Minister’s Foreword

The Victorian Government encourages local communities to take an active role in improving and protecting our environment by offering a range of Victorian grant programs.

To build on this commitment, the government is delivering a new $1.5 million Local Landscape Enhancement grants program that will support Victorian communities to protect and restore the environment, contribute to our environmental knowledge and encourage people to enjoy their local area.

The new grants program recognises the need to improve the environmental amenity of areas valued by local communities with up to $50,000 available to community groups for year-long projects.

This is a great opportunity for groups such as Committees of Management, schools and kindergartens, youth groups, senior citizens groups, rotary and RSL clubs and multicultural groups to actively participate in improving their local environment.

Thank you to Victoria’s fantastic community and volunteer groups who contribute to our environmental knowledge, improve environmental outcomes and make a real difference in our local communities. Through these grants, the Victorian Government is providing these groups with the funding needed to recognise their hardwork and support their efforts.

I encourage community groups with an idea for a new environmental project in their area, or one that builds on a previously completed project to apply.

A great example could be improving and restoring a local building by investing in its restoration, providing funding for painting, or landscaping the area using native trees and shrubs.

The following guidelines provide an overview of the application criteria and information on how applications will be assessed.

I look forward to seeing the results of projects achieved through this exciting new program.

The Hon Ryan Smith MP
Minister for Environment and Climate Change
What is the Local Landscape Enhancement Grants program?

The Local Landscape Enhancement Grants program will provide support to groups such as Committees of Management, schools and kindergartens, youth groups, senior citizens groups, Rotary, RSL clubs and multicultural groups to enable them to actively participate in improving their environment.

This program will specifically provide support to improve the public amenity and enjoyment of areas of value to the local community, in order to increase the community’s enjoyment and awareness of their local environment.

These kinds of projects may have been to date overlooked for funding.

The Local Landscape Enhancement Grants program seeks to:

- support and promote practical community action to improve and enhance sites and assets that will increase the community’s enjoyment and awareness of their local environment;
- support community groups to undertake works that will improve and enhance the natural and social amenity of a site;
- foster new partnerships between community groups and organisations that manage public land; and
- support community activities that will improve public awareness and enjoyment of the environment and sustainability.

What funding is available?

The Victorian Government is inviting applications from the community who are seeking support to improve and enhance their local environment.

Applications are being sought for grants of up to $50,000.

Single year projects that will be completed by 31 December 2015 are eligible for funding.

Applications are now open and close Monday 15th September 2014.
Who is eligible?

Local Landscape Enhancement Grants are targeted towards groups such as Committees of Management, schools and kindergartens, youth groups, senior citizens groups, Rotary, RSL clubs and multicultural groups.

For further information on whether your organisation requires a sponsor, please contact the DEPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Who can be a sponsor?

The following organisations can participate as a sponsor, but are NOT eligible to apply in their own right:

- catchment management authorities
- water authorities
- industry bodies
- state government statutory bodies/authorities
- state government agencies (except for schools)
- local government
- Parks Victoria.

The following are NOT eligible to apply for or sponsor a project:

- commonwealth government agencies
- private individuals
- private companies and private trusts.
What might be funded?

The intention of the Local Landscape Enhancement Grants program is to support local communities to address local issues that will result in improved awareness and enjoyment of the local environment and benefit the broader community.

Projects are expected to address local environmental and facility issues on public land such as:

- biodiversity and habitat enhancement; or
- improving the community’s enjoyment of local sites of environmental interest; or
- enhancing social well-being through improved amenity of local environmental sites; or
- improving access to local sites of environmental interest; or
- community engagement activities that increase awareness of the local environment.

For all eligible activities, groups must demonstrate that they are utilising best practice management techniques and have taken safety, cultural heritage and biodiversity impacts into account. Advice on these matters can be sought through the Grants Information Line.
What might be funded?

Projects are expected to:

- be on public land and have consent of the relevant public land manager;
- have work permits where they apply for any on-ground works (applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their local Shire/Council to determine whether permits for works are required and obtain permits for work where applicable);
- ensure capital items purchased or leased are related to the project’s on-ground components and become a registered asset with the entity;
- seek to ensure re-vegetation works use locally indigenous species only; and
- clearly define project costs and show transparent application of funds.

The grants program will support the following categories of expenditure:

- rubbish removal (if necessary prior to site restoration);
- exclusion fencing;
- capital items such as seating, access steps and barbeques;
- improvement of existing assets to facilitate social benefits from the environment;
- personal Protective Equipment (such as gloves, goggles and masks);
- materials (chemicals, plants, etc.);
- equipment hire;
- transportation and travel costs (actual or as per ATO reimbursement rates per Km);
- signage;
- printing/design;
- training and certification (if directly related to funded activity);
- site preparation;
- site security (landholder agreements);
- equipment purchase and equipment purchase should be no more than $1,000 or 5% of requested funds – whichever is greater. The purchase would also need to relate directly to on-ground works and become a registered asset with this entity;
- postage;
- advertising;
- project coordination;*
- environmental assessments;*
- contractors.

