Nature-based Tourism Small Grants Program

Grant Guidelines

About the Nature-based Tourism Small Grants Program

The Nature-based Tourism (NBT) Small Grants Program is a pilot project funded under the $5 million Nature-based Tourism Co-investment Fund, to assist eligible businesses and organisations to deliver innovative, sustainable tourism experiences in South Australia.

Nature-based tourism is about offering visitors special experiences in these natural places that nurture and broaden their environmental and cultural understanding and appreciation for conservation. It aims to preserve and enhance the local environment and heritage while encouraging people to look after the natural and cultural values that attract them to a region.

The NBT Small Grants Program offers a total of $300,000 in grant funding for small-scale, innovative projects that will support tourism activation in South Australia. The purpose of the NBT Small Grants Program is to create new tourism experiences including seasonal or pop-up experiences, as well as tourism/regional events in nature, parks and public places.

New nature-based tourism experiences will create opportunities for visitors to develop a sense of personal connection that will endeavor to encourage them to become life-long supporters and advocates of nature and heritage conservation. Innovative projects connecting visitors to nature are encouraged.

Funding limits and timeframes

Applicants can apply for funding from $2,000 to $15,000 (excluding GST).

The maximum grant period is 12 months after execution of the grant agreement. However, due consideration will be given to any potential impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have on completing the project with social distancing and other public health measures in place.

When applications can be made?

Applications open: **Monday, 25 October 2021**

Applications close: **Friday, 3 December 2021 at 2pm**

Please make sure you note the closing date and allow for any technical issues as late applications **WILL NOT** be accepted.

Who can apply?

To apply for a NBT Small Grant, applicants must be a legal entity with a valid and active ABN (Australian Business Number) and have an account with an Australian financial institution.

Who is not eligible to apply?

- Commonwealth, State and Territory Government entities.

Where can proposed projects be located?

Proposals will be considered on the following lands:

- South Australian National Parks and Reserves
- Crown Land areas under the care and control of the Minister for Environment and Water
- Crown Land areas under the care and control of a local Council
- Land under the care and control of SA Water
- Land under the care and control of ForestrySA
- Botanic Gardens of South Australia
- Historic shipwrecks within South Australian State waters
- Aboriginal owned or controlled lands and where First Nations peoples have shared access rights under Native Title

Applicants are required to obtain written support for their proposed project from the relevant land managers. A template is available from the webpage and must be signed by land managers and attached to the application.

It is recommended that applicants consult with and receive written support from key stakeholders before lodging an application.

What type of projects are eligible?

New or improved innovative tourism experiences including, but are not limited to:
- Seasonal or pop-up tourism experiences
- Events that encourage visitation
- Commercial and/or cultural tours
- Interpretative, educational or interactive programs
- Temporary or portable visitor facilities.

The new product or tourism experience is (or will need to be) registered on the [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)](#) when completed.

Applications will not be considered where the project:

- Has been completed or project works have commenced prior to the grant agreement being signed by both parties
- Requires ongoing or recurring SA Government funding to be sustainable
- Is undertaken on behalf of third parties
- Has already received assistance from the SA Government or other relevant grant funds to achieve the same project outcomes
- Relates to non-tourism activities
- Is not compliant with relevant legislation or management plans
- Is not appropriate for the setting
- Will interfere with activities that are required by the relevant authority for its operation.

What expenditure is eligible for funding?

- Expenditure must be incurred by the applicant within the project period (i.e. within 12 months of executing the grant agreement)
- Expenditure must be a direct cost of the project, including but not limited to operational expenditure, marketing and advertising, engagement of short-term personnel, purchase or lease of equipment and transportation such as vehicles, trailers, bikes, kayaks and boats.

What expenditure is <u>ineligible</u> for funding?

- Costs associated with the preparation of the application and reporting
- Costs associated with applying for approvals
- Plans, including feasibility studies, business cases, reports and development plans
- Fees paid to Commonwealth, State, Territory or local governments to obtaindevelopment, environmental or other regulatory approvals
- Purchase of land or a business
- Any costs that are not an integral part of the funded project including but not limited to wages of existing staff, insurance, utilities, repairs, training, postage and bank charges, communications, accommodation, office computing facilities, printing and stationery.

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

Project approvals

Any funding secured through the NBT Small Grants Program does not constitute automatic authority to undertake activities in South Australia's nature, parks and places. Please note that proposals that have approved funding may be subject to other development, environmental and regulatory approvals.

Each assessment and approval process is different depending on the nature and location of the proposal. In support of the assessment, the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) may ask you to provide additional information and address specific components of yourproposal. DEW can help applicants understand the assessment and approval process for their proposal.

