

Aboriginal Partnerships Grant guidelines

NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027

December 2025



Please read the guidelines below in full before submitting your application.

Key information

Opening date and time	Monday 15 December 2025, 2pm	
Closing date and time	Monday 16 February 2026, 5pm	
Application outcome date (estimated)	April 2026	
Project delivery timeframe (estimated) (for successful applications)	April 2026–30 June 2027 (These timeframes are subject to the terms and conditions of an executed funding deed)	
Decision-maker	NSW Minister for Agriculture	
NSW Government source agency	Local Land Services	
Type of grant opportunity	Closed, non-competitive	
Total program funding	\$5,000,000 (GST exclusive)	
Grant amounts	See Grant value (p9)	
Enquiries and getting support Please use only these details. To maintain the integrity of the grant process, do not contact any other NSW Government staff.	Email	landcare.grants@lls.nsw.gov.au
	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar • Frequently Asked Questions • A pdf of the Application Form • Project Details Excel Spreadsheet • Sample Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator Position Description • Sample funding deed

Contents

Overview of Program	5
Program purpose and objectives	5
Purpose.....	5
Objectives and outcomes	5
Principles for Learning to be Culturally Capable.....	7
Intended recipients.....	8
Source agency	8
Delivery of program.....	8
Type of grant opportunity.....	8
Value for money	8
Grant value.....	9
Co-contributions.....	10
Program delivery timeframe	10
Selection criteria	11
Eligibility criteria.....	11
Eligible applicants.....	11
Funding Tiers	12
Eligible projects and activities.....	14
Eligible locations.....	16
Eligible costs.....	16
Ineligible project costs	17
Assessment criteria	18
Application process	20
How to apply.....	20
Parameters.....	20
Where to apply.....	20
When to apply.....	20
What to include.....	20

False and misleading information.....	21
After submitting application.....	21
Getting support	21
Assessment process.....	22
Assessment of grant applications.....	22
Stages.....	22
Eligibility cull.....	22
Assessment	22
Assessment team	22
Assessment process.....	22
Recommendations.....	23
Decision maker.....	23
Final decision	23
Notification of application outcome	24
Feedback and appeal	24
Announcements	24
Publication of grants information	24
Successful grant applications.....	25
Funding deed.....	25
Terms and conditions	25
Changes to projects	26
Grant payment	26
Instalments	26
Tax.....	26
Unspent funds.....	27
Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements	27
Evaluation.....	27
Additional information and resources	28
Complaint handling	28
Access to information.....	28
Ethical conduct.....	29
Conflict of interest management	29
Confidentiality.....	29

Conduct.....29

Discretion.....29

These guidelines.....30

Changes and publication30

No offer.....30

Overview of Program

Program purpose and objectives

The NSW Government established the Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027 (LEP) to enhance the capacity, efficiency and self-sustenance of the NSW Landcare movement.

Purpose

Phase 3 of the LEP includes an Aboriginal Partnerships Grant Program (“the program”). The program builds on Phase 1, Local and Regional Coordinators and Phase 2, Landcare NSW Enabling Support.

The Aboriginal Partnerships Grant Program aims to improve Aboriginal cultural knowledge and understanding of local Landcare groups, foster and grow sustainable relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal groups, and facilitate the employment of local Aboriginal Landcare Coordinators.

Objectives and outcomes

The *objectives* of this grant program are to:

- improve Landcare’s ability to engage positively and respectfully with Aboriginal communities, supporting their aspirations and strengthening partnerships through collaborative and mutually beneficial programs, engagements and opportunities
- improve the Aboriginal cultural knowledge and competence of landcarers
- provide meaningful and culturally safe Aboriginal employment opportunities within Landcare networks.

These objectives will be facilitated through a combination of capacity building, cultural readiness, and employment of Aboriginal Landcare Coordinators.

The required *outcomes* of the program are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Short, medium and long term outcomes for the grant program (NRC Program Logic for the LEP 2025)

Short term	Medium Term	End of Grant	Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are time and opportunities for Landcare across NSW to grow relationships with Aboriginal communities and land managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landcare groups have strengthened partnerships with Aboriginal communities and land managers and improved their cultural competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased volume of Landcare activities targeted to local needs and priorities • Landcare’s activities are increasingly guided by relevant best practice • Landcare regions, groups and networks are increasingly sharing knowledge and resources • Community and partners have increased and more widespread support and trust in Landcare in NSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared responsibility for and care of natural resources resulting in healthier and more productive landscapes • Thriving and resilient Landcare regions, groups and networks and communities empowered with knowledge, resources and support • Enhanced opportunities for resourcing and partnerships with Landcare in NSW

Principles for Learning to be Culturally Capable

The grant process for the Aboriginal Partnerships grant program is based on three key principles designed through an Indigenous perspective.

