



**Australian Government**

**Department of Industry, Science and Resources**

**Department of Climate Change, Energy,  
the Environment and Water**

## Grant Opportunity Guidelines

# Reef Coastal Restoration Program Grant Opportunity

<b>Opening date:</b>	6 October 2023
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	5.00pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time on 20 November 2023 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
<b>Administering entity:</b>	Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	4 October 2023; 23 January 2024
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Open competitive

# Contents

<b>1. Reef Coastal Restoration Program processes</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1. Introduction	5
<b>2. About the grant program</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. About the Reef Coastal Restoration Program grant opportunity	5
<b>3. Grant amount and grant period</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1. Grants available	6
3.2. Project period	6
<b>4. Eligibility criteria</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?	6
4.2. Additional eligibility requirements	7
4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?	7
<b>5. What the grant money can be used for</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1. Eligible grant activities	7
5.2. Eligible locations	8
5.3. Eligible expenditure	8
5.4. What the grant money cannot be used for	9
<b>6. The assessment criteria</b>	<b>9</b>
6.1. Assessment criterion 1	10
6.2. Assessment criterion 2	10
<b>7. How to apply</b>	<b>11</b>
7.1. Attachments to the application	11
7.2. Joint (consortia) applications	12
7.3. Timing of grant opportunity processes	12
7.4. Questions during the application process	12
<b>8. The grant selection process</b>	<b>12</b>
8.1. Assessment of grant applications	12
8.2. Who will assess applications?	13
8.3. Who will approve grants?	13
<b>9. Notification of application outcomes</b>	<b>14</b>
9.1. Feedback on your application	14
<b>10. Successful grant applications</b>	<b>14</b>
10.1. The grant agreement	14
10.2. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards	14
10.2.1. Child safety requirements	14
10.3. How we pay the grant	15
10.4. Grant Payments and GST	15
<b>11. Announcement of grant</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>12. How we monitor your grant activity</b>	<b>16</b>

12.1.	Keeping us informed .....	16
12.2.	Reporting .....	16
	12.2.1. Progress reports.....	16
	12.2.2. Ad-hoc reports.....	17
	12.2.3. End of project report .....	17
12.3.	Audited financial acquittal report.....	17
12.4.	Grant agreement variations .....	17
12.5.	Compliance visits .....	18
12.6.	Record keeping.....	18
12.7.	Evaluation .....	18
12.8.	Acknowledgement.....	18
<b>13.</b>	<b>Probity</b>	<b>18</b>
13.1.	Enquiries and feedback .....	18
13.2.	Conflicts of interest .....	19
13.3.	Privacy .....	19
13.4.	Confidential information .....	20
13.5.	Freedom of information.....	21
<b>14.</b>	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>22</b>

# 1. Reef Coastal Restoration Program processes

**The Reef Coastal Restoration Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives**

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)'s Outcome 2: to conserve, protect and sustainably manage Australia's biodiversity, ecosystems, environment and heritage. DCCEEW works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#).



**The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on [business.gov.au](http://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 assess 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 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 will be proportional to the risks involved.



**Delivery of grant**

You complete 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 Reef Coastal Restoration Program**

DCCEEW will evaluate the specific grant activity and Reef Coastal Restoration as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

## 1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Reef Coastal Restoration Program.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- 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 grant opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR) on behalf of the Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

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.

## 2. About the grant program

The Reef Coastal Restoration Program (the program) seeks the restoration and rehabilitation of Great Barrier Reef (Reef) coastal habitats and ecosystems specifically defined as being blue carbon systems (see definition in glossary), through delivery of projects that will immediately contribute to the delivery of the [Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan](#) (Reef 2050 Plan) and [Reef Trust Outcomes](#). The program funding aims to upscale action with a focus on seascape-landscape scale activities.

The objectives of the program are to:

- rehabilitate and/or restore degraded or previously destroyed Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems by implementing on-ground ecosystem rehabilitation and/or restoration activities
- encourage greater community participation and partnerships, including involvement with First Nations peoples
- improve the health and resilience of Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems, accelerating progress towards meeting water quality targets, while aligning to the objectives of the Reef 2050 Plan, Work Area 5 (protect, rehabilitate and restore).

The intended outcomes of the program are to:

- bring immediate, tangible, and reportable benefits, outcomes and improvements for the Reef environment and catchment
- contribute to the Reef 2050 Plan and Reef Trust Outcomes
- accelerate action for effective on-ground rehabilitation and/or restoration, capable of being upscaled to promote large-scale improvement and recovery of Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems.