Applicants who already have relevant permissions and approvals should attach evidence to their application.

COVID-19

Successful projects will need to comply with the relevant social distancing or other public health measures in place at the time they are delivered. This includes national, state and/or local government requirements. Applicants will be required to provide evidence of a COVID Safe Plan or a COVID Management Plan approval, if applicable. For details, see the South Australian Government www.covid-19.sa.gov.au webpage.

Co-contribution

Financial and/or in-kind contributions will be highly regarded and should be clearly identified in the budget table of your application. An in-kind contribution means support, other than money, provided towards the project, and can include voluntary hours or donated goods and services. If applicable, formal documentation confirming co-contribution is required.

Risk Assessment

Applicants need to consider potential risks that may have impact on their capacity to deliver the project, including the effect of COVID–19. A Risk Assessment can be completed as part of the application form, however for larger/higher risk projects, a Risk Assessment should be completed and attached as a Supporting Document in your application. A template is available on the webpage.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Alignment with the SA government's Nature-based tourism priorities (50%)
- The project aligns with DEW's Parks 2025 strategy https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/parks-2025-brochure-gen.pdf and/or Nature-based Tourism Strategyand Action Plan 'Nature like Nowhere' https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/docs/nature-based-tourism-strategy-gen.pdf
- The project demonstrates innovation in nature-based tourism and/or meets visitor demand currently not serviced.

Environmental, social and economic benefit (20%)
- The project delivers positive benefits for one or more of the following:
  - ❖ conservation of our nature, parks and places
  - ❖ the local community and visitors
  - ❖ SA economy (direct and indirect)
  - ❖ First Nation peoples.

Capability and capacity (20%)
- The applicant has the capability and capacity to deliver the project
- The applicant can identify and mitigate risks.

Value for money (10%)
- The project provides value for money (this includes cost, value, in-kind and cash contribution by applicant or project partners).

Supporting documents
Applications should be supported by the following documents:

- Written support from the relevant land manager (mandatory)
- Quotes and/or budget justification (mandatory)
- COVID safe plan or the COVID Management Plan approval (if applicable)

- Formal documentation confirming evidence of co-contribution (if applicable)
- Evidence of consultations with key stakeholders and/or letters of support(recommended)
- Itinerary or event program (for all events)
- Any additional supporting documentation to support application.

Allocation of funds

An Assessment Panel will assess all grants applications and grants will be awarded by the Minister for Environment and Water. 100% of grant funds will be paid on signing of a grant agreement and submission of a tax invoice by the applicant.

If the total cost of the project is less than the grant funds awarded, funds will need to be returned. The Department for Environment and Water will invoice for any unspent funds.

Grant Agreements

DEW will negotiate a standard Grant Agreement with successful applicants. 100% of the funding approved will be paid to successful applicants once the Grant Agreement has been executed and all required approvals have been obtained. A draft template of the grant agreement which outlines the terms and conditions of the funding is available on the NBT Small Grants Program webpage.

Application and Grant Agreement process

The NBT Small Grants Program has the following steps:

1. Obtain written support for the project from the relevant land manager and consult with key stakeholders.
2. Develop project details and gather all supporting evidence.
3. Submit your application for grant funding through DEW's online grants system (Grants Management System) before the closing date and time at https://gmsportal.environment.sa.gov.au.
4. Submission of application will be confirmed in the Grants Management System.
5. Eligibility check. Applications must satisfy the eligibility check to progress to assessment.
6. Eligible applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel on a merit basis against the grant criteria.
7. The Assessment Panel will make recommendations to the Minister for Environment and Water, as the final decision maker.
8. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their applications.
9. Successful applicants will enter into a grant agreement.
10. Grant recipients must not commence the project before signing the grant agreement.
11. Grant recipients will be required to submit final reports and acquittal of funds at the end of the grant funding period via the Grants Management System

More information

For assistance with the Grants Management System please contact:

Email: DEW.Grants@sa.gov.au or

phone: 8463 7883 (between 8am and 4pm on weekdays).

For all other assistance with NBT small Grants please contact the Grant Coordinator:

Email: DEWTourism@sa.gov.au or

phone: (08) 8124 4934 (between 9am and 5pm on weekdays).

Indicative Timeframes:

	Proposed Date
NBT Small Grant Applications Open	25 October 2021
NBT Small Grants Applications Close	3 December 2021
Applicants advised of outcome of application	February 2022
Projects commence	March/April 2022
Projects completed	March/April 2023