

# Landcare and Community Programs Volunteering and Grants Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Frequently Asked Questions – 22 April 2020

We know your Landcare and community environmental volunteering work means a lot to you, as it does to us. While we appreciate the enormous contribution Landcarers, environmental volunteers and community organisations make to the protection, enhancement and restoration of our landscapes and biodiversity, the message is clear under COVID-19. Stay home. Protect our health system. Save lives.

There are only four reasons to leave home:

- ✓ Shopping for what you need - food and essential supplies;
- ✓ Medical, care and compassionate needs;
- ✓ Exercise in compliance with the public gathering requirements;
- ✓ Work and study if you can't work or learn remotely.

The Landcare and Community Programs team at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) urges you to continue to follow public health measures and stay informed [here](#).

The Department of Health and Human Services has provided a Frequently Asked Questions regarding volunteering – you can access it [here](#).

As volunteers and members of community organisations you are resilient and adaptable, and together we will get through this challenging time. Remember, we will all get back to our usual practices when the time is right.

The Landcare and Community Programs team at DELWP remains fully operational (and working from home). Don't hesitate to contact your Regional Landcare Coordinator (see link below), local Landcare Facilitator, or email us via [landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au) or [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you have any questions or concerns.

## What can I do? Staying involved in Landcare & volunteering while at home

Volunteering is a great way to stay connected with people and the environment, and we know many of you will miss your Landcare and environmental volunteering activities and networks during this period staying at home. While we can't do everything we normally would, there are still ways to stay involved, which include:

- Hold your committee meetings online via [Skype](#) or [MS Teams](#) or one of the many other online tools available. If you need help getting set up for an online meeting, talk to a tech savvy member of your group, a family member or your local Landcare Facilitator. Landcare Victoria Incorporated has also put together some phone and video conferencing tips [here](#) for groups and networks.
- Organise a regular online or phone catch up with people you usually volunteer with.
- Stay in touch with your Landcare and environmental volunteering communities – join or create an online community or social media account to share ideas, achievements, photos and projects.
- Follow Landcare Victoria on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and Landcare Victoria Incorporated (LVI) on [Facebook](#) for information, including about upcoming online events.

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- Work on developing a 12-month or longer strategic or action plan for your group/network and/or its projects, to set yourself up for the future. For example, document your project priorities or aspirational ideas for what you want to achieve; plan what you will focus on and what resources you will need when you re-commence activities. Go to the [Planning with Purpose Toolkit](#) for what's needed in an effective plan, and how to run a planning process for action, strategic, project and business plans.
- Have a look at range of general information on Landcare and environmental volunteering on the [Victorian Landcare Gateway](#).
- Plan how you can attract and recruit more volunteers to your group – [Volunteering Victoria](#) has some helpful information.
- Develop some 'shovel ready' projects which you can seek funding for when relevant grants become available.
- Think about how to make your group [more inclusive](#) and [diverse](#) or document the approaches you have taken and share your learnings with others.
- Make sure all volunteers and staff in your organisation have a current [Working With Children Check](#), and understand Victoria's [Child Safety Standards](#).
- Do your paperwork – review your Job Safety Plans for your activities, complete any outstanding grants reporting, update your meeting templates, update your volunteer contact list.
- Spring clean and service your equipment.
- Connect with other groups who have similar projects or challenges to you – ask your Landcare Facilitator to put you in touch or help you connect online.
- Make sure your group/network details are listed and up to date on:
  - ❖ [Victorian Landcare Gateway](#) - email [landcarevic@gmail.com](mailto:landcarevic@gmail.com) for editing permissions for your group/network,
  - ❖ [Victoria's Environmental Volunteering Opportunities - Interactive Map](#) and email [environmental.volunteers@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:environmental.volunteers@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you need to update details on the map for your group/network.
- Get involved in citizen science projects - the Australian Citizen Science Association has an extensive list of [projects](#).
- Visit the [SWIFFT \(State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams\)](#) website and participate in up-coming interactive online seminars and/or read the notes from previous seminars.
- Sort out your photos and choose the best ones for future promotion or reporting.
- Subscribe to the online *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine [here](#).
- Write an article for the next edition of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine. Find out how to submit articles [here](#).
- Stay up to date with what's happening in environmental volunteering in Victoria by visiting [here](#) and subscribe to our occasional newsletter by sending an email to [environmental.volunteering@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:environmental.volunteering@delwp.vic.gov.au).
- Boost your online presence by developing or renewing the website for your group/network.
- Renew or develop membership or other brochures for your group/network.
- Explore online training opportunities for your group/network members and/or committee.

