

Guideline for Applicants to the Building Resilience to Climate Change Grants Program

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About Building Resilience to Climate Change (BRCC) grants

Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) will assist councils to adapt to climate change in NSW by directing financial assistance to address identified climate risks and vulnerabilities.

BRCC has been established with the following objectives:

- Local and regional consideration of climate change impacts in decision making.
- Delivery of projects that minimise climate impacts and potential liability for local and regional decision makers.
- Implementation of climate change adaptation beyond current projects and programs.
- Fostering adaptive capacity in the NSW Local Government sector through the development of a community of practitioners, and resources, from across professional disciplines with direct experience in implementing adaptation responses across NSW.

Funding

A total of \$875,000 in funding will be available to NSW councils under the BRCC Program. This program is supported by a \$500,000 contribution from the NSW Environmental Trust. The funding will be split between two rounds open to eligible organisations with the following themes:

- Round 1 (closed) – adapting to extreme heat or adapting priority infrastructure. Successful projects were announced in December 2014.
- Round 2 – resilience of water supply and/or quality management, or adapting priority infrastructure (closing midnight Tuesday 4 August 2015).

Priority will be given to those projects which fit within the round theme however, other projects will be considered.

Grants of between **\$15,000 - \$80,000** are available to Local Government. Collaboration with one or more councils, regional organisations, private sector or government agencies and other organisations is encouraged, as it strengthens your application.

A competitive assessment process will be undertaken to determine successful applicants. Projects can last for a maximum of **fifteen (15) months**.

Eligibility

Grants are open to NSW Local Government organisations including councils, Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs) and County Councils. Collaboration with NSW agencies, Aboriginal Land Councils, business, research and community organisations is encouraged however each grant application must be lodged by a Local Government organisation that will be responsible for administering the grant.

To be eligible for a grant, the proposal must be responding to a previously identified climate change risk or vulnerability. Proposals must cite a:

- climate change risk assessment, meeting Australian standards (AS/NZS 4360 or ISO 31000), conducted in the five years prior to the commencement of BRCC (June 2014); or
- a climate change vulnerability assessment (peer reviewed methodology) conducted in the last five years, which includes cross government Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessments (IRVAs) led by OEH through the NSW 2021 Regional Actions Plans.

Projects must be consistent with a climate change risk/vulnerability assessment. This will need to be demonstrated. Please provide as much detail as possible such as Risk ID number etc. The following options are available:

- provide a copy as an attachment or reference relevant sections; or
- provide a hyperlink and make reference to relevant sections; or
- provide an attachment of relevant sections.

Regional assessments

Organisations that have participated in a regional climate risk/vulnerability assessment are eligible to apply.

Ineligible projects

The BRCC will not fund the following activities:

- climate change risk or vulnerability assessments
- continuing administration/operational costs of organisations
- activities where a known person/ organisation can be held legally responsible for the task
- projects that fund devolved grants (i.e. projects offering grants to other councils or organisations / community groups)
- funding ongoing maintenance of projects to which councils have committed as part of a previous and unrelated grants schemes
- reimbursement of salaries of existing Local Government staff who will be supervising or working on the project as part of their usual duties. However, the grant may fund additional human resources to specifically work on the project.
- activities that do not respond to climate change risks, impacts or vulnerabilities previously identified in a risk/vulnerability assessment.
- projects that are primarily renewable energy installation, energy efficiency upgrades or rain water tank installations.

Examples of some initiatives eligible for BRCC funding

As described earlier, BRCC will fund projects to implement priority works identified in climate risk/vulnerability assessments. Examples of such initiatives may include:

- Implementation of Water Sensitive Urban Design elements in council managed spaces
- Risk treatments for community assets at risk of climate change impacts (e.g. building upgrades to minimise the impact of extreme heat events or climate-related degradation).
- Building local or regional capacity to implement adaptive responses (e.g. community engagement programs that build capacity to respond and adapt to extreme weather events).
- Detailed scoping or analysis to support the implementation of priority adaptation actions (e.g. cost benefit analysis, design specifications).
- Measurement and evaluation of risk treatments or adaptation responses.

It is not intended that similar proposals to successful Round 1 projects will be funded.

Maintenance of grant-funded works

Successful grants recipients are responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance the project, into the future. This can be demonstrated through council annual operational plans or resourcing strategies.

Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed by a Technical Committee against the following assessment criteria, which are weighted equally.

Criterion 1 – Builds adaptive capacity

- Project responds to risk or vulnerability identified by previously conducted assessment effectively
- Clear explanation of the climate risk/vulnerability to be addressed
- Opportunities to learn and share knowledge within and between organisations
- Project delivers co-benefits.

Criterion 2 - Level of Support

- Collaboration within and across Local Government organisations, project partners and with external stakeholders
- Project aligns to organisational strategic objectives
- Project embeds consideration of climate change into Local Government processes and procedures.

Criterion 3 - Project Planning (ability to deliver the project to a high standard)

- Sound project planning and methodology
- Outputs and milestones clearly targeted towards achieving stated outcomes
- Measurable stated outputs and milestones both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Criterion 4 – Value for money

- Cost effectiveness, including avoided costs, co-contributions and in-kind support
- Well planned and costed budget
- Project risks identified and addressed.

