

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

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# Greening our City Grant Guidelines

2025 Grant Round - Greening our City Program

August 2025



Photo: Pimelea Western Sydney Parklands. McGregor Coxall.

Image: Simon Wood.



# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Greening our City Grant Guidelines

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## Grant Program Details

Opening date and time	4 August 2025 (AEST)
Closing date and time	26 September 2025 at 5:00 PM (AEST)
Application outcome	30 November 2025
Project delivery timeframe	30 months
Evaluation timeframe	As part of Climate Change Fund program evaluation
Decision-maker	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
NSW Government Agency	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Type of grant opportunity	Targeted, competitive
Grant value	Total available funding: \$10 million Min Grant Value - \$50,000 Max Grant Value – no maximum
Enquiries	<a href="mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au">gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au</a>

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# Message from the Minister



The NSW Government is committed to creating more sustainable, liveable, and cooler urban communities across the Greater Sydney, Hunter-Central Coast, and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions.

We need to mitigate the impacts of urban heat and climate change by increasing urban tree canopy and biodiversity to create a more ecologically connected urban landscape.

That's why we are working with local councils to deliver \$10 million in funding to green our urban areas. This funding will support the greening of areas with low tree canopy and high urban heat that are targeted for housing growth, particularly low and mid-rise housing areas, to build climate resilience and enhance liveability and local amenity.

For the first time, the Greening our City grants are open to 10 councils in the Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions. This change will bring the benefits of urban cooling, biodiversity, and improved amenity to these growing communities.

We look forward to partnering with councils to create more resilient places for the people of NSW.

# Overview of grant program

The NSW Government is inviting select councils across the Greater Sydney, Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions to apply for grants to fund urban greening projects under the 2025 Greening our City grant round. This is the fifth round of grant funding under the Greening our City program (the **Program**).

## Greening our City program expansion

The Greening our City program aims to mitigate the impacts of urban heat and climate change by increasing urban tree canopy and urban biodiversity to develop a more ecologically connected urban landscape. The program delivers grants, engages in partnerships, hosts council workshops and provides other support to promote urban greening outcomes. This includes the Greener Neighbourhoods program which empowers councils to take a strategic approach to planning and managing their local urban forests.

The program is funded by the Climate Change Fund (CCF) and was recently expanded to include 10 local government areas (LGAs) outside of Greater Sydney in the Hunter, Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions. With new housing projected for these regional urban centres, the program will now deliver benefits to an additional 1.4 million residents, including communities identified under the NSW Government's recent housing reforms. This change will ensure that urban cooling, biodiversity and amenity benefits are delivered to these growing communities.

## 2025 grant round

Up to \$10 million is being made available through the 2025 Greening our City grant round through a competitive, targeted grant program with all projects to be completed within 30 months from commencement of the funding agreement.

Grant funding will enhance public areas for current and future residents. The funding will mean greener streets, increased understorey planting and more shade along active transport routes. It will create cooler, sustainable and more liveable urban areas. Enhancing urban tree canopy can help reduce the economic, social and environmental impacts of extreme heat and build resilience to climate change. Supporting biodiversity through urban greening projects with a focus on canopy and understorey planting represents an opportunity to connect with Country and foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing with Aboriginal communities.

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## Purpose

The 2025 Greening our City grant round will help councils deliver urban tree canopy and biodiverse understorey plantings that will increase canopy, reduce urban heat and support local biodiversity.

Greening our City grants will support urban greening in areas of low canopy and high urban heat that are targeted for housing growth, particularly low and mid-rise housing areas, to build climate resilience, enhance liveability and local amenity.

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## Objectives

The objectives of the 2025 Greening our City grant round are to:

- deliver tree canopy and biodiverse understorey plantings that reduce urban heat, increase liveability and support biodiversity in urban areas
- prioritise urban greening projects in low canopy and high urban heat areas
- support projects that align with the Biodiversity in Place Framework
- support projects that service areas identified under the Low and Mid-rise Housing Policy
- support projects that align with local urban greening strategies and canopy targets, including those developed under the Greener Neighbourhoods program
- support projects that enhance use of public places, through cooling and greening of streets, parks, public plazas and active transport routes
- support projects that demonstrate principles of Connecting to Country

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## Grant value

Up to \$10 million is being made available through the 2025 grant round. This funding will be available to eligible local councils through a competitive grant process. There is a minimum grant funding amount of \$50,000 (ex GST) per application with no maximum grant amount. Councils may submit up to 3 project applications, identifying council's order of preference where more than one application is submitted. This order will be considered by the evaluation panel and each project will be assessed individually against the assessment criteria.

