



ACT Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program

Guidelines for applicants

Round Five

Applications close: 5pm, Tuesday 9 April 2024



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climate choices



ACT
Government

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Acknowledgement of Country

Yuma

Dhawura nguna ngurumbangu gunangu Ngunnawal. Nginggada dindi dhawura Ngunnawalbun yindjumaralidjinyin. Mura bidji mulangaridjindjula. Naraganawaliyiri yarabindjula.

Hello

This country is Ngunnawal (ancestral/spiritual) homeland. We all always respect elders, male and female, as well as Ngunnawal country itself. They always keep the pathways of their ancestors alive. They walk together as one.

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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1. About the Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program

Climate change is already affecting Canberra. Impacts include higher temperatures and longer and more frequent heatwaves. As a result, Canberrans are increasingly suffering from the “urban heat island effect”. This occurs when surfaces such as pavements, roads and buildings absorb the sun’s heat and radiate it back, increasing surface temperatures day and night by up to 10-15°C.

Along with many other benefits, living infrastructure can help reduce this heat island effect, supporting our city to cope with the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. Living infrastructure refers to natural assets, including:

- trees, gardens, green walls and roofs,
- parks, reserves and open spaces, and
- waterbodies including lakes, wetlands and waterways.

The Nature in the City Grants Program was initiated in 2020, supporting projects that aimed to improve the urban landscape. The rounds have funded projects that enhanced living infrastructure in the ACT’s urban areas.

The 2024 round, Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb will focus on urban cooling through nature-based means. It will provide funding to eligible organisations for projects and feasibility studies which focus on reducing urban heat, with priority given to projects in urban locations that have lower than average tree canopy cover (Figure 1) and/or at locations that are hotter than average (Figure 2).

Please note biodiversity and revegetation projects are not priorities for this round, although projects may provide biodiversity and revegetation co-benefits. Projects which focus solely on biodiversity or revegetation would be better suited to a different grant such as the ACT Environmental Grants Program or the Community Garden Grants Program.

The ACT Government has committed \$300,000 over a two-year period for the Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program.

1.1. Program Objectives

Projects:

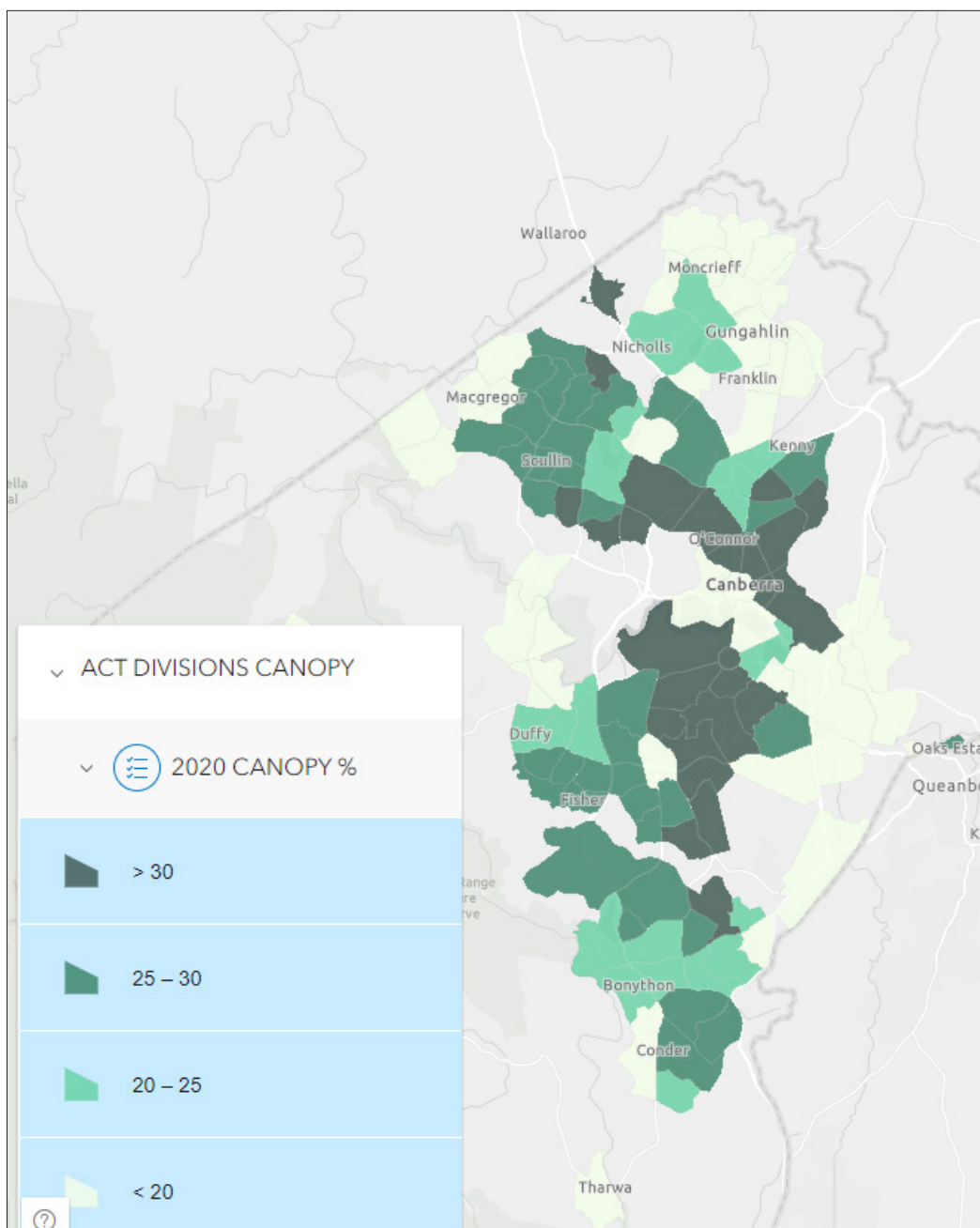
The Program is designed to fund projects that will achieve all or some of the following objectives:

