

Grant Program Guidelines

2024-25 Environmental Recovery Package: Coastline Rehabilitation Program

North and Far North Tropical Low, 29 January – 28 February 2025



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Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and
Innovation.

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The department is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights, and our obligations under the Human Rights Act 2019.

December 2025

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Overview

The '2025 North and Far North Tropical Low Environmental Recovery Package: Coastline Rehabilitation Program' (the program) is providing funding to support coastal environmental rehabilitation activities in those regions which were heavily impacted by the North and Far North Tropical Low, 29 January – 28 February 2025 event (the event).

This program aims to provide grants to eligible recipients for on-ground projects which are to support a range of measures to ensure high-value environmental recovery and mitigation efforts are achieved across impacted coastlines. These include support for coastal recovery nature-based solutions that increase the erosion buffering capacity of the coast and biodiversity conservation measures in the marine environment

The program is an initiative funded under the \$73 million Environmental Recovery Package (Phase 2) as part of an exceptional circumstances package of measures jointly agreed and funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under Category D of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to assist in recovery following the North and Far North Tropical Low event.

The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) is the delivery agency for the program, and will be delivering this program alongside the following initiatives:

1. Catchment and Coastline Rehabilitation
 - Catchment Rehabilitation
 - Coastline Rehabilitation
2. National Park Recovery
3. Environmental and Cultural Asset Support

This guideline applies to the **Coastline Rehabilitation Program** only.

The '2025 North and Far North Tropical Low Environmental Recovery Package: Coastline Rehabilitation Program' is providing funding to support coastal environmental rehabilitation activities in those regions which were heavily impacted by the event.

A portion of the \$73 million has been allocated to this program.

Activities must be undertaken within eligible local government areas which are listed in these guidelines below.

Further details are provided in these guidelines, including information about eligibility and assessment criteria, project timeframes and reporting requirements, and advice about how to apply and what makes a good application.

Applications close at 4pm 6 February 2026.

For more information, please email desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Guidelines

Applicants must read these guidelines in full before applying for funding, are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the SmartyGrants online application system, and to read other supporting documentation before starting the process.

Program objectives

This grant program provides funding to enable eligible recipients to undertake on-ground activities within local government areas affected by the North and Far North Tropical Low, 29 January – 28 February 2025 event which aim to support coastline rehabilitation:

- that ensure high-value environmental recovery and mitigation efforts are achieved across impacted coastlines, and
- that support nature-based solutions that reinstate the erosion buffering capacity of the coast and biodiversity conservation measures in the marine environments.

Application eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- local governments established under the *Local Government Act 2009* with coastal environments that have been impacted by the eligible disaster event

Eligible locations

Coastline rehabilitation project activities must be located in one or more of the following twenty-three (23) eligible coastal local government areas:

1. Aurukun Shire Council
2. Burdekin Shire Council
3. Burke Shire Council
4. Cairns Regional Council
5. Carpentaria Shire Council
6. Cassowary Coast Regional Council
7. Cook Shire Council
8. Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council
9. Douglas Shire Council
10. Hinchinbrook Shire Council
11. Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
12. Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council
13. Mackay Regional Council
14. Mornington Shire Council
15. Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council
16. Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council
17. Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council
18. Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council
19. Torres Shire Council
20. Torres Strait Island Regional Council
21. Townsville City Council
22. Whitsunday Regional Council
23. Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Available Funding

There is no cap on the funding amount for a grant to an applicant.

Funding is provided as a GST exclusive amount.

Applicants are requested to submit a grant application that breaks down recovery activities and costs by beach locality, or if a large beach area, then by beach compartment.

Noting the capped total program funding amount, DETSI reserves the right to consider equitable distribution amongst the applicants.

Applications and GST

Applicants registered for GST will not be provided with funding to account for costs directly associated with GST and are required to provide the GST exclusive amount in their budget. Recipients registered for GST can claim the GST component for any expenditure that they incur back from the ATO.

For advice on GST, please seek assistance from the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

For more information, please email desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Project timeframes

Project activities must be completed by **30 June 2028** with all reporting and financial acquittals due by **31 July 2028**. Please refer to the Grants terms and conditions section of this document for more information about grant agreements.

