

BushBank seed sector support

GRANT GUIDELINES 2025



OFFICIAL



Photo credit

Main picture, Cassinia Environmental

Insert picture, DEECA

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



© The State of Victoria Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action 2025



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo and the

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA) logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the DEECA Customer Service Centre on 136186, email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au or via the National Relay Service on 133 677 www.relayservice.com.au. This document is also available on the internet at www.deeca.vic.gov.au.



Contents

BushBank seed sector support grant	2
What is the BushBank program?	2
What is this grant for?	2
Who can apply?	2
Who cannot apply?	2
What might be funded?	2
What won't be funded?	3
What are the funding details?	3
Assessment process	3
What are the assessment criteria?	4
What are the funding conditions?	4
Funding agreements	4
Legislative and regulatory requirements	4
Tax implications	5
Payments	5
Monitoring and reporting	5
Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support.....	5
Privacy	5
What is the application process?	5
Key dates	5
What supporting documents will need to be provided?	6
Checklist	6
Notification process	6

BushBank seed sector support grant

The Victorian Government's \$77 million BushBank program is our most ambitious restoration program in history. BushBank is taking action to address climate change and support wildlife by restoring more than 20,000 hectares of land across Victoria.

This grant will help the seed sector to meet the increased demand for native seed and seedlings to restore Victoria's landscapes.

WHAT IS THE BUSHBANK PROGRAM?

The BushBank program is a 15-year program running to 2035. It will help achieve the *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* goal that 'Victoria's natural environment is healthy' by contributing towards revegetation and permanent protection targets.

BushBank is also a government commitment under the *Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector emissions reduction pledge* and plantings contribute towards Victoria's goal of net zero emissions by 2045.

WHAT IS THIS GRANT FOR?

The Victorian Government is offering grants for suitable projects that increase the supply of Victorian native seed and seedlings of good quality and known provenance to support revegetation works.

The increased seed supply will help the BushBank program meet its habitat restoration target of more than 20,000 hectares across Victoria.

WHO CAN APPLY?

To be considered for funding, applicants must demonstrate experience and expertise within the native seed supply sector.

Applicants must demonstrate that they can help the seed sector meet the increased demand for seed and seedlings from BushBank and other land restoration projects.

Applicants can be:

- registered not for profit organisations
- private sector businesses and agencies
- government agencies or entities
- local government authorities.

In addition, to be eligible for funding applicants must:

- be an incorporated body, cooperative or association (including business associations)
- be financially solvent
- have systems, processes and procedures in place to:
 - receive, manage and acquit government funding
 - identify and manage risk that comply with all relevant laws and regulations including the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*
 - ensure good governance and a high standard of quality assurance for project delivery.

Ineligible applicants cannot be supported through auspice arrangements.

WHO CANNOT APPLY?

The following are ineligible applicants:

- organisations or businesses whose primary focus **is not** related to or supporting conservation, natural resource management, ecological restoration or similar
- individuals
- educational institutions.

WHAT MIGHT BE FUNDED?

To be eligible for funding, projects must increase the availability of Victorian native woody species' seed and seedlings. This includes shrubs and trees that align with Victoria's ecological vegetation classes.

Projects should focus on species in demand that are well suited to large-scale habitat restoration. Species should have a high potential for survival when planted.

Projects can include novel or innovative approaches that improve immediate and longer-term native seed supply in Victoria.

Projects can be implemented over a maximum of three years.

The following types of projects and activities are eligible for funding:

- new or expanded infrastructure including seed production areas and seed banks
- training and capacity building of workforce
- expanded or improved seed collection, storage and propagation efforts including equipment, research and development
- project management (staff time to manage the project, including coordination, communication and administration costs) provided this is less than 10% of total funding request.

WHAT WON'T BE FUNDED?

The following activities won't be funded:

- routine or ongoing maintenance activities
- activities that are already funded through another funding source
- recurrent operating costs, for example rent and utility costs, and/or activities establishing expectations of ongoing funding
- activities located outside the state of Victoria
- any illegal activity
- projects that address plantation, grassy and/or herbaceous species
- projects that focus on species that are not native to Victoria.

The Victorian Government reserves the right not to fund any other activity it determines to be inappropriate or unsuitable use of funds.

Grant funding cannot be used to fund political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

WHAT ARE THE FUNDING DETAILS?

The total funding available for Seed Sector Support is \$3 million over three years, to be allocated across successful projects.

There is no specified funding limit for individual projects and the number of projects funded will depend on the costs of selected project. Scalable project proposals are desirable.

