

Environment & Sustainability Grants Guidelines

Round 1 2021

General Overview

The Environment & Sustainability Grants stream looks for projects that help to achieve the goals and outcomes **and** strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's [Environment Strategy 2019-2027](#).

The priority areas are:

- **Environmental Sustainability** – this means that the way we live meets the needs of the present but also provides a quality environment for future generations.
- **Resilience** – sustained ability of a community to use available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.
- **Environment** – refers to our physical and biological surroundings, both where we work and live and the way these affect how people feel.

Please note: At the time of publishing, Government restrictions are in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council recommends that in the preparation of applications and delivery of grant projects individuals/groups are aware of and adhere to the most recent advice provided at visit <https://www.australia.gov.au/>.

What will we fund

Council will consider applications from incorporated community groups and organisations for projects including but not limited to:

- Support the community to improve their environmentally sustainable practices and build their capacity to respond to environmental change.
- Increase the community's connection with nature enabling them to draw from the benefits of improved physical and mental wellbeing.
- Educate and empower local farming industries and community groups to promote, support and implement environmentally sustainable practices in the agriculture sector.
- Protect, restore, and increase the health of our natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural habitats to ensure they survive and thrive.
- The ecological health of our waterways and wetlands and facilitate sustainable water use in the community.
- Reduce the impact of invasive species on agriculture, natural systems, and the community.
- Aboriginal cultural heritage land management through sensitive land management practices and community education and appreciation.
- Protect and enhance our parks and green spaces to ensure a network of land and water that supports recreation and sport, trails and paths, and nature conservation.
- Reduce waste sent to landfill and/or increase the community's knowledge of waste management and reduction.

- Council will also accept applications that improve the energy and/or water efficiency of community facilities, including (but not limited to) halls, community centres, sporting facilities, kindergartens, libraries, scout halls, church buildings and men's sheds.
- For projects focusing on reducing energy and water use at community facilities, preference will be given to projects which aim to reduce resource usage whilst also promoting behaviour change and awareness. For example, installation of a rainwater tank and water efficient taps, combined with signage which educates users on the need for water efficiency.

Examples include (but are not limited to)

- Solar Panels.
- Solar hot water systems and heat pumps.
- Occupancy sensors and timers.
- Energy efficient light fixtures and appliances.
- Insulation and draught-proofing products.
- Water efficient appliances and fittings, including flow restrictors.
- Rainwater tanks and fittings.

Some project examples include

- **Garbage to Garden:** Childcare centres banded together to make use of all food waste generated by each centre by separating rubbish, setting up compost and worm farms and establishing an edible garden on site.
- **Napoleons Enfield Landcare:** Footbridge Reserve restoration which improved biodiversity by planting local indigenous vegetation, installing, and monitoring nest boxes, as well as ongoing educational opportunities local school.
- **Generational Change in the Woody Yaloak Catchment:** Workshops and information sessions aimed at achieving generational change in ownership of Landcare and building the next phase of priorities for the area.
- **Develop Dereel Swamp:** A walking track around swamp with educational signage about local species of flora and fauna.

What will not be funded:

Council **will not** provide funding for the following:

- An applicant whose project has received Golden Plains Shire funding for the same activity within the same financial year, including through budget allocation or another grant stream of funding.
- An applicant that has failed to provide satisfactory acquittal reporting from any previous Golden Plains Shire Council funding.
- Projects that only provide direct financial benefit to a commercial business or individual with no significant community outcome.
- Projects outside of Golden Plains Shire.
- Works that have already commenced.
- Projects that will have a detrimental environmental impact.
- Energy and water efficiency improvements to facilities that are not publicly accessible.
- The purchase of land.
- Revegetation that is required as a condition of a planning permit or illegal vegetation clearing.
- Revegetation projects using plants that are not indigenous to the local area.
- Control of weeds on private land that are already the statutory responsibility of the project applicant.
- Projects for which the funding is the responsibility of other levels of government.
- Applicant labour and hire charges for applicant-owned equipment, which should be shown as an in-kind contribution.
- Plantings which are solely for beautification.

