



Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants: Round 1

Opening date:	04 May 2022
Closing date and time:	5.00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time on 15 July 2022 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
Administering entity:	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	03 May 2022
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

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1. Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants: Round 1 process

The Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the Koala Conservation and Protection Package which contributes to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's Outcome 1. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#).



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant opportunity guidelines on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#).



You complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form, addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



We assess all grant applications

We review the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. We assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and compare it to other eligible applications.



We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the decision maker on the merits of each application.



Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment evaluates the specific grant activity and the Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants program as a whole based on information you provide and that we collect from various sources.

2. About the Koala Conservation and Protection Package

The Koala Conservation and Protection Package (Package) was announced on 29 January 2022 by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP and the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP and provides \$50 million over four years from 2021-22 to 2024-25 to maintain and support the recovery and protection of the Koala.

The Package will support the restoration and protection of Koala habitats, extend and expand Koala monitoring and the improvement of Koala health and care in response to natural disasters such as bushfires and diseases such as Chlamydia. It includes:

- large and medium scale projects to support on-ground actions to support Koala habitat protection and restoration and threat mitigation
- small-scale community projects for habitat protection and restoration, threat mitigation and improving health outcomes
- extending the National Koala Monitoring Program
- addressing Koala health challenges and improving health outcomes
- supporting training in Koala treatment and care.

This funding builds on the \$18 million Koala conservation package announced in 2020. This package delivered on-ground conservation actions, supported coordination and delivery of more effective health research and Koala veterinary activities, and the design and implementation of a National Koala Monitoring Program.

The Package aligns with the Australian Government's efforts to protect and restore Australia's threatened species and places through the Threatened Species Strategy 2021-2031 and the Strategy's first Action Plan 2021-2026. The Package also aligns with the [National Recovery Plan for the Koala](#) *Phascolarctos cinereus* (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory), in effect under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) from 8 April 2022.

The objective of the Package is to support efforts to improve the trajectory of the Koala combined populations of Queensland, NSW and the ACT (listed Koala, [see glossary](#)).

The intended outcomes of the Package are to:

- improve the extent, quality and connectivity of the nationally listed Koala's habitat and reduced local threats
- improve data and knowledge of Koala populations and health across their range
- increase understanding and management of disease and injury affecting Koala health and lift capability in on-ground care, treatment and triage of Koalas, and
- strengthen coordination of recovery efforts for the Koala and cross-sector engagement, collaboration and capability.

There may be other grant opportunities as part of this package and we will publish the opening and closing dates and any other relevant information on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#).

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs)¹.

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-guidelines>

2.1. About the Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants: Round 1 Grant Opportunity

The Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants: Round 1 grant opportunity (the program) will run over 2 years from 2022-23 to 2023-24. This program will invest up to \$5 million and includes opportunities for co-contributions, boosting the total value of assistance delivered. The program will provide grants of up to \$200,000 for small-scale community projects and local activities that support the recovery and protection of the listed Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory).

The intention is to run a second round of community grants beginning in 2023-24.

The objective of this program is to:

- support community-led conservation and recovery efforts to improve the trajectory of the listed Koala (combined populations of Queensland, NSW and the ACT) ([see glossary](#)).

The intended outcomes of the program are to:

- improve the extent, quality and connectivity of the nationally listed Koala's habitat and reduce local threats
- increase understanding and management of disease and injury affecting Koala health and lift capability in on-ground care, treatment and triage of Koalas, and
- improve data and knowledge of Koala populations and health across their range, to support effective decision making and conservation action.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (the department) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the [glossary](#) at section 14.

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

3. Grant amount and grant period

Up to \$5 million over 2 years from 2022-23 to 2023-24 is available through this program.

3.1. Grants available

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible project expenditure (grant percentage).

- The minimum grant amount is \$50,000.
- The maximum grant amount is \$200,000.

You are responsible for funding the remaining eligible and ineligible project costs. Co-contributions are strongly encouraged to amplify the impact of the program. This could include funding provided to initiatives and programs already announced that the program would build on.

