

# Climate Action Grants Guidelines

**A key focus of the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) is responding to the impacts of climate change on the ecological, cultural and social characteristics of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (the Area). These impacts are happening now—and are predicted to increase and accelerate over the coming decades. Our work is guided by the [Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030](#). This Plan outlines measures to reduce negative climate change impacts through the delivery of targeted, on-ground priority actions.**

One of the strategic actions of the Plan is to empower the community by supporting initiatives that increase participation in adaptation action across Wet Tropics landscapes. A particularly important aspect that requires further work, is the need to increase our knowledge about changes that are occurring to Wet Tropics biodiversity and ecosystems. This will help develop appropriate management responses. The Authority is offering climate action grants of up to \$15,000 that are designed to support the community, scientists (including citizen scientists) and other organisations to:

- undertake innovative monitoring or research projects that increase our knowledge about changes (impacts and trends) in Wet Tropics biodiversity and ecosystems
- support research and monitoring led by Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, including approaches based on traditional ecological knowledge and experience of adaptation to historic climate risks
- increase community engagement with the World Heritage Area
- support research to encourage and facilitate community level responses to adapt to climate change.

Projects and activities delivered through partnerships, such as with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, youth educational institutions, the nature-based and eco-tourism sector, and the science and research community will be well regarded.

While we anticipate additional initiatives and projects will be funded over time, we are seeking to support up to four projects in 2021.

## Express your interest!

We want to hear your ideas. We are initially seeking expressions of interest for suitable and innovative projects, ideally with strong monitoring, evaluation and learning components. We will then work with shortlisted applicants to develop final proposals. We have come up with a list (not exhaustive) indicating the sorts of project outcomes and approaches we are looking for:

- evidence about trends and changes in Wet Tropics species and ecosystems through the collection of data and empirical observations i.e. changes in distribution of species
- indications about trends—changes that have or are occurring, based on observations, and lived experiences, either qualitatively or quantitatively e.g. the arrival and departure times of migratory species or availability of a resource
- evidence about a particular species or ecosystem threatened by climate change
- data to support existing research projects with explicit climate change objectives i.e. fire, mountain-top plant or animal surveys
- monitoring effectiveness of connectivity, restoration, rehabilitation, and revegetation work in achieving adaptation outcomes
- monitoring climate change impacts on cultural sites and the health of totemic species on Country
- monitoring biophysical changes resulting from climate change i.e. monitoring flowering and fruiting times (phenology) or changes in wildlife distributions
- encouraging involvement of youth or schools as part of formal learning
- identifying critical parts of the landscape for connectivity projects and refugia protection
- showcasing how nature-based solutions in regional areas can improve the environment's resilience to climate change impacts
- engaging and/or partnering with landholders, Rainforest Aboriginal organisations, communities, and groups (engaged groups should be key contributors and beneficiaries).

## Application and grant process

### Seeking expressions of interest (EOIs)

#### Timeframe

EOIs must be submitted by 5pm Monday 16 August 2021.

#### Details

If you think your project or idea for a project could be a good fit, please submit an EOI using the [EOI form](#) and send to [wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au). Please contact the Authority on (07) 4242 0500 if you have questions.

EOIs will allow us to compare potential projects and initiatives, which will be reviewed by an independent panel.

With our objective to help support projects that build environmental resilience to climate change, we encourage organisations to submit EOIs that are at different stages of development—all will be considered.

### Shortlisting

#### Timeframe

Completed by 25 August 2021.

#### Details

Given the potentially wide range of suitable projects, the Authority may invite some applicants to meet, to share further details about their project aims and clarify their plans.

Some proposed projects may require collaboration on further co-design, with the Authority supporting this process. Other proposed projects may be further advanced and only require funding.

Based on the above criteria and subsequent discussions, up to four projects will be selected to progress to the next stage and be invited to submit a project proposal and budget.

All applicants will be contacted by the end of August to confirm whether they have been shortlisted.

