December 2021

Greener Neighbourhoods Grant Program

Who can apply?

All 33 Greater Sydney councils may apply for grant funding:

Bayside Council, Blacktown City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, Burwood Council, Camden Council, Campbelltown City Council, City of Canada Bay, Canterbury–Bankstown Council, Cumberland Council, Fairfield City Council, Georges River Council, Hawkesbury City Council, Hills Shire Council, The Hornsby Shire Council, The Council of the Municipality of Hunters Hill, Inner West Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Lane Cove Municipal Council, Liverpool City Council, Mosman Municipal Council, North Sydney Council, Northern Beaches Council, City of Parramatta Council, Penrith City Council, Randwick City Council, City of Ryde Council, Strathfield Municipal Council, Sutherland Shire Council, City of Sydney, Waverley Shire Council, City of Willoughby, Wollondilly Shire Council, Woollahra Municipal Council.

When do applications close?

Applications close at 11:59 pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022.

How many applications can councils submit?

Councils can only submit one application. If council is seeking funding for more than one project, the online application allows councils to include multiple projects in one application.

Funding

How much funding is available for this program?

The total funding available for this program is $1.65 million.

What is the minimum and maximum amount for which councils may apply?

The maximum grant amount councils may apply for is $50,000 (ex-GST). There is no minimum amount under this funding round.

Do councils need to match funding dollar for dollar?

No. Councils do not need to match funding dollar for dollar. The grant funding can be used to either:

- fully fund new projects, or
- expand the scope of existing projects.

Can councils include cash and in-kind contributions in their application?

Yes. Councils may include cash and/or in-kind contributions in their grant applications to increase the value for money their projects offer.

Can projects be funded retrospectively?

No. Councils may only use funding for new projects or to expand the scope of existing projects.

Can councils use the grant funding to directly fund personnel or staff positions for the project?

No. However, councils can include staff and resource time, as well as project management costs, as an in-kind contribution to the project.

Our council has already received other government funding or co-contributions from external organisations for the project. Can we still apply for Greener Neighbourhoods grant funding?

Yes. Councils can use grant funds to expand the scope of existing projects. However, funds under this program cannot be used to replace funding from other sources such as other government funding or external organisations.

When will councils receive payments?

Payments will be made at 2 milestones. We will finalise the timing and phasing of payments with successful applicants.

What is the source of the funds?

The NSW Climate Change Fund. The Greening our City Program received a 4-year funding allocation from the Climate Change Fund, which was established to address the impacts of climate change and encourage energy and water saving activities.

Why is grant funding limited to the Greater Sydney region?

Program funding is attached to the NSW Government's Priority Greening our City to plant one million trees in Greater Sydney by 2022. It is therefore limited to the Greater Sydney region.

Eligible projects

What projects are eligible for funding?

Projects that align with the objectives of the Greener Neighbourhoods Grant Program and align with one or more of the following funding categories: data, policy, community engagement and private land canopy.

What are the objectives of the Greener Neighbourhoods Grant Program?

- **Improve data capabilities** by boosting council capacity to analyse and understand tree canopy trends in their local government area
- **Finalise or update an urban forest strategy** (or other strategic plan with canopy targets or actions) by supporting councils in identifying actions to enhance canopy or mitigate loss
- **Develop locally appropriate tree canopy targets** embedded in an urban forest strategy (or other policy or plan)
- **Enhance community support for canopy** by supporting councils to develop programs to engage and educate the community on the value of trees
- **Improve tree canopy outcomes on private land** by supporting councils to develop strategies to mitigate loss and enhance tree canopy on private land.

What type of activities can be funded under each funding category?

Data: Funding must be used to analyse existing canopy or related imagery, expand council data capabilities or purchase supporting software. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- engagement of external consultancies to analyse data such as vegetation data, asset data
- software or product training for council staff
- purchase or upgrade of software for spatial data analysis and asset management.

Policy: Funding must be used to develop or update strategic tree canopy policies, plans or locally appropriate canopy targets. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- engagement of external consultancies to draft or update strategies and plans, and/or develop tree canopy targets
- embed urban forestry planning and management into council's community strategic plan and community engagement strategy
- development and implementation of a sustainable funding source and mechanism for replacement tree planting.

Community engagement: Funding must be used to develop programs to engage and educate the local community on tree canopy and urban greening. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- engagement of external consultancies for developing community engagement plans

- development and implementation of education and awareness campaigns
- enhancement of website content on tree canopy and urban greening.

Private land canopy: Funding must be used to mitigate loss and enhance tree canopy on private land. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- research and evidence to address private land canopy management including developing private tree canopy controls
- engagement of external consultancies for developing strategies and plans to address private land canopy challenges.

Are tree-planting works eligible for funding?

No. Any activities involving the purchase and planting of trees including tree-planting works on council land, tree giveaways to residents and community tree-planting events are not eligible for funding.

Why is the purchase of data products acquiring canopy imagery in 2022 or previous years ineligible for funding?

New data products are ineligible for funding under this grant program as the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has made updated canopy data (2019) available through the SEED portal and intends to provide regular canopy data updates to councils over the course of the Greener Neighbourhoods program.

Application process

Where can I find the grant guidelines?

For a copy of the Greener Neighbourhoods Grant Guidelines, visit:
www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greener-neighbourhoods

How do I lodge an application?

Submit applications, including supporting documentation, via the SmartyGrants portal. Visit
www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greener-neighbourhoods

Can I change the budget during the application process?

No. Once you submit an application, you cannot change the budget for the project.

Who needs to approve my application?

The council's general manager (or equivalent approver with an appropriate level of financial delegation) must approve the application. This is a mandatory step in the application process. This approval is required as the council will be the responsible entity to manage the funding agreement, budget and reporting.

Can someone help me prepare the application?

The department can provide information on how to interpret the grant guidelines. For enquiries or more information, email greeningourcity@planning.nsw.gov.au

Assessment of applications

What are the assessment criteria?

The department will assess eligible applications against 3 assessment criteria (merit, viability, and budget). The grant guidelines give more details about the assessment criteria.

Will applications be assessed against each other?

No. As the program is non-competitive, the department will assess each application on its own merits (that is, its ability to meet the eligibility and assessment criteria). The department will make final decisions about funding allocations.

If a council does not apply for funding, or if its application is unsuccessful, will this funding be made available to other councils?

No. Councils can only receive up to $50,000 in funding. Unallocated funds will not be made available to other councils.

Delivering projects

How long do councils have to complete a project?

All grant funds must be spent, and project activities completed, within 12 months of signing a funding agreement.

Do successful councils need to report on the delivery of their projects?

All successful councils must submit a project progress report halfway through the period of grant funding as well as a project completion report. Successful councils will receive more information about reporting requirements for the implementation and success of their project.

More information

Please visit https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greener-neighbourhoods or email greeningourcity@planning.nsw.gov.au