Knowing, Being and Doing explores what we need to know, be and do to be culturally responsive in our work environments and practices. This approach gives voice to Aboriginal ways and supports the continuous journey to creating culturally safe environments.

Effective practice in all three domains contributes to an organisation becoming culturally capable.

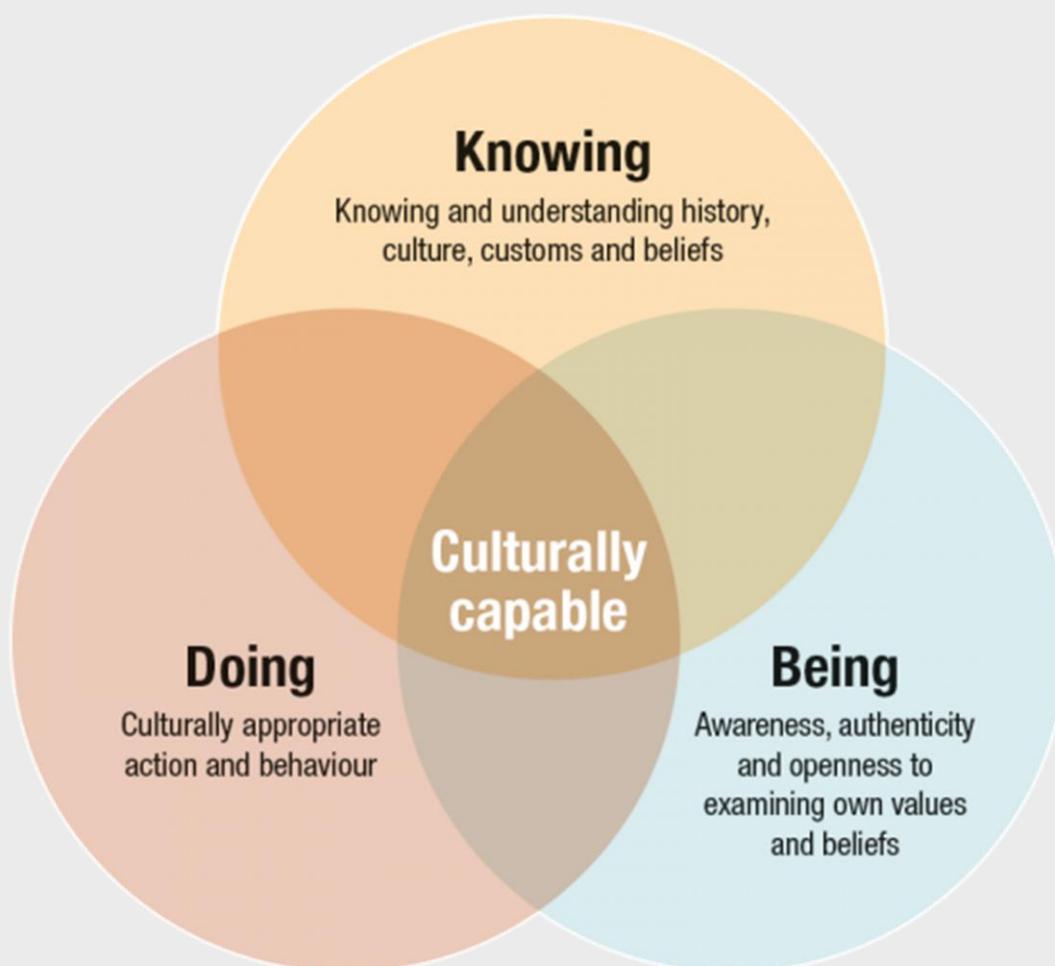


Figure 1: The Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Model.

Cultural capability is a continuous journey and cannot be achieved after a single training session or course. Individuals should view cultural capability as a lifelong learning process, helping them to make culturally informed approaches to ensure policy, programs and services are appropriate and reflect the needs of First Nations people.

Intended recipients

The intended recipients of this grant are:

- the regional organisations listed within Schedule A of the Landcare NSW Limited Constitution²; or
- a non-scheduled regional Landcare organisation who was successful in Phase 1 of the Landcare Enabling Program, in consultation and with the endorsement of a Schedule A regional organisation.

Each region is permitted to submit 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 be required.

Source agency

The source agency for the program is Local Land Services.

Delivery of program

Local Land Services is administering the grant program. Landcare NSW has provided input into the program design. An external probity advisor will provide independent oversight of the grant program.

