Guidelines - 2025 Coastcare Victoria Community Grants

Applications close: 17 February 2025

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.

Accessibility

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service on 133 677. Available at DEECA website (www.deeca.vic.gov.au).

Contents

1. What are Coastcare Victoria Community Grants?

The Victorian Government is providing funding to the annual Coastcare Victoria Community Grants. The grants fund community-led environmental groups and organisations that deliver projects to support the community in caring and acting for the marine and coastal environment.

The Coastcare Victoria Community Grants implement the **Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021-26** actions to:

- conserve, restore and protect Victoria's coastline
- promote marine and coastal volunteering and participation
- support community engagement and education to enhance knowledge and understanding of marine and coastal management
- expand, diversify and increase the inclusivity of volunteering
- recognise Traditional Owners' longstanding connection to Country and support their role in leading healing and ongoing care of Country
- support two-way capability building to strengthen relationships and foster shared understanding between marine and coastal volunteers and Traditional Owners.

What are the project streams?

Up to $10,000 ex GST of grant funding is available for projects that focus on one of three streams:

- **Stream 1 - Coastcare Victoria Stewardship and Education:** Projects that engage a broader audience in on-ground action and education to enhance knowledge of the coastal and marine environment.

- **Stream 2 - Strengthening the Coastcare Victoria Community:** Projects that increase participation in the Coastcare Victoria community into the future. Engaging new and diverse coastal volunteers and supporting the Coastcare Victoria stewards to build capability and inclusivity

- **Stream 3 - Caring for Country:** Projects that celebrate Traditional Owner Self-Determination in caring for Country. Recognising Traditional Owners longstanding and deep knowledge and connection to Country and supporting two-way capability and capacity building.

2. Who can apply?

The following applicants are eligible:

- Community-led environmental groups and networks
- Non-government environment-focused organisations
- Aboriginal groups and organisations, Traditional Owners, land councils, trusts and co-operatives

- Committees of Management (excluding Local Government)

All applicants must meet the following financial governance requirements:

1. Registration/Incorporation via one of the following:

   - Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission; OR

   - Consumer Affairs Victoria/other state incorporating agency; OR

   - *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*; OR

   - Registered Victorian Aboriginal Party

2. Insurances to cover the duration of the project:

   - Hold public liability insurance of at least $20 million; AND

   Volunteer personal accident insurance

Applicants who are not eligible can still apply for funding but must operate under an Auspice organisation (see 12. Additional Information).

3. What projects and expenditures might be funded?

All projects must meet the eligibility requirements and provide all applicable supporting documents to be eligible for funding:

- Projects must be undertaken on, or relate to *marine and coastal Crown land*, as defined in the *Marine and Coastal Act.*

- Applicants must contact a Coastcare Victoria Officer to ensure the project meets the eligibility criteria and project requirements

- Consulted with the Land Manager for any components and/or activities undertaken on marine and coastal Crown land to ensure:
  o review and support of the application
  o identify requirements for application for consent under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*
  o alignment with the objectives of the relevant coastal and marine management plan
  o compliance with government policies and relevant legislation.

What projects might be funded?

The following types of projects are eligible for funding across three streams:

Stream 1 - Coastcare Victoria Stewardship and Education: Projects that engage a broader audience in on-ground action and education to enhance knowledge of the coastal and marine environment. This may include:

- on-ground actions to conserve, restore and protect the environment
- weed control and revegetation
- threatened species recovery

- heritage protection through site assessments, awareness and shared history discussions
- education and engagement opportunities through community events and activities
- citizen science activities
- projects that utilise the Coastcare Victoria Schools Kit

Stream 2 - Strengthening the Coastcare Victoria Community: Projects that increase participation in the Coastcare Victoria community into the future. Engaging new and diverse coastal volunteers and supporting the Coastcare Victoria stewards to build capability and inclusivity, including:

- participation opportunities such as events and activities
- education opportunities
- increase the diversity and inclusivity of coastal volunteers by including people of all abilities, ages and backgrounds
- "Reimagine volunteering" to attract more / different participants and volunteers e.g. flexible, casual, event-based or short-term volunteering
- creating new partnerships and connection opportunities to expand the volunteer base

Stream 3 - Caring for Country: Projects that celebrate Traditional Owner Self-Determination in caring for Land and Sea Country and recognise Traditional Owners longstanding and deep knowledge and connection to Country. Supporting two-way capability and capacity building, including recognition and support of:

- Traditional Owners' role in leading healing, ongoing care and custodianship of Country
- Traditional Owners' role in restoring marine and coastal cultural knowledge and practice
- improving the shared understanding and working relationships between volunteers, Traditional Owners and other marine and coastal land managers
- self-determination of Traditional Owners' vision for marine and coastal Country through supporting action on Traditional Owners' Country Plans
- heritage protection through awareness, shared history discussions and site assessments

What expenditure items might be funded?

