

Coastal and Estuary Management Programs

Grant application guidelines 2013–14

Introduction

To assist in managing the NSW coastal zone, the NSW Government provides technical and financial support to local government under two programs – the Coastal Management Program and the Estuary Management Program.

The Coastal Management Program's objective is to support local government in managing the risks from coastal hazards, such as coastal erosion, and restoring degraded coastal habitats.

The Estuary Management Program's objective is to support local government in improving the health of NSW estuaries.

Both programs are administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

Who can apply?

The following organisations are eligible to apply:

- local councils
- Lord Howe Island Board
- Hunter–Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority, if the project is being funded by the catchment contribution, collected by local councils on behalf of the Hunter–Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority
- Lake Illawarra Authority, if project funding includes matching contributions from Shellharbour and Wollongong City councils.

Local councils can also work together in a group, provided:

- one council is the lead agency, in terms of signing of the funding agreement, managing monies and reporting on the project, or
- a relevant Regional Organisation of Councils applies for the funding and manages it.

Catchment management authorities (CMAs), county councils and public land managers (such as a Crown reserve trust or a location-specific NSW Government authority) may apply in partnership with a lead council, providing the council is the principal applicant and assumes overall responsibility for administering the grant.

What will be funded?

Projects that can be subsidised under these programs include:

- preparation of (or updating) coastal zone management plans and associated technical studies (including estuary health and coastal hazard assessments)
- actions that manage the risks from coastal hazards

- implementing environmental repairs, including habitat restoration and conservation projects
- undertaking pre-construction activities for projects that are eligible and are likely to proceed to construction
- developing management tools (e.g. education projects).

What is not eligible for funding?

Funding will not be provided for:

- GST – the project cost is to exclude GST
- retrospective projects – funding is not available for projects that are currently underway or have been completed
- administration costs – unless otherwise approved by OEH through the application approval process (see *What will applicants need to contribute?*), all internal costs (including on-costs) associated with core activities of the applicant are ineligible for funding. An applicant's core activities include preparing study briefs, reviewing proposals and tenders, researching and copying records, attending meetings, administering contracts and grants, accounting costs and liaising with government agencies and the public
- non-monetary contributions as matching funds – an applicant's matching funds must be in the form of monetary contributions, and cannot include in-kind or voluntary contributions.
- contingencies – contingencies should not be included in the application
- projects that the applicant can reasonably be expected to undertake without financial assistance from the program.

What are the funding priorities?

Under this funding round, applications will be separated into two categories for prioritising – Coastal zone management planning and Implementing actions; with the highest priority being awarded to number 1 in each category.

Coastal zone management planning

1. Preparing (or updating) coastal zone management plans, with highest priority given to those areas subject to ministerial directions under the *Coastal Protection Act 1979*.
2. Preparing technical studies which contribute to a coastal zone management plan or revision (including estuary health or coastal hazard assessments).

Implementing actions

1. Implementing actions arising out of the coastal/estuary management planning process, including actions to manage coastal hazard risks, environmental restoration/conservation activities or developing management tools (e.g. education projects).
2. Evaluating and reporting on the outcomes of implementing coastal/estuary management plans.

3. Actions that will manage coastal hazard risks, environmental restoration/conservation activities or developing management tools (that have not been identified through the coastal/estuary management planning process).

Note: Higher priority will also be given within each category to applications that address public safety risks; protect valuable publicly-owned assets; and/or protect, maintain or improve high conservation value environments.

What will applicants need to contribute?

Applicants must normally contribute at least 50 per cent of the project cost from its own funds. If the applicant is partnering with another organisation(s), the applicant must contribute a minimum of 25 per cent of the total project cost. The source(s) of the applicant's share of funds should be detailed in the application and cannot include funds received under other NSW or Commonwealth grant programs.

An applicant unable to match the program's funding contribution may apply for special consideration. The application should demonstrate why the issue being addressed is of regional or state-wide significance and that the applicant does not have the financial capacity to address it.

If special consideration is awarded, the applicant:

- must contribute a minimum of 25 per cent of the total project cost in cash (or justify the equivalent in in-kind funding)
- is eligible to claim project management costs undertaken either:
- internally (with the costs used as in-kind contributions to match funding), or
- externally (selected by a competitive process and funded as a specific cost).

