the project activities. The nature of the arrangement is detailed in a Sponsorship Agreement, and a signed Sponsorship Agreement must be attached to your application.

Applicants must use the **Sponsorship Agreement** template which can be downloaded from the grant round information page, 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN', accessed via [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#) by selecting the relevant grant round.

## 7. Eligible activities

Community Stewardship Grants can be used to fund a wide range of NRM activities, including purchase or hire of relevant equipment or materials, that will achieve on-ground environmental outcomes directly, or improve community capacity and capability to achieve positive NRM outcomes.

Activities must:

- align with the project methodology to deliver clear NRM outcomes
- align with the Community Stewardship Grant Outcomes (see **Section 2.1**), as one of the key assessment criteria, and
- be in addition to business as usual.

A breakdown of eligible activities is provided in **Appendix A**, although this list is not exhaustive and some activities are subject to limitations (see also **Section 7.7**).

### 7.1. Continuing projects

The State NRM Program will consider funding projects that are a continuation of, or an addition to, previously funded State NRM Program grants. All previous projects must be identified in the relevant section of the form.

Evidence of the area, scope, and success of previous works will be required to justify why a continuation of funding should be considered. You will be expected to include additional mapping to show the extent of past works, information regarding the success of previous projects, and detail on how this application will add value and build on past success.

### 7.2. Devolved grants

Grant funding can be used to run devolved grants.

In a devolved grant, a lump sum of money is awarded to the applicant organisation. The applicant runs their own expression of interest or grant application and assessment process prior to awarding funds or materials to selected applicants, private landholders or other organisations to deliver the proposed works.

Applications for devolved grant activities must include the following information:

- the purpose of the devolved grants
- why devolved grants are the most suitable approach
- the criteria that will be (or has been) used to guide the selection and approval process such as a draft version of the guidelines and assessment criteria
- how the applicant will ensure a public benefit is achieved on private land
- confirmation that the applicant will provide a signed **Landholder Agreement** from each participating landholder prior to the release of any funds.

#### Devolved grants: expectations of private landholders

Landholders that receive funding from the Community Stewardship Grants through a devolved grant for fencing or revegetation must be made aware of, and are required to commit to, the following conditions:

- landholders are responsible for their own site preparation
- revegetation must be protected with stock exclusion fencing
- stock must be excluded from revegetation areas for a minimum of 5 years after planting
- landholders are responsible for the upkeep of fencing for a minimum of 10 years after installation.

### 7.3. Administration and operational expenses

Applicants may seek funding to cover project specific administration and operational costs which are additional to business as usual, such as:

- office expenses (such as lease of space, lease of equipment, additional utilities, phone, internet, cyber security, printing, etc.)
- general communications, HR and Finance support
- general travel (such as regular committee or board meetings, regular travel between operational sites, etc.)
- insurances (volunteer, public liability, personal accident/workers compensation, etc.).

Audit expenses may be requested separately for a single, end of project financial audit for projects valued over \$50,000 (large grants applications only).

Applicants may request up to a maximum of 15% of the project’s proposed grant funded budget for all other activities for administration and operational expenses.

The following is an example of how to calculate the maximum administration grant request:

<b>Example Budget</b>	
<i>Grant activities:</i>	
Coordinator salary	\$10,000
On-costs at 25%of salary	\$2,500
Seedlings	\$15,000
Delivery charge	\$2,000
Workshops x3	<u>\$6,000</u>
<u>Grant activities subtotal</u>	<u>\$35,500</u>
<i>Administration:</i>	
<b><u>15% of grant activities subtotal</u></b>	<b><u>\$5,325</u></b>
Total project grant request	\$40,825

Administration and operational requests that are not considered to be commensurate with the activities proposed may be reduced.

For Sponsors, as the sponsor organisation usually provides at least some administration activities, an additional funding request for administration costs for the sponsored group should be commensurate with the administration needed.