Eligibility Criteria

- Community groups and organisation's must be incorporated and not for profit.
- Groups may submit multiple applications per financial year but may only submit one application per project.
- Government organisations and agencies are not eligible to apply, however kindergartens, Committees of Management, other community committees and local branches of larger organisations, e.g. CFA and SES, are eligible.
- Primary and Secondary schools are eligible to apply for projects, which are completed fully within Golden Plains Shire as long as the project is not solely curriculum based and can strongly demonstrate a partnership with another community organisation.
- Applicants must match the requested funding through either cash or in-kind (volunteer labour) contributions.
- The number of times an applicant has previously received funding through the Environment & Sustainability Grant stream will be considered during the assessment process. Council may choose not to fund a project by applicants who have previously received funding should the program be oversubscribed.
- For community facilities, applicants must either be the owner of the building/facility or have the written consent form the owner.
- If the community facility is Council-owned building, the applicant must discuss the project with a Golden Plains Shire Council officer prior to submitting the application.

Funding criteria (weighted, out of 100):

All applications will be assessed by an internal assessment panel against the following criteria:

Clear objectives that align with the grant focus areas:

- *The objectives of the project are clearly identified 10%.*
- *The project and the intended target group aligns with the grant focus areas 30%.*

Direct benefit to the Golden Plains Shire Community:

- *Ability to foster greater understanding of environmental and sustainability issues 20%.*
- *There is potential for the project to have a lasting community impact 20%.*

Capacity of the organisation to manage the funding and deliver the service or program:

- *Clearly demonstrated understanding of Environment and sustainability objectives 10%.*
- *The application contains a detailed, clear, and accurate budget 10%.*

Funding Rates

The following rates should be used as a guide when calculating budget item expenses:

- In-kind community group/individual labour - \$30 per hour.
- Professional services provided by a qualified tradesperson - \$45 per hour.

Funding Conditions

- All applicants must acknowledge that they have read and understood the legislative requirements for volunteer health and safety. <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/book/essential-guide-work-health-and-safety-volunteers>.
- All applicants must submit a completed application form and the appropriate finance forms to Council before the closing date to be considered for funding.
- Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application by July 2021 for Round 1 applications and by November 2021 for Round 2 applications.

- If successful, funding will be paid directly into the bank account specified in the application.
- Grant approval is subject to the applicant demonstrating that they have obtained the necessary permits or approvals required to complete the project.
- All projects must be completed within 12 months of receiving funding notification unless Council gives prior written permission for an extension. Extensions may be granted up to a maximum of 6 months.
- Applicants are required to submit a final project report at the completion of the project, this must be submitted online at goldenplains.smartygrants.com.au
- Council will audit a minimum of 10% of projects annually and applicants must allow property access for Council Officers to conduct these audits. Applicants must also submit information regarding project expenses upon Council's request.
- Council accepts no responsibility for budget over-runs.
- Council accepts no responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of projects unless otherwise agreed to in writing.
- All applications must be submitted online at goldenplains.smartygrants.com.au

Assessment Process

Projects will be assessed via a competitive process whereby a panel of 3 Council officers relevant to the specific stream of funding make an initial assessment against the criteria below. Final endorsement will be given by the CEO. All applicants will be informed on the outcome of their application in writing.

Applicants may appeal decisions made in writing to the CEO as outlined in Council's Community Grants Policy.

Important: Meeting all the criteria does not guarantee that an application will be successful. Budget constraints will ultimately limit the projects that can be funded in any given financial year.

What happens after the Assessment Process

Unsuccessful applicants will be advised by post or email by July 2021 for Round 1, and by November 2021 for Round 2. Successful applicants will be contacted and required to enter into a contractual agreement with Golden Plains Shire Council in accordance with the Funding Conditions.

Features of a strong Funding Application

There are ways to make your funding application more competitive:

- Clearly outline what is proposed, why it is needed, how it will be achieved, who is involved and where it will take place.
- Provide relevant support material, preference will be given to projects which can demonstrate clear, defined partnerships with other community organisations. Provide letters of support from partner organisations/groups.
- Provide relevant support material that shows the potential of the proposed activity, e.g. quotes for work or reference to your town's community plan.
- Letters of support from partners or other community organisation.

Contacts:

To discuss your Environment & Sustainability Grant application before applying, please contact:

- David Collins, Environment & Sustainability Team Leader,
Phone: 5220 7103 or david.collins@gplains.vic.gov.au
or
- Jennie Schoof, Community Partnerships Officer
Phone: 5220 7220 or communitygrants@gplains.vic.gov.au