Where a group of local councils are working together in partnership (either under the lead of one of the councils or a relevant Regional Organisation of Councils), then the lead council or Regional Organisation of Councils is eligible to claim project management costs by either:

- a dedicated project manager selected by a competitive process, or
- a staff member from one of the councils or a Regional Organisation of Councils.

Any eligible project management costs (referred to above) must be directly related to the funded project and can include the administrative costs noted under *What is not eligible for funding?*. The amount eligible for subsidy is to be capped at 10 per cent of the total project cost.

What is the timeframe for project implementation?

OEH receives an annual funding allocation for the programs, with limited capacity to carry over funds to future financial years. Consequently, projects should be completed within two years of the grant offer. If the project is likely to extend beyond two years, consider staging the project. For projects that are not completed within two years of the grant offer, the applicant must justify why the grant should not be terminated.

What are funding agreements?

Successful applications must enter into a performance-based funding agreement that stipulates all funding obligations and conditions. The agreement will need to be duly

executed by the general manager (or delegated authority) within 45 days of the Minister's formal grant offer.

Consider the conditions in these sample funding agreements before submitting an application:

- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastalgrants.htm, and
- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/estuarygrants.htm.

What is the assessment process?

Applications will be initially checked for completeness and assessed for grant eligibility. Ineligible or incomplete applications will not be assessed.

Applications will then be assessed by technical OEH staff against the assessment criteria listed below. An independent panel, which includes independent expert and stakeholder representation, will then assess and prioritise applications on a state-wide basis and consider claims for special consideration.

A priority list of applications will be developed. Applicants on the priority list will be contacted to confirm their financial commitment to the project.

The Minister for the Environment will approve all grant offers.

Details of successful applications will be placed on the OEH website. All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

What are the criteria for assessing applications?

Essential criteria

All applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- that the project meets the objectives of the Coastal or Estuary Management Program, and
- their capacity to deliver the project, with regard to their past grants management history, available resources and the proposed timeframe, and whether the project is realistic based on completing the prerequisite consultant briefs, preconstruction work or approvals.

Other criteria

Applications will also be assessed on:

- the extent to which the project cost-effectively addresses one or more of the grant program's priorities
- technical feasibility, if relevant to the type of project
- the level of state or regional significance, including the immediacy of any threats
- environmental benefit of the project
- the level of community or CMA support.

Note: An application will be awarded a reduced ranking if it is not well thought out or it has unclear objectives or outcomes.

Contacts for assistance

For assistance with grant applications, contact the OEH offices listed below.

Region	Telephone
North Coast	(02) 6653 0109
Hunter/Lower North Coast	(02) 4904 2594
Sydney	(02) 9895 6471
South Coast	(02) 4224 4164

For general grant administration inquiries, contact the Grants Program Coordinator on (02) 9895 6472 or via email at coastalestuary.floodgrants@environment.nsw.gov.au

Closing date

Applications must be received by **5 pm Thursday 14 February 2013**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Lodging the application

Electronic application forms are preferred. Completed application forms should be emailed to coastalestuary.floodgrants@environment.nsw.gov.au. If you are unable to email your application, post your application to:

Grants Program Coordinator
Office of Environment and Heritage
PO Box 3720
Parramatta NSW 2124

Other programs

The NSW Environmental Trust offers a range of other environmental grants for local government. For further information, visit www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au.

NSW Maritime administers the Better Boating Program, a NSW Government grants program aimed at providing recreational boating infrastructure. For further information, visit www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/mpd/infra_grants.html.

The Crown Land Division of the NSW Department of Primary Industries administers the NSW Waterways Program. This program offers financial assistance for dredging navigable waterways to improve access for recreational boating. For further information, visit www.lpma.nsw.gov.au/crown_lands/waterways_program.

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.

1 Applicant's name

The applicant must be a local council, Regional Organisation of Councils or be explicitly included under '*Who can apply?*'.

If you have a project partner(s), attach a letter of support from that organisation, which also outlines details of the partner's financial commitment to the project.