Contributions to your project may be cash or in-kind, including volunteer contributions. Other funding can come from other sources including State, Territory and local government grants.

We cannot fund your project if it receives funding from another Commonwealth government grant. You can apply for a grant for your project under more than one Commonwealth program, but if your application is successful, you must choose either the Koala Conservation and Protection - Community Grants Round 1 grant or the other Commonwealth grant.

3.2. Project period

Projects must be completed by 30 April 2024.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following entities:

- an entity incorporated in Australia
- an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth)
- a co-operative
- a Regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisation supporting a project that is delivered by, or directly engages with, local community groups
- an incorporated not for profit organisation, including incorporated Indigenous not-for-profit organisations
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an Australian local government agency or body as defined in the [glossary](#).

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead organisation who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. Landholders that do not meet the eligibility criteria, Australian universities and other publicly funded research organisations (as defined in the [glossary](#)) can be part of a joint application but cannot apply as a lead organisation.

For further information on joint applications, refer to section [7.3](#).

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications that:

- have at least \$50,000 in eligible expenditure
- have identified that the listed Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) will benefit from your project activities
- provide with your application the required documents outlined under section 7.2
- provide a letter of support from each project partner where the application is a joint application (refer to section 7.3)
- are able to provide a current letter of support for your project prior to commencement of on ground works from the site or landowner, if you are not the site or landowner

- are able to provide a letter of support for your project prior to commencement of on ground works from relevant Traditional Owners or Indigenous organisations with landowning/management rights or responsibilities, or with these rights being determined, if their support is required
- declare that your proposed project does not duplicate other government-funded management actions that are already underway in the location you are proposing to undertake activities.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation not included in section 4.1
- an individual
- an unincorporated association
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity
- an Australian State/Territory Government Agency or body (unless a Regional Land Partnerships service provider)
- a university or other publicly funded research organisation (as defined in the [glossary](#))
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au)
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be aimed at addressing the program objective and primary program outcomes as outlined in section 2.1
- include activities that benefit the listed Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory)
- include on-ground project activities that are undertaken in areas where the listed Koala is known or likely to occur (with the exception of ex-situ healthcare facilities and treatment). You may wish to review the listed Koala's location via the [protected matters search tool](#)
- be designed to complement, extend or expand existing activities or designed to be stand-alone, provided the project does not overlap or duplicate existing activities. Activities that are complementary to work that is already underway must demonstrate alignment, for example:
 - by filling a critical gap
 - by expanding or supplementing an existing activity, or
 - by increasing the reach and impact of an existing activity.

Eligible activities may include:

- activities that improve the extent, quality and connectivity of the listed Koala's habitat, such as

- activities that support climate and fire refugia
- activities that support corridors facilitating movement and metapopulation processes of Koalas
- activities that improve the condition or extent of existing Koala habitat through altered land management practices.
- coordinated threat management across the landscapes such as weed and pest control that provides a demonstrable reduction in pressure on the listed Koala and its habitat
- environmental restoration and protection across areas that support the listed Koala
- ex-situ healthcare facilities and treatment for the listed Koala
- applied research, that includes on-ground interventions such as trialling new Koala protection devices or threat abatement techniques
- activities that improve knowledge of listed Koala populations and their health, such as citizen science projects
- activities that improve health outcomes and care facilities for listed Koala/ Koala populations
- activities as part of community and school education programs that accompany an on-ground activity
- activities that promote the protection and recovery of the listed Koala
- activities that encourage the participation of Indigenous people in the program, including:
 - sharing of Indigenous ecological knowledge to support achievement of the project and program outcomes
 - collaboration with Traditional Owners
 - supporting Indigenous-led caring for Country activities.

