

National Parks and Wildlife Service

Friends of Parks - Partnership Grants Program

Grant Guidelines

Applications close midnight (ACDT) Sunday 31 October 2021

1. Introduction

To further support the substantial work undertaken by Friends of Parks (FoP) groups across South Australia's national parks reserves and other important conservation-based initiatives, the Minister for Environment and Water has announced a new Friends of Parks - *Partnership Grants Program* with up to \$500,000 available for projects that may be delivered for a maximum three year period.

The Friends of Parks -*Partnership Program* is directed at conservation-based activities to be delivered both on-park and off-park. This can also include the purchase of minor plant or equipment and other materials or services that supports the group's project conservation outcomes. *Conservation* includes conservation biodiversity, pest plant and animal control, and Aboriginal cultural heritage or European heritage activities across national parks and reserves and the broader landscape and land tenure.

Grants of up to \$25,000 per annum will be available for projects to be completed within three (3) years up to a maximum of \$75,000 per application, commencing on payment of funding. There will be a primary Friends of Parks member or affiliate group applicant, with an identified supporting partner.

Where member groups apply for fuel reimbursement as part of the budget submission, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) draft Fuel Subsidy policy criteria will apply i.e. first 300km travelled is the individual's cost, then a maximum of \$300.00 per/vehicle per year can be claimed (noting this policy is being reviewed).

The Department for Environment is administering the grant program and will transfer the funds into the successful group's bank account upon approval by the Minister for Environment and Water. The individual group will be responsible for payment of all invoices and acquittals as per a signed grant agreement.

2. Grant Program Parameters

Examples of what sort of project activities will be funded.

- Large-scale projects that involve for example, pest plant and animal control, revegetation, habitat restoration or maintenance/ monitoring, wildlife monitoring and survey work, coastal systems, inland waterways and wetlands, track maintenance, and European or Aboriginal heritage site maintenance/ protection/ restoration.

The following conditions apply:

Friends of Parks member groups will need to demonstrate that the project activities and budget items sought in their application have a partnership arrangement in place with at least one other organisation (for example NGO, community group, Council, business organisation etc.), or other Friends of Parks member group(s).

What will not be funded?

- Large plant or equipment such as a ride on mower, large trailer, tractors
- Amenity and beautification projects (due to ongoing maintenance requirements)
- Boundary and barbed wire fencing
- Non-indigenous vegetation
- Laptop computers, software
- Smartphones, software licenses
- Purchase of goods for competition, prizes, gifts, vouchers, giveaways, or alcohol
- Accommodation or food
- Directional signage (responsibility of National Parks and Wildlife Service) and publication of books (pamphlets/information sheets on park or conservation biodiversity and interpretive signage are acceptable)
- Any other action or activity determined by the Assessment Panel to be inappropriate or unsuitable use of the funds within the context of park management

Project location

Conservation projects/activities can either be on-park (i.e. land protected under the National Parks and Wildlife Act or the Wilderness Protection Act) or off-park and located on other land tenure (**note:** land owner permission is required as part of the application).

Project Assessment Criteria

Grant applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel, comprising Friends of Parks Inc. Board and Department for Environment and Water (DEW) staff. The Minister for Environment and Water will be provided with a list of recommended projects for approval. Successful grants will be announced by the Minister.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email of the outcome.

This panel will consider what the contribution of the project/activity makes in terms of:

A. Protection and/or restoration of land, biodiversity, environment, heritage sites (either European or Indigenous).

- The extent to which the project contributes (to the above) through on-ground works or follows up on previous on-ground work.

B. Value for money

- The budget demonstrates that the application represents good value for money, including realistic costs that are directly related to the grant proposal, and a clear justification for requested budget items.

C. Project in-kind or co-contribution

- To meet the Department of Treasury and Finance requirements, groups must demonstrate an in-kind or co-contribution to their project of at least 50% of the funding amount being sought. This can include volunteer hours, other funds, or other in-kind contribution e.g. third-party support. Further information can be found in the application budget table.

D. Partnership arrangements

- The project/ activities need to demonstrate a community partnership arrangement in place with the Friends of Parks member group applying for the grant i.e. they are partnering with a community organisation or other Friends of Parks member group(s). The in-kind contribution from the partnership arrangement needs to be documented in the budget breakdown.

E. NPWS Regional Staff/ Local Government/ Private Landowner Support

- Project applicants must have obtained all necessary endorsements or approvals from either the relevant National Park & Wildlife Service region and/ or local government and/ or private landowner for the proposed project to be undertaken, prior to an application being submitted. If legislative approvals or permits are required to carry out the proposed works, these have to be attached to the application, or if the approval process has commenced, proof of same needs to be attached to the application. The relevant regional Parks and Wildlife Manager's endorsement must be obtained for ALL grant applications.

3. Eligibility

To be considered for funding, groups:

- Must be a current full or affiliated member group registered with Friends of Parks Inc. and have a signed endorsement from a NPWS National Parks & Wildlife Manager (and relevant landholder if the grant project is undertaken off-park) as part of the application process.
- Who are not incorporated will be sponsored through the Friends of Parks Board Inc. or may choose to be sponsored by another incorporated organisation such as local government or a Local Action Planning group etc.
- Must not have outstanding grant acquittals longer than six months past their grant agreement deadline unless prior approval has been obtained from the Board.

4. How to Apply

- Applications must be received electronically by midnight (ACST) on the closing date. **Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

5. Conditions of funding

Successful groups will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Department for Environment and Water which outlines the conditions of the funding, including:

Project Reporting

The project/ activity duration is up to three (3) years from the time of funding payment.

End of financial year grant acquittals will be required from applicant member groups for each project/ activity that runs over 12 months until project/ activity completion in which case a final acquittal of expenditure is required.

In the case that events beyond the group's control delay the project/ activity (such as unseasonal weather conditions, bushfire, COVID-19 etc.), groups may apply to the Board for a variation to the grant application, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note: external contractors who are engaged as part of this grant program by volunteer groups, for example a weed spray operator, must be managed by DEW staff to comply with Departmental policy guidelines, not volunteers.

Insurance and Safety

Friends of Parks member groups will be provided with injury and public liability insurance cover by the state government insurer, SAFA, subject to NPWS management endorsement. It is a legal requirement of NPWS staff under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, to ensure that the relevant standards and processes are implemented effectively and

consistently to ensure the health and safety of all volunteers who are working in NPWS business.

Grant Payments

All successful applicants will be required to sign a *grant agreement* between their Group and the Department for Environment and Water (DEW). Once the grant has been signed by the grantee and DEW, the grant funds will be paid to the FoP Inc. Board to administer on behalf of the groups who are not incorporated, or directly to any incorporated groups, **including any GST payments.**

Please note

If you have any questions regarding your grant project please contact your group's liaison ranger, or for affiliated group projects the relevant regional NPWS District Ranger.

For eligibility or specific grant application questions please contact Volunteer and Visitor Programs staff at: DEWVolunteers@sa.gov.au or telephone 8124 4838.