Please ensure assets and equipment are hired, borrowed, and shared between rather than purchased for one-off projects where possible.

Quotes for expenditures over $2,000 are required at the application stage, and capital items must become an entity's registered asset.

Expenditure items eligible for funding:

- communication, including advertising, marketing and promotion

- environmental and technical advisors, contractors and specialists (must be from an external party or provide a declaration of conflict of interest at the application stage)
- equipment or asset purchases/hires/lease
- fees and permits
- insurance renewal or organisation membership renewal that includes insurance cover
- on-ground project materials for site preparation and protection, weed control and revegetation
- project management and administration (maximum 15% of total funding)
- project volunteer care and protection, including catering, PPE, weather protection and safety requirements
- fees and permits
- sustainable education materials
- training and certification (if directly related to funded activity)

5. What projects and expenditures will not be funded?

What projects will not be funded?

The following types of projects are ineligible for funding:

- actions or costs associated with native vegetation offset sites or activities
- amenity and beautification projects
- clearing vegetation without Land Manager consent and appropriate permits
- infrastructure or asset projects such as coastal protection structures, sand renourishment and erosion mitigation
- pest animal control
- planting non-indigenous flora species

What expenditure items will not be funded?

The following types of expenditure items are not eligible for funding:

- IT equipment computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones
- goods or services for competitions, prizes, gifts, vouchers or alcohol
- chemicals or hazardous materials

Note: products produced from Victorian Government funding, including Coastcare Victoria, cannot be sold or reproduced for money.

6. What are the grant funding details?

About: The Victorian Government is investing up to $220,000 through the VicCoasts volunteer program to sustain the Coastcare Victoria community. The funding, part of the Victorian Budget 2024/25, aims to support the community in acting and caring for Victoria's marine and coastal environment.

Grant funding available: Up to $10,000 ex GST

Project Delivery: 1 July 2025 to 29 May 2026 (11 months project delivery, no extensions)

Number of Applications: One per applicant

In-kind Support: Applicants are not required to contribute (cash or in-kind) toward the project's cost; however, a project that can demonstrate contributions provides greater value for money to Coastcare Victoria and may receive a higher score against the Value for Money assessment criteria.

7. What are the assessment criteria?

Assessment criteria and weighting

Applications will be checked for applicant and project eligibility. Eligible applications will be assessed using the criteria and weighting below. Each criterion is given a percentage weighting to indicate its relative importance in the assessment process. Applications should address all relevant criteria.

Generally, higher-scoring projects against the criteria set out below will be funded. The overall mix of project types, diversity, inclusivity, locations, and allocation between the project streams may be considered.

Criteria 1: Project Outcomes

Weighting: 60%

➢ Stream 1 - Coastcare Victoria Stewardship and Education, projects that:
  • involve individuals, groups and the community
  • on-ground actions
  • education opportunities
  • engage a broader audience
  • enhance knowledge and understanding
  • care and act for the coastal and marine ecosystems

➢ Stream 2 - Strengthening the Coastcare Victoria Community, project that:
  • build capability and skills
  • strengthen the Coastcare Victoria community into the future.
  • increase the diversity and inclusivity of coastal volunteers
  • increase participation and engage new coastal volunteers

➢ Stream 3 - Caring for Country, projects that:
  • celebrate Traditional Owner Self-Determination in caring for Sea Country.

- recognise Traditional Owner's longstanding and deep knowledge and connection to Country, support two-way capability and capacity building.

Criteria 2: Project Risk

Weighting: 20%

Identify potential project risks and what mitigating actions are proposed to remove, manage, or reduce

Criteria 3: Value for Money

Weighting: 20%

Demonstrates that the project budget is relevant and appropriate for the scale of the project and activities versus the funding sought and for successful project completion.

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

All applicable supporting documents must be provided for the application to be assessed. Failure to provide the required documents will make the application ineligible. Correspondence, such as letters and emails, will be accepted as supporting documents.