Type of grant opportunity

This grant opportunity is a **closed, non-competitive grant process**. Each application will be assessed individually, without reference to the comparative merits of other applications. To be successful, the application must meet a minimum quality assurance standard.

Value for money

A key principle of any grant program is to achieve value for money, to ensure that the benefits of the grants are maximised for the people of NSW. Ways in which applicants may contribute to delivering value for money include:

- considering the most efficient and innovative means of carrying out grant activities

² Landcare NSW Constitution June 2025 [Constitution-Landcare-NSW-Limited-V3-2025-June-3-.pdf](#)

- considering how government objectives and the applicant’s identified needs can be mutually achieved
- identifying longer term opportunities and benefits achievable through this grant funding
- applying processes and procedures that are proportional to the grant’s value and risk, including managing both internal risk and external risks
- providing a well-considered and realistic project budget
- promoting and demonstrating the ethical use of public resources
- maintaining flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and adaptively manage the project
- ensuring funds are used for their intended purpose, and that programs or projects remain on track
- clearly distinguishing activities funded under this grant program from other funded initiatives.

Grant value

The total available program funding amount is \$5,000,000.

Each region (as identified in Schedule A of the Landcare NSW Limited Constitution³) is permitted **one application only**, submitted by a single eligible applicant on behalf of the region. The grantee is responsible for the delivery and acquittal of all contracted outcomes.

Grant applications are based on a tiered approach with maximum available funding tied to the applicant’s chosen tier, detailed in Table 2 below. Grant applications should consider the needs of Landcare groups in the region and should not solely rely on the employment of an Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator to deliver outcomes.

Refer to *Table 4* for a more comprehensive list of eligible activities per tier. Table 2 Grant funding for each tier

Tier	Items eligible for funding	Maximum funding available (GST exclusive)
Tier 1 Explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for training, consultants, events and/or on-ground works 	\$250,000 per application

³ Landcare NSW Constitution June 2025 [Constitution-Landcare-NSW-Limited-V3-2025-June-3-.pdf](#)

Tier 2 Embed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 full-time equivalent Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator role/s • Funding for training, consultants, events and/or on-ground works 	\$450,000 per application
Tier 3 Enhance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 2 full-time equivalent Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator roles • Funding for training, consultants, events and/or on-ground works 	\$700,000 per application

The total value of eligible grants must not exceed the available program funds. Local Land Services, at its own discretion, may negotiate proposed costs and total project value with applicants.

Co-contributions

Applicants are not required to make a financial co-contribution; however, applicants that co-contribute, in-kind or financially, will deliver better value for money, which is an assessable criterion for this grant program.

If the cost of implementing the project exceeds the funding awarded, the applicant is solely responsible for covering any additional costs.

Under exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, if the project costs do exceed the allocation of funds, the applicant may request a variation to the original Funding Deed. Additional funding beyond the original awarded funds *may* be considered by the grantor, if unallocated funds are available, but it is not guaranteed.

Program delivery timeframe

Each project funded under this program must commence within one month of Funding Deed execution and be completed by **30 April 2027** for consultants, events and on-ground works and **by 30 June 2027** for the employment of staff, allowing sufficient time for acquittal processes and the release of final payments.

Selection criteria

The selection criteria comprise both eligibility and assessment criteria.

All applications will be assessed for eligibility against the eligibility criteria. Only applications that meet the eligibility criteria will move to the next stage to be assessed against the assessment criteria.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria cover:

- eligible applicants, including a funding tier self-assessment
- eligible projects/activities
- eligible locations
- eligible costs.

Eligible applicants

To be eligible for grant funding, an applicant must meet all the following requirements:

- the organisation is a regional organisation listed within Schedule A of the Landcare NSW Limited Constitution⁴ or a non-scheduled regional Landcare organisation who was successful in Phase 1 of the Landcare Enabling Program, in consultation and with the endorsement of a Schedule A regional organisation
- be located in NSW
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be an incorporated entity or company limited by guarantee in Australia
- hold public liability insurance of not less than \$20 million per occurrence or hold equivalent or better self-insurance to the satisfaction of Local Land Services
- not be insolvent, bankrupt or subject to ongoing legal proceedings
- declare in the application form that the applicant is not aware of any issues which could cause reputational or other risks to the NSW Government
- hold or obtain approvals, licences and permits directly relating to project delivery.
- comply with all relevant environmental laws and regulations (if an on-ground project)
- has no existing debt with Local Land Services that is outside of Local Land Services payment terms.

⁴ Landcare NSW Constitution June 2025 [Constitution-Landcare-NSW-Limited-V3-2025-June-3-.pdf](#)

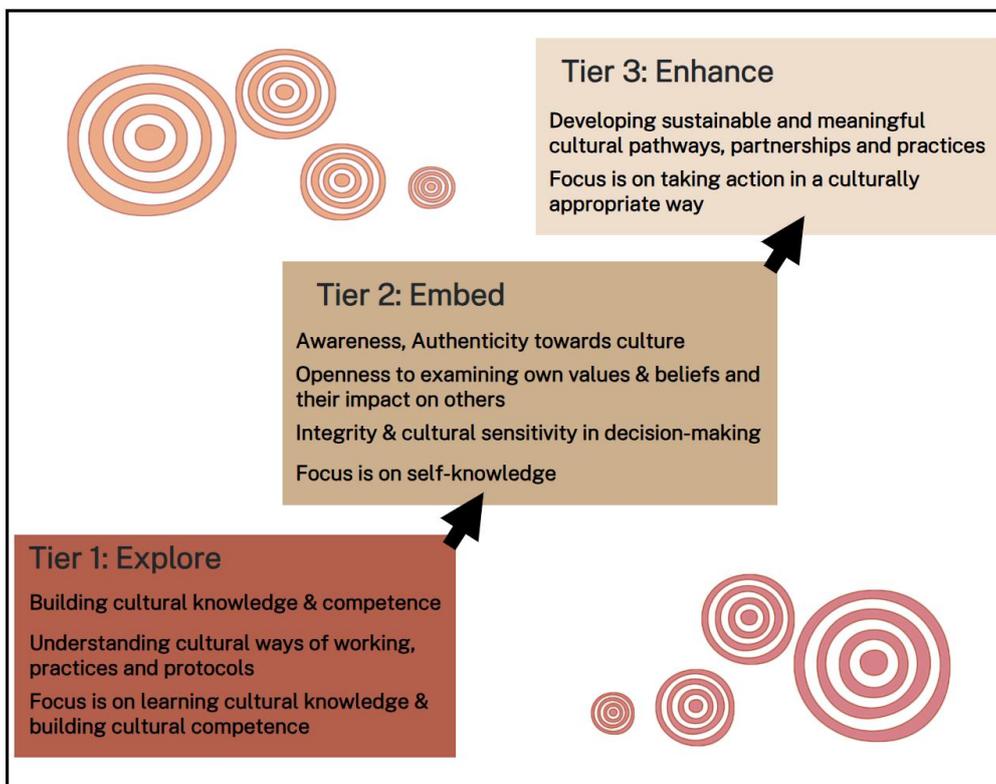
If an applicant’s circumstances in relation to the above eligibility criteria change, the applicant should provide updated information by contacting Local Land Services using the Enquiries/Getting Support details in the Key Information section.

Funding Tiers

Eligible applicants will be required to complete a funding tier self-assessment to determine the evidence and type of activities that may be included in your application.

Self-assessment

The following tiers reflect the applicant’s capability, capacity, and cultural readiness to participate in and meet the objectives of the Aboriginal Partnerships Grant Program. Applicants will need to undertake a self-assessment to determine which tier best reflects their current status and provide sufficient evidence to justify their nominated tier (see Table 3).



The Aboriginal Partnerships grant program aims to help Landcare networks identify and improve their capability, capacity and cultural readiness.

Table 3 Funding tier self-assessment

Tier	Self- assessment	Evidence
Tier 1 Explore	You’re just starting your journey to build cultural understanding and relationships with Aboriginal communities.	You’ve started activities that help Landcare groups learn about Aboriginal culture and practices. Evidence may include:

	<p>You're not ready to hire an Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator yet, but you're committed to learning and preparing for that step.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of support • Attendance at events like LNSW Campfire Gatherings • Case studies • Emails or meeting notes showing consultation • Examples of working with others
<p>Tier 2 Embed</p>	<p>You've already begun working with Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>You might be ready to hire an Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator to strengthen those relationships or, if not, still want to expand your work.</p>	<p>You're actively involved in Aboriginal partnerships and cultural learning, and you're planning respectful and beneficial collaborations.</p> <p>Evidence may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of support • Event attendance • Case studies • Consultation records • Aboriginal engagement plan • Board or advisory group involvement • Events and projects • Resources you've created
<p>Tier 3 Enhance</p>	<p>You've got strong, ongoing partnerships with Aboriginal communities and want to expand your work.</p> <p>You are ready to hire one or two Aboriginal Landcare Coordinators (or already have).</p>	<p>You have well-established plans and practices that support respectful and meaningful collaboration with Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>Evidence may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Tier 2 evidence • Aboriginal Engagement Strategy, Partnership Plan, or Reconciliation Action Plan • Governance structures with cultural representation • Recruitment and onboarding processes • Coordinator work plan/s • Cultural training plans • Monitoring and evaluation practices • Cultural Safety policy or plan

Eligible projects and activities

The project/activities must meet the following requirements to be **eligible**:

- **Program objectives:** It must be clear how the project aligns with the program objectives
- **Timeframe:** The project must be deliverable within the delivery timeframe

- **Consultation with relevant local Landcare groups:** The applicant must provide evidence that they have consulted with the region’s local Landcare community (e.g. letters of support, meeting minutes, emails etc).
- **Support from local Aboriginal communities:** The applicant must describe how they have consulted with the local Aboriginal community.
- **Feasibility:** The project must be technically and economically feasible to implement. The applicant must demonstrate key activities, milestones, budget, and key personnel required to deliver the project (this is included in the Application Form)
- **Environmental impact:** Projects involving on-ground works or activities with potential environmental impact must comply with all relevant environmental laws and regulations
- **Landowner consent:** If any project works are to take place on land that is not owned by the Applicant, the applicant must demonstrate landowner consent.
- **Strategy:** The project must align to at least one relevant local, regional or national strategy or plan strategy.
- **Improved outcomes for Aboriginal people:** The project must seek to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and align with the skills, aspirations and experiences of local Aboriginal communities.

The below table provides examples of activities that may be considered under the Aboriginal Partnerships Grant program. They are listed as guidance only.

Table 4 Examples of items that could be included in your grant application

Tier 1 Explore	Tier 2 Embed	Tier 3 Enhance
Develop a regional cultural profile e.g. Create and capture local and regional contacts (who to contact, key Aboriginal groups, Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders etc.)		
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy or Aboriginal Partnership Plan		
Implement actions from the Landcare Aboriginal Partnerships Framework		
Develop materials e.g. banners or signage that incorporate local Aboriginal artwork or raise the local cultural profile		
Workshops or events		
On-ground works in partnership with Aboriginal community / Aboriginal-led e.g. walks on Country, cultural fire, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage identification		
Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country practices e.g. how to obtain advice, protocols for inviting Elders for Welcome to Country		
Cultural safety policy or plan		

Tier 1 Explore	Tier 2 Embed	Tier 3 Enhance
Cultural Training Calendar and associated implementation (speaker fees, venue hire, catering, travel for attendees)		
Participation in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Training		
Hiring Aboriginal consultants or contractors to deliver project outcomes		
Develop cultural safety protocols		
Embed cultural training into other Landcare workforce and professional development plans		
Work with Aboriginal community organisations or people to encourage participation on group boards or take up committee positions.		
Develop workforce and professional development plans	Develop & implement workforce and professional development plans for an Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator	
Cultural safety training	Cultural safety training including providing a culturally safe workplace	
Reconciliation Action Plan (<i>Reflect</i>)	Reconciliation Action Plan (<i>Reflect or Innovate</i>)	Reconciliation Action Plan (<i>Stretch</i>)
	Culturally sensitive recruitment and onboarding approach	
	Cultural mentoring support for Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator	
	Participation in Aboriginal Community of Practice	
	Employment of up to one FTE Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator including on-costs (see sample Position Description in Supporting Documents)	Employment of up to two FTE Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator including on-costs (see sample Position Description in Supporting Documents)

Eligible locations

The location of the project is relevant to eligibility. Projects must be located within [NSW Local Land Services](#) regions.

Eligible costs

The project costs must support the objectives of the program.

The following types of project costs are eligible for funding (including but not limited to):

- employment costs such as remuneration, superannuation, leave entitlements, annual leave loading and workers compensation up to 30 June 2027 for the roles specified in these Guidelines.

- FTE allocations can be used to create part time roles; each role must be a minimum 0.5 FTE, however, applicants may opt for a lower FTE with sufficient justification.
- Total FTE must not exceed 1 FTE for Tier 2 and 2 FTE for Tier 3.
- Operational costs to a maximum of 17.5% of salary component of grant funding
- Professional development expenses, up to \$3,000 per Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator role over the employment period. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate a direct link between the skills and experience obtained and the expected capabilities of the roles.
- Consultancy or contractor fees for scoping, planning, project management and delivery
- Training, workshops and events and associated travel
- Marketing campaigns or other communications
- Development of tools and templates
- Partnership arrangements that support the program objectives

Aboriginal procurement

The NSW Government values the economic, social and cultural contribution of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of NSW. To meet the program objectives, Local Land Services encourages applicants to consider procuring Aboriginal-owned and / or managed businesses to conduct works identified in their application.

The NSW Government Aboriginal Procurement Policy defines an Aboriginal business as one with at least 50% Aboriginal ownership and recognised by organisations such as Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce, or the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.