Submitting your proposal

Documentation

In applying to the BRCC project for funding the following documentation is required:

Part 1: [Grant Application Form](#) (online document)

Part 2: [Preliminary Work Plan](#) (Excel document)

These documents can be downloaded from the [LGNSW website](#).

Applications must be provided in electronic form and submitted via the website. You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to draft the text of your entry in a word document (or similar format) in case you need to resubmit.

Partnerships

Obtaining the support of other organisations/groups can add value to a project and also promote regional responses to climate impacts and vulnerabilities. You should provide evidence of your project partners' support when submitting your application. Please note

partnerships are not an essential criterion for funding, but are likely to strengthen your application.

Letters of support

Letters of support are only required to confirm project partner involvement. These should be submitted with your application, and must be signed by a senior manager or senior office bearer of the organisation providing them.

Good and services tax (GST)

All councils are registered for GST, so do not include any GST in your budget when you fill in your application. LGNSW will add GST to your grant payment.

Insurance

It is a condition of grant that you have public liability insurance of \$20,000,000 and any other appropriate insurance cover for all your measures, works, activities and volunteer personnel. You need accident insurance for the life of the project and you need to ensure that all the people you employ are covered by workers' compensation insurance.

Attachments

Any additional material submitted with your application must be kept to a minimum. Please consider including relevant sections, or extracts of documents, rather than the whole plan. Use of weblinks to documents is also strongly encouraged.

Closing date for submission of proposals

Applications must be submitted through the website. All components of your application must be provided electronically, including all attachments. If this is not possible please contact Denise Anderson, LGNSW on denise.anderson@lgnsw.org.au or 02 9242 4056.

Closing Date for round two: Tuesday 4 August 2015

Acknowledgement of receipt of applications

You should expect acknowledgement of your application immediately after submitting your application. Acknowledgement will be via email.

Notification of grant decisions

The successful applicants will be announced in October 2015. Applicants will also be notified via mail. Written contract agreements will be provided to successful applicants and funding will be awarded on completion of the BRCC Grant Agreement.

Project commencement

All projects should commence by 1 November 2015 for a period of up to 15 months. Projects may commence before this date, once the Grant Agreement is finalised.

Payment Timetable

Funding will be provided in staged payments to most grants (80% initially) with one instalment provided on receipt of a signed Grant Agreement, November 2015. A final payment (20%) will be paid on acceptance of a satisfactory final report, required by 10 March 2017.

Who to contact if you need further help

If you require further help with your application, please contact either:

Denise Anderson, LGNSW, on (02) 9242 4056, or denise.anderson@lgnsw.org.au or Suzanne Dunford, OEH, on (02) 9995 6351 or suzanne.dunford@environment.nsw.gov.au

Assessment and Approval Process

After the closing date, program staff will check whether your application is eligible and sufficiently complete for assessment purposes. Program staff may also contact you for further information about your application.

The BRCC has a Technical Committee to assess the applications. The Technical Committee consists of people with knowledge and experience in climate change adaptation.

The Technical Committee will assess the merit of your proposal by using the assessment criteria outlined in these guidelines and will make recommendations to the BRCC Management Committee (representatives from OEH, the NSW Environmental Trust and LGNSW). The Management Committee, having considered the Technical Committee's recommendations, determines which applicants will receive grants.

Decisions by the Management Committee are final.

Conflict of interest

Applicants are required to declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest (COI) that they may be aware of in relation to the awarding of a grant.

Obligations of successful applicants

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Provide written evidence of partnership funding where relevant.
- Obtain any necessary licenses to undertake the work.
- Sign a BRCC Grant Agreement that sets out terms and conditions associated with the grant.
- Comply with all conditions contained in the Grant Agreement.
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage (see page 7).
- Forward a tax invoice to the LGNSW for each instalment of their grant, if applicable.
- Seek prior approval from the LGNSW to alter proposed outputs, milestones or budget variations more than 10 per cent.
- Provide progress reports and comply with all conditions contained in the Grant Agreement.
- Provide a final report including a financial report certified by the Chief Financial Officer or certifying accountant. Guidance on the format of the final and progress report will be provided by LGNSW.
- Acknowledge the NSW Environmental Trust, OEH and LGNSW's support in all promotional material or any public statement about your project and include logos on relevant written material.
- Be prepared for all knowledge gained as part of the grant to be made publically available.
- Contribute to evaluation of the BRCC project undertaken by an external organisation as appointed by the NSW Environmental Trust.
- Ensure that all procurement and employment is undertaken in line with your organisation's internal policies and guidelines.

Instructions for completing the application form

Separate application forms should be completed for each project.

Applications that are incomplete or do not provide the necessary level of detail to facilitate an adequate assessment of the project against others on a state-wide basis will be considered ineligible for funding. Lodging an application for financial assistance does not guarantee assistance will be offered.

These explanatory notes correspond to the items on the application form.

