

Cooler, Greener, Wilder Grants Program



2025/26 Application Guidelines

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Contents

Contents	2
1. Overview.....	3
2. Key Dates.....	3
3. How to apply?	3
4. What are we working to achieve?.....	3
5. Program Objectives	4
6. What types of projects are eligible for funding?	5
7. Ineligible activities	5
8. Funding.....	6
9. Co-Contributions	6
10. Application Process	7
11. Application Assistance.....	7
12. Supporting Documentation	7
13. Assessment process	7
14. What will we be looking for?	7
15. Conditions of funding	8
16. Reporting	9
17. Unspent funds.....	9



1. Overview

Green Adelaide's Cooler, Greener, Wilder Grants Program will support local governments in the Green Adelaide region to undertake projects that deliver greening and cooling outcomes and include practical implementation of water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design principles, in highly modified urban settings with high community usage. Projects will improve biodiversity, climate resilience and liveability and can be at a site, street or precinct scale.

Total funding available for allocation in 2025/26 is up to \$1,500,000 (plus GST), with grant applications requesting between \$10,000 and \$500,000 to be accepted. Grants will be awarded once council funding for the project is confirmed up to February 2026. Grants will be offered for projects up to four years duration. This will allow for establishment of vegetation during the grant.

2. Key Dates

Applications open: 12 August 2025 (via SmartyGrants)

Applications close: 31 October 2025 (at 5pm ACDT)

Assessment period: November 2025

Notification of assessment outcome: December 2025

Grant project construction must start by: 31 December 2026

Grant project construction must be completed by: 31 December 2029

3. How to apply?

Applications must be submitted online using SmartyGrants at:

<https://greenadelaide-sa.smartygrants.com.au/>

For further information please contact Martin Fidge, Water Project Officer at martin.fidge3@sa.gov.au or on 7424 5714

Late applications will not be accepted.

4. What are we working to achieve?

The Cooler, Greener, Wilder Grants Program is aimed at supporting projects which deliver multiple outcomes against the following Green Adelaide priorities.

Biodiversity-sensitive and water-sensitive urban design

- Best practice BSUD and WSUD in the public realm.
- Implementation barriers are solved, and opportunities harnessed for improved urban greening, BSUD and WSUD.
- Improved BSUD and WSUD implementation success by councils.

Green streets and flourishing parklands

- Strategic, high-quality climate-resilient greening reflective of local context and need.



Water resources and wetlands

- Biodiverse public blue and green spaces that enhance the quality and sustainability of water resources.

5. Program Objectives

The Cooler, Greener, Wilder Grants Program has an emphasis on supporting on-ground works to achieve integrated urban greening, water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design outcomes that meet Green Adelaide's key priorities listed above. Projects must deliver on at least 2 of the 3 key objectives (see below). Each key objective is scored equally hence projects that deliver on all three priorities are likely to rank higher and be more successful in attracting funding.

Three key objectives of the Cooler, Greener, Wilder Grants Program are:

- Integrate **Water-sensitive Urban Design** for localised water management, fit-for-purpose water provision or at-source infiltration to support urban greening and cooling.
 - Specific outcomes may include stormwater runoff quantity and/or quality improvement; water reuse/recycling (stormwater, wastewater); at-source infiltration to support greening and cooling.
- Create diverse and appropriate habitat for native wildlife in urban settings through the implementation of **Biodiversity-sensitive Urban Design** principles.
 - Specific outcomes may include conservation, creation of habitat; facilitation of species dispersal; minimisation of threats and human generated disturbance; facilitation of natural ecological processes; improved potential for positive human-nature interactions.
- **Increase urban green cover**, including tree canopy in appropriate areas to progress against the target in the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, and reduce the urban heat island effect across metropolitan Adelaide.
 - Specific outcomes may include increased tree canopy (where not impacting on intact pre-European native vegetation associations), and/or other forms of urban greenery in streets and reserves; mitigation of urban heat islands; and increased species diversity.

Secondary objectives:

- Enhance public amenity and natural character to provide community benefit in areas of high pedestrian usage, through creation of **Quality Public Green Spaces**.
 - Specific outcomes may include community health and wellbeing; connection with nature; stronger communities; access for all; neighbourhood character; resilient communities. Please also include reference to any community events that are part of your project.
- Embed Kaurna cultural knowledge, practices and guidance for projects and activities are happening on Kaurna Yarta (Kaurna Country).
- Support projects that lead industry best practice through innovation.