1. Provide cooling, increase access to shade, and reduce heat through nature-based means. Priority will be given to locations that have lower than average tree canopy cover (see Figure 1) and/or locations that are typically hotter than average on a hot day (see Figure 2).

2. Demonstrate innovative approaches to achieving urban cooling using climate-wise designs. These may include non-natural materials to complement and/or maximise the viability of the living infrastructure elements.
3. Improve rainwater retention and penetration in the landscape to reduce storm water runoff and sustain vegetation.
4. Establish collaborations with organisations, including community organisations, which can maintain the project’s cooling benefits beyond the funded grant period.

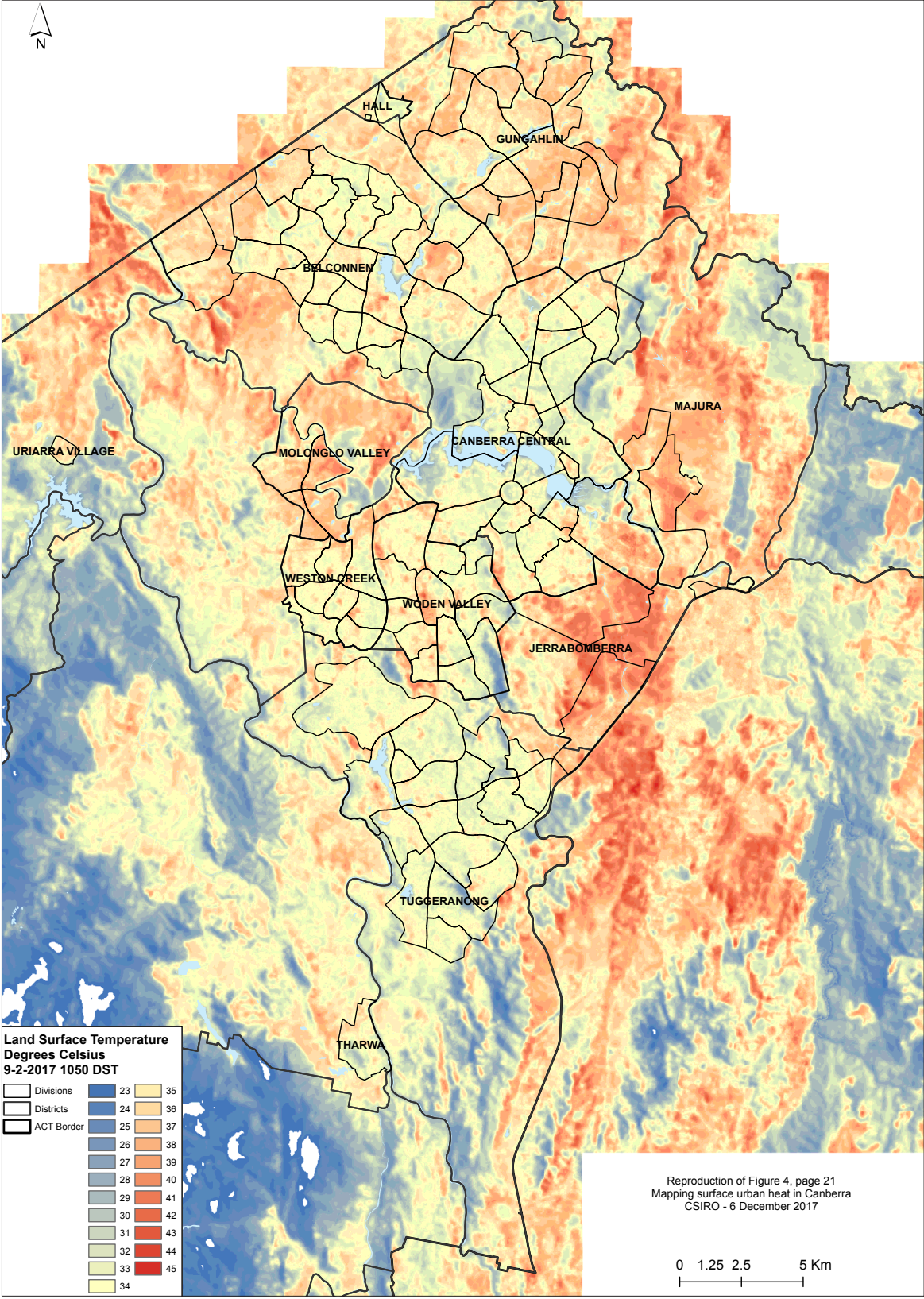
A list of potential project ideas is provided in section 4.3 of these Guidelines.