It is advised that you seek expert advice to ensure that the proposed project activities are suitable for the listed Koala. Your application should be informed by the [National Recovery Plan for the Koala](#) and current scientific evidence and/or knowledge, and you should include this advice in your application. For example, if your project includes tree planting, ensure chosen tree species are consistent with locally important Koala tree species in your bioregion as identified in Section 8 of Australian National University's: [A Review of Koala Habitat Assessment Criteria and Methods](#), or other appropriate local restoration and revegetation guidelines for Koala habitat where they exist.

Any additional or indirect benefits from project activities should be outlined in your application, including but not limited to: flow on benefits for other threatened species listed under the EPBC Act; regional economic benefits; community engagement; cross-sector collaboration; and capability building

You will be required to provide geospatial data about the project location(s) in your application.

We may also approve other activities.

5.2. Eligible locations

Your project must be delivered in locations within Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory where the listed Koala is known or likely to occur (with the exception of ex-situ healthcare facilities and treatment). You may wish to review the listed Koala's location via the protected matters search tool.

Where you are not the landowner for the location of proposed activities you will need to provide evidence of approval for your project prior to commencing any on-ground works at that site.

You will need to provide a letter of support for your project prior to commencing any on-ground works from relevant Traditional Owners or Indigenous organisations with landowning or management rights or responsibilities, or with these rights being determined, if their support is required.

5.3. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

Eligible expenditure items may include:

- purchase (or hire) of equipment, materials and supplies to support eligible project activities such as tube stock, hardware, seed and chemicals
- salaries and on-costs for personnel directly employed in delivering the project activities (this should be calculated on a pro-rata basis relative to their time commitment). This excludes project management or project co-ordination costs which are covered under administrative support below
- building modifications where you own the modified asset and the modification is required to undertake the project, for example installing improved Koala care facilities. Modifications to leased buildings may be eligible
- staff training that directly supports the achievement of project outcomes
- contract expenditure being the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract to others directly relating to the program objectives. All contractors must have a written contract in place covering the work to be undertaken, prior to starting any project work
- costs associated with managing collaborations and partnerships with Traditional Owners and the local community
- removal of legislated weed species (including Weeds of National Significance)
- costs incurred in obtaining planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals during the project period. However, associated fees paid to the Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments are not eligible.
- domestic travel to and from the on-ground location limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct the agreed project activities
- administrative support and overheads additional to the normal day to day running costs of the organisation, including project management or project co-ordination (maximum 10 per cent of the grant)
- reporting on project outcomes
- contingency costs up to a maximum of 10% of the eligible project expenditure. Note that we make payments based on actual project costs incurred.

Other specific expenditures may be eligible as determined by the Program Delegate.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project. If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is a manager within the department with responsibility for the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise

We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

5.4. What you cannot use the grant for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- the provision of goods, services or support for activities not directly related to eligible grant activities
- routine operation, business as usual or running costs including communications, accommodation, office facilities, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges
- costs for activities that are required to be carried out by law or by a private contractual obligation
- cost for activities that include the introduction of plants, animals or other biological agents that are known to be, or that could become, environmental or agricultural weeds or pests
- costs of purchasing, leasing, depreciation of, or development of land or the purchase of other assets, being an item of tangible property purchases, leased, hired, financed, created or otherwise brought into existence either wholly or in part with the use of the grant and which has a GST exclusive value of \$10,000 or more per asset, unless identified in the application and approved
- costs incurred prior to us notifying you that the application is eligible and complete
- costs for the purchasing of firearms
- costs for fencing for the primary purpose of stock management unless it can be clearly demonstrated to provide benefits for protecting and conserving Koala habitat
- financial costs, including interest and debt financing
- catering expenses, except for provision of light refreshments/drinks that support safe community participation at community events (e.g. to maintain hydration)
- planting of species that are known to be, or have the potential to become, an agricultural or environmental weed, this may include some native Australian species when planted out of region - please refer to your State or Territory Government for further information about weeds in your area
- revegetation activities using species which are not endemic to the area
- removal of vegetation, including native grasslands, with the exception of legislated weed species (including Weeds of National Significance) and where burnt/removed in the course of the essential activities of a dedicated fire management project
- any costs associated with the development of an application, including labour costs as outlined in section 5.3 (for example, preparation of applications)
- fees paid to the Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments associated with obtaining planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals

- administration costs and overheads related to the ongoing operations of an organisation, including costs such as rental, renovations and utilities
- activities likely to have a significant adverse impact on any matter of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- activities likely to have a significant adverse impact on Indigenous cultural heritage, or not supported by Registered Aboriginal Parties or the relevant Traditional Owner representative group, without approval through relevant State, Territory or Commonwealth legislation
- lobbying activities and media campaigns that could be considered political in nature (whole or part)
- international travel, and business class domestic travel
- costs for activities outside of Australia unless identified in the application and approved
- activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources, including another Commonwealth, State or Territory, or local government, program
- any in-kind contributions
- capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers or photocopiers
- costs involved in the purchase or upgrade/hire of software (including user licences) and ICT hardware (unless it directly relates to the project)
- non-project-related staff training and development costs
- insurance costs (the participants must effect and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage for any liability arising as a result of its participation in funded activities)
- costs related to obtaining resources used on the project, including interest on loans, job advertising and recruiting, and contract negotiations
- depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- maintenance costs
- costs related to preparing the grant application, preparing any project reports (except costs of independent audit reports we require) and preparing any project variation requests.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure of the grant funds. Other costs may be ineligible where we decide that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.

Further information can be found at the following sites:

- [Weeds of National Significance](#)
- [State or Territory Government information about weed management.](#)

6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays size limits for answers.

We will only consider funding applications that score at least 50 per cent against each assessment criterion, as these represent best value for money.

6.1. Assessment criterion 1

Project alignment with program objectives (50 points)

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- a. how your project will support effective on-ground recovery and protection activities that contribute to the intended program outcomes listed in section 2.1.
- b. how your project activities are consistent with the [National Recovery Plan for the Koala](#), [Conservation Advice for the listed Koala](#) and/or threat abatement plan or other strong evidence (for example, primary research such as published scientific papers, state government guidelines, or best practice and local restoration and revegetation guidelines for Koala habitat where they exist)
- c. the relationship of the project activities to other relevant Koala conservation and management actions underway
- d. how any Koala monitoring outputs will or can be incorporated in broader reporting of recovery, such as the National Koala Monitoring Program (NKMP) or the Atlas of Living Australia
- e. any additional or indirect benefits of your project activity, including for other nationally-listed threatened species.

6.2. Assessment criterion 2

Your capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (50 points)

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- a. your track record in managing similar projects and your access to personnel with the right skills and experience including management and technical staff
- b. your plan to manage the project including scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, budget and identification and assessment of project delivery risks
- c. how you will monitor and measure the success of your project
- d. any additional investment that your project will leverage, such as cash or in-kind support that will enhance the achievement of intended outcomes
- e. your access, or future access, to any required land, infrastructure, capital equipment, technology, and regulatory or other approvals
- f. your capacity and commitment to manage the project sites where on-ground activity has occurred to sustain the project outcomes, beyond the term of this grant.

7. How to apply

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#).

You will need to create an account to access our online [portal](#). The portal allows you to apply for and manage a grant or service in a secure online environment.

To apply, you must:

- complete the online [application form](#) via [business.gov.au](#)

- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments – refer to section 7.2

You should retain a copy of your application for your own records. You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

7.1. Impact of COVID-19

When preparing your application, you need to take into consideration the timeframes and any constraints that may impact the delivery and participation of your activities resulting from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects need to be designed to ensure participants' safety and health.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

7.2. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- project plan
- project budget
- trust deed (where applicable)
- documents requested in section 4.2, as they apply to your project.

You must attach supporting documentation in line with the instructions provided in the application form. You should only attach requested documents. The total size of all attachments cannot exceed 20MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.3. Joint applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to join together as a group to deliver a project. In these circumstances, you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners. Each letter of support must include:

- details of the project partner
- an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
- the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer.

