



# **Biodiversity on Rural Land Grant**

## Program Guidelines



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### Introduction

Latrobe City Council supports practical community efforts to undertake conservation projects on private land. This program will support a wide range of initiatives that help to protect, improve, and expand habitats for our native plants and animals.

### Program Objectives

Funds will be directed towards practical initiatives that:

- Improve biodiversity through increase in the extent of native vegetation;
- Create or extend wildlife corridors;
- Contribute to improved understanding of the need for biodiversity on non-government land.
- Biodiversity on Rural Land Grants
- Examples of Biodiversity on Rural Land projects include:
  - Exclusion of stock by fencing native vegetation;
  - Extension or enlargement of native vegetation;
  - Creating or extending wildlife corridors;
  - Provision of nesting boxes or artificial hollows;
  - Weed or pest control within native vegetation;
  - Survey or planning for conservation;
  - Capacity building (training and identification aids); and
  - Wetland creation or maintenance.

The grant is designed for projects on private rural land. It cannot be used for projects on public land, Crown land or Latrobe City Council owned land. It cannot be used for projects in urban areas (townships).

**Please note:** the word 'project' refers to the project, activity, proposal, or initiative that will be delivered if your application is successful.

### Grant Funding

**Funding available:** up to \$1,500 per property

### Funding Rounds

The Biodiversity on Rural Land Grant program accepts applications annually.

- **Opening Date:** 8 July 2024 9:00am
- **Closing Date:** 8 August 2024 4:00 pm

Successful projects are to commence after 6 September 2024.

If you receive funding before this date, you can commence your project.

### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply applicants must:

- Be individuals delivering a project on private rural land;
- Be free of debt to Latrobe City Council and have no outstanding acquittals from previous Latrobe City Council grant applications; and
- Reside in Latrobe City.

### Who Cannot Apply

- Groups, entities, and organisation; and
- Individuals residing outside of Latrobe City.

### What will not be funded?

- Funding cannot be used for projects on public land, Crown land, Latrobe City Council owned land or in urban areas (townships);
- Projects which are the responsibility of the State or Commonwealth Government departments;
- Retrospective costs. This includes reimbursement of costs already incurred and funding for projects which have already taken place or begun prior to the application being approved by Latrobe City Council;
- Payment of debts or loans;
- Funding will not cover expenses such as insurance, electricity, lease or rent payments, telephone, wages, salaries, and project management costs.
- The purchase of land;
- Repair of facilities damaged by vandalism, fire, or other natural disasters where the incident should reasonably be expected to be covered by insurance;
- Applications for projects that engage in activities which promote discrimination, violence, or anti-social behaviour;
- Activities that are not focused on delivering biodiversity or threatened species conservation outcomes;
- Any activity involving the use of firearms, tranquilisers, traps, or explosives;
- Any illegal activity;
- Development of recreational facilities or beautification projects;
- Development of infrastructure or engineering works;
- Barbed wire fencing; and
- Any other action or activity determined to be an inappropriate or unsuitable use of the funds.

### Guidelines for Grant Applications

- Applications must be completed in full. They need to contain sufficient evidence to make a reasonable assessment of the application. Applications must be submitted on the correct online application form;

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- When an applicant is successful in receiving a grant, they agree to acknowledge Latrobe City Council's contribution on materials produced to support their project. This acknowledgement, depending on the amount of funding received, may include logo presence on supporting publications, displays or signage. You will be provided with copies of the Latrobe City Council, 'Supported by' logo and guidelines on its correct use when you receive your outcome notification.
- Applicants who fail to comply with the terms and conditions listed in the funding guidelines and supplementary agreements will be required to return the funding to Latrobe City Council. Any underspent and excess funding must be returned to Latrobe City Council when submitting the Acquittal form;
- Funding must not be regarded as a recurrent commitment from Latrobe City Council. There is no guarantee a recurring project will be funded in the future. Funding is limited.

### Projects

- A project may be open to the whole community or target participation from different community demographics. Successful projects will either have broad community benefit or achieve deep and meaningful outcomes with community members.
- Latrobe City Council may request additional information to assist in assessing an application for funding;
- Additional funding conditions may be applied to your project during assessment;
- Approval of funding does not constitute permission to deliver your project. It remains your responsibility to seek the appropriate permits and approvals to deliver the project;
- Latrobe City Council must be notified of any significant changes to the project, to what was originally submitted, by providing written request for a funding variation. This includes requests for extensions of time to acquit the project.

### Funding

- Applicants are eligible to receive one grant from the Biodiversity on Rural Land grants program, per property, per funding round.
- Applicants are encouraged to provide financial or in-kind assistance to the project;
- The start date for projects must be after 6 September 2024. If you receive funding prior to this date, you may commence your project.
- Funds must be expended and acquitted within 12 months of signing a Funding Agreement unless written approval has been given for an extension. Applicants who have an outstanding Acquittal form will not be able to apply for further funding.

### Acquittal

The Acquittal form will be a reconciled statement of income and expenditure associated with the grant. It will ask the applicants to provide details on the outcomes of the project that were achieved as a result of the funding. You will also be required to attach:

1. Evidence of how Latrobe City Council's support for the project was recognised;

2. An actual income and expenditure budget for the project, including proof of purchase invoice and/or receipts for all items purchased using funding from Latrobe City Council; and
3. Photo evidence that highlights the completed project and community participation.

### Assessment Process

Once applications are received, they will be checked for eligibility against the grant program guidelines.

All applications will be assessed in accordance with Latrobe City Council's Grant Governance Policy and program objectives and weighted out of 100. Latrobe City Council Community Grants program involves a competitive process with applications for this program assessed against the following criteria:

- The applicant's capacity of delivering the project (50) – This includes any quotes, budget information and plans in support of the application.
- The benefits the project/s will have for the community (50)

Recommendations will be developed by an internal panel and approved by staff at a management level. Applicants will receive an email notifying them of the result of their application following the decision.

Latrobe City Council's grant program is competitive, and we receive more applications than we can support.

### Submitting your application

All applications must be submitted online. When you complete an application form you will be asked to sign up for a Latrobe City Council grants account. This grant account will be used to send you reminders and allow you to complete your application, funding agreement and acquittal form.

### Supporting Documents

You will be asked to upload the following attachments when completing your application:

Mandatory:

- If you are delivering a project on land that is not owned by you, you will need to provide written permission from the landowner;
- Quotes or Evidence of Item costs that Latrobe City Council funding will be used for; and
- A map showing the location of the project within the property boundaries. Hand drawn maps are acceptable.

### Making the Payment

If your application is successful, you will be provided with a Funding Agreement form and an Acquittal form.

To receive payment, you will be required to submit the completed online Funding Agreement form and attach:

- Signed Tax invoice if you are GST (Goods & Services Tax) registered; or
- A completed Supplier Application form.

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Once you have provided these documents, funding will be deposited into your nominated bank account within 6 weeks.

### Further information and assistance

For all grant enquiries, including assistance and support available to help you submit your application, please contact the Senior Grants Officer:

#### Senior Grants Officer Contacts

**Caitlan Ponton**

**Phone:** 0429 270 149

**Email:** [grants@latrobe.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@latrobe.vic.gov.au)