### 2.1. About the Reef Coastal Restoration Program grant opportunity

The program will run from 2023-24 to 2025-26. The program will fund projects to deliver immediate, on-ground Reef coastal habitat/ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration activities.

Project activities will contribute to at least one Reef Trust Outcome:

- Reef Trust Outcome 1 - Improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef from broad-scale land use to increase the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef
- Reef Trust Outcome 2 - Improve the health and resilience of coastal habitats
- Reef Trust Outcome 3 - Improve and protect marine biodiversity.

Project activities will also contribute to achieving the Reef 2050 Plan, specifically Work Area 5 goals and strategic actions.

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

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

#### 3.1. Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of up to \$30 million from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

- The maximum grant amount is \$2 million.

The grant amount will be up to 100 per cent of eligible expenditure.

You are responsible for the remaining eligible and ineligible project costs.

If you enter into a grant agreement under the program, you cannot receive other grants for the same project activities from other Commonwealth, state or territory granting programs.

#### 3.2. Project period

You must complete your project by 31 March 2026.

### 4. Eligibility criteria

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

#### 4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

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)
- an incorporated association
- an incorporated not for profit organisation
- a publicly funded research organisation (PFRO) as defined in section 14
- an Australian local government agency or body as defined in section 14
- Queensland state government agency or body.

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead organisation who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 7.2.

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

## 4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications where projects will:

- undertake on-ground restoration and/or rehabilitation of Great Barrier Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems
- you must also have relevant permits and approvals in place, or the ability to obtain relevant permits and approvals, within an appropriate timeframe to deliver the objectives and outcomes by the end of the project period

For the purpose of this program, Great Barrier Reef coastal ecosystems that are eligible for rehabilitation and/or restoration activities are blue carbon ecosystems including seagrass meadows, mangroves, saltmarsh, coastal wetlands, and supratidal swamp forests. Great Barrier Reef coastal shellfish reefs will also be eligible for rehabilitation and/or restoration activities in this program.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

## 4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- 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'
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)
- an individual
- a partnership
- an unincorporated association
- an entity not included in section 4.1
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee may apply on behalf of a trust).

# 5. What the grant money can be used for

## 5.1. Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be aimed at the program objectives outlined in section 2
- deliver immediate, tangible and reportable benefits, outcomes and improvement for the Reef coastal environment
- support the outcomes and objectives of the Reef 2050 Plan and the Reef Trust Outcomes 1, 2 and/or 3.

Eligible activities can include but are not limited to:

- activities that build on small scale pilot projects that have previously successfully trialed site-specific restoration methods
- projects and/or the coordination of multiple projects that rehabilitate and/or restore multiple different connected Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems, to maximise the rehabilitation and/or restoration outcomes through ecological facilitation
- restoration of hydrological regimes in Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems.

Eligible projects may be an extension of, or build on, an existing project however you must clearly demonstrate the project is additional to any existing projects or grant activities.

We may also approve other activities where you can demonstrate that restoration or rehabilitation actions can produce immediate, tangible benefits to the Reef coastal environment.

## 5.2. Eligible locations

Your project can include activities at different locations, as long as they are all in the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, the Great Barrier Reef Natural Resource Management regions or habitats/ecosystems within the Great Barrier Reef Catchments that have a clear and direct effect on the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park and wider Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

## 5.3. Eligible expenditure

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

Eligible expenditure items include the following, where they are directly related to the project:

- labour 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
- contractor costs for the delivery of eligible project activities. All contractors must have a written contract prior to starting any project work. Invoices from contractors must contain a detailed description and breakdown of the work including hours and hourly rates
- costs associated with administrative support activities up to a maximum of 10 per cent of total eligible expenditure incurred through the delivery of eligible project activities
- costs associated with purchase, lease or hire of equipment where needed to undertake eligible activities
- costs associated with monitoring and reporting activities up to a maximum of 5 per cent of total eligible expenditure
- domestic travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct agreed project activities in Australia
- staff training that directly supports the achievement of project outcomes
- the cost of an independent audit of project expenditure up to a maximum of 1 per cent of total eligible project expenditure.

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 administering the program) makes the final decision in consultation with DCCEEW 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.



You may elect to commence your project from the date we notify you that your application is 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.