The application **must** include:

- A copy of Public Liability Insurance of at least $20 million and Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance
- Letters of support from Auspice Organisation (if required)
- Letters of support from Land Manager (if required)

The application **may** include:

- Letters of support from project partners
- Any documents supporting the project outcomes, activities, risks and actions, including maps, photos, and plans
- Documents supporting the project expenditure (including quotes for items over $2000)
- A declaration of Conflict of Interest if an external contractor has a relationship with the applicant

A project that can demonstrate the project's outcomes to Coastcare Victoria may, therefore, receive a higher score against the assessment criteria. Supporting document templates and resources: Coastcare Victoria Community Grants

9. What are the funding conditions?

Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a Victorian Common Funding Agreement with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information is available at https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement

The activity does not include using the Funding for political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

If the project is funded, successful applicants must provide all applicable supporting documents before the project can commence:

- attend a project meeting with a Coastcare Victoria Officer
- Land Manager approved Job Safety Plan
- Land Manager submitted Marine and Coastal Act 2018 consent application.
- approval for appropriate works permit/s from councils or other authorities
- any permits/consents required by government policies and relevant legislation (including Marine and Coastal Act 2018 consent if applicable)

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*
- *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*

- *Native Title Act 1993*
- *Working with Children Act 2005*

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications arising from this grant funding.

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form 'Statement by a Supplier' so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge Coastcare Victoria and the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines (https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants), which will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

Payment

Agreed payments will be made as long as:

- the funding agreement has been signed by both parties
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

Monitoring & Reporting

Grant recipients must comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This includes provision of supporting documents, project meetings, Job Safety Planning documentation, Completion Reports and budget acquittal documentation.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

10. What is the application process?

Coastcare Victoria Community Grants

Apply here: https://www.marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastal-programs/coastcare-victoria/coastcare-victoria-community-grants

Note: No hard-copy applications will be accepted. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

If you require assistance submitting your application online, email grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au.

11. What is the notification process?

After completing the assessment process, successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback on their application.

12. Key dates

Applications open: 6 December 2024

Applications close: 5:00 pm AEDT 17 February 2025 *Late applications will not be accepted

Applicants notified: 18 April 2025

Project activities commence: 1 July 2025

Project meeting deadline: 31 August 2025

Job safety documentation submission deadline: 31 October 2025

Project completed and evaluation submitted: 31 May 2026

13. Additional information

Coastcare Victoria Support

Additional documents and resources are available on our website: https://www.marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastal-programs/Coastcare-Victoria/coastcare-victoria-community-grants.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please get in touch with any Coastcare Victoria Program team:

Barwon South West: Shaya Kaartinen-Price

0436 604 127 or shaya.kaartinen-price@deeca.vic.gov.au

Port Phillip Bay and Western Port: Jess Schubert-Hoban

0475 557 628 or jess.schubert-hoban@deeca.vic.gov.au

Gippsland: Laura Town-Hopkinson

0427 818 683 or laura.town-hopkinson@deeca.vic.gov.au

For general enquiries, please contact Coastcare.Victoria@deeca.vic.gov.au.

Auspice information

Who can sponsor (auspice) an applicant?

Applicants who do not meet the above requirements can still apply for funding but must operate under the auspice of a sponsor organisation. An auspice can sponsor multiple applicants.

An auspice organisation must:

- be a registered cooperative, entity or an incorporated association
- hold public liability insurance of at least $20 million and volunteer personal accident insurance, with enough allowance to cover the project's duration
- agree to take responsibility for the safety, financial management and insurance of the applicant group or organisation
- sign the funding agreement, receive the grant funds and be accountable for the delivery and reporting of the project delivery
- provide a letter or email of support to be attached to the application

First Nations Country Plans

The local Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) or Country your project is situated on can be found here: Welcome Map (achris.vic.gov.au)

Barwon South West:

- *Ngootyoong Gunditj Ngootyoong Mara* South West – Management Plan
- Gunditjmara *Nyamat mirring plan 2023-2033*
- Eastern Maar – Meerreengeeye ngakeepoorryeeyt
- Paleert Tjaara Dja – Let's make Country good together 2020-2030 – Wadawurrung Country Plan

Gippsland:

- Gunaikurnai Whole-of-Country Plan

Port Phillip and Western Port:

- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (bunuronglc.org)

Project design and development resources

Useful resources for the planning and development of the project.

- [Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021-2026](#)
- [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Guide 2020](#)
- [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS)](#)
- [Coastcare Victoria's Schools Kit](#)
- [CoastKit](#)
- [Communications toolkit](#)
- [Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) and bioregions](#)
- [NatureKit Victoria](#)
- [Victorian Biodiversity Atlas](#)
- [Victoria's Resilient Coast - Adaption Actions Compendium](#) (Section 1.3 Nature-based revegetation methods, pp 30-42)

14. Checklist

☐ Have you contacted a Coastcare Victoria Officer for a chat to ensure the project meets the eligibility criteria and project requirements?

☐ Have you read these guidelines and the information about this grant program at [Coastcare Victoria Community Grants (marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au)](#) before applying and complete the following checklist.

☐ Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- checked if the group or organisation meets eligibility requirements funding?
- checked if the project meets the eligibility requirements for funding?
- checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your project?
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents?