

12 February 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027: Innovations & Partnerships Grants program

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are for NSW Landcare Enabling Program (LEP) Innovations & Partnerships Grant program. They are to be read in tandem with the [Grant guidelines](#).

1. Who administers the NSW Landcare Innovations & Partnerships grants program?

This program is administered by Local Land Services.

2. Who can apply for funding?

Applicants for this grant program are limited to:

- the regional organisations listed within Schedule A of the Landcare NSW Limited Constitution (see [Constitution-Landcare-NSW-Limited-V3-2025-June-3-.pdf](#)) or
- a non-scheduled regional Landcare organisation who was successful in Phase 1 of the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, in consultation and with the endorsement of a Schedule A regional organisation.

Each region is permitted one application only, submitted by a single eligible applicant on behalf of the region. In regions where there are multiple Phase 1 grantees, a single combined regional application will still be required.

3. How much funding is available for the Landcare Innovations & Partnerships grants program, and is it competitive?

\$5 million is allocated to this program.

The regional allocation in Table 2 in the Grant guidelines is based on current LEP-funded staff full time equivalent (FTE) allocations for each region, proportionate to the total grant amount.

This is a **closed, non-competitive** grant, meaning that intended recipients are invited to submit applications. These applications will be assessed individually, without reference to the comparative merits of other applications.

4. When do applications open and close?

The Innovations & Partnerships Grant Program opens at 2pm on **Monday 15 December 2025** and closes at 5pm on **Monday 16 February 2026**.

5. Is there support available when completing an application?

A webinar is available to targeted applicants. It provides general advice on how to interpret the guidelines and practical guidance on completing a grant application.

This FAQs resource will be updated as necessary, and applicants will be advised of FAQs updates via email.

For additional enquiries, please email landcare.grants@lls.nsw.gov.au.

6. How do we submit an application?

Applicants are required to submit their application and supporting documents via the SmartyGrants webpage at https://lls.smartygrants.com.au/LEP_InnovationsandPartnerships. The requirements for supporting documents and supporting information are outlined in the Grant guidelines.

Applications cannot be reopened or amended once the closing date has passed.

7. What is the assessment process?

Determining which applications are successful involves three stages: eligibility cull, assessment and decision-making.

Once an application has been received, Local Land Services will determine if the application meets the eligibility criteria.

Applications which are eligible will then be evaluated by the assessment team against the assessment criteria.

As part of the decision-making process, the assessment team can:

- seek advice from other NSW Government agencies and other sources as required.
- contact applicants seeking clarification of information in the applications or further supporting material.
- make written recommendations to the decision maker, whose decision is final.

Applications must meet a minimum standard to be eligible for funding. To be considered for funding, an application must achieve a minimum overall score of 70% across the assessment criteria.

8. Can staff funded through the LEP (local and regional Landcare coordinators and support staff) actively participate in grant-funded activities without being

considered an ineligible cost?

Yes, however this should be considered in the context of the regular duties and capacity of existing LEP staff. Additional salary can be costed into the grant program. Ensure this is captured in the project details table in the Application Form.

9. When will applications be assessed?

Applications will be assessed after the closing date and outcomes will be made known by **April 2026**.

10. Is this grant application process the same as we completed for Phase One?

Elements of this grant application process are similar to the Phase One process; however, this grant application process will be managed by Local Land Services, not the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) Grants Management Office.

11. How many applications will be accepted per region?

Each region is permitted one application only, submitted by a single eligible applicant on behalf of the region. Grantees will need to demonstrate they have consulted with Landcare groups in their region. Applications may include multiple projects, provided the total funding requested does not exceed the region's allocation. The grantee is responsible for the delivery and acquittal of all contracted outcomes.

13. Can we apply for grant funding for on-ground works?

Yes, applicants can apply for on-ground works. Projects involving on-ground works or activities with potential environmental impact must comply with all relevant environmental laws and regulations. Applicants will need to demonstrate that the on-ground works achieve value for money and address the assessment criteria.

14. Do all approvals and permits need to be obtained before the application deadline, or can applicants demonstrate engagement and secure approvals post-award? Is an Expression of Interest (EOI) from landholders or groups sufficient at application stage?

Demonstration towards engagement would be acceptable but fully obtained is preferred. There is a risk that the time taken to secure approvals may impact project delivery.

Where works may take place on private land, evidence of landholder support should be provided. An EOI or email from the landholder are acceptable forms of evidence.