Figure 1. Percentage Tree Canopy Cover across all suburbs in Canberra (average across Canberra’s urban area is around 22%)



Source: <https://actgov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=2eb04c29f971499aa3aeb4abaa36059>

Figure 2. Map of surface urban heat in Canberra on a summer day showing areas in orange and red that are hotter than the average - the analysis is based on satellite data from 10.50am on 9 February 2017 when the mean land surface temperature was 35°C. (CSIRO, 2017)



Source: Meyers J, Devereux D, Van Niel T and Barnett G (2017) Mapping surface urban heat in Canberra. CSIRO, Australia.

Feasibility Studies:

Applications for feasibility studies can also be considered in the Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program.

The purpose of a feasibility study is to investigate the cost and engineering viability of a future project idea, aimed at delivering the program priorities.

Please note the following:

- Funding of a feasibility study does not guarantee funding of an emerging project proposal in future program rounds.
- Feasibility studies may be made publicly available upon completion to inform possible projects in a subsequent Round. For this reason, organisations that have been successfully funded to undertake a feasibility study will need to supply a publicly accessible weblink to the study upon completion.
- In the event a feasibility study is used to inform a future grant application, or is otherwise used, the future applicant or user must acknowledge the source of the feasibility study.

1.2. Funding Available

\$150,000 of funding is available in Round Five of the Program.

Projects: The minimum funding is \$10,000 (GST exclusive) with a maximum of \$50,000 (GST exclusive) per eligible organisation.

While grant funding from the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate can cover the full costs of projects, proposals that contribute additional funding from proposal organisations or partners and/or jointly funded projects will be competitive during the assessment process (refer to Section 2.6 for information on applicant contributions). Successful applicants are responsible for any remaining eligible and ineligible project costs in excess of the grant funding provided.

Feasibility Studies: The minimum funding is \$2,000 (GST exclusive) with a maximum of \$10,000 (GST exclusive). If the feasibility study is successful, applicants are eligible to apply for project funding up to \$50,000 (GST exclusive) in a subsequent round of the program (as per above) or through another source.

While organisations may submit multiple applications for projects and/or feasibility studies consideration, only one grant can be awarded to each organisation per round. Joint applications with multiple organisations delivering the project are welcomed, however there must be a single lead applicant.

1.3. Important Dates for Round Five

Applications open: Thursday 15 February 2024.

Applications close: 5pm, Tuesday 9 April 2024.

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 funded grant period.