Ineligible project costs

The following project costs are ineligible for funding (including but not limited to):

- Devolved grants. Funding cannot be used to establish or run a separate grants program
- Funding must not be used for political purposes
- Staff wages, salaries and/or employment costs for roles other than those specified in these Guidelines
- Capital expenditure above \$5,000 per item
- Vehicle usage or hire not directly attributable to the Program
- The repayment of existing debts or budget deficits

- Costs incurred in the preparation of an application to this Program or related documentation
- Costs that are already funded under Phase 1 or 2 of the LEP
- Costs already funded by other grant funding, including from another NSW Government source, for the same costs over the same period
- Any costs that do not clearly align with the objectives and intended outcomes of the Aboriginal Partnerships Grant program.

Assessment criteria

Table 5 below lists the assessment criteria and the supporting evidence required for this grant program.

Table 5 Assessment criteria for each Tier and supporting evidence required in your grant application

Assessment criteria and weighting	Evidence
<p>Improved outcomes for Aboriginal people (35%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects improve Landcare’s ability to engage positively and respectfully with Aboriginal communities, supporting their aspirations Projects strengthen partnerships through collaborative and mutually beneficial programs, engagements and opportunities 	<p>Application Form Questions: How will your project improve Landcare's ability to engage with Aboriginal communities? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>What partnerships will you build as part of the project? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>How will those partnerships last beyond the project? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>Additional evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Details Table Evidence of intention to engage with Aboriginal-owned and / or managed businesses Document upload (see list above)
<p>Local need and impact (25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects demonstrate alignment with local or regional plans, or other relevant documents Projects demonstrate consultation with local Landcare and Aboriginal communities 	<p>Application Form Questions: Which local or regional plans does your project align with? How? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>How have you / will you consult with local landcare and Aboriginal communities? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>Additional evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document upload (see list on page 15)
<p>Cultural safety and competency (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects improve the Aboriginal cultural knowledge and competence of landcarers 	<p>Application Form Questions: How will you explore and improve cultural understanding in your organisation? <i>[Free Text]</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects demonstrate meaningful and culturally safe Aboriginal employment opportunities within Landcare networks (Tiers 2 & 3) 	<p>For Tiers 2 & 3 How will you support your Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator (e.g. mentoring, cultural safety)? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>Additional evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document upload (see list on page 15)
<p>Deliverability and value for money (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants can demonstrate their ability to deliver on their project Projects demonstrate efficient resource use, the budget is detailed, reasonable, and cost-effective; and project outcomes justify the investment 	<p>Application Form Questions: How will you ensure you deliver the project on time and within budget? <i>[Free Text]</i></p> <p>Additional evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget template Risk table Project Details table

Applicants must address all the assessment criteria. Specific information and evidence listed against each of the criteria below is provided in the SmartyGrants Application Form.

The Application Form will include a chance to upload evidence to:

- support your tier self-assessment, and
- support your responses to the assessment criteria.

Evidence may include:

- Letters of support
- Notes from meetings
- Examples of past activities
- Event attendance
- Strategy documents
- Records of consultation e.g. emails or meeting minutes
- Endorsements from Aboriginal groups
- Governance structures that include Aboriginal voices
- Quotes or estimates (if relevant)

Application process

How to apply

Parameters

Only one application may be submitted by a single eligible applicant on behalf of the region.

Where to apply

Applicants must submit their applications to the program's online application page via the following link https://lls.smartygrants.com.au/LEP_AboriginalPartnerships.

When to apply

Applicants must submit their applications by 5pm Monday 16 February 2026.

Applicants cannot reopen or amend applications after the closing date and time.

Local Land Services retains discretion to extend the closing date and time, and to accept late applications in extenuating circumstances.

What to include

Each application must include the documents listed in the Application Form which include the following:

- identify which tier you are best aligned with at this time and provide evidence
- relevant regional strategies or plans
- evidence that supports your application such as letters of support, records of consultation, endorsement from Aboriginal groups or governance structures that include Aboriginal voices (where relevant). This will support both your tier self-assessment and your answers to the assessment criteria. You will only need to upload evidence once.
- evidence of public liability insurance
- proof of incorporation for community groups
- evidence that the local Landcare community's input has been sought (including the Schedule A regional body endorsement if they are not the applicant).
- evidence of quotes or estimates (if relevant)

- if applicable, landowner consent, if elements of the project are to take place on land that is not owned by the applicant.

False and misleading information

Applicants must not include false or misleading information in their applications. If an application contains false or misleading information, Local Land Services may deal with the application as it determines in the circumstances and may, for example, determine that the application is ineligible.

