

Habitat Conservation Incentive Grants 2023/24

Guidelines for Applicants

Habitat Conservation Incentive Grants provided by the Limestone Coast Landscape Board's (LC Landscape Board) regional landscape levy. Funding is available for projects up to \$7,000 (GST exclusive) for the 2023-24 financial year, with a total annual funding pool of \$50,000¹ available. Funding will be awarded to projects on a competitive basis² and the Limestone Coast Landscape Board expects to fund a range of projects across the region that fit the objectives of the grant.

Funding will be awarded on merit to those projects that demonstrate the best value for money and delivery of benefits in accordance with LC Landscape Board priority. Applications will be addressed against eligibility and assessment criteria included below.

Stage 1 applications open on 5 September 2022 and close at 5pm 31 October 2022

The final process for applications close 5pm on 28 February 2023.

¹ Additional funding may be contributed to this funding pool throughout the year.

² The LC Landscape Board reserves the right to allocate funding as it sees fit. Habitat Conservation Incentive Grants could be awarded to specialist, emergency relief projects as required e.g. fire recovery.

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1. Introduction

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board (LC Landscape Board) is offering small incentive grants to undertake habitat conservation activities that protect, enhance or establish native vegetation on private land.

This grant focuses on works that will align with the objective to support the co-benefits of biodiversity on farms, and ultimately contribute to the LC Landscape Board's priority of "Conserving and enhancing our region's biodiversity".

While this grant is suited to individual landholders, there are opportunities for individuals to team up with a community group or other organisation to deliver works together on their land.

The grant is expected to generate strong interest, applicants should be aware this is a competitive process and only those projects that best meet the assessment criteria will be funded. The application process will involve three stages to best identify these projects.

2. Objectives

Support on-ground works for biodiversity conservation outcomes, where there are primary productivity co-benefits. Incentive funding will be prioritised towards projects that will contribute to one or more of the following objectives:

- Enhance habitat resilience by managing the threats affecting remnant vegetation (including protecting paddock trees and wetlands), encouraging natural regeneration or replanting local species within patches of native vegetation.
- Creating buffers around priority areas of habitat or enhancing or creating links between habitats.
- Revegetating cleared areas to increase the extent of available habitats in the region, reduce the effects of fragmentation and/or support nearby habitats.
- Implementing recovery actions to address threatened species and threatened ecological communities listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act (1999).

3. Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria will need to be met. The applicant will need to:

- Be an individual, volunteer, community organisation or other body.
- Be a legal entity or be sponsored by a legal entity.
- Be undertaking a project on private land.
- Where required, attach a Sponsor Support letter from a sponsor to the application, agreeing to be financially and legally responsible for this project.

- Have the agreement of any partner/s and provide a letter of support with the application form.
- Ensure that proposed project activities are not a component of any other funding agreement.
- Ensure that written approval for any works undertaken on land owned by another person/entity, other than the applicant, is attached to the application.
- Be undertaking project activities within the Limestone Coast landscape region (See Appendix A for a map of the region).

You are not eligible to apply if:

- You have an overdue final report and acquittal for a previous grant from state/territory or Australian Government agencies or had funding revoked due to performance and/or integrity reasons.
- You are one of the following – Political organisations, or Government agency.

4. Project length

The starting date for the project should be 1 July 2023. All permissions and approvals for project activities will need to be obtained prior to any works being carried out.

In most cases, projects are to be completed by 30 June 2024 and fully acquitted by 30 July 2024. However, if a project is likely to benefit from an additional three months for seasonally dependent works such as planting, applicants may apply for an extension to complete the project. Approval of extension will be determined by project type and benefit to outcomes.

5. Funding

Funding will be offered to individuals, volunteers, community organisations and other bodies, on the following basis:

- Only expenditure incurred by the funding recipient, directly attributable to the approved project, will be considered eligible expenditure.
- Eligible expenditure must be incurred during the project start and completion date, or any approved variations.
- Funding is provided strictly to support the project and its core activities as per the grant application and any approved variations.
- Eligible costs that may be funded include materials and contractor costs. Payment for your own labour or your own staff's labour is not eligible.
- In-kind contributions from the applicant such as labour, materials or co-funding are strongly encouraged and will be considered as part of the value for money assessment.
- Projects that may be subject to requirements under the Water Affecting Activity (WAA) Control Policy will need to be assessed before works commence. Applications must identify if any of the works within the project requires a WAA permit and an

assessment (more information [here](#)). If a permit is required, this will be identified in the Grant Agreement along with any appropriate conditions.

- Successful projects with an on-ground works component may be subject to a cultural heritage assessment under the terms of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*. The Limestone Coast Landscape Board will facilitate this process.
- Successful projects will be expected to acknowledge the Limestone Coast Landscape Board in their promotions and publications, and are encouraged to send the LC Landscape Board news articles both from the original and extended/shared news source. Logos and branding information will be supplied upon request.
- Funding will not be provided for projects that have already commenced.