Eligible projects and activities

The following activities are eligible:

- sand-pushing and beach nourishment to reinstate eroded beaches and dunes, including recovery of sand from storm bars offshore (dredging interventions¹) and importation of clean sand to replace sand permanently lost from the beach system, transfer of sand from lower to upper beach, sand redistribution within a beach compartment and infilling of over wash or runoff gullies
- sand surface reprofiling for public safety and to rebury exposed tree roots
- revegetation and stabilisation of degraded and eroded foreshores and beaches, including reinstatement of natural dune-building processes to restore critical erosion buffers
- temporary measures (e.g. rock/sandbag placement, exclusion fencing and/or barricades) for short term protection of foreshore for public safety and to support natural regeneration at impacted coastal areas or to protect eroded coasts from further damage
- stabilisation of coasts and foreshores from further wind or water erosion

¹ Dredging activities are to utilise existing dredging programs currently in place for the purpose of sand nourishment.

- recovery of natural public paths and access points, installation of exclusion/temporary fencing for public safety and to support natural regeneration
- rehabilitation of coastal environmental and associated cultural values
- where nature-based solutions are not appropriate, repairing existing public-owned erosion protection structures (e.g. seawalls or groynes) damaged by the event (where not eligible under REPA)
- undertaking clean-up and removal of debris, where not funded under other DRFA funded initiatives e.g. Community Relief Fund or the Environmental Recovery Cleanup grants for environmental clean-up and local conservation activities

Ineligible projects and activities

Examples of ineligible projects and activities include but are not limited to:

- beach nourishment (importing sand) where it is assessed that there has not been a permanent loss of sand from the beach system (i.e. beach sand has only been moved locally/offshore and natural recovery is likely)
- works to reinstate sea erosion impact where natural recovery is expected and remaining dune width is adequate for ongoing protection of significant development from erosion (other than for point 3 above). This clause does not apply where there is a significant economic argument for beach recovery, such as to return beach amenity in high use or tourism focused areas
- revegetation where natural regrowth and recovery is expected to occur and there is a low risk of further destabilisation of the coastal environment
- construction of new infrastructure including seawalls and groynes that did not exist prior to the event
- activities and projects undertaken outside of the eligible locations
- pre-planning activities, including feasibility studies or impact investigations
- temporary works, other than those required to enable completion of the approved project/activity
- repair works to event-damaged infrastructure, including public facilities and signage, other than the above existing public-owned erosion protection structures (e.g. seawalls or groynes) damaged by the event.
- official opening expenses (including new permanent signage)
- attendance at conferences
- duplication of existing initiatives
- activities funded through other funding packages for this eligible event i.e., DRFA Community Relief Fund or Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs must be directly associated with delivering eligible activities above, delivered within the eligible timeframe and include:

- extraordinary staffing and/or salaries for staff (and their on-costs such as superannuation, annual leave and other entitlements) to undertake eligible activities
- costs associated with staff travel expenses, allowances, and accommodation to undertake eligible activities
- fees for engaging specialist contractors to deliver eligible activities
- purchase of consumables used in undertaking the eligible activities (e.g., personal protective equipment, fuel)
- hire of plant, equipment and vehicle/boat and associated operating consumables (fuel, oil, maintenance, etc.) consumed while undertaking eligible activities
- purchase of materials and low-cost items required to complete eligible activities where hiring is not a feasible option (e.g. wheelbarrows, hardware tools, and minor equipment).

Eligible costs must be linked to an eligible activity and must be supported by detailed evidence of the actual expenditure and dates delivered when claiming payments and acquitting the grant and exclude GST.

Eligible costs include project related costs incurred by the successful applicants after 16 July 2025. These can include costs incurred prior to the execution of the grant agreement. Such costs will need to be identified in the application and must be acquitted at conclusion of the project.

If there is any doubt about eligible projects/activities, please contact the department.