In receiving this funding, councils are required to complete a 12-month establishment period of all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings and replace stock that does not survive this period. Up to 10% of total grant funding can be attributed to plant establishment costs within the project period. Council is to commit to ongoing maintenance of all plantings beyond the funded period.



Councils are encouraged to provide additional funding (cash and/or in-kind) for activities to improve value for money of the overall grant funded project. Contributions, whether cash or in-kind, will increase the value for money of the project in the assessment process but are not mandatory.

The assessment panel will be provided with a suggested delivery intent that reflects the program objectives and is based on funding approximately 30 projects. While grant applications with higher values will be considered, it is suggested such applications would need to clearly demonstrate exceptional value and strong alignment with the objectives of this grant round to be considered for funding.

Notwithstanding the suggested delivery intent, the assessment panel will determine the final set of recommended projects based on how well they meet the objectives of the program.

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## Distribution of grant funding

In this grant round, the total funding allocation will be split between local councils within Greater Sydney and those outside Greater Sydney. Funding will be allocated as follows:

Funding Pool	Eligibility	Funding available
1	Local councils outside of Greater Sydney	\$2.5 million (and any remainder from funding pool 2)
2	Local councils within Greater Sydney	\$7.5 million (and any remainder from funding pool 1)

This approach will ensure councils outside of Greater Sydney are not evaluated against councils that have had previous experience with the grant program, access to data and the Greener Neighbourhoods program.

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## Timeframes

All projects are required to be completed within 30 months of the commencement date. This 30-month period is recommended to consist of:

- Planning, procurement and planting of trees and biodiverse understorey plantings - 18 months.
- Establishment of all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings - 12 months.

Regardless of timing, Council must ensure that all trees and biodiverse plantings are properly established for 12 months from the date of planting. Where approved, up to 10% of grant funding can be used for plant establishment costs within the project period.

4 August 2025	Applications open
26 September 2025	Applications due
October - November 2025	Assessment and approval
December 2025 – January 2026	Agreements and funding Project delivery begins
June - July 2028	Project completion and final reporting

# Selection Criteria

The 2025 Greening our City grant round is seeking to fund Eligible Projects that promote urban tree canopy and biodiverse understorey plantings in urban areas in Greater Sydney and select councils in the Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions.

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## Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, applications must:

- be submitted by an eligible council
  - no more than 3 applications will be accepted from each council (in prioritised order)
  - projects can be a partnership between councils and other organisations, but funding agreements will be between the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the **Department**) and council only
- have minimum grant amount of \$50,000 (ex GST)
- include tree planting in urban areas as a central component of the project and integrate biodiverse understorey where possible
- demonstrate how planning, procurement, planting and project funded components of the establishment period can occur within the 30-month funding period
- have written endorsement from the council's General Manager (or equivalent) that:
  - the project will be resourced appropriately and that reasonable efforts will be made to manage modern slavery risks and complete the project on time
  - council will ensure all trees, and biodiverse understorey plantings receive a 12-month establishment period, with council ensuring ongoing maintenance after that period
- demonstrate alignment with one or more of the following:
  - [Greener Neighbourhoods Program](#)
  - Council's urban greening strategic documents, including but not limited to an urban forest strategy, street tree masterplan or biodiversity strategy
  - [Biodiversity in Place Framework](#)

- Low and Mid-Rise Housing areas
- Local Strategic Planning Statements
- Climate Change Fund objectives

## Eligible works

The following works are eligible for grant funding under this program:

- tree and biodiverse understorey plantings:
  - on council-owned or council-managed land or property (e.g. publicly accessible rooftops)
  - in new and existing public areas such as streets, laneways, parks, verges, active transport routes, sports grounds, plazas, cemeteries, reserves, pocket parks, and publicly accessible rooftops
  - with a recommended pot size of:
    - trees: 45L or greater
    - understorey planting: 50mm, 75mm, 140mm, 150mm or 200mm
  - that consider the future climate suitability of species to provide resilient and biodiverse planting
- woody meadows, micro forests, food forests and orchards where urban cooling and biodiversity outcomes can be demonstrated
- infrastructure that supports tree and biodiverse understorey planting projects, such as:
  - tree pits
  - soil, compost, soil amendments and mulch
  - structural soil cells or similar
  - root barriers
  - active, passive and smart irrigation
  - drainage
  - tree guards
  - root ball support
  - Water Sensitive Urban Design such as rain gardens and bioswales
- community engagement that is required to gain support for approved planting activities

- project management where costs can be completely and directly attributed to project works (e.g. contractors)
- temporary green infrastructure (e.g. floating gardens) where the application can demonstrate how it will reduce urban heat, enhance urban biodiversity and that inground planting is not feasible in the proposed location
- up to 12 months of establishment for all plantings
  - up to 10% of grant funding can be used for these works, with council to provide the remainder
  - council is to commit to ongoing maintenance of all plantings beyond the funded period.
- projects delivered in partnership with community groups (such as Landcare) or universities

## Ineligible works

The following items are not eligible for grant funding under this program.

- green walls and facades
- bush regeneration / revegetation works
- direct funding of council personnel or staff positions
- planning and strategy projects
- retrospective works or activities
- community tree giveaways
- communications materials / communication activities that are not directly related to the planting project funded by the grant
- holding an event and associated costs
- existing ongoing maintenance, management or asset replacement projects
- land purchases
- planting projects that do not target urban cooling outcomes
- tree canopy and understorey programs on private property

Note: Any project works that are funded or provided by councils, such as project management costs, can be included as a cash or in-kind contribution in the grant application, increasing the overall value of the project.

## Eligible councils

The following councils in the Hunter-Central Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions are eligible to apply:

- Central Coast Council
- Cessnock City Council
- Kiama Municipal Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Maitland City Council
- City of Newcastle
- Port Stephens Council
- Shellharbour City Council
- Shoalhaven City Council
- City of Wollongong

The following councils in Greater Sydney are eligible to apply:

- Bayside Council
- Blacktown City Council
- Blue Mountains City Council
- Burwood Council
- Camden Council
- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Canada Bay
- Canterbury-Bankstown Council
- Cumberland City Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Georges River Council
- Hawkesbury City Council
- The Hills Shire Council
- Hornsby Shire Council
- Hunter's Hill Council
- Inner West Council
- Ku-ring-gai Council
- Lane Cove 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 Council
- Sutherland Shire Council
- City of Sydney
- Waverley Council
- Willoughby City Council
- Wollondilly Shire Council
- Woollahra Municipal Council



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## Assessment criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Assessment criteria
Merit	50%	<p>Clear vision and need for the project</p> <p>Demonstrated impact of the project to reduce urban heat and enhance urban biodiversity</p> <p>The existing tree canopy cover of the tree planting project area (subject to data availability)</p> <p>The proposed amount and effect of tree canopy increase and/or proposed area of biodiverse understorey planting</p> <p>Demonstrated alignment with grant program objectives</p> <p>Demonstrated alignment with NSW Government and council strategies/priorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Low and Mid-Rise Housing Policy and/or Biodiversity in Place Framework</li><li>• Local urban forest strategies, local biodiversity strategies, street tree masterplans, Green Grid strategies, etc.</li><li>• Canopy targets included in the Greener Neighbourhoods Guide or other council plans or policies</li></ul> <p>Methodology to implement the 12-month establishment period of the trees, including commitments to put measures in place to ensure the efficient supply of water for the establishment period</p> <p>Quality of project evaluation methods</p>
Engagement	10%	<p>Strategies for engagement of the community and participants</p> <p>Consideration of community expectations and how these will be addressed</p> <p>Partnership with community groups (such as Landcare) or universities</p>
Viability	20%	<p>Well planned project with appropriate risk management in place</p> <p>Realistic project scope, resourcing and timelines to complete the project</p> <p>Council commitment and capacity to deliver project alongside other grant responsibilities</p>

Criteria	Weighting	Assessment criteria
Value for money	20%	<p>Detailed and realistic budget relative to the scale and impact of the project</p> <p>Total project value, including co-contributions (cash and in-kind)</p> <p>Appropriate use of public funds and provision for contingencies</p> <p>Adequate insurance and other liabilities</p>

# Application process

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## How to apply

The application process is as follows:

1. Visit the website at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/urban-greening/grant-programs> . Read the information about the grant program to determine if you are eligible.
2. Read these grant guidelines and familiarise yourself with the grant program requirements.
3. Complete and submit the application through SmartyGrants by 5:00 pm (AEST) on 26 September 2025.

Applicants must:

- answer all questions in the application portal
- attach copies of plans/reports referred to in your application. Only attach relevant pages or sections, not reports in their entirety.
- provide General Manager (or equivalent) written endorsement at the time of application or within one week of applications closing.
- Applications must also satisfy the grant criteria and applicants must accept the conditions outlined in these guidelines.

The applicant may be contacted for verification or for further information. However, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their application is clear and complete upon submission.

After the application is submitted, councils will receive notification of receipt.

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## Application requirements

### Number of applications

- Each council can make up to 3 applications, provided each application meets the eligibility criteria. Each application will be assessed individually against the assessment criteria.

- Where a council wishes to submit multiple projects, they will be required to rank them in order of preference for council delivery. This ranking may not reflect which projects get supported.
- Councils can combine similar projects into one application.
- Council should only apply for projects they can complete with the resources they have available. Councils should not apply for more grants than they can project manage within their existing resources, should all projects be endorsed for funding.

## Council capacity to complete projects

- Councils will be required to identify how many outstanding Greening our City grants they have at the time of application and demonstrate how council will service their current grant management responsibilities alongside any new projects, should they be successful.
- Previous grant management performance will be considered when determining council's capacity to complete projects that are seeking funding.

## Council endorsement

- The council's General Manager (or equivalent) must approve the application before it will be considered. 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.
- If General Manager approval is not feasible before the grant application deadline, applications with approval from a director with an appropriate level of financial delegation to meet the grant submission deadline will be accepted as an interim measure.
- The General Manager or equivalent must then approve the application by email to [gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au) or provide a signed letter of support within one week of applications closing. If General Manager approval is not provided within that timeframe, the application may be deemed ineligible.

## Commitment to health of trees and biodiverse understorey plantings

- Councils must commit to providing a 12-month establishment period, including replacing and establishing any trees or biodiverse understorey plantings that do not survive this period. Where approved, up to 10% of grant funding can be used for plant establishment costs.

- The establishment period commences the day of planting and concludes 12 months from that day for each tree and/or biodiverse understory plantings.
- Projects must demonstrate that there is, or will be, a reliable water supply to the newly planted trees and biodiverse understorey plantings during the 12-month establishment period, and that Council will continue to provide ongoing maintenance to plantings beyond the funding period.
- We encourage applications that propose to incorporate efficient water supply, planters, products or systems that enhance water efficiency/retention (especially during establishment) or water-efficient technologies such as recycled water or stormwater.

## Project timeframe

All projects will have 30 months to complete all works and acquit.

This 30-month period is recommended to consist of:

- Planning, procurement and planting of trees and biodiverse plantings - 18 months.
- Establishment of all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings - 12 months.

Regardless of timing, Council must ensure that all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings are properly established for 12 months from the date of planting. Where approved, up to 10% of grant funding can be used for plant establishment costs within the project period.

## Community engagement

Applications must demonstrate how the community will be engaged and involved during the delivery of the project.

## Delivery of tree canopy and/or biodiverse understorey plantings expansion

Projects must demonstrate the extent of impact they will have on local tree canopy and urban greening. The [Greener Neighbourhoods Guide](#) and, for Greater Sydney Councils, the [2022 tree canopy data](#) are examples of tools that can be used to prioritise tree planting projects and to measure canopy cover and set targets.

## Insurance requirements

Organisations applying for funding via this program are required to have minimum public liability insurance cover of \$20 million.

We recommend that applicant organisations have personal accident and professional indemnity insurance, however this is not a condition of funding. Organisations that employ

staff must comply with the *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998* (NSW).

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## Support available to applicants

Instructions and guidance are provided on the Greening our City [website](#).

A webinar will be held in August 2025 for all eligible councils to attend and ask any questions.

For further assistance, please contact the Green and Sustainable Cities team at [gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au)



# Assessment process

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## Assessment of grant applications

The Department will assess applications as follows:

1. Applications will be assessed by the Green and Sustainable Cities team to determine their eligibility.
2. Eligible applications will be assessed by an independent assessment panel against the criteria in the 'Assessment criteria' section of these guidelines. The independent panel will be selected from industry experts, senior Department officers and state government representatives. The panel will recommend projects for funding to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.
3. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces will make final decisions regarding funding allocations.

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## Notification of application outcome

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the application outcome by email or letter before the public announcement. Written advice to unsuccessful applicants (with reasons for the application being unsuccessful) will be provided. Feedback can be arranged on request.

Any request for feedback or to appeal any decision is to be made to [gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au)

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## Publication of grants information

The Grants Administration Guide (Guide) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPA Act), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined.

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 (NSW).

# Successful grant applications

The following section applies only to those councils that are advised that they have been successful in receiving grant funding. It provides an overview of the key requirements for grant recipients in delivering their projects under this program. Details will be confirmed within the funding agreement.

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## Grant agreement

Grant recipients are to arrange for the General Manager (or delegated authority), to sign the grant agreement and return to the Department for countersignature. No work is to commence until the funding agreement is signed by all parties.

Important terms and conditions associated with the funding include the following:

- Quarterly project progress monitoring
- Compliance with project milestones
- Acknowledgement of the financial support by the NSW Government
- No financial commitments to be made until funding agreements are executed
- Project termination by the Department if council does not comply with the funding agreement
- Completion reporting for project acquittal
- Repayment of unspent funds
- Being responsible for any project cost overruns
- Participating in a program evaluation or audit to determine the extent to which projects have contributed to the program objectives.

The NSW Grant Administration Guide (the Guide) introduces guidance for variations in state funded grant programs. The Greening our City grant program will be administered in line with the Guide and all Department grant management policy positions.

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## Grant payment

Payments of grants will be made at the completion of key milestones, with timing and phasing to be confirmed in the signed funding agreement.

A final project report and invoice must be submitted as part of the final payment claim. The report must outline the process and outcomes achieved by the project. This report should include a commitment to ongoing maintenance of all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings as part of the project. The final payment will be subject to satisfactory completion of the project, demonstrated within the final project report.

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## Unspent funds

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

Should the grant recipient seek to use the funds to extend the scope of the project, they should make a formal request for the Department's approval to vary their project to [gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au).

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## Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

Grant recipients must submit project progress and final reports as per the reporting schedule within the signed funding agreement. An indicative reporting schedule is provided below:

### **Milestone 1 – Commencement (30% of grant funding)**

- On execution of funding agreement

### **Milestone 2 – Mid-way progress report (30% of grant funding)**

- To be paid on satisfactory submission of:
  - Progress report at mid-point of project
  - Update of project plan
  - Concept design of project, including planting plan and plant schedule

### **Milestone 3 – Progress report (30% of grant funding)**

- Completion of planting activities
- GIS point locations of all trees and polygon location of biodiverse understorey plantings, all with minimum spatial data provided

### **Milestone 4 – Final report (10% of grant funding)**

- Completion of establishment period or satisfactory progress
- Project and financial acquittal

## Quarterly progress monitoring

Council project leads will be required to provide a short progress update of their project each quarter. This may be in the form of an online survey or similar. Based on the results of this report, project leads may be required to attend a subsequent check-in meeting with the Department.

The requirements of this monitoring will have been met once the progress update has been provided and follow-up tasks (if any) have been completed.

## Acquittal requirements

A project can only be acquitted when it is complete. A project is complete when:

- All trees and understorey have been planted.
- All other deliverables in the project plan have been completed.
- The Department is satisfied a 12-month establishment period will be provided for all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings, including replacing and establishing any trees or understorey plants that do not survive this period
- All acquittal information has been submitted and is considered adequate by the Department

Projects must be completed within 30 months of the date of all parties signing the funding agreement. Due to funding constraints, it is unlikely that variations to extend time will be granted to projects.

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## Evaluation

The grant will be evaluated against the purpose and objectives of the program, in line with requirements from the CCF.

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## Project launch and promotion

Grant recipients are not to publicly announce the project until advised by the Department.

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, and the Resilience and Sustainability Division of the Department must be:

- invited to attend any formal launch event (including commencement and completion ceremonies)
- advised four weeks prior to any formal event

- acknowledged for their contribution on all communications and media for the project.

Further details, including acknowledgement of funding, will be detailed within the signed funding agreement.

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## Tree management plan and establishment period

Grant recipients must complete a 12-month establishment period for all trees and biodiverse understorey plantings planted under this program, including replacing and establishing any plants that do not survive this period. This establishment period is essential to ensure trees and biodiverse understorey plantings have the best chance of survival. Where approved, up to 10% of grant funding can be used for plant establishment costs.

The Department may audit establishment periods to ensure they are being carried out and to measure their success.

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## Communication

It is expected that grant recipients maintain regular communication with the Department.

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to:

- alert the Department of any issues or risks to delivery or completion of the project at the first available opportunity; and
- respond to the Department should they be contacted by the Department regarding any aspect of their grant at the first available opportunity.

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## Project management

Councils are asked to nominate a project manager and to notify the Department in writing should the project manager change. Councils are responsible for all aspects of project management and budgetary control.

### Disclaimer

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The costs of preparing an application are borne by the applicant.



# Additional information and resources

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## Definitions

**Biodiverse understorey plantings:** Diverse understorey planting including shrubs, grasses and groundcovers enhances the biodiversity value of the various typologies that are present across urban areas (e.g. roads, streets, laneways, campuses, district, local and pocket parks, cemeteries, reserves, disused lots etc). For the purposes of this grant round, understorey planting includes shrubs, grasses and groundcovers of less than 3m in height at maturity, including within planter boxes, but does not include lawn or turf.

**Bush regeneration:** The process of renewing and restoring degraded, damaged, or destroyed vegetation areas. Also known as natural area restoration. (National Trust)

**Establishment period:** The establishment period for trees and biodiverse understory plantings is the 12-month period immediately following planting. In this period, councils must ensure all plants are watered and managed to ensure what is planted grows successfully to maximise survival. Any plants that die in this period are to be replaced and established. It is councils' responsibility to implement the establishment period for all plantings under this program.

**Tree:** For the purposes of the Greening our City Program, a tree is a tall, long-lived, woody plant that casts shade and provides a cooling effect.

**Tree management plan:** A plan which councils must provide that demonstrates how trees and green cover will establish, grow successfully and how water will be used efficiently throughout the project, including during the establishment period.

**Urban tree canopy:** The layer of leaves, branches and stems of a tree that provide coverage of the ground when viewed from above. Urban tree canopy refers to trees on public and private land within urban areas and comprises a variety of tree types such as exotics, deciduous trees, and evergreens.

**Urban land:** For the purposes of this grant round, anything related to, or characteristics of, cities, towns and suburbs.

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## Complaint handling

Complaints regarding any component of the grant round can be made to [gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gocgrants@planning.nsw.gov.au).

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## 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.

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## Ethical conduct

### Conflict of interest management

A probity adviser will provide advice regarding managing conflicts of interest throughout all stages of the program. A register of interests will be established with oversight by the independent probity advisor.

### Confidentiality

Successful applicants are required to keep the outcome of the application process confidential until the government makes a public announcement. Grant recipients are not to publicly announce the project until advised by the Department.

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## Privacy policy

The Department will collect and store the information you voluntarily provide to enable processing of your grant application.

Any information provided by you will be stored on a database that will only be accessed by authorised personnel and is subject to privacy restrictions. The information will only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.

The Department is required to comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988*. Minimal personal information is collected to enable us to contact an organisation and to assess the merits of an application.

Applicants must ensure that people whose personal details are supplied in applications are aware that the information is being supplied to the Department and how this information will be used.

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## NSW Grant Administration Guide

The NSW Grants Administration Guide was published in March 2024 to harmonise grants administration processes across government and ensure that the key principles of transparency, accountability and probity are embedded in the way NSW Government grants are delivered.

The 2025 Greening our City Grant Program will be conducted in accordance with the Guide.