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

7.4. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful we expect you will be able to commence your project around September 2022.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	6 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	1- 4 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	You may commence your project from the date we notify you that your application was successful. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.
End date of grant commitment	The end date specified in your grant agreement.

8. The grant selection process

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we will then assess it against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the criteria assessment stage.

We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought.

We will establish a committee comprised of employees from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources to assess applications. The committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts.

The committee will assess your application against the assessment criteria and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which projects to fund. The committee may also take into account other factors, such as geographic spread of projects, the range of projects that will best protect and support the listed Koala, alignment with other Koala investments, the best available research and data at the time of assessment, and the risks associated with the grant, including risks of the activity and risks to the Commonwealth.

The committee will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs. The committee may seek additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, as well as States and Territories, even if you do not nominate the sources as referees. The committee may also consider information about you or your application that is available as a result of the Due Diligence process or through the normal course of business.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

8.1. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for the Environment decides which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Minister will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. Sample [grant agreements](#) are available on [business.gov.au](https://www.business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#). The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Minister. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under this program, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities from other Commonwealth, State or Territory granting programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

10.2. Simple grant agreement

We will use a simple grant agreement for projects where we consider your project to be relatively simple.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Minister.

10.3. Project/Activity specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/ policies/ industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to:
 - working with children
 - working with vulnerable people
 - interstate movement of native plants and animals
 - animal welfare
- Commonwealth/State/Territory legislation in relation to:
 - workplace health and safety
 - animal care and protection, including prevention of cruelty to animals
 - management of wildlife and listed threatened species
 - quarantine, national parks and wildlife, biosecurity, and biodiversity conservation
 - agricultural and veterinary chemicals use, including the AgVet Codes
 - biosecurity, to prevent the spread of pests and diseases
 - native vegetation and environment protection
 - Indigenous heritage and relics
 - management of forests and waterways.

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you must comply with the following requirements:

- requirements relating to state/ territory regulated activities, such as take from the wild
- hold relevant permits or be otherwise accredited with, or authorised by, the relevant state or territory government(s) to undertake the proposed activities in those jurisdictions
- relevant codes of practice, standards and guidelines, and threatened species conservation programs (where applicable)

- you and other people engaged in the grant activity must not trespass on property in the course of undertaking your grant activity nor endorse, sanction, or give comfort to acts of trespass or unauthorised access to private property
- you must also comply with any government measures and requirements in relation to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
- if the grant activity is proposing to directly affect Indigenous places, values or communities, the applicant must have the consent of the relevant Traditional Owners.

10.4. Child safety requirements

You must comply with all relevant legislation relating to the employment or engagement of anyone working on the project that may interact with children, including all necessary working with children checks.

You must implement the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)² endorsed by the Commonwealth.

You will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse, and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You must update this risk assessment at least annually.

You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure personnel are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements, relevant legislation including mandatory reporting requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

You will be required to provide an annual statement of compliance with these requirements in relation to working with children.

10.5. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage).

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

For grants up to \$80,000, we will pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the project.

For grants over \$80,000, we will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

10.6. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities³.

² <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

³ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at ato.gov.au

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

11. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on [GrantConnect](#). We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on [business.gov.au](#). This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

You may also be required to:

- report to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) using the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Tool (MERIT) to help the Commonwealth to evaluate the project's environmental outcomes, and
- provide data collected as part of your project to the National Koala Monitoring Project.

12.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- include evidence of expenditure
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

12.2.2. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

12.2.3. Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

12.3. Independent audits

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is available on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

12.4. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.5. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum time period allowed in program guidelines
- changing project activities.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds
- delivery of projects that fall outside the scope of the program.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the project end date. We can provide you with a variation request template.

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

12.6. Evaluation

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. They may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. They may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.7. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This project received grant funding from the Australian Government’s \$50 million Koala Conservation and Protection Package.’

You must include the Australian Government logo in all promotional materials, publications and websites. Do not modify the logo’s colour, shape, form, font or design in any way. Do not place it over an image or heavily textured background or as a tint of a colour. You cannot use the logo to give the impression that the Australian Government has published a product or endorsed another organisation.

If you promote your project on social media, where character limits allow please use the following handles and hashtags:

- Twitter - @TSCommissioner, @envirogov
- Facebook - @TSCommissioner, @awegov (Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment)
- Instagram - @tscommissioner, @awegov

If you erect signage in relation to the project, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant.

13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published grant opportunity guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

13.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately. Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)⁴](#) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy⁵](#) on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

13.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per , or
- personal information as per 13.2.3,

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057>

⁵ https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

13.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

13.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the committee and our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

13.2.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁶ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

13.2.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

13.3. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on [business.gov.au](#).

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at [business.gov.au](#). We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Chief Finance Officer
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)⁷ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

⁶ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

⁷ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
Australian local government agency or body	A type of entity that refers to a local governing body as defined in the <i>Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995</i> (Cth). Local governing bodies are also known as local councils. State or Territory governments define the powers of local government bodies within their borders, and arrangements can therefore vary across jurisdictions.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.
Conservation Advice	The Conservation Advice for <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> (Koala) combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory , in effect under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> from 12 February 2022.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.3.
Ex-situ	Projects undertaken in a location away from the natural Koala habitats in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding.
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.

Term	Definition
Listed Koala	The legal entity covered by this program, being <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) which is listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act. This entity is considered to be a “species” for the purposes of the EPBC Act. See also Species (legal definition), in this glossary.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment.
Package	A \$50 million package to maintain and support the recovery and protection of the Koala over four years from 2021-22 to 2024-25, announced on 29 January 2022 by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP and the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP.
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is:</p> <p>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Program	The Koala Conservation and Protection – Community Grants: Round 1 grant opportunity providing up to \$5 million in grants to support the recovery and protection of the listed Koala.
Program Delegate	A manager within the department with responsibility for the program.
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.
Publicly funded research organisation (PFRO)	All higher education providers listed at Table A and Table B of the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (Cth) and corporate Commonwealth entities, and State and Territory business enterprises which undertake publicly funded research.
National Recovery Plan for the Koala	The National Recovery Plan for the Koala <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) in effect under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> from 8 April 2022.

Term	Definition
Species (legal definition)	<p>Following the EPBC Act (s528) a species is a group of biological entities that (a) interbreed to produce fertile offspring; or (b) possess common characteristics derived from a common gene pool; and includes (c) a sub-species.</p> <p>Under section 517 of the EPBC Act, the Minister for the Environment may determine that a distinct population of biological entities is a species for the purposes of the Act. On 27 April 2012, the <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i> (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) was determination under this provision to be a species. In this program, the legal entity is referred to as the 'listed Koala'.</p>
The Committee	<p>The body comprised of employees from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources to consider and assess eligible applications and make recommendations to the Minister for funding under the program.</p>
Threats	<p>Activities, events and processes, whether anthropogenic or natural, that directly or indirectly influence the biophysical environment or natural demographic or ecological processes and may interfere with the conservation of the Koala.</p> <p>Direct threats (anthropogenic) are the proximate human activities or processes that directly cause changes to Koalas survival or breeding, or that reduce the quality of extent of their habitat. Direct threat classification is adapted from the IUCN Threat Classification Scheme (Version 3.2). Examples include housing developments, road building, and harvesting using silvicultural systems that directly remove habitat trees and patches. The occurrence of dogs and vehicles may cause direct mortality of Koalas.</p> <p>Examples of indirect threats include habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation, and population isolation.</p>
Threatened Species Strategy 2021-2031 and Action Plan	<p>Policy document - Australian Government's forward plan to improve the outlook of Australia's plants, animals and ecological communities over the next ten years.</p>