The Authority may continue to work with other proposed projects to improve suitability for future funding opportunities.

### Project refinement

#### Timeframe

Completed 30 September 2021.

#### Details

For those organisations and projects invited to submit a project plan and budget, the Authority will work with project partners and potential additional contributors, as required, on the design of the project.

This refinement process may look different for different projects.

### Project contracts and funding

#### Timeframe

First round of funding completed by 30 October 2021.

#### Details

Successful applicants will be asked to enter into a grant agreement that sets out the terms and conditions of the Climate Action Grants. Grants are only to be used for the purposes for which they are given.

## Frequently asked questions

These frequently asked questions outline some key information. It is important that you read both documents before completing your EOI.

For queries about the guidelines or additional questions, contact the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) on (07) 4241 0500 between 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday, or email [wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au)

### What are the minimum and maximum dollar amounts I can apply for?

The Authority's Climate Action Grants will range from \$4,000 to up to \$15,000 (excluding GST) to be used over a period of up to two years. The amount applied for should be aligned and proportionate to the actual cost of the project or initiative. Final granting amounts may depend on the nature and needs of the successful projects.

### How do I submit an expression of interest?

The only method is to complete the [expression of interest form](#) (available at [www.wettropics.gov.au](http://www.wettropics.gov.au)) and email it to [wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au).

### How will I know if my application has been received?

You will be sent an email of acknowledgement within 24 hours of your application being received.

### Must the project or initiative I am seeking a grant for be operational only in the Wet Tropics bioregion?

Yes.

### What is the granting process?

Climate Action Grants will follow the process outlined in the guidelines. It will include receiving EOIs, shortlisting by an independent panel and a project refinement stage prior to funding being released.

### What is the Wet Tropics Management Authority looking for?

A good EOI will align with the goals of our [Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030](#), match the project scope and criteria outlined in the guidelines, and address each question in the EOI form succinctly. Attachments to the EOI form will not be read as a matter of course as the EOI should ideally contain all the information that we need. Where necessary, the Authority will contact applicants for more information.

We are keen to fund projects and ideas that provide information on strategies to protect and conserve the natural and cultural integrity of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area; including projects that collaborate and/or engage in knowledge sharing with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, as per the [scientific research and educational activity permits](#) for the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

### When will I find out if I was successful or not?

EOIs close on 16 August 2021, and shortlisted applicants will be notified by 25 August 2021.

### If my project is shortlisted, what happens next?

If your project is shortlisted, the Authority will contact you by 25 August 2021 to discuss and arrange the next steps. These will include an invitation to submit a project plan and budget for the project refinement stage, which must be completed by 30 September 2021.

If this is successful, grant recipients will be required to sign a grant agreement or contract which sets out the terms and conditions.

### Are you willing to consider early-stage projects?

Yes, we are willing to work with applicants at all stages of their project. This means projects could range from concept/idea stage to already in operation and looking to upscale and grow impact.

Projects that are assessed as not yet ready to receive funding may be considered for future grant opportunities, and the Authority may work with applicants to assist them in becoming grant ready. More eligibility criteria are outlined at the end of these FAQs.

### Will projects only be considered if they align to the goals of the Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030?

Yes. The primary focus areas of the Climate Action Grants are to promote the strategic actions of the [Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030](#).



# Climate Action Grants—Guidelines

## **What is the role of the scientific advisor?**

Each project must have a scientific advisor—an individual who will work with the project team. They may be the applicant, or a collaborator or project partner. They will have specialist western science and/or traditional ecological knowledge or skills in the discipline the project focuses on. These qualifications or skills may have been gained at a university, vocational educational institute, or through years of experience in the field or through connection to Country. Where applicable, the scientific advisor may also provide advice on hypothesis testing, data collection and analysis, and/or interpreting project results.

## **What happens if a project, program or initiative changes its purpose during the time a grant is being received or used, or is discontinued?**

Grants can only be used for the purposes for which they are given. In accordance with the grant agreement, if a grant can no longer be used for these purposes, the funds will need to be returned.

