



ACT Community Garden Grants Program

Guidelines for applicants
Round Nine 2023-24

Applications close
5pm, Thursday 7 September 2023



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as Canberra's first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians. We recognise the special relationship and connection that Ngunnawal people have with this Country. Prior to the displacement of Ngunnawal people from their land, they were a thriving people whose life and culture was connected unequivocally to this land in a way that only they understand and know and is core to their physical and spiritual being. The segregation of the Ngunnawal people from Culture and Country has had long-lasting, profound, and ongoing health and well-being effects on their life, cultural practices, families, and continuation of their law/lore. We acknowledge the historic interruption of the Ngunnawal people of Canberra and their surrounding regions. We recognise the significant contribution the Ngunnawal people have played in caring for Country. For time immemorial they have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual, and economic connection to these lands and waters.

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Accessibility

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If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, please phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at EPSDDComms@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone **13 14 50**.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment, and need the teletypewriter service, please phone **13 36 77** and ask for Access Canberra on **13 22 81**.

For speak and listen users, please phone **1300 555 727** and ask for Canberra Connect on **13 22 81**.

For more information on these services visit relayservice.com

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About the Program

The ACT Community Garden Grants are designed to support the delivery of community gardens across Canberra that enhance community places and spaces.

The popularity of community gardens and school kitchens is increasing across Australia and in our region. Community gardens are often established in urban areas, providing important opportunities for people to grow and consume locally produced fresh food. Other benefits include providing opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, celebration of cultural diversity, provision of spaces to connect with nature, an increased understanding of food production challenges, and fostering a stronger sense of community.

This year we are pleased to announce two funding streams for the Community Garden Grant Program. Stream One includes \$40,000 in funding for minor improvements or expansion of existing gardens, or establishing small low-impact gardens. Stream Two includes \$60,000 in funding for the establishment of new, large-scale food production community gardens, or for significant garden infrastructure. Please refer to the 'Funding Project Priorities' section for more information on the characteristics that help define a new Canberra community garden.

Eligibility

Not-for-profit community organisations, groups and owners' corporations are eligible to apply. An applicant must:

- be a not-for-profit organisation or not-for profit group with an incorporated legal structure registered under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) (e.g. be an incorporated association, a company limited by guarantee, an Indigenous corporation or a non-trading co-operative). Individuals and non-incorporated groups can apply through an auspicing incorporated not-for-profit organisation
- have an ABN and a minimum of \$10 million public liability insurance or provide a quote from an insurance company and then become insured for \$10 million public liability upon becoming successful for funding. This grant cannot be used to pay for the required insurance
- be applying for funding for a project to be undertaken within the ACT and primarily for the benefit of ACT residents
- not be a government agency
- not be a political party registered under the Commonwealth Electoral Act (1918)
- be prepared to enter into a Deed of Grant with the Territory.

Auspiced applications

Individuals and non-incorporated groups must apply through an auspicings incorporated not-for-profit community organisation. An auspice is an organisation that accepts legal responsibility including financial accountability for a project.

If your organisation is not a legal entity you will need to arrange for an organisation that has legal status to act as an auspice. Where an application includes an auspicings organisation, they are required to:

- Contract directly with the Directorate for the receipt of grant funding for the project and administer the funding in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Deed of Grant
- Disburse grant funding for the project to the auspicings party in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Deed of Grant and not unreasonably withhold funding from the auspicings party for the implementation of the project
- Comply with all grant funding contractual obligations, including the provision of progress reports, final reports and financial acquittal documentation
- Submit the Project Evaluation Report and Financial Acquittal Report on behalf of the auspicings party.

How much is available?

\$100,000 is available for Round nine 2023-24.

How much can I apply for?

Stream One: The minimum funding is \$2,000 (GST exclusive) with a maximum of \$10,000 (GST exclusive) funding per eligible organisation/s.

Stream Two: The minimum funding is \$10,000 (GST exclusive) with a maximum of \$20,000 (GST exclusive) funding per eligible organisation/s.

While organisations may submit multiple applications for consideration, only one grant can be awarded to each organisation per round. Joint applications with multiple organisations carrying out the project are welcomed.

Important dates for Round Nine

- **Applications open:** Friday 23 June 2023
- **Applications close:** 5pm Thursday 7 September 2023
- **Funding provided:** Within 30 days of the Deed of Grant being signed by both parties
- **Acquittal of funds:** Within 30 days of the end of the grant period

Project funding priorities

Applicants are required to demonstrate that their project contributes to the delivery of new or existing gardens. Appropriate land approvals must be in place (or in progress) prior to applying.