After submitting application

Applicants will receive a notification of receipt.

Local Land Services may contact applicants to verify information or seek further information.

Getting support

Applicants can obtain support in preparing their applications, for example, technical support with online forms and practical guidance on how to complete an application. Contact Local Land Services using the resources listed at Enquiries and getting support in the **Key information**.

A webinar will also be held for potential applicants. See the grant program website for details.

Assessment process

Assessment of grant applications

Stages

Determining which applications are successful involves these stages:

- eligibility cull
- assessment
- decision-making.

Eligibility cull

Staff from Local Land Services will assess the applications against the eligibility criteria.

Applications that have met the eligibility criteria will move to the next stage.

The review team may contact applicants seeking clarification of information in the applications or further supporting material.

Assessment

The assessment team will assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria.

Assessment team

The assessment team consists of a Local Land Services Senior Executive, Local Land Services Aboriginal staff, representatives from Landcare NSW (observer role), and an external Probity Advisor.

The assessment team may seek advice from other NSW Government agencies and other sources as required.

The assessment team may contact applicants seeking clarification of information in the applications or further supporting material.

Assessment process

The assessment team will assess each application on its merits without reference to the comparative merits of other applications.

Applications must meet a minimum standard to be considered for funding. Each assessment criteria will be scored on a scale from 1 (Not demonstrated) to 5 (Strong Demonstration). To be considered for funding, an application must achieve a minimum overall score of 70% across the assessment criteria.

The assessment team may:

- request additional information from the applicants
- consider input from other stakeholders (such as other levels of government or industry representatives) where appropriate. Any such input will be documented as part of the assessment process.

Recommendations

The assessment team will make written recommendations to the decision maker.

The assessment team may recommend a lesser or greater amount of funding or defer a recommendation pending further information.

Decision maker

The decision maker is the NSW Minister for Agriculture. The decision maker will review the availability of grant funds, the recommendations of the assessment team and, where relevant, the outcomes of the eligibility cull.

The decision maker may take other factors into account including advice from a Probity Advisor and issues that could cause reputational or other risks to the NSW Government.

In limited circumstances, the decision maker may waive selection criteria, for example, where not doing so would: lead to perverse or unfair outcomes; be contrary to the policy intent; or damage the reputation and integrity of the program.

If the decision-maker departs from the assessment team's recommendations, the decision maker will arrange for the departures to be published with reasons.

Final decision

The decision maker's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the approval to award a grant
 - the amount awarded
 - the terms and conditions of the grant.
-

Notification of application outcome

Local Land Services will send successful applicants a letter of conditional offer.

Successful applicants may be required to sign confidentiality undertakings, promising to keep the outcome of the application process confidential until the NSW Government makes a public announcement.

Successful applicants will be required to sign funding deeds with Local Land Services.

Local Land Services will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing of the outcome of their applications.

Feedback and appeal

Local Land Services will offer unsuccessful applicants a feedback information session.

There is no appeal mechanism from the decision-maker's decisions.

Announcements

The NSW Government may announce the outcome of funding applications at its discretion.

Publication of grants information

Key information about the grants awarded will be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Webpage, in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Grants Administration Guide.

This information, plus information submitted in applications and related correspondence, may be open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)* which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information. Information that is commercially sensitive may be withheld.

The NSW Government may use information submitted in applications and in funding deeds for promotional material and to develop case studies.

Successful grant applications

Successful applicants must execute a funding deed with Local Land Services.

There is no promise of funding until both the applicant and Local Land Services have executed a funding deed (and the applicant has met any other funding conditions).

Importantly, this means that successful applicants must not make financial commitments for the funded activities until both the applicant and Local Land Services have executed a funding deed.

Funding deed

A sample funding deed is available [here](#).

Local Land Services has discretion to amend and update this sample funding deed.

Successful applicants will be required to provide all supporting documentation and approvals before Local Land Services can enter into a funding deed.

Local Land Services makes no binding funding commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign a funding deed.

Local Land Services will tailor the template funding deed for each project to include the grant instalment amounts, activities, deliverables, timeframes and any special conditions. Grantees will be required to submit progress reports as outlined in the funding deed, including financial evidence of expenditure incurred.

Terms and conditions

The funding deed will set out the grant recipient's obligations including, for example, to:

- meet activity timeframes and deliver the project on time
- submit progress reports
- notify Local Land Services of any delays
- be responsible for project cost overruns
- repay unspent grant funds
- repay grant funds which are not spent in accordance with the funding deed

- meet monitoring and acquittal requirements
- maintain insurances
- acknowledge the grant as per the Funding Acknowledgement guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines>
- provide data
- participate in program evaluation and audits including to determine the extent to which the project has contributed to the program objectives
- keep records for seven years
- advise Local Land Services of any changes to the grant recipient's legal status.