## 7.4. Project coordination expenses

Project coordination and other project roles are eligible activities for Community Stewardship Grants funding, subject to the following conditions:

- The request for any grant funded base salary must not exceed \$101,000 per annum pro rata (excluding GST and on-costs) in the first year and must not exceed an annual increase of 3% per annum in future years.
- Salary on-costs (superannuation, leave expenses, payroll tax and workers compensation insurance) must not exceed 25% of the grant funded salary expenses (excluding GST).
- The total of all grant funded positions must not exceed 1.0 FTE (full time equivalent) in any calendar or financial year of the project.
- Applicants must provide a sufficient level of detail on the work the grant funded positions will be doing to justify the request (this can be provided in the workplan or separately).
- Salary and salary on-costs should be itemised separately in the workplan.

Basic monitoring activities (such as fixed-point photo monitoring, drone photography or photos and registrations) should be included in project coordination (officer time) expenses.

Project coordination and management expenses must be commensurate with the nature and scope of the project, as well as the work the positions will be doing, to be considered value for money. Grant requests that are not considered to be commensurate with the activities and work proposed may be reduced.

## 7.5. Consultation with Aboriginal people

DPIRD respects the Traditional knowledge of Traditional Custodians of the land and sea; the intangible and tangible aspects of the whole body of cultural practices, resources and knowledge systems developed, nurtured, and refined by Indigenous people and passed on by them from generation to generation as part of expressing their cultural identity. The State NRM Program acknowledges that Traditional Owner knowledge, expertise and time is valuable.

Applicants are no longer required to contact representatives of the Aboriginal community relevant to the Country on which they are working as part of the application process unless there is a requirement under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* or the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* to do so; or if the proposed project includes capturing or sharing Traditional ecological knowledge.

Applicants are still required to include Aboriginal engagement and consultation within project implementation, and grant funding may be requested to cover relevant costs for engagement, consultation and participation.

## 7.6. Aboriginal Rangers, Elders and Traditional Owners

Grant funding can be used to support projects that contract Aboriginal Ranger groups to deliver project activities.

Applicants planning to work with Aboriginal Rangers must:

- clearly outline how the services provided to the project consist of new or additional work outputs that are not funded through other means
- confirm whether or not the Aboriginal Ranger team has already secured funding to cover its employment costs:
  - if employment costs are already funded, these can be included as in-kind contributions to the project
  - if employment costs are not already funded, these can be included in the State NRM Program grant request.

Grant funding can be used to support Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Owners to participate in NRM events and work activities on Country that relate directly to an NRM

Traditional Owner knowledge, expertise and time is valuable, and funding may be requested to cover relevant costs for engagement, consultation and participation.

Detail on how local Traditional Owners will be consulted or will participate in the project should be included in the application and workplan.

## 7.7. Limitations of activities

There are limitations to funding that can be requested for specific activities, or limitations to activities, as follows:

- funding for fencing materials is limited to a maximum of \$6,000 per kilometre
- boundary fencing is ineligible for funding
- project specific travel is capped at 88 cents per kilometre
- a maximum of \$6,000 per hectare can be requested for weed control
- a maximum of \$6,000 per hectare can be requested for revegetation
- seedlings must be purchased for no more than \$4 per stem
- a minimum of 800 stems per hectare must be planted
- local provenance species are preferred where possible
- watering is considered an in-kind contribution
- funds cannot be requested to pay landholders for site preparation or planting
- project coordination expenses have limitations (see **Section 7.4**).

Projects that have activities which fall outside these limitations will need additional information and justification, including quotes where necessary.

Further information on Eligible activities – expectations and limitations can be found in **Appendix A**.

## 7.8. Ineligible activities

Community Stewardship Grant funding cannot be used for activities or items that are already funded or resourced, including under business as usual; these can form part of the project, but must be included as in-kind co-contributions.