## **Do I need to live in the Wet Tropics bioregion to apply?**

No, but the work must occur in the Wet Tropics bioregion.

## **Can I apply for a grant if I have been successful for a different grant from the Wet Tropics Management Authority?**

Yes.

## **Can I receive non-financial and in-kind support for my project or initiative as well as funding?**

Yes. The EOI for your project, program or initiative should outline if it would benefit from non-financial and in-kind support from the Authority or other organisations. We will support and work with partners to support the grant recipients. This could include leveraging existing relationships with communities, Rainforest Aboriginal organisations, industry and business groups, environmental non-government organisations, universities and government. Support could also be provided by relevant Wet Tropics Management Authority staff to support project outcomes.

## **Can I apply for and/or be awarded more than one grant in a year?**

Yes. Several EOIs can be submitted for different projects.

## **Can I have an unsuccessful EOI reviewed?**

No. The Wet Tropics Management Authority has final discretion in relation to reviewing EOIs and awarding grants. These decisions are final.

## **Can I get feedback on my EOI?**

The Authority will contact applicants to advise on whether the EOI will progress to the next steps. Feedback on unsuccessful applications will be at the discretion of the Authority, based on the recommendation of the independent panel. While not all projects will receive funding in 2021, we may continue to work with some applicants to prepare projects and initiatives for future funding opportunities.

## **If I am successful in obtaining a grant, is regular reporting required?**

We will request feedback reports as appropriate to each project, program or initiative. This will be a condition of the grant agreement. We expect that successful projects will have, or can put in place, strong monitoring and evaluation components, which will likely be reflected in the feedback reports requested as part of the grant agreement.

## **When will the grants be paid?**

The first grant payment will be by 30 October 2021. If multi-year funding is requested and approved, subsequent funding will follow the agreed timeline in the grant agreement. Completed grant agreements or contracts must be returned to the Authority before funds are dispersed. The Authority team will work closely with successful applicants throughout this process.

## **How can grants be used?**

We can only provide grants to support a project or initiative that has a charitable purpose and is clearly aligned to the approved budget. Grants cannot be used for the personal benefit of individuals.

## **Can grant money be spent on interstate travel or conference expenses?**

Generally, the Authority does not promote the funding of conference expenses. However, if this is strongly connected to the project proposal, approval may be granted. The entirety of the grant money may not be spent on conference expenses.

## **What happens if I have money left over after the project has been completed?**

Funds provided to grant recipients must be spent on the activities outlined in the application and as approved by the Authority. Unspent funds are to be returned. An accurate budget should be calculated prior to proposal submission.

## **What happens if I do not submit my reports?**

The grant recipient is responsible for submitting reports when due. If reports are not submitted, the Authority will refuse any further proposals from the organisation.

## Who can apply?

Funding is available to:

- Australian universities, research facilities, schools or other educational institutions
- Honours, Masters and PhD students enrolled in any Australian university
- Rainforest Aboriginal organisations including RNTBC or PBCs
- charities that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- social enterprises (not-for-profit and for-profit) or start-ups with social and/or environmental impact at the core of their business
- groups or organisations (not-for-profit and for-profit) that hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have a charitable purpose.

## Are there organisations, programs, or activities that are excluded from eligibility?

Applications won't be accepted for the following:

- organisations or programs outside of Australia
- organisations that don't have an ABN or those that don't have a charitable purpose
- individual applicants or applications applying for personal expenses
- programs that don't align to the aims of the Accept, Act, Adapt: Climate Adaptation Plan for the Wet Tropics 2020–2030
- activities that may be deemed harmful to the community or the environment
- recurrent costs or consolidated revenue
- government entities (except for local government or government-funded facilities such as a school or childcare centre)
- general fundraising appeals or commercial sponsorships
- business-as-usual activities, including marketing and fundraising activities
- political support or political organisations
- bequest programs
- foundations that are grant-making bodies.