Ineligible expenses

Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- costs of works/activities completed prior to Prime Ministers approval of the program on 16 July 2025.
- non-specific or un-supported indirect and overhead costs
- legal expenses
- land and/or building acquisition costs
- profit margins of applicant including (but not limited to) the applicant's supply or use of plant, labour, or materials
- purchase of core business capital equipment such as motor vehicles, phones, and office equipment or furnishings
- ongoing costs related to a grant recipient's administration, operation, maintenance or engineering of the approved project
- remuneration of employees for work not directly related to the approved project
- vehicle leasing, unless directly required for service delivery (and only to that extent)
- costs of preparing the application
- in-kind contributions
- costs of activities that are the normal or legal responsibility of the landholder (e.g. maintenance of buildings)
- costs of activities that are deemed to be landscaping for private or scenic amenity

- costs of activities that are commercial in nature
- costs that would have been incurred should the event not have occurred or budgeted by the applicant (e.g., existing vehicle leases, insurances, rental costs and wages)
- costs that are reimbursable under other funding sources (e.g., business continuity and insurance, alternative DRFA relief measures, and costs recouped through sale of salvaged assets)

The above list identifies the most common examples of ineligible costs and is not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive. If there is any doubt about ineligible projects/activities, please contact the department.

Purchase of new assets

The purchase of new assets to undertake eligible activities is generally ineligible. However, the purchase of assets may be considered eligible where:

- equipment is unable to be hired and must be purchased to meet operational requirements, or
- it is less expensive to purchase the asset than to hire it.

Only the purchase price less the residual/depreciated value of the asset will be considered an eligible expense.

Applicants seeking to purchase an asset, as opposed to hiring, must provide the following information with their applications for assessment purposes:

- the operational imperative to purchase the asset versus hiring it (including priority and timeframe necessitating the purchase)
- evidence of inability to hire from suitable suppliers, i.e., letter or email with company letterhead or logo
- cost benefit rationale including a comparison of purchase cost against actual hire costs over a required timeframe, and the cost to transport hire equipment plus hire costs versus local purchase cost
- details of ongoing maintenance, storage and insurance requirements
- details of safe use/health and safety risk mitigation of asset
- estimated residual value of the purchased asset, including warranty period extending beyond the eligible activities.

The purchase of assets is to be requested to the department prior to their purchase.

If the purchase of an asset is approved, the applicant must provide the following information with final report and acquittal:

- proof of purchase, and
- the purchase price less the residual/depreciated value at the end of the operational use may be considered eligible.

Definition of an asset

For the purposes of this funding, an asset is defined as something that has a usable life beyond the project and would be added to and managed in the applicant's asset register.

Assets **do not** include eligible items consumed during the approved project activities.

If there is any doubt about eligibility of asset purchases, please contact the department.

Application requirements

All applications must include the following:

- a detailed budget breakdown for each beach locality / beach compartment in the Project Details Form template provided in **Appendix 1**.
- evidence of public liability insurance coverage of at least \$20 million (in total and per incident) that is current and remains current for the duration of the project
- a project timeframe where activities are to be completed by 30 June 2028.
- a project area map clearly defining the location and extent of each project area along the beach locality/beach compartment. Maps can be hand drawn or created using an online program such as Queensland Globe.
- Photographic or survey evidence of the event impact.

Application process

Applicants are required to submit the application and all supporting documentation in full by the submission deadline. All applications must be submitted using [SmartyGrants](#), the department's online grants administration program.

New users will need to set up a free online SmartyGrants account. If you already have a SmartyGrants account, you can login using your existing details. The [Help Guide for Applicants](#) explains the steps you need to take to complete and submit your form. If you experience technical difficulties creating an account or completing an online form, contact SmartyGrants on (03) 9320 6888.

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to abide by all terms and conditions as specified in these guidelines.

Application assessment

Applications will initially be assessed by a panel consisting of Queensland Government employees and external content expert representatives. As per the requirements under the Commonwealth and Queensland Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, an assessment panel comprised of Queensland Government employees will review and endorse the funding recommendations.

Endorsed funding recommendations will be provided to the Director-General, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, who is the decision-maker for all funding recommendations.

Assessment criteria

All applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. Meets the programs eligibility requirements detailed in these guidelines

Taking into consideration the extent the proposed project:

- will undertake eligible coastline recovery activities such as nature-based solutions that reinstate the erosion buffering capacity of the coast as a result of the event
- projects are located within the activated local government areas from the event.