The following items and activities are **ineligible** for Community Stewardship Grant funding:

- activities that are a statutory or regulatory responsibility of the landholder (such as boundary fencing)

- activities that are directly related to income generation under another program or scheme (such as carbon farming)
- activities to beautify, improve amenity, or improve access that cannot be directly linked to an NRM outcome (such as construction of new roads, tracks or car parks, or the resurfacing of existing infrastructure)
- expenses/costs that are already funded or resourced, either through another grant or under business as usual, including supervision, manager or officer 'time' (such as existing salaries or on-costs) or administration or operational costs (such as existing salaries for HR or finance officers, and office space that is already funded)
- mine or quarry (Basic Raw Materials) site rehabilitation (including removal of waste)
- play equipment or areas that cannot be directly linked to an NRM outcome
- purchase of equipment or materials that is ordinarily a landholder's responsibility as part of the day-to-day management of a property
- purchase, lease, or acquisition of land
- purchase of clothing, unless it forms part of Personal Protective Equipment
- purchase of information that is already available free of charge and/or development of data and information that is readily available
- removal and disposal of old or existing infrastructure (such as fences, roads, buildings, bollards, or car parks)
- retroactive activities completed prior to the grant being awarded, including events, works, planning or assessment
- revegetation with species that are not endemic to the region
- revegetation that is predominantly for feed or fodder purposes
- roadside weed control, unless it is to control a Weed of National Significance (Weeds of National Significance) or a Western Australian Declared Plant (Declared plants)
- salaries or on-costs of tertiary institution employees (such as staff, researchers or PhD students)
- salaries or on-costs of Western Australian or Australian Government employees
- sitting, board or committee fees or reimbursements
- student scholarships, stipends, or subsidies
- sustainable or regenerative agriculture activities that are already established as standard practice in the region
- volunteer payments, stipends or subsidies

## 8. Supporting information and attachments

Applicants should pay close attention to information that must be provided with the application to ensure that it can be assessed appropriately.

### 8.1. Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation arising from a conflict between the performance of duties or activities as a member of an applicant organisation, sponsored organisation, or contractor, and an individual's private or personal interests, including financial gain. These interests can also be indirect such as those involving family, friends, or associates.

Applicants must declare and describe any conflict of interest (actual, perceived or potential), even if you're unsure, in the appropriate section of the application form.

Declarations help to ensure conflict of interest can be managed openly and transparently. They do not rule out a project from consideration.

If you are unsure whether you have a conflict of interest, please call the State NRM team on 6551 4428, and we can discuss your situation.

### 8.2. Acknowledgement of funding

All organisations receiving funding through the Community Stewardship Grants must be prepared to correctly acknowledge the funding provided to the project by the Western Australian Government, as outlined in the **Acknowledgement Guide**, which can be downloaded from the grant round information page, 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN', accessed via [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartgrants.com.au\)](https://www.smartgrants.com.au) by selecting the relevant grant round.

This also applies to Sponsored organisations and recipients of devolved grant funding.

### 8.3. Stakeholder engagement

One of the key assessment criteria is evidence of local community involvement in each phase of the project lifecycle at design, planning and implementation. Including evidence of stakeholder engagement shows the assessment panel that the project is well planned and supported by the community.

Applicants will need to complete the relevant section in the form regarding consultation which has occurred, including who was contacted and the result of the discussion.

### 8.4. Essential attachments

Applicants should pay close attention to attachments that need to be provided to support the application and provide justification for grant funding.

Applications **must** include:

- Signed Sponsorship Agreement if the application is made under a sponsorship arrangement (see **Section 6**).
- Maps of on-ground activities which show the detail of the works planned at each site and the landscape scale context across all sites, if relevant (see **Section 8.5**).

- The workplan is an essential component of the application and must be completed in Microsoft Excel format using the new 2026 workplan template (see **Section 8.6**).
- Letters of support/commitment: a letter or similar from each organisation that will co-contribute cash, other resources, or effort to the project that provides the details and value of what will be contributed (see **Section 8.7**).
- Landholder permissions: written confirmation that access permission from all relevant land owners/managers has been obtained at the time of applying (see **Section 8.8**).

## 8.5. Mapping

If the project involves on-ground activities, applicants are required to upload and submit a map for each project site clearly identifying:

- the type of activities that will be undertaken; and
- the extent or area of each activity, such as:
  - length of fencing
  - area of revegetation or weed control
  - area of vegetation survey
  - location of camera traps or feral animal traps.