Further guidance on Water-sensitive Urban Design

Information and guidance on WSUD concept can be found at:

<https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/environment/docs/water-sensitive-urban-design-policy-gen.pdf>

Further background and guidance is on the Water Sensitive SA web site which can be accessed at

<https://www.watersensitivesa.com/>

Further guidance on Biodiversity-Sensitive Urban Design

Information and guidance on BSUD steps for grant applications can be found at:

https://ggarrardresearch.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/bsud-final_reduced-size2.pdf and [https://icon-](https://icon-science.org/biodiversity-sensitive-urban-design/)

[science.org/biodiversity-sensitive-urban-design/](https://icon-science.org/biodiversity-sensitive-urban-design/). The following document was prepared for the Urban Greening Strategy



for Metro Adelaide 2025-2030: [Blueprint for a Nature-Positive Adelaide RMIT A background Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design evidence](#).

Further background and guidance can be found in Professor Sarah Bekessy's presentation in the webinar 'Nature-based Opportunities for Resilient Cities' run by the Threatened Species Recovery Hub which can be accessed at: <https://youtu.be/iZLIrUOEnIU>

Further guidance on Quality Green Public Spaces

Information and guidance on QGPS concept can be found at:

<https://www.odasa.sa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Green-Public-Spaces-Principles-FIN-WEB-V3.pdf>

6. What types of projects are eligible for funding?

The grants are open to fund on-ground works. The grants are targeted at \$10,000 - \$500,000 projects that deliver multiple benefits across urban greening, water-sensitive and biodiversity-sensitive urban design, including:

- fit-for-purpose water provision, at-source infiltration, and other sustainable water management opportunities through water-sensitive urban design.
- greening and cooling through increased vegetation and other green infrastructure at the site, street or precinct scale. Ideally in priority areas identified as susceptible to increased urban heat and socio-economic vulnerability.

Activities eligible for funding include (but are not limited to):

- creating habitat for native fauna through biodiversity-sensitive urban design including trees, shrubs, grasses, and other understorey plantings.
- Installation of other green infrastructure, in particular where based on BSUD principles.
- Installation of WSUD assets such as stormwater inlets and infiltration, tree pits, raingardens, and permeable paving, as well as construction of wetlands, swales and bio-retention basins in urban settings.
- Extensions to stormwater pipe networks necessary to install WSUD features.
- Conversion of asphalt to blue-green open space.
- project management costs are permitted as part of the in-kind contribution, up to 10% of the total value of the project.
- educational/interpretive signage associated with the project

Activities that can be included as in-kind contribution:

- Development of master plans, concept plans, and designs for on-ground urban greening projects which incorporate water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design principles.
- Maintenance of newly established vegetation or assets for the grant period including watering, weed control, and cleaning of WSUD assets

7. Ineligible activities

The following works are **not eligible** for funding:

- Projects where works or material purchases have commenced prior to grant funding approval as part of an existing project, unless the funding request is for an additional enhancement of the existing project (projects where work such as concept designs, detailed designs, feasibility studies and master planning have been completed are eligible for funding subject to satisfying other criteria).



- Projects that are considered to be part of council's usual ongoing maintenance, management or asset replacement, including ongoing street tree management or asset maintenance (management and maintenance of assets created with grant funding, undertaken within the grant funding period, is permitted as part of the in-kind contribution).
- costs associated with preparation of the grant application or administration costs associated with the delivery of the project
- Standalone civil works including routine upgrading of footpaths, kerbs, roads and carparks that do not include WSUD or BSUD principles in project design.
- Purchase of plant or equipment.
- Marketing and promotion, including publications, branding, artwork or signage (unless it is educational/interpretive in nature).
- Land purchase for open space.
- Projects on land which the public cannot access or which require the public to pay a fee to access.
- Broad-scale revegetation or street tree and open space planting projects which do not target urban cooling and incorporate WSUD and/or BSUD principles in project design.
- Stormwater quality treatment with no associated greening or cooling outcomes.
- Development of high-level policies, strategies, plans or similar (that is, policies, strategies or plans that do not link directly to subsequent and reasonably committed on-ground outcomes).
- Project contingency budget (also not eligible as part of the in-kind contribution).
- Activities that cause, or with the potential to cause, environmental damage, either directly or indirectly.
- Other activities or specific expenditure that the Board decides does not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes of the project or that is contrary to the intention of the funding.
- Projects that are already fully funded by other means and will not achieve additional outcomes.

8. Funding

Up to \$1.5 million (plus GST) is available for allocation in the 2025/26 round of funding. This funding is available to councils within the Green Adelaide region via a competitive grant process. Applications between \$10,000 and \$500,000 will be accepted. Please note that grant funding is only available for clearly defined greening, water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design activities. Councils are required to match any funding granted with co-contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Councils may submit applications for multiple projects.

9. In-Kind/Co-Contributions

Both cash and in-kind co-contributions will be considered and may consist of contributions from council. Please note that only co-contributions towards clearly defined greening, water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design activities are eligible for consideration.

Any in-kind co-contribution must be identified within the project budget breakdown and can include.

