COMMUNITY RIVERCARE PROGRAM GRANTS
GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS
ROUND 10

1. BACKGROUND

The State Government is continuing its commitment to community volunteer groups through the Community Rivercare Program. Through Round 10 a total of $100,000 is available for community groups to deliver on-ground projects during 2027-28 to help protect and restore the waterways of the Swan Canning Catchment.

This program is administered by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

There is a well-developed network of community groups working in the Swan Canning Catchment with local knowledge, experience and the volunteer workforce to complete restoration projects that achieve multiple benefits for our waterways and the community. This funding is aimed at supporting community groups to deliver environmental projects that will improve their local waterways.

The Community Rivercare Program has to date funded 126 projects. This has resulted in revegetation of foreshores along waterways and increased habitat for native fish, birds and other species dependent on waterways.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the program is to support community groups to improve habitat for native fauna, foreshore condition and water quality, and to prevent erosion along the waterways in the Swan Canning Catchment.

3. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants:

- Community groups with a volunteer base.
- Not-for-profit Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups with a community volunteer base.

Community groups must be incorporated or sponsored (under an auspicing arrangement) by another group or organisation that will administer their grant funding (see section 13 for more information about sponsorship).

Government agencies, educational institutions, businesses, land managers or land owners may participate by forming partnerships with community groups and contributing to projects.

Eligible projects:

- Must be in waterways or riparian zones located in the Swan Canning Catchment or other catchments of concern (please contact us for more information) that feed into the Swan and Canning rivers (map of Swan Canning Catchment). For the purposes of the Community Rivercare Program, waterways include rivers, streams, brooks, creeks and open drainage channels that flow to the Swan and Canning rivers. Riparian zones include the channel and the banks of the waterway extending laterally away from the bank and including the extent of the connected floodplain.
- Must address at least one of the following criteria:
    - habitat improvement for birds and/or other species dependent on waterways;
    - foreshore revegetation and weed control;
    - weed control to promote natural regeneration;
    - bank stabilisation to repair or prevent foreshore erosion; or
    - water quality improvement.
- Can be on public or private land in the Swan Canning Catchment or other catchments of concern. For projects on private land, a clear benefit to the public must be demonstrated.
- Require a letter of support for the project from each of the land owner(s)/ manager(s). If there is a voluntary management agreement or conservation covenant covering the project site, then please state this in the letter. The letter should:
    - Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to protecting the project site from clearing or other significant disturbances.
    - Consider the potential for increased fire risk (where applicable).
    - Include a commitment to maintenance of the project.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Adequately address one or more of the criteria.
- Are feasible, technically sound, and achievable.
- Are primarily comprised of on-ground works.
- Demonstrate value for money.
- Demonstrate financial or in-kind contributions (this includes volunteer time) to the project.

All applications will be assessed by a panel consisting of representatives with relevant expertise including foreshore restoration, fauna habitat and water quality.

4. FUNDING AVAILABLE

In 2027-28 between $3,000 and $10,000 (ex GST) is available for one-year projects. A total of $100,000 is available for allocation in Round 10.

Note that payments for projects trialling alternative restoration approaches may be broken into further instalments.

Negotiations and project development will be required between the applicant and DBCA before finalisation of the project agreement.

5. INSURANCE

The successful applicants will either need to have their own insurances, be sponsored (under an auspicing arrangement) by an organisation or group that will provide insurance cover or be registered under the DBCA volunteer program.

Sufficient insurances must be maintained throughout the life of your project, including but not limited to, personal accident insurance for volunteers and public liability insurance to cover potential liability in conducting activities funded in part or in full through this grant program. Workers' compensation insurance will be required if the applicant or sponsor has paid staff that are involved in the project.

Volunteers registered through the DBCA volunteer program are covered for personal accident insurance while undertaking approved volunteer activities including participating in Community Rivercare activities.

Successful applicants will be required to submit copies of certificates of currency prior to receiving grant funds.

To ensure applicants are aware of site risks, they will need to have and provide a copy of a signed Job Safety Analysis (JSA) or equivalent. If the applicant or their sponsor do not have an existing JSA, DBCA will assist providing one. If volunteers are undertaking chemical weed control, ChemCert® or equivalent training may be required.

6. METHODOLOGY

Your methodology should include as a minimum:

- A brief description of the techniques you will be using. For example, if weed control is part of your project then nominate hand weeding, mechanical weeding, chemical control including type of chemical and rate of application proposed, or alternative weed management methods.
- The project area (m^2) and length of waterway (m) to be restored.
- An outline of who will be completing each of the proposed tasks and activities (for example, the group members or volunteers, volunteers from outside of the group in the case of community planting days, contractors, partner organisations, land owners or land managers, or others).
- A timeline indicating when the tasks will be completed. Please use the timeline template provided.
- An outline of any approvals required to conduct the activities, or confirmation that no approvals are required.

Please also address the following considerations in your methodology:

Revegetation	Local plant species must be used. Ensure plants and plant material are sourced from a Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA) accredited supplier.
Bank stabilisation	Demonstrate the need. Soft engineering is preferred, for example, coir logging, jute matting and planting.
Mulching	Demonstrate the need. Provide details of mulch type, proposed depth and extent. Include what measures will be taken to ensure mulch doesn't enter the waterway.

Watering	Demonstrate the need. Provide details of planned watering frequency.
Soil improvers and fertilisers	Demonstrate the need. Provide details of products proposed for use including application rates and frequency.
Habitat structures	Demonstrate the need and suitability of structures. This may include appropriate technical advice, materials, longevity of installation, compliance with all relevant Acts and Regulations and a monitoring and maintenance plan.

7. PROJECT MAINTENANCE AND SITE PROTECTION

Your project site is likely to require ongoing maintenance past the project's completion date to continue to meet project objectives. For example, follow up weed control or removal of seedling protection bags. Please state who will be responsible for site maintenance (for example, the land owner or manager, or the grant recipient) following the project's completion.

To ensure the project site is not the subject of land clearing or other disturbances the land owner(s) or land manager(s) should demonstrate an ongoing commitment to site protection and maintenance in their letter of support.

8. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER STRATEGIES, PLANS, PROJECTS AND NATURAL ASSETS

Examples of the types of documents that your project may align with and you may refer to in your application where relevant:

- Water Quality Improvement Plans;
- Management Plans;
- Tributary Assessments;
- Strategic Regional Plans;
- Catchment Management Plans; and
- Biodiversity Strategies.

9. PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Expected monitoring and evaluation for projects:

- Photo monitoring points to be established prior to commencing works.
- Monitoring photos to be taken at a minimum of every six months.
- If the project involves revegetation, the number of seedlings planted, approximate survival rate and area (m^2) and length (m) of waterway or riparian zone revegetated.
- If the project involves weed management, weed species and area (m^2) and length (m) of waterway or riparian zone successfully controlled.
- For projects aiming to create, restore or protect habitat for specific species, number of structures installed, or area of habitat created (m^2 or linear metres). Records of observations before and after the project may be appropriate. It is recommended that habitat structures are monitored for feral bees or other pests and managed appropriately. Maintenance of habitat structures will need to be considered.
- Evaluation of the project may be a simple statement outlining successes or failures of the project with the goal of sharing any lessons learnt.
- Any additional monitoring results that the group acquires through their own means is also welcomed but not essential for this grants process.

10. BUDGET ADVICE

- In the budget template, indicate the base price excluding GST and show the GST component where applicable.
- GST will only be paid to groups/sponsors that are registered for GST. Unregistered groups will be responsible for paying the GST component.
- A maximum of 10 percent of the total grant may be used toward non-on ground works including project administration and management costs (for example, insurance policies, engagement with Aboriginal people) and any other non-on ground works.
    - Funds for staffing, wages or salary will not be considered.
    - Any fees (for example, to obtain approvals) are to be included in the 10 percent provided for project administration and management costs.
    - Equipment may be purchased up to a maximum of $200 (ex GST), which is to be included in the 10 percent provided for project administration and management costs.
- The budget template should itemise a unit rate for area of treatment for weed control and other restoration activities.
    - Paid contractors undertaking works must provide an ABN and quotation for works proposed.
    - If any quoted operational or material costs appear to be substantially outside commonly accepted current prices, please provide documents to support the claim.
- The assessment panel may be in contact if the costings require further justification.
- For this application, in-kind time contribution valuations will be measured at a consistent rate of:
    - Adult volunteer time = $50/hour
    - Under-eighteens volunteer time = $20/hour
    - Paid officer in-kind time = $70/hour
- Please use the budget template provided.

11. GRANT CONDITIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Successful applicants must abide by the grant conditions set out in the project agreement and agree to the following:

- The grant must only be used for the purposes specified in the application.
- A record of the financial administration (including income, expenditure and interest relating to grant funding received) will be maintained.
- All applicants must have adequate insurance and a signed JSA or equivalent for the project.
- Any promotion of the project is to include acknowledgement of the funding source (Community Rivercare Program – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions). This initiative is part of the WA Government's Kep Katitjin-Gabi Kaadadjan (Waterwise action plan 3) to establish leading waterwise communities for Boorloo (Perth) and Bindjareb (Peel) by 2030.
- A completed report is to be submitted by the grant recipient at the end of each financial year of the project (a reporting template will be supplied by DBCA to the grant recipient).
- The grant recipient shall notify DBCA of any significant delays in the project that could affect the end date as soon as practicable.
- Unspent funds shall be returned to DBCA.