If there are multiple sites or properties, an overarching map that locates these sites in a regional landscape context is also required. The landscape map should show each site and its relative size, as well as showing landscape features, such as waterways, national parks or reserves, or other significant landholders.

## 8.6. The workplan

The workplan is a combined project plan and budget in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and must be used. Without a completed workplan on the correct template, your application will not be considered. If you do not have access to Microsoft Excel, please contact the State NRM Office on 6551 4428.

The **2026 workplan template**, including a worked example, can be downloaded from the grant round information page, 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN', accessed via [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#) by selecting the relevant grant round.

All project costs, co-contributions, and calculations must be provided **excluding** GST.

The workplan is a valuable planning tool to set out what resources and budget will be required to undertake project activities, and who will be funding those resources. It is also a critical component of the application that helps the assessment panel determine if the project is properly planned and costed and shows the project's overall value for money.

For more guidance on measures for activities which will inform your workplan, please refer to the **Activities, Measures and Evidence** document which can be downloaded from the grant round information page, 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN', accessed via [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#) by selecting the relevant grant round.

## 8.7. Letters of support/commitment

Applicants should include a letter from each contributing organisation that provides confirmation of the value of the co-contribution offered and details the resources and/or services it will contribute directly to the project which are in addition to business as usual. Letters of commitment must be signed by a representative of the organisation with the authority to commit the cash or in-kind co-contributions.

If not provided with the application, successful applicants will be required to provide letters of commitment (letters of surety for cash contributions) during the contracting process prior to funds being released.

## 8.8. Landholder permissions and agreements

Applicants must obtain written permission (such as a letter or email) from the landowner or manager of each property where there will be on-ground activities or which needs to be accessed to undertake on-ground activities. This must be included with the application.

Native Title is governed by the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Any land that is a site of an approved or pending Native Title Claim, is bound by that law. If a proposed project is to take place on land where Native Title exists, approval must be evidenced with permission from the relevant Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC).

Successful applicants will be required to provide a signed landholder agreement with each participating private landholder. Landholder agreements are used to clarify and formalise the roles and responsibilities of any private landholders participating in the project, including where and when any work will take place, and outlining expectations of the landholder after the work is complete.

The State NRM Program **Landholder Agreement** template contains all of the relevant terms and conditions that need to be complied with and which can be downloaded from the grant round information page, 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN', accessed via [Home Page - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia \(smartygrants.com.au\)](#) by selecting the relevant grant round.

## 8.9. Recommended attachments

Value for money is one of the key criteria of the grant assessment process. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include the following attachments as these assist the assessment panel in their decision making and may make an application more competitive:

- indicative quotes for any services provided by a third party, such as contractors, consultants or presenters\*
- indicative quotes for purchase of assets\*
- additional written information which can provide further context or detail to support the application, particularly if the project includes activities which are outside guideline limits (see **Section 7.7**), or a new methodology.

\*If not provided with the application, successful applicants will be required to provide these during the contracting process prior to funds being released.

Other attachments also recommended to support the application:

- plans, maps, diagrams, or other evidence of the strategic importance of the project

- copies of any documents that are referenced in the body of the application

Please ensure attachments are labelled meaningfully so it is clear what the file contains.



## Appendix A: Eligible activities – expectations and limitations

### Good environmental hygiene

It is your responsibility and a contractual condition of your successful grant that your activities do not contribute to the spread of weeds, pest animals and diseases (for example, *Phytophthora* spp. dieback in south-west Western Australia).

The Australian Government website, Arrive Clean Leave Clean, provides resources to enable best practice hygiene measures (<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/invasive-species/publications/arrive-clean-leave-clean>).

The Dieback Working Group website provides information on *Phytophthora* dieback disease and how your project can stop the spread (<https://www.dwg.org.au/>).

### On-ground

#### Fencing

The purpose of fencing may include protecting remnant vegetation, exclusion of feral predators or stock, or access control to protect threatened species.