The funding deed will include Local Land Services' termination rights, including if the grant recipient has engaged in conduct that might cause reputational damage to the NSW Government or has provided misleading information in its application.

Changes to projects

After funding deeds are executed, Local Land Services may consider requests for variations to projects only in limited circumstances.

Grant payment

Instalments

Local Land Services will pay grants in instalments.

The funding deed will set out the instalment amounts and what the grant recipient needs to do to receive each instalment (e.g. complete specified activities and provide evidence of completion and reports within a timeframe).

Tax

Grants are GST exclusive. If a grant recipient is registered for GST, GST will be applied on top of the grant value when payment is made.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by taxation law. Grant recipients should seek independent professional advice about taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The NSW Government does not provide advice on individual taxation circumstances.

Unspent funds

If a grant recipient's project is completed and there are unspent funds remaining from the grant allocation, Local Land Services may require the grant recipient to return the unspent funds.

Alternatively, the grant recipient may request to use the unspent funds on extending the scope of the project if the request aligns with the objectives of the program and the grant recipient provides supporting information to Local Land Services. Local Land Services is under no obligation to agree with the request. Projects must be completed by the grant program's end date.

Local Land Services may choose to negotiate with groups around funding allocations, redistribute unspent funds to other projects funded under this program or other elements of the LEP. It may also choose to run another round under this grant program.

Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

Local Land Services will monitor how grant recipients are spending their grants and how their projects are progressing. Grant recipients will be required to submit progress reports, final reports and other information to Local Land Services. The reporting requirements will be outlined in the funding deed.

In some circumstances, site visits may be undertaken to review progress towards milestones specified in the funding deed.

Grant recipients will be required to inform Local Land Services if their circumstances change.

Evaluation

Local Land Services will monitor the funded projects against the purpose and objectives of the program.

Grant recipients may be required to participate in evaluation, such as surveys and reporting.

Additional information and resources

Complaint handling

If applicants have any concerns about the program or individual applications, please contact Local Land Services in writing using the contact information at Enquiries/Getting Support in the **Key information**.

If applicants do not agree with the way Local Land Services handled an issue, applicants may contact the NSW Ombudsman via ombo.nsw.gov.au

Access to information

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

If applicants require further information about the GIPA Act and/or Standing Order 52, please contact the department using the contact information at Enquiries/Getting Support in the **Key information**.

Ethical conduct

Conflict of interest management

Applicants (and their officers and staff) must declare any perceived, potential or real conflicts of interest in respect of the grant opportunity. They must declare such conflicts in the application form.

Where there is a conflict of interest detrimental to the grant opportunity, applicants must put mitigation measures in place. Local Land Services may require individuals not to participate in the application or delivery stage.

Successful applicants must ensure that conflicts of interest are identified and managed during the life of the grant program.

Local Land Services requires that successful applicants keep conflict of interest registers and provide a copy to Local Land Services as requested.

Confidentiality

All applicants (successful and unsuccessful) must keep the outcome of the grant opportunity confidential until the NSW Government makes a public announcement.

Conduct

Applicants must not participate in any anti-competitive conduct.

Applicants must not offer any gifts, benefits or hospitality to any NSW Government employee at any time. Any inducement in contravention of this condition may result in an applicant's application not being considered.

Discretion

The NSW Government may, in its absolute discretion, and without limiting any other rights which it may have, do all or any of the following at any time without giving notice or reasons:

- require additional information from an applicant
- change any of the requirements of these guidelines
- alter or vary any process, procedure or timing related to the grant
- suspend or terminate the grant opportunity
- negotiate with one or more preferred applicants without prior notice to any other applicant
- terminate any negotiations being conducted with any applicant

- readvertise for new applicants
 - consider any non-conforming application
 - terminate an applicant's further participation in the grant opportunity for any reason (including if the department considers that an application contains false or misleading statements or may damage the reputation of the department or the program)
 - not proceed to execute any funding deed.
-

These guidelines

Changes and publication

Where significant changes are made in relation to the grant opportunity, Local Land Services will revise these guidelines and make them available on this [web page](#).

Local Land Services may issue an addendum to these guidelines. The addendum becomes part of these guidelines.

Local Land Services will publish these guidelines and any revised versions and addenda on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Webpage.

No offer

These guidelines are not an offer, recommendation or invitation by Local Land Services in respect of any grant. There is no funding commitment until both a successful applicant and Local Land Services execute a funding deed.

December 2025.

