Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

1. What is the purpose of this grant stream?

Stream 2 is focused on finding innovative and best practice solutions to challenges the community and stakeholders are facing as they work towards achieving increased tree canopy and green cover across the Greater Sydney Region.

Funding is available for demonstration projects which will produce outcomes that are scalable and/or transferable across Sydney and beyond. The purpose of this funding stream is to unlock future planting opportunities by identifying or testing best practice methods, solving existing challenges or addressing emerging problems to tree planting and/or urban greening.

This stream is also focused on fostering stakeholder partnerships and collaboration between project groups and local councils or local government organisations.

Eligible projects

2. What projects are eligible for funding under this grant stream?

Projects must meet one or more of the below criteria in order to be eligible for this funding stream:

- demonstrate best practice in tree planting and greenery to reduce climate change impacts
- investigate existing issues involving planting and/or maintaining trees and demonstrate a contemporary, scalable response
- display innovation in the use of trees and greenery in an urban setting.

3. Can projects be funded retrospectively?

No. Successful applicants may only commence construction of a project once funding approval has been confirmed.

Eligible applicants

4. Who can apply for this grant stream?

This stream is open to (but not limited to) community groups, organisations, the private sector and researchers that have collaborated and partnered with an eligible local council in Greater Sydney or local government organisation.

If you are a local council, you will also need your General Manager (or equivalent) to endorse the application before you can submit it through the LGNSW application portal. All applicants are encouraged to allow adequate time to seek the General Manager’s approval prior to the grant round closing.

If you are not a local council, you are required to have the application endorsed by a partnering council General Manager (or equivalent position) before you can submit it through the application portal. This is a mandatory step in the online application form.
Eligible councils are:

Applying

5. What is the role of Local Government NSW (LGNSW)?
LGNSW is administering the grants on behalf of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department).

6. Where can applicants find the Grant Guidelines?
A copy of the Greener City Grant Program Guidelines can be found at www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greeningourcitygrants

7. How do I lodge an application?
Applications, including supporting documentation, must be submitted via the LGNSW application portal. A link to the portal can be found at www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greeningourcitygrants

8. Can applicants submit for more than one project?
Yes. Applicants may submit more than one application for separate projects.

9. What is the Water Efficient Trees Report and Water Matrix?
The Water Efficient Trees Report and Water Matrix are the result of a study commissioned by the Department to provide advice around tree planting and maintenance in the context of drought and water restrictions. These documents are available for councils to use as reference materials to explore low cost innovations to use water more efficiently as part of a green innovations project.

10. Can the budget be amended during the application process?
No. Budgets relating to the project cannot be amended during the application process.

11. Will assistance be available to support the preparation of the application?
LGNSW, as the grant program administrator, can provide information on the interpretation of the grant guideline. For enquiries or more information, contact LGNSW on (02) 02 9242 4042 or email GreeningOurCity@lgnsw.org.au.
A webinar will also be scheduled to assist applicants in preparing their applications. Details will be posted on the Department’s website www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greeningourcitygrants.

12. What criteria apply to the assessment of the applications?
Applications that meet eligibility criteria and comply with the application requirements will be assessed against four assessment criteria (merit, engagement, viability, and budget). Further details about the assessment criteria are provided in the grant guidelines.
13. What is the role of the Assessment Panel?
An Assessment Panel comprising members with relevant expertise will be established to assess applications against eligibility and assessment criteria. The Assessment Panel will be guided by advice from an independent probity advisor who will also attend the meeting as an observer. The Assessment Panel will recommend projects for funding and the Minister for Planning will make final decisions regarding funding allocations.

Funding

14. What is the program funding for 2020?
Up to $2.5 million has been allocated for this stream in 2020.

15. What is the relationship of the Greening our City Grant Program to the Five Million Trees initiative?
Five Million Trees for Greater Sydney (5MT) is the overarching initiative that is delivering Premier’s Priority 12: Greening our City. These programs are administered by the Department and were created to expand tree canopy and green cover across Greater Sydney.

16. What is the source of the funds?
The first four years of 5MT is funded through the NSW Government’s Climate Change Fund. The Climate Change Fund was established to address the impacts of climate change and encourage energy and water saving activities. A total of $12.5 million of funding under 5MT has been allocated to deliver the Greening our City Grant Program for 2020.

17. Will all applications receive funding?
It is unlikely that all applicants will receive funding as it is anticipated that the program will be over-subscribed and applications will be assessed on their merits.

Successful applications will be those recommended by the Assessment Panel as best meeting the objectives of the program, the assessment criteria and can demonstrate the applicant has the capacity to deliver the project from inception through to the end of the project.

18. If our organisation has already received other government funding or co-contributions from external organisations for the project, does this mean the organisation cannot apply?
No. Projects that have received other Government funding or co-contributions from external organisations are eligible for funding. Applicants must list in their application if the project has received other sources of funding and the amount received.

Applications must document all appropriate contributions from the applying parties, be they financial or in-kind.

Approval

19. Who needs to approve my application?
The council General Manager (or equivalent) must approve the application prior to being submitted. This is a mandatory step in the application portal.
You are encouraged to allow sufficient time to seek the General Manager's approval to ensure you submit the application before the grant round closes.

Timing

20. When are the applications due?
Applications must be received by 11.59pm on Wednesday, 19 August 2019. Any application that is late, incomplete or ineligible will not be considered.

21. How long do applicants have to complete a project?
Projects must be completed within 18 months of signing the funding agreement.

22. If successful, when can we expect to receive funding?
As part of the funding agreement, successful applicants will receive grant funding in instalments. These payments are scheduled against the following four (4) project milestones:

1. Commencement of the project (20%)
2. Project plan finalisation (40%)
3. Mid-point review (30%)
4. Project acquittal (10%)

Acknowledgements

23. How do successful applicants acknowledge the funding when projects are underway?
It is a condition of grant funding that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment are:

- invited to attend any formal launch event (including commencement and completion ceremonies)
- advised four weeks prior to any formal event
- acknowledged in all communications and media for the project.

Reporting

24. Do successful applicants need to report on the delivery of their projects?
All successful applicants will receive detailed information about requirements to report on the implementation and success of their project.

For more information

Please visit www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/greeningourcitygrants or contact Local Government NSW on (02) 9242 4042 or email GreeningOurCity@lgnsw.org.au

© State of New South Wales through Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2020. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (June 2020). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the user’s independent adviser.