Various fencing activities may be considered for funding, taking into consideration the following guidelines and limitations:

- Funding for fencing materials is limited to a maximum of \$6,000 per kilometre unless justified through methodology and quotes. In the workplan, describe what kind of fence you are intending to install and what its purpose is.
- Fencing that serves to protect new or remnant vegetation must be stock proof. Landholders must commit to exclude stock from this area for a minimum of 5 years.
- Landholders must commit to providing ongoing maintenance of State NRM Program funded fencing for a minimum of 10 years.
- Fencing that occurs along a watercourse must have a minimum 30m buffer from the high-water mark.
- Fencing can include native animal access gates; this should be described and justified.
- Boundary fencing is ineligible for funding. In accordance with the *Dividing Fences Act 1961*, it is the statutory responsibility of landholders to fence property boundaries including those bordering crown land. If a boundary fence is to be moved inside your property for NRM purposes, this may be considered but must be a realignment of at least 30 metres inside the boundary line.
- Funds may be used to employ a contractor to construct fences. If a contractor is required, justification must be provided.

#### Infrastructure and earthworks

Infrastructure activities may be funded if clear NRM benefits can be demonstrated, or if justified through other activities that achieve clear NRM benefits.

Infrastructure which is predominantly for amenity will not be funded. Infrastructure considered to be the responsibility of landholders will not be funded, including road construction and maintenance, directional signage, or car park construction and resurfacing. Removal of old infrastructure will not be funded.

Infrastructure which may be considered for funding includes:

- signage for educational purposes or to highlight conservation areas
- hides or viewing platforms that have a demonstrated environmental benefit
- earthworks that have a demonstrated environmental benefit, such as erosion control
- infrastructure that contains or controls vehicle or pedestrian access (such as bollards) to conservation areas
- nature playgrounds that clearly demonstrate an NRM education benefit
- pathways or trails that assist in access control or disease control for protection or conservation, or can demonstrate another clear environmental benefit
- water points for stock or native species where the existing watercourse has been fenced off for new or remnant vegetation protection.

Requests for the construction of deep drains or earthworks to alter to the natural flow of water (such as certain rehydration practices) will not be considered without approval from the Soils Commissioner.

### **Invasive species (weeds, feral animals, and plant diseases)**

Invasive species management of a declared species is a landholder responsibility under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*.

However, if it can be adequately justified that the request is: in addition to or adding value to business as usual; of clear public benefit; and that the landholder is acknowledging responsibility through co-contributions towards management, then funding will be considered.

Priority will be given to applications which demonstrate public benefit through:

- evidence of at least 50% landholder co-contributions towards management
- a collaboration of multiple landholders in a connected area, and preferably multiple tenures or groups
- aiming to achieve eradication or containment in a local or regional area, rather than just at individual sites
- cooperation and communication between organisations and community members building stronger partnerships and networks to deliver long-term results
- justification of why the chosen methodology of single species or integrated pest management will give the best value result
- having a long-term strategy or management plan in place, or developing a strategy or management plan
- continuing projects that can show impact over time towards localised eradication or containment, such as through mapping and evaluation.

Permission to work on public lands must be demonstrated.

Consultation with your local Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG) is essential, if there is one in your area, to understand and demonstrate how the project will complement or extend the activities already being undertaken by the RBG.

### **Weeds**

Control of weed species will be considered if the need and urgency is sufficiently demonstrated. A maximum of \$6,000 per hectare can be requested for weed control unless fully justified within your application through methodology and quotes, and in the workplan.

More information on pest plants can be found at:

- Weeds of National Significance (WoNS). The latest list of WoNS is available at [Established - Weeds Australia](#).
- Declared Plants of Western Australia. The latest list of declared plants can be found at [Declared plants | Agriculture and Food](#).

### **Feral animal management**

Applications must demonstrate appropriate animal welfare consideration and evidence of understanding for what is required. Methodology must include specialist skills, tools and practices to ensure humane animal welfare requirements are met at all times.