6. Activities that may be funded

Activities that are eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Fencing to protect wetlands, creek lines, native vegetation, scattered trees, regeneration of native vegetation and revegetation associated with habitats. Fencing must be to a minimum standard, being 5 strands of wire with droppers at a minimum spacing of every 5 metres with posts every 20 metres.
- Revegetation of habitats including wetland fringing vegetation, links between habitats, habitat plantings and threatened species plantings. Only revegetation with local native species or native species from local climates that are likely to be similar to the planting site in the future and with structural complexity will be supported.
- Shelter belts that have a significant biodiversity co-benefit. Shelter belts must be a minimum of 15 metres wide to provide biodiversity co-benefits, however shelter belts 20 metres or more in width will be favoured. Only planting with local native species or native species from local climates that are likely to be similar to the planting site in the future and with structural complexity will be supported.
- Weed control including declared and undeclared environmental weeds in all sites as described above where there is a strong biodiversity benefit. (Budget allocated to pay the LC Landscape Board's Weed Control Service to do spraying or other control works is NOT eligible. A private contractor can be engaged for this work).
- Pest animal control on project sites will be funded if carried out in conjunction with other activities that increase biodiversity outcomes of the project area.
- Funding for contractors or consultants required for the project may be funded but must be identified and quote submitted with the application.
- Undertaking recovery actions/protection works for nationally listed threatened species (under the EPBC Act 1999).

This list is not exhaustive and applicants have the opportunity to discuss other project ideas with Limestone Coast Landscape Board staff (see Section 13 for staff contacts). Other activities or specific expenditure may be ineligible where the LC Landscape Board determines that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes of the project or that they are contrary to the spirit and intention of the funding.

7. Activities that will not be funded

Projects that are not consistent with the grants outcomes will not be eligible. We will also not fund the following:

- Activities causing or with the potential to cause environmental damage, either directly or indirectly.
- Projects that seek more than \$7,000 (GST exclusive) of grant funding.
- Revegetation using non-native species.
- Shelterbelts that are less than 15 metres wide.
- Activities that are the legal responsibility of the landholder which are associated with compliance under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.
- Activities that are the legal responsibility of the landholder which are associated with clearance consent under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.
- Specific works that are funded through a previous devolved grant/program.
- Work that is undertaken before the Grant Agreement for the project is signed or after the 12-month timeframe (unless an extension has been agreed to in writing).
- Standard boundary fencing that is a landholder's legal responsibility.
- Pest plant and animal control where the primary benefit will be for production purposes.
- Capital works or capital equipment, including the purchase or lease of land and/or purchase, construction or maintenance of buildings, purchase of assets which could be used for personal benefit.
- Purchase, lease or acquisition of: computer hardware or software, photocopiers, GPS equipment or media equipment including video cameras and projectors, motor vehicles, watercraft, aircraft or fuel.
- Day to day operating costs.
- Insurance, legal or administrative costs.
- Overseas travel.
- Budget allocated to pay the LC Landscape Board's Weed Control Service to do weed spraying or other pest control works (N.B. A private contractor can be engaged for this work).
- Preparation of the original grant application, variations or reporting.

This list is not exhaustive. Other activities or specific expenditure may be ineligible where the LC Landscape Board determines that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes of the project or that they are contrary to the spirit and intention of the funding.

8. Monitoring

It is important to understand how effective project activities are at achieving the grant objectives. The LC Landscape Board would like to undertake basic monitoring at project sites to understand the success of the entire grant program, to help inform future activities.

Applicants will need to contribute to monitoring by taking a photo of the project area before work begins and after the works are completed.

Applicants should also consider whether they are open to LC Landscape Board staff visiting their project sites during and after the project is complete, so staff can undertake additional basic monitoring. This may include undertaking repeated vegetation surveys, fauna surveys and additional photo point monitoring.

Any additional monitoring undertaken by the LC Landscape Board would be discussed with, and agreed to, by the landholder prior to anything being undertaken by LC Landscape board staff and prior to every staff visit to the site, unless otherwise agreed. The application form will ask whether the applicant is open to having LC Landscape Board staff undertake monitoring at their site.

9. Assessment criteria

Project applications will be assessed against how well they address the following:

1. How well does this project contribute to one or more of the grant objectives?
2. How well defined are the project activities?
3. How does the project deliver good value for money?
4. How does the project support habitat for biodiversity?
5. How will the project be supported after grant funding has expired?

Applicants may submit more than one project or site, but are advised to consider their preference should funding only be offered for one site.

10. Application process



Stage 1: Initial application

All applicants must complete the Stage 1 application form on the SmartyGrants platform and submit it for consideration prior to close of business on 31 October 2022.

Stage 1 applications are assessed to identify whether the projects fit the eligibility criteria, activities fit the objectives, are technically sound and are achievable. They will also be assessed against the criteria and only those that are anticipated to provide the best biodiversity outcomes will be invited by email move to the next stage of the application process.

Stage 2: Site visit

LC Landscape Board staff will be conduct site visits with invited applicants. If you have been contacted by staff to organise a site visit, you must respond within ten days or you may not be eligible to progress to the next stage of the application process.