The definition of Canberra community gardens in the Territory Plan refers to the use of land for the cultivation of produce primarily for personal use. They are characterised by:

- individual garden plots for twenty or more members together with communal areas
- a connection to a drinkable (potable) water supply
- gardens with edible produce and supportive companion (flowering) plants
- secure fencing and a locked gate
- exclusive access and use by members only, although some garden groups invite the wider community to social and educational events within their garden

The dominant model of management of community gardens in the ACT is where a community group manages a plot of land (either by dividing it into allotments or creating shared gardens) to produce food. The site is usually fenced, and access is controlled by the community group. While this model has already proven successful in Canberra, other approaches should not be excluded from the possibility of approval. Proposed management styles for new community gardens will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Funding is available for projects that support community gardens and meet one or more of the following priorities:

1. Benefit to the wider community, encourage social inclusion and promote healthy living through

- Supplying food to disadvantaged people
- Promoting social cohesion and good mental health through providing meeting spaces
- Supporting activities that foster social inclusion
- Improving awareness, skills and capability in buying and preparing healthy food
- Establishment of new community garden locations across Canberra

2. Demonstrate principles of the circular economy, zero emissions or carbon sequestration through:

- Repurposing, recycling and/or reusing resources, tools, materials
- Minimising the use of harmful chemicals and substances by prioritising the use of organic and eco-friendly options
- Adopting zero emissions technology such as electric alternatives to fossil fuel-powered tools and equipment or renewable technology
- Demonstrating carbon sequestration through activities such as composting and/or planting of trees and shrubs.

3. Have a high level of community support, including volunteers and sponsorship through:

- Demonstrated volunteer support to maintain the gardens operations beyond the life of the grant
- Letters of support from community organisations, co-ops and volunteer groups.

The above priorities are aligned with the ACT Government's Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City, the ACT Wellbeing Framework and the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025.

In addition to demonstrating how projects will achieve the outcomes and priorities listed above, applicants are encouraged to indicate how projects will encourage community engagement through activities such as promoting the garden to a range of community groups.

Projects should identify which on-ground outputs they will deliver against the priorities listed above and how they comply with the Merit Criteria. Applicants are encouraged to develop collaborative projects that can demonstrate on-ground results at an appropriate scale.

What will be funded

Funding will be provided for, but not limited to:

- materials to build a new or enhance a current community garden
- equipment hire
- tools
- contractor hire, e.g. specialised labour required from a bricklayer or backhoe driver
- minor infrastructure, e.g. storage sheds, pergolas, repair to existing garden beds and garden edging
- significant infrastructure, e.g. earthworks for water harvesting and storage, plant propagation, fencing, plumbing, large-scale compost production and accessibility paths
- catering for volunteers for activities related to the grant project or activity, e.g. working bees or planting events
- garden memberships for duration of the grant project only (up to \$150), not funded beyond the grant period
- project administration/oversight directly related to the administration of the grant project or activity (up to 10% of the grant amount)

What will not be funded

Funding will not be provided for:

- projects funded by another grant or funding source unless it can be demonstrated the projects are distinct from the separately funded work
- any project or activity that does not align with one or more of the Program priorities
- any project or activity undertaken on a property not owned by the applicant and for which the applicant does not provide evidence the owner has approved the project or activity
- projects to be undertaken outside of the ACT border
- funding of projects, activities and any other commitments beyond the maximum funding period
- reimbursement for previously completed activities or any costs incurred outside of the grant period
- on-going running costs of an organisation, including salaries of employees (with the exception of project administration/oversight costs directly related to the administration of the grant project, not exceeding 10% of the grant amount)
- salary components
- insurances (e.g. public liability and volunteer)
- projects proposed by a group or organisation with an overdue acquittal for projects or programs administered by the ACT Government.

The inclusion of electoral material in publications produced with ACT Community Garden Grants' funding is not permitted.

Merit criteria

If your application is assessed as eligible, your project proposal will be assessed on the following merit criteria:

Merit criterion	Description	Weight (%)
1	Align with the funding priorities identified above	25
2	Demonstrate sound project planning, including achievable milestones, timelines, and project outcomes	25
3	Establish that the project is feasible and represents good value for money	25
4	Demonstrate relevant stakeholder and community support	25

To be competitive, applicants must address all merit criteria listed above in their application. The ACT Government will assess the application against each merit criterion, using the weighting indicated above. A minimum score of 50% in each of the criterion must be met for a project to be considered for funding. The quality of the application, regarding the level of detail and types of supporting documents supplied, should be proportional to the Stream applied for (One or Two), the size of the project, its complexity and level of funding requested.

Funding duration

ACT Community Garden Grant funds must be spent within 18 months of signing the Deed of Grant. Successful applicants will receive funding in one lump sum.

Applicant contributions

Applicants are encouraged to contribute towards their proposed project through cash and/or in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are non-cash contributions towards eligible project costs. The reported value of in-kind contributions must be consistent with current market rates. For in-kind contributions to count towards eligible project costs they must directly relate to the project and eligible activities. If volunteer labour is included as an in-kind contribution, it can be costed at \$33.71 per hour. In-kind professional or contractor time contributions should be calculated at current average industry rates.

Other funding sources

If applicants are seeking additional funds from other sources, costs need to be clearly defined and show transparent application of project funds to reflect activities (or components of projects) that have been funded through other sources.

Insurance

Successful applicants must provide, at the time of signing funding deeds with the Territory, evidence that they either:

- Have a current public liability insurance policy with a minimum of \$10 million in cover, or
- Have obtained a quote from an insurance company for that level of cover.