2. Guidelines for applicants

In order to receive funds in a timely manner, successful projects will require comprehensive and thorough documentation, in addition to addressing each merit criteria. Please refer to the guidelines below to determine the eligibility of your organisation and proposed project or feasibility study.

2.1. Policies underpinning the allocation of funding under the Program

This grant focuses on supporting community projects that contribute to the long-term objectives of Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City, ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25, the Urban Forest Strategy (2021–45), and the ACT Planning Strategy 2018, for a sustainable and resilient city. In particular, this round will focus on projects and feasibility studies that focus on reducing urban heat, with priority given to projects at locations that have lower than average tree cover and/or are hotter than average on a hot day.

2.2. 2.2 Climate-wise landscape design

A climate-wise landscape is one that can adapt to a changing climate and continue to provide social, environmental and health benefits to the community and environment. A climate-wise landscape embeds sustainability, climate resilience and best practice design principles.

The following is a list of climate-wise landscape considerations that may be relevant:

- Use and choice of vegetation to help our city cope with the impacts of climate change through providing shade and increased resilient to future climate impacts.
- Thinking differently about surfaces (e.g. permeable surfaces instead of concrete).
- Capturing and using rainwater in sustainable ways.
- Incorporating nature-based elements to create climate resilient infrastructure such as trellises, green walls or roofs.

The following link provides a climate-wise landscape guide which may aid applicants with climate-wise design ideas: [Gawari Ngilanmanyin – a landscape guide to support a climate resilient capital](#).

2.3. Land or other approvals

Appropriate land use or other required approvals must be in place (or in process) prior to applying for projects. This does not apply to feasibility studies where obtaining land approvals may be part of the feasibility study.

The factsheets provided on the Community Garden Grants webpage can be used as a [guide for the process of applying for land use approvals](#) depending on the type of garden or infrastructure that relates to your project.

To further determine the documents and approvals required for your project, the Guideline to Landscape Municipal Infrastructure Standards should be read and used together with the suite of Municipal Infrastructure Standards (MIS) requirements for urban design. Examples of interest include: urban open spaces (MIS 16), shopping centres and commercial areas (MIS 17), irrigation (MIS 18), soft landscape design (MIS 24) and plant species for urban landscape projects (MIS 25).

2.4. What may be funded

Funding may be provided for, but not limited to:

- materials to build a project,
- equipment hire,
- tools,
- contractor hire for specialised labour required to build living or non-living infrastructure,
- minor infrastructure such as earthworks, green walls or swales,
- catering for volunteers for activities related to the grant project, and
- project administration/oversight directly related to the administration of the grant project or activity (up to 10% of the grant amount).

Note: As funding for the grants project is sourced from public funds, all projects must demonstrate significant public benefit to be successful.

2.5. What will NOT be funded

- Projects funded by another grant, unless it can be demonstrated the projects are distinct from the separately funded work and demonstrate an urban cooling outcome.
- Any project or activity that does not align with one or more of the programs priorities.
- Any project or activity undertaken on a property not owned by the applicant or if the applicant has not provided evidence the owner has approved the project or activity.
- Projects located outside the ACT border. Excluded locations include the Jervis Bay Territory.
- Projects, activities, and any other commitment beyond the maximum funding period (two years).
- 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.
- Projects that could be funded from other sources. For example, programs which focus on biodiversity and revegetation should apply for grant programs such as ACT Environmental Grants Program or the Community Garden Grants Program.

2.6. Applicant contribution

Applicants are encouraged to contribute towards their proposed project through cash and/or in-kind co-contributions. Co-funding, rather than in-kind contribution, is required where the project will deliver a private benefit in addition to significant public benefit.

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 in-kind contributions, it can be costed at \$41.72 per hour. In-kind professional or contractor time contributions should be calculated at average industry rates.

2.7. 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.

3. Eligibility

Grant applications may be received from various kinds of organisations or collaborations between organisations (see detailed guide below), but only applications with a significant and clearly defined public benefit aligned with the Program objectives will be considered.

Where an organisation applying for a grant (or as a party to an application) may reasonably expect to receive a private benefit from a project, there is an expectation that the organisation will make a financial contribution to the cost of the project commensurate with the proportional value of the private benefit with respect to the public benefit.

The following eligibility criteria apply for applicant organisations or the lead organisation in a collaboration.

3.1. All applicant organisations

All applicant organisations must:

- 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.

- Have obtained appropriate permissions. Appropriate land or other approvals must be in place (or in process) prior to applying for projects. This does not apply to feasibility studies where obtaining land approvals may be part of the feasibility study.