- Development of master plans, concept plans, and designs for on-ground urban greening projects which incorporate water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity-sensitive urban design principles.
- Community volunteer hours such as planting, weeding
- Council operations staff undertaking the works,
- Maintenance of newly established vegetation or assets for up to 12 months within the grant period
- Project Management



Councils should consider other external funding opportunities which could include:

- other state and Commonwealth government grant funding programs.
- partnerships with non-government organisations and/or other councils to achieve regional priorities.

10. Application Process

Applications for funding must be submitted via the SmartyGrants system. Please ensure that all supporting documents are uploaded before finalising submission of your grant application.

11. Application Assistance

General and technical assistance during application preparation is available from Green Adelaide upon request. Please contact DEW.GreenAdelaide@sa.gov.au to request assistance with the SmartyGrants system. Please contact Martin Fidge, Water Project Officer at martin.fidge3@sa.gov.au or on 7424 5714

12. Supporting Documentation

The following forms of evidence must be provided to support applications:

- Map(s) clearly showing the intended project location(s) including urban heat and tree canopy mapping (as well as any other mapping deemed relevant – e.g. biodiversity etc.).
- Any master plans, concept plans or detailed designs already completed.
- Specific references for any technical evidence mentioned in the application, in particular to support claimed WSUD and BSUD outcomes and outputs.
- Specific references for any State or local government policies, strategies, plans etc. mentioned in the application.
- A detailed project budget breakdown (including any costings or quotes obtained).
- A project risk assessment.

Further supporting documentation is encouraged as deemed relevant by the applicant.

13. Assessment process

Applications will be assessed by a panel of Green Adelaide staff, with final funding decisions to be approved by the Green Adelaide Board.

14. What will we be looking for?

While an application may meet the assessment criteria, this does not guarantee that a grant will be awarded, and successful applicants may not receive funding to the full amount requested.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- achieve outcomes aligned to multiple program objectives of BSUD, WSUD and greening.



- align with local and/or state government planning strategies and deliver strategic on-ground outcomes.
- are based on evidence and/or technical knowledge including:
 - For WSUD (information to include but not limited to) design reports and drawings including treated catchment area (ha); modelled stormwater volume infiltrated, retained and/or treated (ML/year); modelled pollution reduction targets (nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment and gross pollutants); modelled water diverted/captured/harvested, treated, stored and re-used (for what purpose) on average each year (ML/year).
 - For BSUD (information to include but not limited to) reports and planting designs, species to be supported; mapping showing links to other habitat areas; reference to defined BSUD principles and process. For reserve plantings consider pre-European plant associations and positively augment these.
 - For greening (information to include but not limited to) reports and planting designs urban heat mapping; canopy area measure and target; number of trees/plants and species lists.
 - For enhanced public amenity through QGPS (information to include but not limited to) public usage/visitation estimates socio-economic mapping, design responses for accessibility, nature connection, neighbourhood character and resilience.
- provide public benefit based on the scale, impact and location of the project, proportional co-contribution (cash and in-kind) and/or leveraging of partnerships and other funding sources.
- include clear distinction of activities, timelines, milestones and management of potential risks for the proposed project.
- the priority of the project area based on urban heat, tree canopy, green cover, and socio-economic vulnerability.
- contribute to innovation,

Green Adelaide may work with applicants to refine project design, partnerships, scope and scale before entering into a grant agreement. All councils will be formally advised on the outcome of their application in writing. Green Adelaide staff will provide verbal feedback to unsuccessful grant applicants by request. Final decision-making on the number of grants funded and the value of the grants will be at the discretion of Green Adelaide and cannot be appealed.

15. Conditions of funding

Successful applicants will enter into a grant agreement which will outline:

- key objectives and project outcomes
- project and grant payment milestones
- monitoring and reporting requirements,
- data sharing agreement including use of project data as a case study for Water Sensitive SA and for Green Adelaide BSUD capacity building.
- acknowledgement of grant in any media/promotional materials
- sharing of any media/promotional opportunities
- process for any project variation and/or extension requests
- responsibility for public liability insurance and any other terms and conditions as deemed appropriate

Projects must commence within 6 months of formalising the grant agreement and be finalised within 4 years of the date of the grant agreement. Commencement may include project planning and/or management, a tender process, ordering of materials, community consultation or on-ground works.



Councils must agree to adopt responsibility for all of the created assets, including all ongoing operational and maintenance costs beyond the grant timeframe.

Funding will be paid in instalments according to milestones and subject to satisfactory reporting and progress as agreed to by the applicant and the Green Adelaide Board.

All project variations including scope and timeframe must be formally approved by Green Adelaide in writing prior to being implemented.

16. Reporting

Reporting on project progress and achievement of milestones will be required on a six monthly basis until the project is completed, or as agreed based on project milestones. Grant recipients will be required to submit a final report outlining outcomes and financial acquittal of funds within 30 business days from the end date of the project. The final report must be accompanied by any data or outputs created and evidence of project completion, such as images.

17. Unspent funds

Any unspent grant funds must be returned to Green Adelaide Board in accordance with the grant agreement.



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