The *Animal Welfare Act 2002* and its accompanying regulations provide the legal framework for ensuring that all animals in Western Australia have appropriate standards of care, administered by DPIRD, with information available at [Animal Welfare Act 2002 | Agriculture and Food](#)

Things to consider in your application:

- To ensure that funds requested through this program do not duplicate the work of Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs), evidence of the outcome of consultation with the relevant RBG must be included in the application, including information regarding priority species, and how the project will complement or extend the activities already being undertaken by the RBG.
- If your project involves feral cat management you may be eligible to apply for funds under the Feral Cat Management Grants. More information can be found at [Apply for a Feral Cat Management Grant | Western Australian Government \(www.wa.gov.au\)](#)
- Animal ethics approval is not required to use Felixer grooming traps in toxic mode when used for feral cat management purposes; more information on Felixer grooming traps for feral cat control is available at [Felixer grooming traps - WA Feral Cat Working Group \(wafcwq.org.au\)](#)
- Use of Eradicat® must be approved by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) Feral Cat Technical Committee; contact [ecosystemhealth@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:ecosystemhealth@dbca.wa.gov.au) for more information and the application criteria; more information is available at [Baiting - WA Feral Cat Working Group \(wafcwq.org.au\)](#)

Priority will be given to projects that:

- address landscape scale control
- protect threatened fauna species or threatened ecological communities

- include monitoring to demonstrate control outcomes on invasive species and threatened native fauna
- can produce the relevant licenses, approvals, permits, or other documents to show the proposed activities will be conducted in a way that complies with all required legislation and Codes of Practice
- have a long term, targeted strategy or management plan in place or are looking to develop a long term, targeted strategy or management plan
- include integrated pest species management (such as cats, foxes, rabbits)
- increase community capacity to continue feral animal control past the life of the application
- demonstrate that there will not be adverse effects by implementing control; for example, that by controlling feral cats, rabbit or fox populations won't increase
- provide data for the numbers of both predators and prey
- can describe why the chosen methodology of management will give the best value result.

### **Plant diseases and pathogens**

Priority will be given to projects that propose the control of plant pathogens affecting remnant vegetation on public lands, or on private land where control will reduce the risk of spread to public land.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring of fauna and flora can provide data and information to inform conservation management actions. A well-designed monitoring system can answer questions such as:

- Are the populations of individual species of animals declining or increasing?
- Is a management intervention required to protect a species?
- Has the management intervention had the intended impact?
- Have new understandings been gained about the species?

Applications which include funding requests for monitoring should ensure that the methodology is detailed and includes how the data and information will be captured, stored and used to inform decision making.

Purchase of equipment for monitoring (such as cameras or tablets) may be considered as a separate activity for funding, especially if this is needed in the longer term to document change.

Monitoring of fauna has animal welfare implications; certain activities may require permits or licences. The WA Ethics Committee will use the Standard operating procedures (SOPs) from DBCA for fauna survey and monitoring activities to ensure projects follow Animal Ethics Committee-endorsed guidelines. More information is available at [Animal ethics and the use of animals | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions \(dbca.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/animal-ethics)

### **Native animal management**

Projects involving native wildlife will require consultation with DBCA as licences and permits are required for the taking or release of fauna under the provisions of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Depending on the activities, separate licences may also be required from DPIRD. It is not essential to provide a copy of the licences and permits on application; however, copies will be required as a condition of funding.

## Regenerative agriculture

Applications involving regenerative agriculture practices should focus on adoption and practice change in the community. That is, proven sustainable or regenerative agricultural practices which are being implemented under new circumstances or in a new area.

Replicating, trialling, or demonstrating activities already considered standard practice in an area, or that are well researched, will not be considered.

Applications must justify how the proposed activities help to support the transition from current to regenerative practice in that area. Activities can include on-ground works in demonstration sites but must also include behaviour change.

Things to consider in your application:

- Adoption and practice change should be based on best practice behaviour change principles.
- Priority will be given to applications where the public and private benefit is balanced; landholders are expected to contribute funds as well as time.
- Methodology and activities must be detailed, with clear NRM outcomes.
- Building the capacity of Aboriginal people to participate in regenerative land management practices will be highly regarded.
- Alignment to The Western Australian Soil Health Strategy 2021-2031 will be viewed favourably. More information can be found at [WA Soil Health Strategy](#)

## Remnant vegetation protection

Priority will be given to projects with sites that:

- align with a landscape scale strategy or management plan
- have a high protected area to boundary ratio (that is, large squarer areas are a higher priority than long thin areas)
- deliver connectivity between remnant patches or revegetated corridors
- demonstrate high-quality representative plant communities
- incorporate buffer zones
- incorporate cross-boundary remnant protection.

Replacing or repairing fences to continue to protect remnant vegetation will be considered, with justification including mapping and quotes. Provide details of any covenants which may apply to properties, to support the funding request.

## Revegetation

Native vegetation is considered to be indigenous aquatic or terrestrial vegetation which supports biodiversity, conservation, or habitat, and does not include fodder species such as saltbush, monoculture plantings, or plantations.

Endemic species are native and known to occur locally.

### General guidelines and limitations for revegetation activities:

- A maximum of \$6,000 per hectare can be requested for revegetation, unless justified by methodology and quotes.
- A minimum of 800 stems per hectare must be planted.
- Seedlings are purchased for no more than \$4 per stem, unless justified with a species list and quotes.
- Local provenance endemic species are preferred where possible, unless justified by methodology and species lists.
- Revegetation efforts should aim for multi-storey plantings, or combining planting with direct seeding to maximise biodiversity and habitat; should an alternative methodology be proposed, this must be justified.
- Seedling protection is recommended, and explanation should be provided if not undertaken.
- Revegetation must be fenced to exclude stock for a minimum of 5 years where relevant.
- Watering is considered an in-kind contribution; there is insufficient evidence to conclude that watering assists revegetation with long-term survival.
- Funds should not be requested to pay landholders for site preparation or planting; it is considered an in-kind co-contribution. In exceptional circumstances, funds may be requested to employ a contractor for site preparation or planting, but this request must be fully justified through explanation and additional information.
- Funds can be requested for the purchase or collection of local provenance seeds; however, the seed collection must be carried out by a fully licensed collector in accordance with the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2018*.

Priority will be given to projects with sites that:

- align with a landscape scale strategy or plan
- have a high protected area to boundary ratio (that is, large squarer areas are a higher priority than long thin areas)
- deliver connectivity between remnant patches or revegetated corridors
- incorporate buffer zones
- incorporate cross-boundary remnant protection or rehabilitation.

## Capability building

### Capturing or implementing Traditional Knowledge

Activities incorporating Traditional knowledge, including the spiritual and the sacred, should focus on Indigenous biological and ecological knowledge, and how that knowledge is applied to natural resources, plants, animals, and their environments.

Applications must demonstrate how Traditional Owners will be involved in these activities, how their Intellectual Property rights will be managed and protected, how the knowledge will be stored, and how the knowledge will be used in future land and sea management.

The State NRM Program acknowledges that Traditional Owner knowledge, expertise and time is valuable. Grant funding may be requested to cover relevant costs for engagement, consultation and participation.

For successful applications, the following clauses on Intellectual Property are included in the Terms and Conditions of the Funding Agreement:

- Where any Project Material developed by the Proponent in connection with this Agreement contains Traditional knowledge:
  - (a) nothing in this Agreement constitutes the vesting of that Traditional knowledge in the State;
  - (b) the Proponent may disclose to the State any Traditional knowledge at its absolute discretion and may elect to do so in compliance with Aboriginal laws and customs, including imposing any requirements as to the State's use of the Traditional knowledge;
  - (c) the Proponent may, prior to providing the Project Material to the State, remove from any Project Material, any portion or material that it considers (acting reasonably) to be Traditional knowledge subject to it notifying the State that Traditional knowledge has been removed from the Project Material provided;
  - (d) that is culturally sensitive to Indigenous groups, the Parties agree that, unless required by Law, they will not disclose such Traditional Knowledge to persons or bodies outside of the State Government without the agreement of the relevant Indigenous groups; and
  - (e) subject to clauses (b), (c) and (d), the Proponent grants to the State a perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive worldwide, royalty-free licence to use, reproduce, adapt, modify and communicate the Traditional knowledge for the purpose of receiving the full benefit of the Project Material, including to the full extent necessary in order for the State to enjoy the Project Material without limitation.
- The Parties agree that this Agreement does not affect ownership of Pre-Existing Material.

