



Australian Government

**Community
Grants Hub**
Improving your grant experience



Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program – Small Grants (Round 1)

Questions and Answers

1. What is the closing time and date for applications?

The Application Form must be submitted by **9.00 PM AEDT on 31 March 2021**. It is recommended that you submit your application **well before the closing time and date**.

2. If I am not able to submit my application by the due time and date, can I be granted an extension?

Late applications will not be accepted unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application.

If an application is late or the Community Grants Hub is requested to approve a lodgement after the closing date, the [late application policy](#) available on the Community Grants Hub website will apply.

3. How much funding is available for this program?

This is \$6 million in total available under this round.

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$20 million GST exclusive over 2 years for the Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program.

Under the Small Grants stream, up to \$10 million GST exclusive is available over 2 separate rounds:

1. Round 1 – up to \$6 million in total in the 2020–21 financial year (this round)
2. Round 2 – up to \$4 million in total in the 2021–22 financial year.

These are notional allocations, and the Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia reserves the right to change these allocations depending on the quality and quantity of grants received in his sole discretion.

4. Is the funding on-going?

No, funding is only provided for the term of the grant. If on-going upkeep and maintenance is required, you must outline in your application how you will fund this after the completion of the project.

5. When will I know the outcome of my application?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application at the end of the selection process. For probity reasons, to treat all applicants fairly and equally, it is not possible to give you information about the status of individual applications during the assessment process.

6. Can someone from the Community Grants Hub help me with my application?

The Community Grants Hub can only provide general information and advice on completing your application. To maintain the fairness and integrity of the application process, applicants cannot be offered individual support or help with their applications.

7. How can I submit the application form?

The form is an online application form that you must submit electronically. The Community Grants Hub will not provide application forms or accept application forms for this grant opportunity by fax, email or through Australia Post.

8. Who do I contact if I'm having trouble using or submitting the application form?

If you require help or support in using and/or submitting an application form on the Community Grants Hub website, please call 1800 020 283 (option 1) or TTY 1800 555 677.

9. Do character limits apply to my application?

Yes, the application form includes character limits – up to 5,000 characters (approx. 750 words) per assessment criterion. Please note, spaces are included in the character limit.

10. Can I submit an application as a consortium with an ineligible entity?

Yes. The lead entity of the consortium must be an eligible entity under section 4.1 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and must be solely accountable to the Commonwealth for the delivery of grant activities. Ineligible entities can form part of a consortium provided they are not the lead entity.

11. Are tourism activities eligible under the program?

Tourism promotion is ineligible under the program. You may wish to consider the [Murray–Darling Basin Economic Development Program](#) if you are seeking funding for such activities.

However, activities that may support increased tourism activity are eligible so long as they form part of a project that improves the ecological health of river and wetland sites in the Basin. This includes activities such as:

- management of access to sensitive areas, including installation of infrastructure, such as boardwalks, sand ladders, visitor access trails, gates and vehicle barriers
- interpretative signage, for example, to inform visitors about the ecological values of the site and on-ground actions undertaken.

12. Are community engagement and capacity building activities eligible under the program?

Yes, however, they must be combined with practical, on-ground works that improve the ecological health of river and wetland sites in the Basin.

13. What is meant by a ‘river’ in the guidelines? Does it have to be a named river?

A ‘river’ is any naturally occurring watercourse. It includes both named and unnamed watercourses, as well as watercourses referred to as streams, creeks, brooks, rivulets, and rills. It does not include man-made watercourses such as irrigation canals.

The water course may have permanent water, be intermittent or ephemeral.

14. What is included as an ‘invasive species’ (pest plant and/or animal)?

An ‘invasive species’ is any species occurring, as a result of human activities, beyond its accepted normal distribution and which threatens valued environmental, agricultural or other social resources by the damage it causes. This can include both introduced and native species.

For more information, you may wish to consider:

- [Australian Weeds Strategy 2017 to 2027](#)
- [Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017 to 2027](#)
- [Threat abatement plans](#) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

15. I have a wetland on my property which is not Ramsar listed. Can I apply for funding to protect and improve its ecology?

Yes, any wetland is eligible for funding. This recognises the important role wetlands play in the health of the Basin – they can reduce the impacts of floods, absorb pollutants and improve water quality. Wetlands also provide habitat for animals and plants and many contain a diverse range of species, including threatened species.

16. Do targeted threatened species and ecological communities and migratory species have to be listed under federal legislation?

Yes, as an Australian Government program we are limited to funding projects that target [threatened species and ecological communities](#) and [migratory species](#) listed under *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

We recognise that threatened species and ecological communities listed under state and territory legislation are likely to benefit from the same activities funded under this program, but they must not be the focus of the funded activities.

17. Where can I find species and ecological communities listed under federal legislation?

You can find the lists of threatened species and ecological communities and migratory species listed under Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 online at:

- [Threatened Fauna](#)
- [Threatened Flora](#)
- [Threatened Ecological Communities](#)
- [Migratory Species](#).

18. What is meant by research with ‘no practical, on-ground actions’?

Research with ‘no practical, on-ground actions’ is research which consists of purely laboratory or academic investigation. It is ineligible as the focus of the program is practical, on-ground actions by communities.

Research activities, such as field surveys, are only eligible where it is used to prove the effectiveness of activities funded under the grant and must not make up the bulk of the funded activities.