3.2. Not-for-profits, schools and Owners Corporations

- Not-for-profit organisations and other groups must have 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.
- ACT Government schools must apply through their Parents & Careers Association. Private and independent schools can apply directly through their school.
- Owner's corporations must be registered (and apply) with their Strata-title.

3.3. Businesses

May apply but there must be a significant and clearly defined public benefit. If there is a reasonable expectation that a business will receive a private benefit from a project, then there is an expectation that a financial contribution to the cost of the project will be made commensurate with the proportional value of the private benefit with respect to the public benefit.

- Businesses who wish to apply are encouraged to partner with a community organisation as lead applicant.

3.4. Auspiced applications

Individuals and non-incorporated groups must apply through an auspicing 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 auspice, 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 auspiced party in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Deed of Grant and not unreasonably withhold funding from the auspiced 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 auspiced party.

3.5. Who is not eligible to apply?

The following entities are not eligible to apply for funding under the Program:

- family trusts,
- statutory bodies and authorities,
- Australian Government agencies,
- ACT Government agencies,
- other state or territory agencies, and
- political parties registered under the Commonwealth Electoral Act (1918).

4. Program Priorities and Merit Criteria

If your application is deemed eligible, your project proposal or feasibility study will be assessed against the Program priorities and merit criteria as listed below.

To be competitive, applicants must address all merit criteria in their application. The ACT Government will assess the application against these merit criteria, using the weighting indicated. A minimum score of 50% in each criterion must be met for the 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 size of the project, its complexity and level of funding requested.

In addition to the merit criteria, projects will be considered favourably if they are able to demonstrate principles of the circular economy and support the transition to zero emissions through repurposing, recycling and/or reusing resources, tools, and materials.

Appropriate land or other required approvals must be in place (or in process) prior to applying projects. This does not apply to feasibility studies where obtaining land approvals may be part of the feasibility study.

ACT Government reserves the right not to allocate all funds, in cases where an insufficient number of projects or feasibility studies do not meet the eligibility and/or merit criteria.

4.1. Program priorities

Funding is available for projects and feasibility studies which provide cooling and reduce urban heat at an otherwise hot location through nature-based means, whilst demonstrating significant public benefit. Any private benefit must be funded by the organisation. Projects and feasibility studies must deliver the essential priority listed below.

Essential priority: Provide cooling and reduce heat through nature-based means with priority given to locations that have a lower than average tree canopy cover (see Figure 1) and/or locations that are in areas that are hotter than average (see Figure 2). All applications must demonstrate significant public benefit. Where there is reasonable expectation of private benefit, an estimate of its size in proportion to the public benefit must be given.

Applications should meet one or more of the following priorities in addition to the essential priority listed above for their application to be competitive.

1. Deliver demonstrable cooling outcomes:

- give consideration to how the cooling benefits of the project (or the potential benefits) can be assessed or demonstrated. For example, evidence from similar projects elsewhere, before and after infrared photos, or incorporating heat sensors within the project.

2. Deliver demonstration projects that showcase climate-wise design:

- for example, this may include the use of non-living materials to complement or maximise the viability of living infrastructure elements in different settings. The website link below can be used to inform applicants about climate-wise designs in the ACT. For more information, please visit [Climate-resilient city - Climate Choices \(act.gov.au\)](https://www.act.gov.au/climate-resilient-city)

3. Improve water penetration:

- capture and re-use rainwater to increase vegetation growth and recharge of groundwater, and
- increase overall surface permeability/replace impermeable surfaces.

4. Support collaboration between a broader cross-section of the community:

- demonstrate the capacity to maintain a project's cooling benefits over a longer time-period,
- promote social cohesion through providing community meeting spaces,
- support activities that foster social inclusion,
- improve public awareness of urban cooling methods, and
- demonstrate a high level of community support. For example, evidence of the involvement of community organisations, co-operatives or volunteer groups, commitments to maintain the project outcome beyond the life of the grant, letters of support.