12. APPROVALS

Obtaining approvals for the project is the responsibility of the successful applicant. Please note timing for approvals and allow adequate time for permits to be approved and notification to be received. For example, permits issued under the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007 may take up to 4-6 weeks for approval.
The following approvals may need to be considered, but are not limited to:

- land manager requirements;
- seed collection permits (administered by DBCA);
- permits for the installation of habitat structures (administered by DBCA and/or the landholder);
- Bed and Banks permits (administered by Department of Water and Environmental Regulation);
- Aboriginal Heritage approvals (administered by Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage);
- permits issued under the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007 (administered by DBCA)*:* and
- any Local Government requirements.

13. SPONSORSHIP

Unincorporated groups will need a sponsor (auspicor), such as the local NRM group, catchment group, local government or partner group/organisation, that will receive and administer grant funding on behalf of the applicant. Grants will not be issued to personal bank accounts.

Groups that are incorporated may choose to be sponsored by another incorporated group or organisation that will receive and administer the grant funds.

Applicants with a sponsor need to provide the sponsoring organisation's details and evidence of their agreement to receive and administer the grant funding.

Incorporated groups **without an ABN** may still be eligible to receive the funding directly. An Australian Taxation Office (ATO) *Statement by a supplier* form will need to be completed and provided to DBCA with the application. The applicant will be regarded as the 'supplier' providing DBCA with a service. Please check the ATO website for details.

14. GRANT TIMELINE FOR ROUND 10

Event	Date
Grant round opens	26 October 2026
Applications close (No late applications will be accepted)	11 December 2026
Any additional or supporting information due*	22 January 2027
Applicants notified of outcome and negotiations for grant agreements commence	March 2027
Successful applicants receive funds	May 2027
Round 10 (2027-28) progress reports due	July 2028

**For example, insurance certificates of currency, permit approvals or any additional information not provided in the initial application.*

15. HOW TO APPLY

Applicants may apply for more than one project. Separate applications are required for each project.

Applications will need to include as attachments:

- A letter of support for the project from the land owner(s) or land manager(s) including maintenance commitments and any covenants on the project site. Note: although this may not be available at the time of submission, it is a mandatory requirement prior to funding approval.
- Map(s) of the project site clearly showing the location, North arrow and extent of the project.
- Timeline for the project identifying when major activities will occur.
- Budget clearly detailing what the grant will pay for. Outline other contributions, both financial and in-kind (including volunteer time estimates, loan of equipment, technical advice) that will be invested in the project.

Additional requirements for some applications:

- Supporting evidence to justify budget estimates (if applicable).
- Applicants with a sponsor (auspicor) will need to provide the sponsoring organisation's details and evidence of their agreement to receive and administer the grant funding.
- ATO *Statement by a supplier* form (if applicable).

Applications are strongly recommended to be submitted online via the SmartyGrants portal Community Rivercare Program Round 10.

Other grant application submission options include:

- Request copies of the documents from rivers.systems@dbca.wa.gov.au, fill in the application form, save it and email it as an attachment along with all other supporting attachments to rivers.systems@dbca.wa.gov.au.

- Post printed application form and attachments to:
  Healthy Catchments Program
  Swan Canning Waterways Branch
  Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
  Locked Bag 104
  BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE WA 6983

- Hand-deliver printed application form and attachments to:
  Healthy Catchments Program
  Swan Canning Waterways Branch
  Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
  17 Dick Perry Avenue
  KENSINGTON WA 6151

USEFUL REFERENCES AND LINKS

Photographic monitoring of vegetation (DBCA)

Habitat protection and foreshore management (DBCA)

Best management practices for foreshore stabilisation: Direct shore stabilisation (DBCA)

Best management practices for foreshore stabilisation: Erosion control matting (DBCA)

Further resources about weeds and plant diseases (DBCA)

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Portal (DPLH)

DBCA's Volunteer Program

Statement by a supplier not quoting an ABN (Australian Taxation Office):
https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/statement-by-a-supplier-not-quoting-an-abn/

CONTACTS

For questions regarding the Community Rivercare Program contact:

Healthy Catchments Program
Swan Canning Waterways Branch
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
(08) 9278 0900
rivers.systems@dbca.wa.gov.au