19. I am a for-profit entity. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, for-profit entities are eligible to apply in order to encourage the maximum participation of landowners in the Murray–Darling Basin in the program. However, for-profit entities should not directly profit from funded activities (for example, purchasing goods or services from themselves at a profit).

20. Are farmers eligible to apply?

Yes, farmers and land managers in the Murray–Darling Basin are encouraged to apply.

For example, farmers might consider seeking funding for grazing exclusion fences to protect rivers and wetlands from stock, or control of pest plants and animals which are impacting rivers and wetlands.

21. My project is located outside the Murray–Darling Basin but will have benefits for the Basin. Is it eligible?

No, all projects must be entirely delivered in the Murray–Darling Basin.

22. What is considered a ‘local business’ under Criterion 2?

We consider ‘local businesses’ to be any business within 100 km of the project site and/or your main office, or the nearest business in remote areas.

23. Do I need to have all land holders signed up to a project before I apply?

No, however, you must explain in your application what you will do if you are unable to secure enough land holders to participate in your project.

If your application is successful, written consent from land holders is required before you undertake activities on their property.

24. What is meant by ‘shovel-ready’ and does my project have to be ‘shovel-ready’?

‘Shovel-ready’ is where planning and approvals are advanced enough for your project that with sufficient funding, delivery can begin within a very short time.

Whilst projects do not have to be ‘shovel-ready’, more developed projects will have a competitive advantage as they are more likely to be able to be delivered within the 12 month period.

25. How can I find Indigenous businesses to supply goods and services for my project?

[Supply Nation](#) provides a national directory of verified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

26. How can I find Australian made products to use in my project?

[Australian Made](#) provides a directory of verified Australian made goods.

27. How do we go about obtaining permission to do works on waterways (for example, Crown land, Parks Vic etc.)?

You are responsible for gaining all necessary permissions before undertaking project activities. Your local [regional natural resource management organisation](#) may be able to provide you with advice on this if you are unfamiliar with the process.

28. Can I apply for more than one grant in this round?

Yes, although you should be careful that your applications and project activities do not duplicate each other.

29. Can I apply for the same activities under different programs?

Yes, you can apply for grants for your project under any Commonwealth program, but if your applications are successful, you must choose either the Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program grant or the other Commonwealth grant.

30. Is funding available for administration expenses?

Yes, although this is limited to:

- administrative support and overheads additional to the normal day-to-day running costs of the organisation (maximum 10% of project costs)
- reporting on project progress and outcomes in the form advised by the department (maximum 5% of the project costs).

31. If I am successful in this round, can I apply for the next round or the large grants round?

Yes. However, the guidelines have not been finalised for the next small grant or large grant rounds yet and you should double check before you apply in case this changes. Additionally, you should be careful that your applications do not duplicate each other.

32. What happens if I am unable to complete my project in 12 months?

Projects must be completed within 12 months of execution of the grant agreement.

In some instances, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment may approve a further 12 months extension provided you can demonstrate there were factors outside your control which prevented you from completing the project (for example, extreme weather events).

33. We want to employ someone to work on the project. How can we make sure we are paying the correct wage and conditions?

The [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) can provide information and advice about Australia's workplace rights and rules, including applicable Awards.

34. What animal welfare requirements apply to projects involving the control of pest animals?

If your grant activities involve pest animals, you must adhere to relevant animal welfare legislation and requirements, and voluntary and/or mandatory Codes of Practice and Standard Operating Procedures for the management of relevant pest animals, as well as adhering to relevant federal and state/territory legislation and regulations.

If you are unfamiliar with these, [PestSmart](#) provides a useful starting point for best-practice information on how to plan, manage and improve pest animal control programs in Australia.

35. Where should I go for further information?

More detailed information about applying is available in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. If you have any other questions please email your enquiries to support@communitygrants.gov.au. You should submit your questions by **24 March 2021**.

The Community Grants Hub will respond to emailed questions within 5 working days.

Question and Answer added on 11 March 2021

36. I cannot find a map on the [Murray-Darling Basin Authority website](#) with a scale that gives me enough detail to figure out whether these wetlands are in the MDB region. It appears that the wetlands in question are right on the border towards the bottom in South Australia (SA) – i.e. 'Beyond Today Wetlands' in Chiton, SA. Could you please tell me if the Beyond Today Wetlands are in the MDB region or provide a clearer alternative to determine this?

The project site in question, 'Beyond Today Wetlands', does not fall within the boundary of the Murray–Darling Basin and is therefore ineligible to receive grant funding under this program.

37. There are no links to the interactive map in the guidelines. I was advised the link is available through the online application and I needed to reach a certain page before I could link into that interactive map. Can this link be added outside of the application for ease of use?

We have received advice from our geospatial team regarding moving the mapping tool link outside of the application for ease of use.

Applicants can access the [mapping tool link](#) to create a map of their project site.

Do not insert the link above to your application form. It does not contain any information.

To insert the correct link, you will need to create your map and click on the 'Save Mapping' button. A new URL link will be created.

Copy and paste the new link into your application form.

Please use one of the compatible browsers listed below to access the mapping tool:

- Internet Explorer version 10 and above (Internet Explorer's Compatibility View is not supported)
- Google Chrome version 36 and above
- Mozilla Firefox version 17 and above
- Safari (Mac users)

For further guidance, please refer to the Mapping Tool User Guide under the grant opportunity documents on the [Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program](#) grants landing page.