2. Demonstrates environmental benefit

Taking into consideration the extent the application clearly identifies and explains the project's environmental benefit including:

- the current environmental problem that the application seeks to address
- why the project is important to the local environment
- potential environmental outcomes directly resulting from project activities
- any potential environmental risks posed by the project and how these risks will be mitigated.

3. Demonstrates a clear project management approach

Taking into consideration the extent the proposed application:

- clearly explains the proposed project activities and provides a detailed and realistic timeframe to complete the activities by 30 June 2028
- demonstrates the applicant has capability and capacity for delivering the project and administering the grant funding
- has adequately detailed the risks associated with the project and identified actions to mitigate the risks
- details what stakeholder consultation has been undertaken or is to be undertaken.

4. Represents value for money

Taking into consideration:

- the scale of the proposed project/s and activities relative to the funding sought
- whether project costs are proportionate to the time and resources requested
- whether additional financial or in-kind contributions are provided
- whether the funding sought, and budget line items are necessary for successful completion of the project
- evidence of due diligence undertaken to ensure project costs are accurate
- whether the applicant is a local supplier.

Where relevant, an applicant's past performance under other grant programs managed by the department—including if there are any outstanding reports or acquittals—will be taken into consideration.

The assessment criteria are not weighted.

Application outcome

All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their submission in writing.

Details, including the name of the successful applicants, funding allocated, and project location and description, will be published on the Queensland Government website and may be announced through media including social media.

Successful applicants will be contacted by the program delivery manager regarding funding arrangements, grant agreements and other documentation/approvals that may be required.

Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback on their application by emailing desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Applicants may lodge an appeal with the department for any decisions made relating to their grant application by emailing desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Funding availability

DETSI will require successful applicants to enter into a grant agreement. Under this agreement successful applicants will receive funding in milestone payments.

Payments will be connected to the recipient's completion of agreed milestones in the approved grant funding agreement.

The final payment of the grant will be paid upon successful acquittal of the entire grant.

Tips for a successful project

When planning a project, applicants should ensure:

- these guidelines have been read, and all application requirements, Grant terms and conditions can be met
- project outcomes are clear and well-defined
- the project activities directly assist the recovery along the coastlines
- the project can be realistically completed by 30 June 2028 and acquitted prior to 30 July 2028.

Please contact the department if you require clarification or have any questions about the application process, or the suitability of your proposed project. Refer to the Contact information section of these guidelines for details.

Grants terms and conditions

Grant agreements

- Successful applicants must enter into (sign) a grant agreement with the department which outlines the terms and conditions for the funding received.
- The grant agreement is prepared by the department using information provided in the application form and in consultation with the approved recipient.
- The grant agreement will specify the financial and operational requirements of the grant.
- All successful applicants must comply with all terms and conditions in the grant agreement.
- Funding will not be available until both parties have signed the grant agreement, along with the provision of any additional required documentation to the department.
- A 'Project Plan' and a 'Project schedule and budget' must be developed for each approved project and will be included as an annexure to the grant agreement.

Successful applicant process

- The applicant must return the signed grant agreement within four weeks of receiving the draft grant agreement, or the offer may be withdrawn.
- Successful applicants will be required to provide the following documentation prior to release of any grant funding:

- Evidence of public liability insurance coverage of at least \$20 million (in total and per event) that is current and will remain current for the project duration.
 - Certificate of Currency for Work Cover insurance (as required by law).
 - A copy of a recent bank statement to confirm the BSB and account details of the recipient. This is the account into which the grant funding will be paid.
 - Copies of appropriate approvals and permits needed for the funded activities.
- Successful applicants must complete a conflict of interest declaration prior to the release of any funding.
 - A conflict of interest exists where a successful applicant has, or could be perceived to have, an interest (whether personal, financial or otherwise) which conflicts or which may reasonably be perceived as conflicting with, the recipient's ability to meet the requirements and obligations of the project fairly, objectively and independently.
 - Changes to the agreed project will require the successful applicant to apply for a variation in writing to the department. This includes, but is not limited to changes in:
 - budget and expenditure;
 - changes in project activities including location; and/or
 - milestone descriptions and delivery dates.
 - It is at the absolute discretion of the DETSI delegated officer to provide approval.
 - No variation is to be implemented without the applicant first receiving a notice of approval from the department.
 - In the event of cancellation of a funded activity, the department must be notified in writing and all unspent funds returned to the department immediately.
 - Funds granted must be spent for the purposes stated in the application form and grant agreement.
 - Acceptance of a grant payment indicates the recipient's acceptance of all funding terms and conditions in this guideline and grant agreement.
 - Funding may be provided in milestone payments with a final payment withheld until the project has been completed and the department has accepted acquittal documentation.
 - All project activities must be completed prior to 30 June 2028.

