Supporting community initiatives that increase youth interest, engagement and skills in invasive species management

Youth engagement in invasive species management

Grant funding guidelines
Introduction to the grants program

Young people are under-represented in invasive species management, yet they have much to offer by way of passion and interest in improving our landscapes.

Land management is an inter-generational issue, and managing pests and weeds is a crucial part of improving our agricultural and natural landscapes. It is important that diverse voices and interests are part of the conversation about how to address the challenge of invasive species.

This grants program has been established to support youth-friendly initiatives with a focus on invasive pest and weed issues in Victoria.

Please read the background information on the Weeds and Rabbits website before submitting your application: www.weedsandrabbits.com/youth-engagement-grant-program/

Purpose of this document

This document sets out the guidelines for the Youth Engagement in Invasive Species Management Grants Program. It is designed to assist prospective applicants with the processes for submission and assessment of applications. It sets out the purpose of the program and explains what projects are eligible, how to apply and the assessment criteria that will be used in assessing applications for funding.

What are the key areas for investment?

The program aims to develop and support youth interest, engagement and capacity in invasive species management. It will do this by supporting initiatives that increase youth participation in, and awareness and knowledge of, invasive species issues.

For the purposes of this grant program, the definition of the term ‘young people’ or ‘youth’ is school age through to under 35 years of age.

The objectives of the grants are to:

- Build the knowledge, skills and confidence of young people to support their involvement in invasive species management
- Provide mentoring and support for young people to support their involvement in invasive species management
- Connect young people with existing invasive species management groups and initiatives
- Include youth perspectives and experience into the planning and implementation of invasive species management
- Support young people to develop new initiatives for invasive species management.

What can the grants support?

The grants will support projects that have an emphasis on invasive pest and weed issues in Victoria. Funding can be used to support the engagement of young people in existing groups and initiatives, or to develop new youth-focused initiatives.

Projects that will be considered include (but are not limited to) initiatives that:

- Provide up-skilling opportunities for young people
- Provide mentoring and networking opportunities for young people
- Support career pathways or professional development for young people
- Support youth-led project planning and governance
- Break down barriers to youth participation, including mental health and gender
- Build young people’s understanding of the invasive species challenge.
- Engagement of local traditional owner groups
• Engagement of participants from disadvantaged or marginalised groups

For project ideas, visit the website: www.weedsandrabbits.com/youth-engagement-grant-program/.

Funding can be used for items directly related to the delivery of the project, such as:
  • skill development and training activities
  • publicity, communications and marketing costs
  • transport
  • equipment and venue hire
  • food and non-alcoholic beverages
  • minor administration costs such as postage, phone calls
  • publication costs of material created through the project
  • resource materials and consumable items.

What can't the grants support?

Grant funding cannot be used for:
  • on-ground works
  • the purchase of goods for competitions, prizes or alcohol for any events.
  • capital purchase: e.g. GPS units, computers
  • retrospective costs (any money spent before a grant is approved)
  • projects that duplicate an existing or similar project / service within the community (projects that build upon an existing program may be considered, but you will need to contact the project officer to discuss)
  • projects that are traditionally funded through other sources
  • projects that require ongoing funding from the Victorian Government
  • staff wages
  • interstate and overseas travel.

Funding available

The grant program offers grants of between $5,000 and $15,000 (ex GST).

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, you must be Victorian-based and one of the following:
  • an incorporated community organisation or not-for-profit group
  • a local education provider
  • a local government authority working in collaboration with a community group
  • an unincorporated organisation or community group applying through the auspice of an incorporated body or a local government authority.
Ineligibility

You cannot apply for this grant if you are:

- an individual
- a commercial for-profit organisation
- an unincorporated organisation (unless applying through an incorporated body or a local government authority)
- a Commonwealth or State Government agency
- an organisation located outside of the State of Victoria.