4.2. Merit criteria

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

Merit criterion	Description	Weight (%)
1	Aligns with Program priorities	50
	Meets the essential priority of providing cooling and reducing urban heat through nature-based means and demonstrates significant public benefit	30
	Delivers demonstrable outcomes	5
	Delivers a 'demonstration project' that showcases climate-wise design	5
	Improves rainwater retention and penetration	5
	Supports collaboration between a broader cross-section of the community	5
2	Demonstrates sound project planning, including achievable milestones, timelines, risk assessment and obtained all required approvals	20
3	Projects must demonstrate the project is feasible, represents good value for money, and has defined project outcomes.	20
	Feasibility studies must represent good value for money.	
4	Demonstrate community and other relevant stakeholder support e.g., through participation in (or letters of support for) the projects.	10
	Projects and feasibility studies must indicate the range of public vs private benefit that the project would provide.	

4.3. Potential project ideas

The following is a list of examples of project ideas that could be considered within the Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program.

- 1. Shading structures (must contain natural elements and may contain non-natural elements):**
 - a combination of tree planting and shading structure that help to cool a location where individuals gather, such as land adjacent to cafés, school grounds, or suburban playgrounds via the use of trellises or green awnings.
- 2. Verge gardens:**

- climate-wise living infrastructure along verges with limited canopy cover or where a section of a path is exposed to extended sunlight. Note: This would be subject to compliance with Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) verge regulations and associated approvals. Please refer to the [Nature Strip Guidelines](#) for further details.
3. **Water penetration:**
 - projects which improve and retain water penetration to support local trees and vegetation such as swales to improve water retention.
 4. **Micro-forests in newer suburbs or other areas where tree canopy coverage is currently low:**
 - new micro-forests would need to be established in urban areas with lower than average tree cover and located in an urban hot spot, providing a cooling benefit to the community.
 5. **Integration of living infrastructure:**
 - replacement of heat absorbing materials such as concrete, artificial turf or gravel with cooler living infrastructure such as grasses, shrubs and groundcovers
 - installation of raised garden beds, green walls, plants against fencing in public places such as netball courts or skate parks.
 6. **Other project ideas:**
 - applicants may submit other project types, noting the projects needs to focus on providing cooling and reducing urban heat within locations within the ACT that are typically hotter than average on a hot day through living infrastructure means. The project must be achievable within the maximum grant period of 24 months and funding limit of \$50,000 (excluding GST), unless project applicants provide extra funding through other sources.

4.4. Prompts to write application

Alignment with funding priorities

Are the project outcomes directly related to the funding priorities?

A project which aligns strongly with the funding priorities outlined above will be considered favourably for funding. In your application clearly identify linkages and describe how your project outcomes will achieve these priorities.

Feasibility and Effectiveness

Are the project outcomes achievable? Can the project be done in the timeframe? Is it the most effective way to achieve your project outcomes?

Provide a clear outline of how your project will address the program priorities of reducing the “urban island heat effect” through living infrastructure or other natural means at an otherwise hot urban location in the ACT. If the project includes on-ground activities, provide information in your application on the proposed scope and scale and, where possible, use quantifiable measurements. For example, the number (or area) of trees to be planted or number of living and non-living structures to be incorporated into the project. It is also useful to have a clear idea of the current condition of the site for the planned project. Supporting documents such as photos, maps, site plans or other applicable documents must be included to highlight the case for your project.

Project Planning

How comprehensive is the project planning? Does each step of the project appear logical? Are there clear end-of-project outcomes? How are you going to monitor and evaluate your project? How will you ensure your project outcomes are maintained?

The Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program is looking for projects which have logical and achievable milestones within the two-year timeframe. You will need to identify how your project will be maintained after its completion to ensure outcomes are sustained beyond the funded project period. A project plan outlining how you will monitor and evaluate your project to ensure desired outcomes are achieved will strengthen your application. This will demonstrate how your project will achieve success in urban cooling.

Value for money

Is your budget well thought out? Are the item costs appropriate for what is required? Have you thought of all potential expenses? Have you included in-kind labour?

Applications that provide itemised budgets which consider all potential expenses of the project and provide value for money, are favourably considered. Make sure you think about the true value of the project including in-kind contributions and volunteer labour. Ideal projects will typically have a large total value but only seek a small portion from the grant funding.

Community engagement

How many people are involved in your project? What are the different demographics that will be engaged? What other community groups may be involved? How will the project and its outcomes be communicated to a wider audience?

Ideally projects will engage the community and reach a range of demographics. Please identify the various community groups that may be involved in your project and what their roles are. How will you communicate the outcomes you achieve to the wider community?