## Landcare and Community Programs – Funded Projects

### General Guidance

We anticipate that the delivery of some of your funded grants projects will be affected or delayed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and that is ok. Please follow public health measures and directions. Rest assured that we will provide flexibility around grant project due dates where required.

### Landcare and Community Programs Grant Rounds

#### *Biodiversity On-ground Action Tranche 1 - Hubs and Iconic Species Projects*

Hubs and Iconic Species projects have been going since 2017 and should be nearing completion. Final reporting has been extended to 31 July 2020 for those who need it. Please ensure you submit your final report by that date. Please contact [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you have any queries regarding this.

#### *Biodiversity On-ground Action Tranche 1 - Community and Volunteer Action Grants*

**2017** - Final reporting has been extended to 22 June 2020 for those who need it. Please ensure you submit your final report by that date. Please contact [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you have any queries regarding this.

**2018** - these projects are due for completion in 2021, but we will consider time extensions and flexibility. Please contact [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you have any queries regarding this.

#### *Biodiversity On-ground Action Tranche 1 – Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Victorian Grants*

All Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Victorian projects funded should already be completed and a final report returned, unless an extension has previously been agreed with DELWP. If you have not submitted your final report or received an extension, please contact [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au).

#### *Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants (WRG) and Wildlife Rehabilitator Bushfire Grants (WRBG)*

**2019/20** - WRG final reports are due 31 July 2020. Please contact [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) if you have any queries regarding this.

**2019/20** - WRBG program is due to end on 30 April 2020 and no extension to the program is possible. Final reports are not required for these grants.

#### *Victorian Landcare Grants (VLG)*

**2019/20** – VLG projects are funded through your local Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and are due for completion by 30 November 2020. An extension of up to six months is available for those who require it, and variations to projects can be made to activities that within the scope of the VLG guidelines. Please contact your Regional Landcare Coordinator (RLC) at your CMA if you need a variation.

**2020/21** – Victorian Landcare Program staff at DELWP are working with the RLCs and CMAs regarding the delivery of the 2020/21 VLG under the current COVID-19 pandemic. More information will be provided on the 2020/21 VLG in the future.

### Our project is due for completion in 2020 or 2021. Can we get an extension?

Groups undertaking projects funded through the Landcare and Community Programs teams of DELWP (e.g. Community & Volunteer Action Grants, Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants, and Victorian Landcare Grants) may have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see the more detailed direction above and please contact [landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au) and/or [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au) to discuss if you need a variation.

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## We have finished all the work for our grant but haven't submitted a final report yet. What should we do?

Now is a good time to catch up on paperwork and ensure your reporting requirements are up to date. The Community Programs team are in the process of preparing final report acquittal templates for relevant programs and they will be forwarded to you soon. Once released and you have finished your project, you can submit your report, even if it is not due yet.

## We are supposed to deliver a community engagement or education event as part of our grant. What should we do?

You have two options – you may like to hold your event online, or you may prefer to request an extension to hold your event when public health directions are lifted, and face-to-face engagement can occur.

If you would like to try an online event feel free to contact your local Landcare Facilitator, and we will also assist you as much as we can.

## Landcare and Community Programs Contact Details

- DELWP's Victorian Landcare Program staff – [landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au) and your email will be sent onto the appropriate staff member.
- Regional Landcare Coordinator (RLC) contacts – go to [RLC contacts on Victorian Landcare Gateway](#).
- DELWP's Community Programs and grant staff – [enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au).

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