Applicants must contribute to the total project cost. The contribution can be financial or in-kind from the applicant organisation or can be sourced from co-funding partners, such as private or philanthropic organisations. The contribution cannot include any other Victorian Government grant funding.

If suitable projects are not identified, the total funding allocation may not be committed.

Assessment process

The Victorian Government seeks to achieve an impact across Victoria by supporting a range of project types that address seed supply in the short and long term across several of Victoria's landscapes.

A government panel will assess all applications and make a value for money recommendation to the Minister for Environment, who is the decision maker for this grant program.

The panel or panel members may discuss project scalability with you during the assessment process.

Assessment steps:

- 1) All applications will be checked for eligibility to make sure the applicant, project and proposed activities are eligible for funding.
- 2) Eligible applications will be assessed by the panel using the assessment criteria listed below and given a score.
- 3) The panel will provide a value for money recommendation that considers the project scores, project budget including the funding requested and the co-contribution, and the government's desire to fund a mix of project types and to address seed constraints across Victoria.

WHAT ARE THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA?

Project proposals will be assessed using the following assessment criteria. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal responds to each criterion.

Criteria	Weighting	Description
Project Benefits	70%	
Increased supply of native seed and seedlings of known provenance for restoration of native vegetation across Victoria	60%	The degree to which the proposal improves availability (amount) of quality native seed (and seedlings) of known provenance, particularly woody species in the short term (<5 years) and/or improves seed supply in the longer-term (from 5 years).
First Peoples and community benefits	10%	The degree to which Traditional Owners, First Peoples and local communities have, or will be, engaged and benefit from the proposed project.
Applicant Capability	30%	
Expertise and experience	20%	The degree to which the applicant demonstrates experience successfully delivering similar projects. This may be demonstrated by the number, type and scale of projects, and number of years in the native seed industry.
Ability to identify and manage project risks	10%	The degree to which the applicant has the required systems in place and has identified project risks and mitigation actions to reduce risks to acceptable levels.

What are the funding conditions?

FUNDING AGREEMENTS

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). The Victorian Common Funding Agreement will be used for not-for-profit organisations, businesses and local government authorities.

It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available on <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement>.

The DEECA Transfer Payment Funding Agreement will be used for any Victorian public entities, as defined under section 5 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

Permits must be obtained as required and regulatory requirements must be met for all project proposals, including for wild seed harvesting. As relevant, this will be a condition of funding if not included in the application.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

In delivering the activity, grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- The *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth)
- The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Native Title Act 1993* (Commonwealth)
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic)
- Protected flora and listed fish, with reference to Declared Protected Flora Guidelines

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this grant funding.

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form 'Statement by a Supplier' so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.

PAYMENTS

Payments will be made as long as:

- the funding agreement has been signed by both parties
- grant recipients provide reports as required, or otherwise demonstrate that the activity is progressing as expected
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Grant recipients are required to comply with project reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This may include progress reports, annual reports, completion reports and acquittal documentation.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support, and promotional guidelines (<https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants>) will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the BushBank program to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

PRIVACY

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by DEECA for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or

collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

What is the application process?

KEY DATES

Applications open	7 July 2025
Applications close	1 September 2025
Applicants notified	November/December 2025

Applications are submitted using the Grants Online portal. You will need to register and create an account prior to commencing your application if you don't already have one. Register or log in [here](#).

Once you are logged in click on "available grants" and click on the *BushBank program seed sector grant 2025* to begin your application. You can click on 'save and resume later' at any time and then return to your application by clicking on "my draft applications" button from your home page.

You will receive an application number when you apply. Quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

If you require assistance submitting your application using the Grants Online portal, email grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au.

Applications close at 5:00 pm on 1 September 2025.

Email the [BushBank program](#) for any grant queries.

Important notes:

- No hard copy applications will be accepted.
- Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Landowner or land manager consent must be included if you are not the landowner.

WHAT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS WILL NEED TO BE PROVIDED?

The following documents may be relevant to include with your application:

- a PDF map showing the location of any proposed infrastructure to be developed
- letter from co-funding partners committing to financial contribution
- written consent to undertake the activity from the relevant land manager or landowner for any project proposed on land that is not in the applicant's ownership
- any permits obtained.

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, JPEG, ZIP. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email

them to grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

CHECKLIST

Have you:

- > read these guidelines carefully?
- > checked if your organisation is eligible for this grant funding?
- > checked if your activity is eligible for this grant funding?
- > checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your project?
- > prepared the required supporting documents?

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the assessment process is completed and a final decision made.

All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.