Key dates

- Applications open – 2 September 2019
- Applications close – 30 September 2019
- Successful grants announced – November 2019
- Projects undertaken – November 2019 to June 2020

Assessment process

Each application will be assessed against the defined key selection criteria (see below). The assessment will be undertaken by a panel of representatives from key community and government organisations working on invasive species.

Key selection criteria

The assessment of project proposals will be based on the following four criteria:

1. The project engages or connects with young people
2. The project promotes youth awareness of, or develops youth skills in, invasive species issues and management in Victoria
3. The project provides ongoing benefits for young people and the applicant’s community after the grant funding is spent (e.g. knowledge, skills, new members, expanded networks)
4. The project is viable and represents value for money.

Additional considerations

In addition, evidence in project proposals of any of the following will be well-regarded:

- Collaboration with other groups and organisations
- Co-funding from other groups and organisations
- Involvement of young people in the design, planning and/or running of the project
- A landscape-scale, integrated approach to invasive species management
- A communications strategy or plan
- Engagement of local traditional owner groups
- Engagement of participants from disadvantaged or marginalised groups
- Plans for continuing the project beyond 2019-2020, or for replicating or extending to other communities.
How to apply

1. Read the background information on the grant program: www.weedsandrabbits.com/youth-engagement-grant-program/.
2. Contact the grants coordinator, Lauren Hull, if you have any questions about your idea or the application process: lauren.hull@agriculture.vic.gov.au or 03 5735 4342.
3. Download the application form and complete all sections: www.weedsandrabbits.com/youth-engagement-grant-program/application-form/
4. Check your application against the selection criteria to ensure all criteria have been met.
5. Submit your application via email to pestanimalsandweeds@agriculture.vic.gov.au by 30 September 2019.

Funding requirements

Agreement
If you receive a grant, you will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, signed by an authorised representative or auspice organisation. This agreement will detail the obligations to use funding and meet performance against described activities, the expected timeline for the project and reporting requirements.


Reporting
At the end of your project you will need to complete a final report that evaluates the project and accounts for how the funds have been spent. A final report template will be provided by the Project Officer.

The report should include:
- a description of your project and how it met your objectives
- an evaluation of the impact of your project, including things like attendance figures, community impact and invasive species outcomes
- a financial reconciliation, showing your actual finances compared with the budget you submitted in your proposal
- supporting documentation, including media and communications products, photos, videos, feedback from participants, etc.
- feedback on the grants program.

Once Agriculture Victoria has received and accepted your acquittal report, you will have completed all your obligations under the Funding Agreement.

If you do not satisfactorily acquit your grant you will not be eligible to apply for further Agriculture Victoria funding and action may be taken to recover the grant.

Program evaluation
Successful applicants may also be asked to participate in evaluation interviews at the completion of the project, however this is not mandatory.

Occupational health and safety
All activities associated with the grant program must adhere to occupational health and safety requirements.

Child safety
If you are proposing to undertake activities with children under 18 years of age, your organisation must have policies and procedures around working with children, Working with Children Checks, and the handling of child abuse complaints.

Non-government organisations funded by Victorian government departments to deliver services to children are required to be:
- incorporated separate legal entities that can be sued in their own right in child abuse proceedings, and
- appropriately insured against child abuse.
These requirements are detailed in the funding agreement.

**Promotion**

When promoting the project successful applicants must acknowledge Agriculture Victoria and the Commonwealth of Australia as sources of funding.

**Privacy**

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) for the purpose of grant administration.

This information may be provided to other Victorian Government agencies for the purposes of assessing your application. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement. The Department’s privacy policy is available from https://djpr.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) and other applicable laws. DJPR is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. Enquiries about access to information about you held by the Department should be directed to the DJPR Privacy Unit by phone on (03) 9651 9749 or email privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

**Further information**

If you’ve got more questions, please email or call Lauren Hull at Agriculture Victoria: lauren.hull@agriculture.vic.gov.au, 03 5734 4342.