Program assessment criteria	
1. Eligibility	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant must be a Local Government organisation or be explicitly included in the section above under 'Eligibility'. If you have a project partner(s), attach a letter of support from that organisation, which also outlines details of the partner's financial and other resource commitment to the project.
2. Identification of climate risk or vulnerability	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate if your project addresses a climate change risk or vulnerability identified in the last 5 years through either a risk assessment meeting Australian standards (AS/NZS 4360 or ISO 31000) or a vulnerability assessment that employs a peer reviewed methodology. Those councils that have undertaken a risk assessment with Echelon and Statewide Mutual or through Local Adaptation Pathway program comply with ISO 31000. NSW Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessments (IRVA), identified and delivered through the <i>NSW 2021 Regional Actions Plans</i> also comply. Please provide as much detail as possible such as Risk ID number etc.
3. Round theme	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate whether your project addresses water supply or quality impacts or adapts priority infrastructure to climate change. Priority will be given to projects which consider the above.
4. Project name	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a descriptive name of the project
5. Grant amount	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide figure from the Preliminary Work Plan
6. Project description	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a succinct summary of the project (maximum of 150 words). This may be used for promotional and media purposes. Include an overview of the project including project location, the climate change related issues the project will address, project need, expected outcomes and how these will be achieved. Please ensure this captures the main elements of your project in an informative way. Please check spelling and grammar as this description will at a minimum be used on the LGNSW website.

7. Project objective
<p>The objective should be about the issue or problem you want to overcome and ultimately what you want your project to achieve. A strong objective should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific about what you want to achieve • measurable • achievable • realistic • time bound <p>The standard format for an objective is: 'To [action verb and statement reflecting your measurement indicator] by [performance standard] by [deadline].'</p>
8. Resilience to Climate Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must demonstrate that their project will moderate harm or capture opportunities associated with climate change.
9. Co-benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate co-benefits have been identified as win-win opportunities to tackle climate change with other positive outcomes. Co-benefits are where a single activity or policy can generate multiple benefits across varying sectors. For example, cooling an urban setting by implementing urban greening strategies can provide psychological and health benefits, enhance energy efficiency (avoided cooling costs) and provide biodiversity habitat. • Outline if any social, economic or environmental co-benefits will be generated by your project.
11. Engagement and Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe who and how you will involve and engage participation in your project to build and share knowledge about adapting to climate change (adaptive capacity). • Describe strategies that you will use to maintain the outcomes of this project once the funding support ceases. • Describe how you will share the outcomes and learnings from your project.
12. Project partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project partners offer increased opportunity to build adaptive capacity and community support for your project. List project partners and define what role they will play in your project e.g. steering committee, promote the project through their networks, officer time, funding etc. • Please note partnerships are not an essential criterion for funding, but are likely to strengthen your application. • Upload any letters of support from project partners as evidence.
13. Organisational objectives and priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed project meets relevant organisational objectives. What commitments, strategies or objectives support the implementation of this project? • Evidence should be provided by web links or attachments to relevant documents such as Community Strategic Plans, council reports and other strategic documents. Please provide relevant sections or extracts of these documents.

14. Project outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project outcome is the broad effect or benefit of the project. Outcome statements often use words like: minimise, maximise, increase, decrease, improve, expand, update, upgrade, maintain, start or complete. What does the success of your project look like? • Outcomes should be specific, measurable and realistic e.g. minimise heat impacts in a prescribed area, reduced risk from flooding in a prescribed area, improved management of extreme heat events through community participation, increased resilience of public infrastructure through improved locating of X. • How will you measure the outcomes?
15. Project risks
<p>Identify key project risks and proposed management measures. Risk categories covered should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule risk. This refers to anything that will likely lead to delay in the project schedule, and ability to meet agreed milestones. For example, this could be a result of delays in approval processes, unforeseen approval processes, availability of equipment and/or resources, stakeholder/community opposition • Budget risk. This refers to any risk that can result in increased cost. For example, this could be a result of higher than expected cost of equipment and/or labour, the need to source material from further away than planned, land contamination, other construction risks etc. • Environmental and heritage risk. This refers to any impact on the natural environment. For example, construction works can lead to loss of natural habitat, loss of amenity etc. • WHS (formerly OH&S). This refers to safety and health risks. These are mostly relevant for during construction.
16. Preliminary work plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preliminary work plan should outline the project's expected output, activities, measures, timeline, budget and grant amount sought for each milestone. Grants are to be completed within 15 months of the grant offer. Project commence from November 2015.
17. Conflict of Interest
<p>Please declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest that you may be aware of. This can relate to land ownership, salary and/or contractor payments. Applicants are required to declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest (COI) that they may be aware of in relation to the awarding of a grant, particularly where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • members, or relatives of members, of the applicant organisation are being paid as project managers with grant funds • members, or relatives of members, of the applicant organisation are being paid as contractors with grant funds • works carried out by the project could create current or future financial or other benefit for members of the organisation applying for the grant, or their relatives. <p>Such circumstances do not exclude the project from being funded, however they do need to be acknowledged as a potential COI. The Committee will assess each situation on its merits and environmental need.</p>
18. Authorisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant applications need to be authorised by Council's General Manager or your organisation's CEO.