#### 5.4. What the grant money cannot be used for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- activities that fall outside of the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, Great Barrier Reef Natural Resource Management regions or habitats/ecosystems within the Great Barrier Reef Catchments that do not have a clear and direct effect on the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park and wider Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on any matter of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*
- activities that do not support or contribute to the delivery of the Reef 2050 Plan and Reef Trust Outcomes
- cost of fencing that is a landholder's normal responsibility (for example stock fencing or boundary fencing)
- the management of pests, diseases and/or weed species that legally require control
- restoration and/or rehabilitation activities where the habitat/ecosystem did not historically exist
- restoration and/or rehabilitation activities where the environmental conditions are not suitable to support the survival of rehabilitated and/or restored habitat/ecosystem
- research activities not directly supporting eligible activities
- activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources
- costs incurred prior to us notifying you that the application is successful
- any in-kind contributions
- financing costs, including interest
- non-project-related staff training and development costs
- depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- maintenance costs
- recurring or ongoing operational expenditure (including maintenance, rent, water and rates, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges).

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.

## 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 character limits for each response.

We will only consider funding applications that score at least 50 per cent against each assessment criterion.

## 6.1. Assessment criterion 1

### **Alignment with the program objectives and outcomes (50 Points).**

You should demonstrate this through identifying how your project will:

- a. improve the health and resilience of Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems, support the delivery of the Reef 2050 Plan (Work Area 5 protect, rehabilitate, restore) and contribute to the Reef Trust Outcomes
- b. deliver immediate tangible, reportable benefits, outcomes and improvements for the coastal Reef environment, through on-ground restoration and/or rehabilitation activities that are informed by evidence and consistent with best practice
- c. restore and/or rehabilitate Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems at large scales or demonstrate how the project can be successfully replicated at seascape-landscape scales in the future
- d. capture and collect appropriate data and information sharing methods that can be used to scale and/or replicate and/or support ongoing rehabilitation and/or restoration work at seascape-landscape scales
- e. identify opportunities for further Reef coastal habitat/ecosystem restoration that will occur as a direct result of the successful implementation of the project.

## 6.2. Assessment criterion 2

### **Capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (50 Points).**

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- a. your track record of successfully managing similar projects
- b. your access to personnel with the right skills and experience in delivering your project activities
- c. your readiness to commence the project (with appropriate insurance and approvals)
- d. how you will plan and manage the delivery of the project including obtaining permits and approvals if not already obtained, methodology, budget, risk management and governance (you will be required to attach a project plan to your application with detail appropriate to the size of your project)
- e. a clear understanding of the risk profile needs to be demonstrated and a risk plan with appropriate risk management and mitigation strategies needs to be provided
- f. your monitoring and evaluation framework, including the proposed measures of success/indicators and targets linked to the objectives and outcomes of the project and how this information will be used to assess, adapt and report progress
- g. on-going monitoring and maintenance costs beyond the life of the grant and how you will use the grant funding to leverage support to fund ongoing maintenance and monitoring costs.

You may wish to refer to the [NESP Project 1.7](#) guidelines for a universal approach to marine and coastal restoration monitoring in Australia, to guide your monitoring and evaluation approach.

## 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.

Applicants should read all eligibility and assessment criteria closely and attach detailed evidence that supports the assessment criteria.

You will need to set up an account to access our online [portal](#).

To apply, you must:

- complete and submit the application through the online portal
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

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](#). 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.

After submitting your application, we can contact you for clarification if we find an error or any missing information, including evidence that supports your eligibility/merit. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission of your application is at the discretion of the Program Delegate. Additional information should not materially change your application at the time it was submitted and therefore may be refused if deemed to be purely supplementary.

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

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.

### 7.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- a detailed project plan
- a summary of your ongoing monitoring and management plan past the life of the project
- a detailed project budget
- a risk management and mitigation plan
- evidence that supports assessment criteria responses (where applicable)
- a letter of support from project partners (where applicable) that includes the details outlined in section 7.2
- trust deed (where applicable).

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

## 7.2. Joint (consortia) 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 should 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.

## 7.3. Timing of grant opportunity processes

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 February 2024.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	8 weeks
Approval and announcement of successful applicants	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	1-3 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	The date you are notified that your application is successful
Project completion date	31 March 2026
End date of grant commitment	June 2026

## 7.4. Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

# 8. The grant selection process

## 8.1. Assessment of grant applications

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria.

If eligible, your application will be assessed against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.<sup>2</sup>

When assessing the extent to which 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.

If applications are scored the same, the program delegate will consider value for money and alignment to the program objectives to recommend applications for funding.

## 8.2. Who will assess applications?

We assess your application against the selection criteria.

We will establish a committee comprised of employees from DCCEEW to assess applications. The committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts or advisors to inform the assessment process.

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, and any expert or advisor, 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.

