



This Fact Sheet outlines considerations community groups must take to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage when applying for a Biodiversity Environment and Community Grant.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in Victoria including Aboriginal Intangible Heritage (traditional practices and knowledge), Aboriginal sites, places and objects are protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Aboriginal Heritage Act Regulations 2018*. It is the responsibility of everyone working on Country to respect, understand, and protect our Aboriginal Heritage.

Cultural Heritage Permits

A Cultural Heritage Permit is required if you plan to:

- disturb or excavate land to uncover or discover Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- rehabilitate land at an Aboriginal place
- carry out research on an Aboriginal place
- carry out an activity that will, or is likely to, harm Aboriginal cultural heritage
- sell an Aboriginal object (where it was not made for the purpose of sale)
- remove an Aboriginal cultural heritage object from Victoria

You need a cultural heritage permit for these activities even if you don't require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan.

For further information, visit

<https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/cultural-heritage-management-plans-permits-agreements-and-tests>

Checking your project location

It is recommended that applicants conduct an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage check early in the planning stage. This can be done through the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party or the First Peoples – State Relations Heritage Programs Team.

To determine if your planned project is within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, you will need to look at the online mapping tool, which can be found at <https://achris.vic.gov.au/weave/wca.html>

If your proposed project site is within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, please refer to the First Peoples – State Relations website under the Heritage section for further information.

If your project is not within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, this does not guarantee there are no Aboriginal cultural heritage sites in the area. If potential Aboriginal cultural heritage is found during the delivery of your project, you must **STOP IMMEDIATELY** and contact First Peoples – State Relations on [1800 762 003](tel:1800762003).

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Guide

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Guide steps out the process for meeting the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and helps groups and networks determine whether a Cultural Heritage Permit is required. The guide also provides the key Aboriginal cultural heritage contacts, including for the 11 Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) in Victoria.

For further information, visit

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/aboriginal-cultural-heritage-guide/>

DEECA Biodiversity Environment and Community Grants

Application considerations

If a Cultural Heritage Permit or Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required, you may need to include budget in your grant application and allow 30 days to complete the permit and approval process.

For more information contact your Regional Landcare Coordinator, Registered Aboriginal Party or First Peoples – State Relations.

Cultural heritage permissions

All activities undertaken in Victoria, whether done by DEECA, Parks Victoria, Catchment Management Authorities, volunteers or other groups, must comply with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and should make every effort to avoid harming Aboriginal heritage.

All projects that include ground disturbance (including tree planting) must undertake a cultural heritage assessment to determine the risk to Aboriginal heritage prior to the activity starting and if permissions are required, they must be granted from the Registered Aboriginal Party, Traditional Owners and First Peoples – State Relations.

Cultural Heritage assessment

A cultural heritage assessment is done by a registered Heritage Advisor. They will do a desktop assessment and possibly a field visit to identify what cultural heritage is known (or is likely to be present) on the site, and whether the activity is likely to cause harm. Depending on the outcome of the assessment, the Heritage Advisor may recommend that the project:

- go ahead, potentially with a contingency plan or protection plan in place
- be moved or adapted to avoid harming Aboriginal heritage
- seek permission to potentially harm Aboriginal heritage, through a Cultural Heritage Permit or Cultural Heritage Management Plan.

How much will it cost?

The cost for a Heritage Advisor to do a cultural heritage assessment will depend on the location of the site and what type of assessment is required to determine cultural heritage within the site.

The costs for getting permissions to harm can range from around \$600 for a Cultural Heritage Permit to many thousands for a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, which is more likely to be required for major works.

The cost of a cultural heritage assessment and permit (if required) will need to be factored into the grant funds applied for by the applicant. Projects that are likely to require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should be reconsidered.

Contact us

Program enquiries

If you have any queries, or require more information, please contact the Community Programs team via email at enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au or contact the DEECA Customer Contact Centre on 136 186 during normal business hours. Please quote your application number and the grant program in your communications with DEECA.

Technical difficulties

If you require technical assistance submitting your application online email grantsinfo@delwp.vic.gov.au or call the DEECA Customer Contact Centre on 136 186 during normal business hours. Please quote your application number and the grant program in your communications with DEECA.

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