5. When are funds made available?

Funding will be available to the successful applicants (as a single lump sum) on the completion of:

- the announcement of successful projects by the Minister,
- signing by both parties of a Deed of Grant (refer to section 10),
- tax invoice supplied to receive the funds, and
- provision of all required documentation to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

The Directorate reserves the right to determine specific project payment structures on a case-by-case basis and in negotiation with the grant recipient.

6. 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 lodgement of an application or immediately after a potential conflict becomes apparent.

Public benefit must represent a significant portion of funded project. Where an organisation applying for a grant (or as a party to an application) may reasonably expect to receive a private benefit from a project, there is an expectation that the organisation will make a financial contribution to the cost of the project commensurate with the proportional value of the private benefit with respect to the public benefit.

7. Insurance

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

- 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, OR
- if their project utilises a volunteer base, they have current Voluntary Workers Insurance policy or Certificate of Insurance with minimum of \$10 million in cover.

Note: Applicants may also need additional types of insurance depending on their activities.

8. Work Health and Safety

Work Health and Safety legislation imposes a duty on employers to protect the health and safety of workers (including volunteers) and people exposed to risks arising from work being carried out. Through the grant process the successful applicant has the responsibility to address all work health and safety issues arising from their activity.

As part of your submission, you are required to:

- develop a risk assessment plan,
- identify, assess, and mitigate to the extent any relevant issues, and
- identify and document any residual risk and associated controls.

9. 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-end 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 GST exclusive amount based on the budget submitted in the application.

10. 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.

11. Reporting Evaluation and Acquittal

Successful applicants are required to have informal meetings 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.

Once the project has been concluded, the project will need to be acquitted. You will need to provide a signed statement from an appropriate financial representative from your organisation or sponsor that project funds were spent according to project budget or subsequent variation.

The applicant is responsible for the acquittal, evaluation and reporting of the project as agreed upon in the Deed of Grant. 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 report must include:

- 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 type 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.

12. Application stages and assessment

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 planned activity. Contact the Directorate through Access Canberra 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 to the Nature in the City Grants: Cooling your Suburb application webpage at <https://actgovt.smartygrants.com.au/NiCRd5> and familiarise yourself with the application form. You can preview or download the form prior to starting an application.
5. Set up a free online account in SmartyGrants (if you don't have an existing account). This is the Directorate's online grants management system. Previous SmartyGrants applicants can use their previous log in details.
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, and
 - 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 Smarty Grants by **5pm, Tuesday 9 April 2024**.
2. If there is a reason why you are unable to submit an online application, please contact the Grants Coordinator through Access Canberra 13 22 81 or via email at EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au.
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 of Climate Change and Energy Programs in Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD), is the decision-maker for all grants recommended for funding by the assessment panel.
2. The Minister for the Environment will announce 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.
6. 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

Stage 5 – Funding duration

If successful the funds must be spent within two years of signing the Deed of Grant. Successful applicants will receive funding in a lump sum.

13. Land Manager letter of support

Your project will require approvals from the relevant land manager or landowner to proceed. Due to the timeframes involved in the application process, a letter of support is sufficient in the first instance. If your application is successful, proper approval will need to be obtained before the project is able to proceed. Relevant contact details are:

Land Tenure	Land Manager/Owner	Contact Details
Urban open spaces	Transport Canberra and City Services	Please email TCCS.CPUrbanPrograms@act.gov.au referencing Nature in the City Grants and highlighting the specific sites and activities proposed as part of your project.
Private land	Legal leaseholder	Please provide written approval from the legal leaseholder, referencing Nature in the City Grants for the specific sites and activities proposed as part of your project.
Nature Reserves	ACT Parks and Conservation Service	For North side project please contact: CNPNorth@act.gov.au For South side projects please contact: CNPSouth@act.gov.au

14. Project promotion

As part of the Deed of Grant, successful applicants are required to agree to the ACT Government promoting your project to the wider community. This includes via the ACT Everyday Climate Choices website and through social media platforms. Names, location and project details of successful projects are posted on the ACT Everyday Climate Choices website.

15. Need help with your application?

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

16. How can I find out more?

Additional information relating to the Nature in the City: Cooling your Suburb Grants Program can be found on the Everyday Climate Choice website or by calling Access Canberra 13 22 81.

Applications must be received by 5pm, Tuesday 9 April 2024.

Contact us

Phone: 13 22 81

Email: EPSDDCommunityGrants@act.gov.au

January 2024



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Small Steps. Smart Choices.
climatechoices.act.gov.au