LC Landscape Board staff will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate a site visit at a mutually agreeable time with the applicant, however if this cannot be achieved before final applications open, the applicant may not be asked to progress to the next stage of the application.

Site visits will allow LC Landscape Board staff to meet and discuss the project with the applicant, see the proposed site to ensure it is suitable, answer any questions and offer advice as required. Suitable projects will be invited to submit a final application, which is the third and final stage of the application process.

Stage 3: Final application

Depending on the assessment of the Stage 1 application and site visit, suitable applicants will be asked to submit a final application on the **SmartyGrants** platform. When submitting their final application it is recommended that applicants carefully address any feedback provided to them following their site visit and during any other discussions with LC Landscape Board staff.

Applications must be submitted via the online platform **SmartyGrants**. All grants will be managed through this system. Support to use the online system is available **by emailing LandscapeSA.LCLandscapeBoardGrants@sa.gov.au** or by calling 8429 7550 during business hours. If your query is in relation to your grant content, please refer to the list in section 13.

To access SmartyGrants, visit our **website** or use the direct [link](#).

The closing time and date for Stage 3 final applications will be 5pm on Tuesday 28 February 2023. There will be no extensions and late applications will not be accepted.

Assessment and Agreement

Projects will be assessed in more detail against the selection criteria by an assessment panel including Limestone Coast Landscape Board staff.

Applicants will be notified in May 2023 of the outcome of their application. Successful applications will receive a Letter of Offer and Grant Agreement via email. Unsuccessful applicants will also be notified by email.

Grant Agreements for successful projects will form a contract covering the conditions of funding, including your responsibility to keep proper accounting records, your reporting obligations, management obligations and any ongoing site maintenance required by the applicant, including the control of proclaimed weeds and vermin and maintenance of any fencing constructed as part of the project in a stock-proof condition.

If you do not respond to the offer of funding by the date specified, the offer may be withdrawn.

Your funding will be paid when you have:

- Signed and returned the Grant Agreement.
- Provided a compliant Tax invoice.

11. Project delivery



Implementation

Your project commencement date is the date that the Grant Agreement is signed by you and is countersigned by LC Landscape Board staff.

Project implementation will then commence, and proceed against the agreed deliverables and any conditions outlined in the grant agreement. Project activities can be undertaken once the Grant Agreement has been signed and must be completed before 30 June 2024.

Grantees will be encouraged to invite Limestone Coast Landscape Board members and staff to their activities to build relationships and document Habitat Conservation projects for promotion and engagement with the wider community.

Reporting

The project will be completed by 30 June 2024, unless otherwise negotiated, and reporting will be undertaken in SmartyGrants, in accordance with the grant agreement or any approved variations. Final reports and financial acquittals must be submitted by 31 July 2024. This will consist of:

- A final project report detailing the activities that have been undertaken and lessons learnt.
- End of project financial acquittal and copies of relevant tax invoices.

A site inspection by LC Landscape Board staff may be undertaken to confirm what is provided in reporting. If required, a staff member will be in contact to organise such an inspection.

12. Grazing Agreements

A Grazing Agreement may be included as an attachment to a Grant Agreement for projects that require special grazing management within the project area, to ensure the biodiversity objectives are achieved. Please note, a grazing agreement is only applicable for sites that have previously been grazed. A Grazing Agreement is likely to recommend:

1. For wetland areas, grazing should be excluded from the project area unless the ground is dry.
2. For non-wetland areas grazing should be excluded from the project area between the months of August to January to allow native flora to flower and set seed during late spring and summer.
3. When grazing is required, that a 'crash graze' approach be adopted (i.e. a large number of sheep enter the area for a short time). Stock are removed as soon as the sward has been reduced to an acceptable height with minimal impact on native flora.
4. If grazing is required to reduce fuel loads for fire management, seasonal conditions should be observed and a 'crash graze' undertaken, preferably in December.
5. Stock should be removed if browsing predominantly on native shrubs and trees.
6. The first graze of the summer should occur no earlier than late January but seasonal conditions should be observed to allow minimal impact on regenerating native flora.
7. Where possible, grazing should be conducted with only sheep to minimise soil damage.
8. Grazing should not be undertaken if extreme seasonal conditions occur (i.e. heavy rains) where a possibility of excess damage to the soil or its surface crust may eventuate.
9. Areas that are revegetated under this program be totally excluded from grazing for 5 years, as per the Grant Agreement.

13. Assistance with project submissions and further information

Assistance in developing projects can be provided by staff listed below. This will ensure that the project outcomes are aligned with the grant's outcomes. The Limestone Coast Landscape Board office can also be contacted on 8429 7550.

Position	Contact	Role
Wetland Restoration Advisor	Emma Maxwell Emma.Maxwell@sa.gov.au	Grant general information and wetland technical advice SmartyGrants support
Bush Management Advisor	Before 30 September 2022 - Michelle Sargent Michelle.sargent@sa.gov.au	Grant general information and biodiversity technical advice
Team Leader Habitat Conservation	Mark De Jong Mark.DeJong@sa.gov.au	Biodiversity and wetland technical advice

14. Appendix

Map of the region