Reporting requirements

- All grant recipients must complete quarterly progress reporting. This is required at the end of every quarter for the duration of the project. This report will be provided by the department to recipients through SmartyGrants and will include:
 - actual expenditure reported against the grant funding
 - percentage of project completed
 - project milestones achieved to date
 - any forecasted variances in activities, cost or time
 - before (where possible) and after photos
 - report to be signed off by the authorised accountable officer.
- All grant recipients must complete and submit a final report and acquittal within 30 calendar days after the completion date of the project. This reporting form will be provided by the department to recipients through SmartyGrants during the course of the project.

- Income and expenditure statement, tax invoices or other evidence of expenditure must be provided with the completion report as evidence of all grant funding expenditure.
- The applicant must allow departmental officers to conduct site inspections to inspect project progress if requested.
- The applicant must allow departmental officers to use information/images relating to the project for promotional or other purposes. Applicants will be consulted before images are used for promotional materials.

Other requirements

All recipients, where relevant, must:

- Comply with relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the Fisheries Act 1994.

Public acknowledgement of joint Australian Government and State Government assistance

All recipients must acknowledge Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements funding contribution in public materials, which includes but is not limited to:

- media releases, social media, posters, advertising and signage associated with the approved project;
- acknowledgement or statements in project publications and materials; and
- events that use or include reference to the approved project.

To comply with this requirement, all public advice and media releases should refer to the relevant funding source, as being *"jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements"*.

Prior agreement must be reached with the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority which will oversee approval of media events and associated materials, in consultation with the National Emergency Management Agency.

All publications must also include both the State and Australian Government logos and the following disclaimer: 'Although funding for this product has been provided by both the Australian and Queensland Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either Government.'

For assistance, contact the grants coordinator by emailing desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au

Announcement of successful applicants

Successful recipients are to treat their funding as confidential prior to the announcement by the Australian and Queensland Governments of the successful applicants. This means no media or public announcements of the project until the Australian and Queensland Governments have announced them.

Following the announcement, successful applicants will be listed on the Queensland Government website.

All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their submission in writing.

Privacy

The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation is collecting personal information to assist the grant program assessment panel review funding applications and to prepare a grant agreement, should your application be successful.

All personal information provided in the application form, including all attachments, will be provided to the following parties for assessing the application:

- Authorised officers from DETSI and other Queensland Government agencies
- Approved external assessment panel members (e.g., industry experts).

Where necessary, information contained in your application, including ongoing project reporting and acquittal documentation for successful projects, will be provided to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and the Australian Government's National Emergency Management Agency.

Information contained in your application, including ongoing project reporting and acquittal documentation for successful projects, may also be provided to the Minister for the Environment and Tourism and the Minister for Science and Innovation and the minister's members of staff.

If your application is successful, the following information will be published on the Queensland Environment and Australian Government National Emergency Management Agency websites, and potentially on Queensland Environment and National Emergency Management Agency social media channels:

- total amount of funding allocated
- project name, suburb location and description
- project recipient, except in the case of private protected area landholders, where the name of the nature refuge or the special wildlife reserve will be published instead of the recipient's name.

The department will not otherwise use or disclose your personal information unless you provide your consent, or if the use or disclosure is authorised or required by law.

The grant application and associated documentation is subject to the *Right to Information Act 2009*. If you wish to access your personal information that is in the control of the department, please contact the department's Right to Information Services unit by email rtiservices@detsi.qld.gov.au.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the privacy of your personal information, please contact the department's Privacy Services unit by email privacy@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Contact information

If you have any questions relating to grants or these guidelines, please contact the grants coordinator by emailing desdrfa@detsi.qld.gov.au.

The program delivery officer will be able to provide you with the best advice based on the information provided. All decisions relating to a grant application will be made based on the information contained in that application.