

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/>

Environment and Sustainability Guidelines:

Contact Information:

To speak to an officer before submitting an application for an Environment and Sustainability Grant contact

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Or

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General Overview:

The Environment and Sustainability Grant Program is seeking projects that help to achieve the goals and outcomes of the strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council [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 – individuals, communities and systems can survive, adapt and grow no matter the kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. In other words, being able to ‘bounce forward’, to turn vulnerabilities into opportunities.

Environment – refers to our physical and biological surroundings, both where we work and live and the way these affect how people feel.

What are we looking for?

Council will consider applications from incorporated community groups, organisations and individuals to undertake projects with activities within Golden Plains Shire relating to the following outcomes:

- Projects which support the community to improve their environmentally sustainable practices and build their capacity to respond to environmental change.
- Projects that increase the community’s connection with nature enabling them to draw from the benefits of improved physical and mental wellbeing
- Projects which educate and empower local farming industries and community groups to promote, support and implement environmentally sustainable practices in the agriculture sector.
- Biodiversity – projects that protect, restore and increase the health of our natural ecosystems, biodiversity and natural habitats to ensure they survive and thrive.
- Water Security – projects which protect the ecological health of our waterways and wetlands and facilitate sustainable water use in the community.
- Invasive Species – projects which reduce the impact of invasive species on agriculture, natural systems and the community

- Aboriginal cultural heritage land management – projects which preserve and protect Aboriginal heritage values and culture through sensitive land management practices and community education and appreciation.
- Projects that protect, enhance and increase our parks and green spaces to ensure a network of land and water that supports recreation and sport, trails and paths, nature conservation and visual relief from the urban environment.
- Waste reduction and education – projects which reduce waste sent to landfill and/or increase the community’s knowledge of waste, waste management and waste reduction.

Council will also accept applications from incorporated community groups who wish to 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

Examples of items that are eligible for funding 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

(Please note ONLY community facilities are eligible for these items)

Examples of projects

- “Garbage to Garden” – Food waste project – Child care 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.
- Native and bush tucker garden which aims to encourage native wildlife
- Napoleons Enfield Landcare – Footbridge Reserve restoration and maintenance: Improved the biodiversity of the site by planting local indigenous vegetation, installing and monitoring nest boxes and also provided ongoing educational opportunities and outdoor experience for local school.
- Generational Change in the Woody Yaloak Catchment – Workshops and community information sessions aimed at achieving generational change in ownership of landcare with the long term goal of building the next phase of landcare priorities for the area.
- Develop Dereel Swamp – Create a walking track around swamp with interesting and educational signage about local species of flora and fauna to foster local interest in the local environment

Energy and Water efficiency projects

- Retrofitting existing infrastructure:

For projects to reduce energy and water use at community facilities, preference will be given to projects which focus on replacing existing infrastructure with energy and water efficient alternatives, such as replacing electric hot water system with solar hot water system. The installation of new infrastructure is not eligible for funding, unless there are demonstrable energy and water saving benefits. For example, the

installation of an additional shower (not replacing an existing shower) would not be eligible as this would actually increase water consumption at the facility.

- Purchasing energy and water efficient products:

Showers, taps, toilets, urinals, washing machines and dishwashers are labelled for their water efficiency using a 'star' rating system. The more stars the more water efficient. For more information, including a list of rated products, visit www.waterrating.gov.au

Electrical and gas appliances such as televisions, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, and some air conditioners and heaters are labelled for their energy efficiency using a 'star' rating system. The more stars the more energy efficient. For more information, including product lists, visit www.energyrating.gov.au

- Using strategies to promote both resource efficiency and sustainable behavior:

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 behavior 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.

What won't 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 overdue debts to Golden Plains Shire Council
- 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
- Projects that increase energy and water use (such as installation of new infrastructure)
- 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:

1. Community groups and organisations must be incorporated and not for profit
2. Groups may submit multiple applications per financial year but may only submit one application per project
3. Government organisations and agencies are not eligible to apply, however, kindergartens, Committees of Management, other community committees and local branches of larger organisations (like CFA and SES) are eligible where other avenues of funding sources have been exhausted? Where significant community benefit can be demonstrated?
4. Primary and Secondary schools are eligible to apply for environmental projects which are completed fully within the Golden Plains Shire Council. However, they are not eligible to apply for energy and water efficiency items (e.g solar panels, light fittings, insulation) or projects that should otherwise be provided by the department of education.
5. Applicants must match the requested funding through either cash or in – kind (volunteer labor) contributions)
6. The number of times an applicant has previously received funding through the Environment and Sustainability Grant stream will be considered during the assessment process. Council may choose not to fund project by applicants who have previously received funding should the program be oversubscribed.
7. For community facilities, applicants must be either the owner of the building/facility or have written consent from the owner
8. If the community facility is a 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 panel against the following criteria:

1. 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%

2. 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%

3. 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 labour 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
- 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 June 30 for Round 1 applications and by November 30 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. The final report will be sent out through SmartyGrants
- 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

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 funding criteria. 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 in July 2020 for round 1 and November 2020 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 artistic support material that shows the potential of the proposed activity
- Where applicable, projects included in your town's community plan will be given higher priority within that town/district – for more information on your towns community plan contact:

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