

Landcare Notes

Landcare Note 3.1
September 2010

Funding options for community groups

This Landcare Note is a guide to finding financial support from a range of local, regional and federal bodies. This information will help establish what you need to think about before you get started, and then how to go forward.

What are the funding options?

There is a range of funding options that your group can consider to help you achieve your work goals. The funding may go directly to individual members, through the Landcare group or network.

Funding options are continually changing so make sure you get the most up-to-date information from the funding source you are considering.

Local Government

Your local council may provide funding support for Landcare activities, usually related to specific projects such as weed control.

This could be in the form of rate rebates only available to farm properties, or the council may offer direct grants to the group for items such as education activities, equipment purchase and the cost of planting and fencing activities.

Other types of council help can include the offer of council equipment (bulldozers, road graders) for major projects, or services, such as providing office space, meeting places and photocopying.

State Government

Both the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) have been financially involved in Landcare activities since Landcare started.

Currently, the primary source of funding is the Victorian Landcare Grants, which cover weed and pest management, salinity and erosion

control, revegetation and support of Landcare groups. There are other funds available for specific activities in waterway management, biodiversity, wetlands and protection of rare species, for example.

Other State Government departments that provide financial support to community groups and individual landholders include the Department of Planning & Community Development (DPCD), the Environment Protection Authority, Catchment Management Authorities and Melbourne Water.

Commonwealth Government

Federal funding provides key opportunities to support innovative practices leading to sustainable primary production.

There is a range of programs available, but some may only apply to selected works and geographic areas, so it is important to read the guidelines and eligibility criteria.

Funding programs also support group and individual projects. Several smaller grant options are usually available to support projects such as biodiversity projects and other specific activities.

Corporate sponsors and funding programs

Private companies are increasingly involved in supporting Landcare activities through their own grant programs. This type of support is often focused on a major group project or even a network of groups working within a specific area.

Landcare Australia Limited was specifically set up to foster corporate sponsorship arrangements. Your group could contact them for advice and information if you believe your project would be a suitable candidate for such funding (see further references below).

It's also worth considering approaching local businesses which may be able to support the work you are doing by supplying materials,

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equipment, skilled workers and discounts on the goods you need (see Landcare Notes: 3.2 *Partnerships and collaboration*; 3.3 *Sponsorship*; 3.5 *Local fundraising*).

Philanthropic organisations

Some philanthropic organisations will provide financial support, skills-based support or volunteering for local projects but they are mainly interested in group projects rather than individual activities. They may favour longer-term projects which can demonstrate significant benefits for the community and the environment. Each organisation will have their own purpose and eligibility criteria that you should check before you consider applying.

How to do it

Choosing funding options

The first step for your group is to work out exactly what you want to do, and then draw up a list of potential funding sources. You could seek guidance from your local Landcare coordinator on the most appropriate funding sources for what you want to do. Check the funding criteria and read the guidelines before you begin your application.

Remember, there will be limits to the funding program which have to be factored into your considerations.

No matter who is providing the money, there will be specific obligations and administration involved, so be prepared to follow the procedures if you want your proposal to be accepted.

Starting the project

You may decide to nominate several members of your group to develop the initial project plan and identify potential funding sources before reporting back to the group.

Creating a plan

It is good to have a simple outline of who you are, what you have achieved, what you want to do and how you will do it. In planning your

projects, having a strategic plan makes these proposals much easier. If your group has not yet considered its longer term goals, and does not have any plans in place, you may want to refer to Landcare Notes: 2.1 *Planning*, 2.2 *Strategic planning*, 5.2 *Project planning*.

Timing is also important. Deadlines for funding will vary between organisations and agencies, so be prepared to plan a year or more in advance.

Your local CMA or council may have a Grants and Incentives Calendar that provides information on possible funding sources and the timing needed for applications, so it's worth checking that first.

When working out your proposal it is important to remember your group will be in partnership with the funding body. Both parties should benefit from this funding agreement, so consider what your project will offer the funding body in return for their investment.

How to apply for funding

For more information on how to go about doing a funding application or project proposal please refer to Landcare Notes: 3.4 *Grants guide for community groups* and 5.2 *Project planning*.

Further references

Landcare Investment or Grants Officer: contact your local Catchment Management Authority <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm> – (follow the links through Land Management, Catchment, Catchment Authorities and click on your nearest area).

Commonwealth of Australia – GrantsLINK: <http://www.grantslink.gov.au/>

Find and Manage Money: http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/boards/boards_main.jsp

Landcare Australia Limited (LAL) funding opportunities: <http://www.landcareonline.com/>



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Related Landcare Notes

- Landcare Note 2.1: *Planning*
- Landcare Note 2.2: *Strategic planning*
- Landcare Note 3.2: *Partnerships and collaboration*
- Landcare Note 3.3: *Sponsorship*
- Landcare Note 3.4: *Grants guide for community groups*
- Landcare Note 3.5: *Local fundraising*
- Landcare Note 5.2: *Project planning*

Acknowledgements

Jude Niemiec and Nicole Blackett: *Landcare Notes – Practicalities of Local Landcare Sponsorship (2002); 10 Steps to Successful Sponsorship (2002)*

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