* There is a limit of 20% of the total requested funds that can be allocated to project coordination or environmental assessment.

Applicants will need to demonstrate that environmental assessment or contractors are essential to facilitate the on-ground works component of the project and in the case of the contractors is for works that your group is unable to carry out.

Your costing table is to show costs inclusive of GST.
What won’t be funded?

Funding is not available for:

- Activities (or components of projects) that are already funded by other funding bodies.
- The purchase of goods for competitions, prizes, giveaways, vouchers or alcohol for any events.
- General operating or travel costs not directly associated with a project/event.
- Projects assessed as not meeting the eligibility and assessment criteria.
- Any activity requiring clearing of native vegetation.
- Activities that involve the use of fire-arms, traps or explosives.
- Any activity required as an offset (as a condition of a permit to clear native vegetation).
- Applications that exceed the allocated $50,000 (inc. GST) grant limit.
- The purchase of insurance.

What are the application open and close dates?

Applications are now open and close Monday 15th September 2014. See section “How do I apply?”

Funding is available for:

- **Grants** for projects up to $50,000 (GST inc.).

Please note that paper applications will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted online.

**Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.**
**How will applications be assessed?**

Grant applications will be assessed through program alignment, project need and project design.

**Program alignment** – how well does the project address one or more of the desired grants program outcomes?
- Support practical community action in the environment.
- Improve public amenity by fostering improved access, convenience and social well-being.
- Create visible and lasting improvement.
- Foster greater awareness and enjoyment of the natural.
- Strengthen partnerships and participation by equipping communities with the skills and knowledge to take action safely and with the capacity to optimise resources.

**Project need** – what is being protected, restored or enhanced? What are the threats impacting on the area now or in the future? What community group would benefit from an improved understanding of the?

**Project design** – what evidence do you have that the proposed approach will address the issue? What skills and knowledge will your group (and partners) bring to the project? How do you propose to track progress and ensure you meet your objectives? Are your costs clearly defined and show transparent application of project funds?

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**What if I’m not successful?**

All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Applicants not granted funding can however ask for feedback on their application.
What are the conditions of funding?

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) signed by the authorised representative of the group or sponsor organisation. Projects that will be completed by 31st December 2015 are eligible for funding.

Agreements detail the obligations to use funding, meet performance against described activities, the expected timeline for project expenditure and project reporting requirements and describe how grant recipients will be required to acknowledge the funding support from Local Landscape Enhancement Grants program.

As a guide, the agreed project funding will be available upon the provision of duplicate signed funding agreements and the following documentation:

- insurance certificate of currency by an insurer authorised under the Insurance Act 1973 as per eligibility criteria on page 5;
- copies of permits for works that apply to the project; (funding does not guarantee your permit will be awarded, you must apply for this separately)
- payment details so that the Department can generate a Recipient Created Tax Invoice (this only to applies for applicants who are GST registered. RCIs and invoices may be required for some applicants) on behalf of the applicant;
- photographs of the site/s prior to works;
- a map of the proposed location of works.

All successful applicants will be required to provide completion reports, including a map and photos showing the project area, at the completion of projects.

Successful applicants must adhere to all relevant legislation including Occupational Health and Safety requirements.

How do I apply?

1. Check to see if you and your project are eligible.
3. Contact the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356 (during business hours) as early as possible to obtain technical or general advice to assist in completing your application.
4. Seek approval from the site’s land manager/owner and consult with your local Council regarding any permits you may need to undertake works.
5. Log on to www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/community-programs/LLEG-program then click on the application link to create a log on and draft your application. NB: your draft can be saved until you are ready to submit.
6. Respond to all the application information requirements and provide all the necessary documentation in the right format.
7. Print a copy of your application prior to submission and check all content. NB: You will be unable to edit your application after you submit.
8. Submit your grant application online by 4.00pm on Monday 15th September 2014.
9. Applicants will receive an automated email confirming receipt of the application.

The contact person for the group, as nominated on the application form, will receive all correspondence from DEPI regarding the grant application and administration.

Contact the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356 (during business hours), or the DEPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186, for help accessing the online information pack or completing the application form.
Who can I contact?

For further information, to discuss concerns or for support with project development please contact the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356 (during business hours) and your query will be directed to a regional technical advisor or the Local Landscape Enhancement Grants Manager.

Thank you for your interest in the Victorian Government’s Local Landscape Enhancement Grants
Further information:

Contact the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356

Local Landscape Enhancement Grants
www.depi.vic.gov.au