2 Project name

Provide a title for your project in 80 characters or less. If your application is successful, this project name will be used on the grant documentation and for promotional purposes. The title should be self-explanatory and, where possible, include the location name.

3 Project category

There are a number of categories to choose from. These represent the funding priorities under the programs (see *What are the funding priorities?*). If your project falls across more than one category, use the one that best describes the project's major focus. If there is any uncertainty about the best category to use, contact OEH.

If the project arises from an action identified through a coastal, coastal zone, or estuary management plan, select the relevant category which includes the words 'in a CZMP'.

4 Project activity

Only one activity should be selected. This should represent the major activity describing the project. If unsure which activity to use, contact OEH.

5 Project timeframe

List the expected commencement and completion dates for the project. The proposed commencement date cannot be prior to 1 July 2013. You should be realistic with your timeframe, as this will set the funding term duration for the funding agreement, if you are awarded a grant.

Please refer to *What is the timeframe for project implementation?* for more information on the maximum project duration.

6 Project location

Describe the geographic extent of the project including, for example, town, latitude, longitude, nearby road, beach or other notable landmark. You should also attach a locality diagram or map.

Use the relevant *state* electorate boundaries, not federal electorate boundaries.

Information on the LGA, state electorate boundary, CMA region and catchment are required for program reporting purposes. They will not be considered as part of the assessment process.

7 Budget overview

Provide a breakdown of the projected project expenditure on a financial-year basis. This should be consistent with the more detailed budget outlined in the attached preliminary work plan. Refer to point 5 regarding the project timeframe.

8 Project summary

Provide a succinct summary of the project (maximum of 150 words) for promotional and media purposes. This should include an overview of the project, including project location, the issues the project will address, expected outcomes and how these will be achieved.

9 Other grants at this location

Provide details of any previous grants received for similar projects at this location in the last five years. This should include funding under any NSW or Commonwealth grant programs. Indicate if the grant is ongoing or finalised.

10 Other funding sources

Provide details of any current or planned proposals for accessing funds from other funding programs for this project or components of this project. Include information about the funding program, the project scope and budget, the indicative timing of the project and proposal, and any impacts it may have on this application.

11 Background of issue

Provide a brief background of the issue, why it is a problem, and the identified need for the proposed project.

12 Regional or state significance

Outline why the project is of state or regional significance, including any immediate threats (e.g. from natural hazards) if the project relates to a high value/icon site etc.

13 Why is funding required?

Explain why this project could not proceed without funding.

14 Project objective

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:

- specific about what you want to achieve
- measurable
- achievable
- realistic
- time bound.

The standard format for an objective is: 'To [*action verb and statement reflecting your measurement indicator*] by [*performance standard*] by [*deadline*].'

15 Project outcomes

The project outcome is the broad effect or benefit of the project. Outcome statements often use words like: increase, decrease, improve, expand, update, upgrade, maintain, start or complete. Outcomes should be specific, measurable and realistic e.g. reduced risk from coastal hazards, improved estuary health, increased area of native habitat and vegetation, improved community engagement in coastal zone management, increased knowledge of coastal or estuary processes/hazards/management options, reduced risk of erosion, improved management of X.

16 Project outputs

The outputs are measures of project activities – products created or delivered, people served and activities or services carried out. For example:

- the number of community forums conducted
- the length of eroded riverbank rehabilitated
- the area revegetated
- the number of protocols/management options developed
- the number of recommendations implemented from the study/plan
- a management plan developed
- a technical report produced
- a model developed.

17 Preliminary work plan

The preliminary work plan should outline the project's expected milestones, activities, timeline, budget and grant amount sought for each milestone. Use the Microsoft Excel template provided at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastalgrants.htm to include realistic dates and costs of the project. Grants are to be completed within 24 months of the grant offer.

18 Program's objectives and priorities

Applicants *must* demonstrate how the project meets the Coastal or Estuary Management Program's objectives and priorities (as outlined earlier in the guideline). Applications that cannot demonstrate this will be ineligible for funding.

19 Capacity to deliver

Applicants *must* demonstrate that they have the capacity to deliver the project as outlined. The justification should outline the applicant's past grant management performance and their available resources. It needs to show that the proposed timeframe is realistic when completing the prerequisite consultant briefs, preconstruction work or approvals. Applications that cannot demonstrate this will be ineligible for funding.