## Data collection

Data collection may be undertaken by the applicant, citizen scientists, consultants, or others, and the methodology for collection should be detailed.

Activities that collect data should clearly show how this data will be used to determine or improve the condition of an area or species, how it will add to existing knowledge, how it will be used to improve long-term management, and how it will be stored, managed, and shared.

## Information sharing

Funding may be requested for activities to access information to develop capability or to disseminate experiences and learnings to increase the benefit from that information. Grant funds may be requested to develop, improve and/or deliver the following activities:

- events such as seminars, workshops, field trips, citizen science

- information products such as booklets, brochures, websites, GIS systems, and peer-to-peer learning systems, noting that the preferred format for products is digital and justification needs to be provided for paper-based production
- skills development and training programs including Aboriginal Ranger Group training
- education programs that focus on environmental education and align with WA curriculum learning areas.

## Planning

Applications that include the development of a plan (for example, an action plan or management plan) should clearly demonstrate how the plan will be developed, what consultation is involved, how it will be used in future management of an area or species, and how it will contribute to decision making.

## Research and development

Community-led research activities which may be considered for funding include:

- research into implementation of innovative best practice in specific Western Australian land systems where it is relatively untested
- research to extend and enhance existing knowledge
- innovative research into Western Australian specific NRM outcomes and activities.

Research and development activities have the following guidelines and limitations:

- Tertiary education institutions (including employee or student salaries and on-costs, scholarships, stipends or subsidies) are not eligible for direct or sub-contracted funding; involvement in a project can only be as an expert consultant under contract to the successful applicant and may not include project management.
- Funding requests for research must demonstrate how it will assist the local or broader community and how the results or data will be shared more widely to maximise the funding investment. All relevant current research should be formally acknowledged.
- Using animals for scientific purposes is covered by a licence issued under the provisions of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*, which is administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. It is not essential to provide a copy of the licence on application but a copy may be required as a condition of funding. Further information is available at [Using animals for scientific purposes | Agriculture and Food](#)
- Before applying for a scientific use licence, applicants are required to obtain an agreement from an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) for ethical oversight. In February 2022, DPIRD established a Wildlife Animal Ethics Committee (WAEC), which allows institutions and environmental scientists to operate in accordance with the conditions of their Scientific Use Licence. Further information is available at [Wildlife Animal Ethics Committee \(WAEC\) | Agriculture and Food](#)
- Approval from an AEC in accordance with the Scientific Use Code is not essential on application but a copy may be required as a condition of funding.
- If the project involves native animals, licences will also be required from DBCA. Further information is available at [Fauna Licences | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions \(dbca.wa.gov.au\)](#)

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to investigate what is required for your project

## Resource condition assessment

The gathering and recording of data about the condition of natural resources such as flora, fauna and ecosystems, is recognised as an important foundational activity enabling sound project planning and strong project outcomes. Resource condition assessments can also be valuable to show the impact of past State NRM Program funded works and contribute to the evaluation of ongoing works.

Applications should demonstrate a clear need for the proposed assessment, and the value of the activity in enabling improved long-term management. The funding request should clearly identify how the assessment information will be collected, stored, managed, and shared.

Licences, permits and authorities are required for a range of activities relating to resource condition assessment. These are issued under legislation including the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, *Biodiversity and Conservation Act 2016*, *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* and *Rottneest Island Authority Act 1987*. Other activities, including flying a drone over national parks and other conservation areas, and installing, owning or using moorings in marine parks and reserves, require permission to be obtained from the department. More information can be found at [Licences and permits | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions \(dbca.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/licences-and-permits)

## Technical advice

Grant funding may be used to engage the services of experts or consultants who can help volunteers and community groups access, interpret and better understand technical information that may help them improve how they do their NRM work, and how they engage with the broader community.

## Training and skills development

Grant funding may be used to build the capacity of an organisation through training and skills development. Applications should describe the target audience, the training need or skills gap, how this was identified, and how the training need or skills-gap will be addressed.



### **Important Disclaimer**

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