15. What is a NSW Government panel scheme?

The NSW Government “panel scheme” is a prequalification framework enabling government agencies to procure goods or services from a roster of approved suppliers.

NSW State Government prequalification scheme, from page 6 Table 3 Examples of possible grant projects.

Use the link to Government contracts and schemes | info.buy.nsw to learn more about Government contracts and schemes.

16. What supporting documents should be included? What are some examples of regional strategies?

Supporting documents should aim to provide evidence to support your application. Supporting documents will be used to assess your application during the assessment process.

Examples of strategies include LLS Local Strategic Plans, LLS Regional NRM Plans, other NSW plans such as the NSW Koala Strategy or NSW Plan for Nature, or National Plans such as National Recovery Plans for Threatened Species.

Landcare Networks may also refer to their own strategic plans.

17. How should applicants frame projects that build on existing approaches, but apply them in new contexts, through new partnerships, or new delivery models?

It is up to applicants to determine what activities they would like to include in their application. Projects that build on existing approaches will still need to demonstrate that they meet the project objectives of innovation, partnerships and self-sustenance.

18. Can we budget a percentage for administration into our application?

There is no allocation for administrative expenses for this grant program. However, applicants can cost in salary, and related OPEX, to help with the project management of proposed deliverables. Refer to question 8 of these FAQs for more detail.

19. The funding deed refers to LLS being able to undertake an independent audit of grant funded projects. Do we need to build the cost of this into the grant?

If an independent audit is undertaken for a grant program, LLS will incur this cost.

20. Can we have an editable version of the application form?

LLS can only provide the supporting documents, including a pdf of the application form, already released.

21. Can LLS provide letters of support for our grant application?

No. Although we encourage applicants to work with all relevant partners, including LLS, as the Grant Administrator, LLS cannot endorse projects or provide letters of support.

22. Can we apply for an extension?

Local Land Services retains discretion to extend the closing date and time, and to accept late applications in extenuating circumstances. All requests for extension must be received in writing by 3pm on the application closing date and approved by the LLS Landcare Business Partner. The following principles will be applied to all extension requests:

No Extension	2-hour Extension	6-hour Extension
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- General requests for more time- Short term non-serious illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Forgot to attach a document or key information- Confusion with deadline time- Extended or serious illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Technical issues including poor connectivity- Impacted by natural disaster- Other issues deemed significant and out of the control of the applicant

The Landcare Business Partner can apply discretion to the above timeframes in extenuating circumstances. All time extensions will be reviewed by the independent probity advisor for consistency and fairness.

If an applicant is approved to submit after the closing time and date, Local Land Services must advise the applicant in writing that the Decision Maker has final discretion to consider the application.

23. Contracts and funding:

Question	Answer
Will there be an upfront payment aligned to the first milestone?	Yes.

Are subsequent payments linked strictly to milestone acquittals?	Milestones and payments will be negotiated at funding deed stage.
What is the expected timeliness of payments once an invoice is submitted (noting the guideline reference to 30 days)?	LLS will aim to make payments within 30 days, assuming all relevant acquittal information has been received.
Is Schedule A automatically populated from the application?	Schedule A will be manually populated by LLS staff based on the information in your application. LLS may seek further information and negotiate aspects of your funding deed.
Is it possible to extend the delivery end date to 31 May 2027, or potentially to the end of 2027, rather than April 2027?	The Landcare Enabling Program ceases on 30 June 2027. Grant program end dates are based on the need to finalise and acquit grant program outcomes by the LEP end date. If there is a program extension or new Landcare program, LLS may consider extensions to grant programs.
Will we be able to make changes to our proposed activities once funding deeds are signed?	After funding deeds are executed, Local Land Services may consider requests for variations to projects in limited circumstances. (see Guidelines page 26)

Grant guidelines page references for Frequently Asked Questions

Question	page reference
Definitions	
What constitutes “innovation” in this program?	page 1
Selection criteria	
What are the eligibility criteria?	page 5
What are eligible projects and activities?	page 6
What are eligible costs?	page 9
What are ineligible costs?	page 9
Do applicants need to make a financial co-contribution?	page 4

How do we account for GST?	page 19
Is capital expenditure allowed?	page 9
Can cross-regional projects be included?	page 10
Assessment criteria	
What are the six assessment criteria?	Table 4 – page 10
Application process	
How do I apply?	page 13
Assessment process	
What are the three assessment stages?	page 15
Next Steps	
How will we be notified of our application outcome?	page 16
What should we expect will be in a funding deed?	page 18
How will grants be paid?	page 19