## 8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Decision Maker (who is a Senior Executive in DCCEEW with policy responsibility for the program) decides which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Decision Maker'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 Decision Maker will not approve funding if there are insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

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<sup>2</sup> See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

## 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.

### 9.1. Feedback on your application

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

## 10. Successful grant applications

### 10.1. The grant agreement

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

We will manage the grant agreement through the online portal. This includes issuing and executing the grant agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have accepted the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur and cannot make any payments 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 Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under the 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.

We will use a standard grant agreement.

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 Decision Maker.

### 10.2. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and Australian Government sanctions 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

#### 10.2.1. 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](#)<sup>3</sup> 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.

### 10.3. 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)
- any financial contribution provided by you or a third party.

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

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

### 10.4. Grant Payments and GST

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 entities<sup>4</sup>.

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 grant

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect.

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#), Section 5.3. 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

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

<sup>4</sup> See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at ato.gov.au

- 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 and outcomes
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds
- you will also be required to report to DCCEE using the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Tool (MERIT) to help the Commonwealth to evaluate the project's environmental outcomes. The reporting required in MERIT will not be duplicative.

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.

#### 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. 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.

#### 12.2.3. 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.

### 12.3. Audited financial acquittal report

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](http://business.gov.au) and GrantConnect.

### 12.4. 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
- changing project activities.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement end date. You can submit a variation request via our online portal.

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.

### 12.5. 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.

### 12.6. Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

### 12.7. Evaluation

DCCEEW will evaluate the grant opportunity to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We 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.

### 12.8. Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the Reef Trust and that funding is from the Australian Government. Branding guidelines, including Reef Trust logos, will be made available to you.

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 guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

### 13.1. 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:

General Manager  
Business Grants Hub  
Department of Industry, Science and Resources  
GPO Box 2013  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

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

### 13.2. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity. 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\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)<sup>5</sup> on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

### 13.3. Privacy

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per below, or
- personal information as per below.

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.

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.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/conflict-interest-policy>

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](#)<sup>6</sup> 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.

### 13.4. Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

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.

We may disclose confidential information:

- to 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.

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

### 13.5. 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.

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
administering entity	When an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
application form	The document issued by the program delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application ranking.
Australian Local Government agency or body	Local government bodies and agencies are established by state and territory governments to take responsibility for a number of community services. Their powers are defined by the state or territory government which established them, and those state or territory governments have primary responsibility for funding and supervision of local councils.
Committee	The body established by the Department to consider and assess eligible applications and make recommendations for funding under the program.
<a href="#"><u>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)</u></a>	Establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by
date of effect	Can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
decision maker	A Senior Executive in DCCEEW with policy responsibility for the program.
eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
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.

Term	Definition
eligibility criteria	Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.3.
General Manager	Position title for Senior Executive Service level staff within DISR.
grant	<p>For the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>7</sup> or other <a href="#">Consolidated Revenue Fund</a> (CRF) money<sup>8</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.</li> </ul>
grant activity/activities	Refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake
grant agreement	A legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding, and specifies the details of the grant.
grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
grant opportunity	Refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	A 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.

<sup>7</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>8</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
grantee	The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
Great Barrier Reef Catchments	<a href="http://www.qld.gov.au">Great Barrier Reef catchment and river basins regions map (www.qld.gov.au)</a>
Great Barrier Reef coastal habitats/ecosystems	For the purpose of this program, Great Barrier Reef blue carbon coastal ecosystems that are eligible for rehabilitation and/or restoration activities include seagrass meadows, shellfish reefs, mangroves, saltmarsh, coastal wetlands and supratidal swamp forests. Great Barrier Reef coastal shellfish reefs are also eligible for rehabilitation and/or restoration activities in this program.
Great Barrier Reef Coastal Marine Park	<a href="http://www.qld.gov.au">About marine parks   Environment, land and water   Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)</a>
On-ground	On-ground refers to project activities that monitor, survey, and directly make a change to, the state of the natural biophysical environment.
personal information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and</li> <li>b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
program delegate	A manager within the department with responsibility for administering 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.
Restoration	The process of assisting the recovery of damaged, degraded, or destroyed habitats/ecosystems.
Rehabilitation	Reinstating degrees of habitats/ecosystem functionality on degraded sites where restoration is not the aspiration
selection criteria	Comprises of eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.



Term	Definition
value with money	<p>Value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the quality of the project proposal and activities;</li> <li>▪ fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives;</li> <li>▪ that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved; and</li> <li>▪ the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>