ABN and GST registration

If a successful applicant ('Recipient') has an Australian Business Number (ABN) and is registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST), the project will be funded as a GST exclusive amount based on the budget submitted in the application. The Territory will pay to the Recipient a 10% top-up equal to the GST as part of the total grant monies. The total grant amount received (including GST) must be accounted for as a taxable supply (income) and 1/11th remitted to the Australian Tax Office (ATO) on your next Business Activity Statement as GST payable. The net funding that remains will cover the costs of your project excluding GST. Any GST that you pay on goods and services acquired for your project will be claimable by you as input tax credits.

If the Recipient has an ABN registration but does not have GST registration, the Grant will not include a 10% top-up equal to the GST and the Territory is not liable to pay any further amount in relation to GST to the Recipient. The project will be funded as a GST exclusive amount based on the budget submitted in the application.

Deed of Grant

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Deed of Grant with the Territory. The Deed of Grant identifies certain legal obligations associated with the grant including project activities, requirements concerning the use of grant funds, project evaluation and financial reporting. If recipients wish to change the purpose of the grant or a condition of the Deed, written authorisation from the Territory will be required. A variation to the Deed may also be necessary.

Individual applicants and non-incorporated groups or organisations must apply through an auspicing incorporated not-for-profit organisation. In that case, the Deed of Grant would be between the sponsoring incorporated group and the Territory.

Reporting

Successful applicants are required to have informal check-ins with the Program Coordinator to report on progress of the project and discuss any issues that arise. This will help provide assurance that projects remain on track and are being delivered to an acceptable standard.

All organisations that enter into a Deed of Grant will be required to submit a formal report via SmartyGrants within 30 days of the end of the grant period, the formal report includes:

- an overview of the achievements of the project including photos
- an evaluation of the project, and
- a financial statement, including evidence of grant expenditure, i.e. scanned tax receipts.

The types of evidence collected for reporting should be proportional to the size of the project, its complexity and level of funding received. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will provide templates to successful applicants for preparing their reports and can provide further guidance on this.

Conflict of interest

It is important that applicants do not have private interests and/or relationships that will create a conflict of interest or can be perceived to create a conflict of interest. Potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed at the time of lodgment of an application or immediately after a potential conflict becomes apparent.

How to apply

Stage 1 – Planning and preparation

1. Read and understand these grant guidelines and land use approval process if applicable
2. Determine your organisation's eligibility as well as the eligibility of the planned activity. Contact the Directorate through Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or at EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au if you have a question relating to these guidelines or if you would like to discuss your application.
3. Obtain all relevant approvals and authorisations to undertake activities associated with your application.
4. Go the Community Garden Grants application webpage and familiarise yourself with the application form <https://actgovt.smartygrants.com.au/CGgrantsRd9>
5. Set-up a free online account in SmartyGrants - the Directorate's online grants management system (previous SmartyGrants users can use their previous account).
6. Start your application early to ensure you have enough time to gather supporting information such as quotes, letters of support and landholder's approval. Failure to provide relevant supporting documentation may affect the success of your application.
7. Applications must be submitted using the application form. In particular:
 - a. all sections of the application form must be completed
 - b. all additional material requested in the application form must be attached where relevant
 - c. full details of the applicant (including ABN) must be supplied with two contact names, phone numbers and email addresses.

Stage 2 – Submit your application

1. All applications must be submitted via SmartyGrants. Submit your application online via SmartyGrants by 5pm Thursday 7 September 2023.
2. If there is a reason why you are unable to submit an online application, please contact the Grants Coordinator through Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au to discuss.
3. No late applications will be accepted.
4. Emailed/posted applications will only be accepted if prior approval has been given.

Stage 3 – Assessment of applications

1. Assessment will be undertaken by Directorate staff and external representatives with relevant expertise.
2. Assessment will be based on the criteria identified in these guidelines.

3. Directorate staff involved in assessment will operate under the ACT Public Service Code of Conduct.
4. External representatives will be required to sign a Conflict of Interest Declaration and a Deed of Confidentiality.

Note: any liaison with an assessment panel member by an applicant or another person about a specific application may result in immediate disqualification.

Stage 4 – Results of applications

1. The Executive Branch Manager, Climate Change and Energy Programs, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, is the decision-maker for all grants recommended for funding by the assessment panel.
2. The Minister for the Environment will announce the successful applicants.
3. Following the announcement, successful applicants will be listed on the Directorate's website.
4. All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their submission by email.
5. The Directorate will email successful applicants regarding funding and seek further documentation as required.
6. All decisions are final. Applicants not granted funding can request feedback on their application by emailing EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au

Need help with your application?

Contact the Directorate through Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or via email at EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au if you have a question relating to these guidelines or if you would like to discuss your application.

General information and tips for those considering applying for an ACT Government grant can be found online at <https://www.act.gov.au/grants/applying-for-receiving-grant>.

How can I find out more?

Additional information relating to the ACT Community Garden Grants can be found on the [Everyday Climate Choices](#) website or by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

Applications must be received by 5pm Thursday 7 September 2023.

Contact us

Phone: 13 22 81 Email: EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au

May 2023



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