20 Funding agreement

Applicants *must* enter into a performance-based funding agreement. Sample funding agreements can be downloaded at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/coastalgrants.htm or at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/estuarygrants.htm.

21 Discussions with OEH

OEH recommends applicants initially discuss the project with OEH staff regarding the overall concept, preliminary cost estimate and eligibility for funding. OEH staff can also provide technical advice on draft applications (see *Contacts for assistance*).

22 Coastal or estuary management plans

If a coastal, coastal zone or estuary management plan has been prepared for this location, the applicant should identify the relevant plan, show how the project relates to the recommendations or actions of the plan, and outline the relative priority of the action or recommendation.

If the project does not relate to an action in a coastal, coastal zone or estuary management plan, the applicant must explain how the need for this project was established (e.g. a coastal zone management plan is currently in preparation, and this action is likely to be a high priority in the plan once it's completed).

23–25 Catchment management authority (CMA)/community support

Describe the level of support for the project from the CMA, and from within the community. This should include details of any consultation undertaken (or proposed) to assess the need, appropriateness and support for the project. Some examples of responses include:

- the project has been developed by a coastal or estuary management committee with community membership
- a public meeting was held, supported by an article in the local newspaper and display panels at the council building foyer during the initial planning stages of the project
- public comment has been invited on an environmental impact statement and/or development application
- a brochure detailing the background of the project and possible options is being prepared to seek comments from local residents, community groups and stakeholders
- no public comment or input is required for this project.

26–27 Land ownership

Generally, works will only be funded if they are on public land owned by either a council or the Crown.

28–31 Planning approvals

For works, detail the necessary approvals and licences required and whether these have been obtained. For large complex projects it is preferable that an initial grant be sought to undertake feasibility studies, develop designs and obtain approvals. This allows a more detailed scoping and costing of the works stage, which could form another application for funding.

32 Competitive tenders

Proposals to undertake work other than via a competitive tender process require specific approval. Applicants answering 'No' to this question *must* attach a separate page justifying this. Any applicant proposing to use their own resources should provide detailed justification for the work to be done 'in-house'. They need to give full details of the key staff to be involved and clearly demonstrate that they have the expertise, skills, qualifications and experience to undertake the work. Applicants must also demonstrate that the staff and other resources required will be committed to the project to ensure that work is completed within the specified time period. Only the applicant's internal costs directly incurred in undertaking

the project, together with administrative on-costs of 10 per cent of salaries, are eligible for funding. An applicant's core services (outlined in 'What is not eligible for funding') are excluded.

33 Applicant's funding contribution

Applicants must normally contribute at least 50 per cent of the project cost from their own funds. If the applicant is partnering with another organisation(s), the applicant must contribute a minimum of 25 per cent of the total project cost.

Any applicant unable to fund their matching contribution may apply for special consideration by attaching a separate page outlining their case. Applications for special consideration should demonstrate that the issue being addressed is of regional or state-wide significance and that the applicant does not have the financial capacity to address it.

If an application for special consideration is approved, the applicant:

- must contribute a minimum of 25 per cent of the total project cost in cash (or justify the equivalent in in-kind funding)
- is eligible to claim project management costs undertaken either:
- internally (with the costs used as in-kind contributions to match funding), or
- externally (selected by a competitive process and funded as a specific cost).

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- a dedicated project manager selected by a competitive process, or
- a staff member from one of the councils or a Regional Organisation of Councils.

Any eligible project management costs (see point 33 above) must be directly related to the funded project and can include the administrative costs noted under *What is not eligible for funding?*. The amount eligible for subsidy is to be capped at 10 per cent of the total project cost.

Office of Environment and Heritage
59 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000
PO Box A290, Sydney South NSW 1232
Phone: (02) 9995 5000 (switchboard)
Phone: 131 555 (environment information and publications requests)
Phone: 1300 361 967 (national parks, environmental enquiries and publications requests)
Fax: (02) 9995 5999
TTY users: phone 133 677 then ask for 131 555
Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 131 555
Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents

Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au
See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

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