



AUCKLAND COUNCIL

RENH Applicant Guide – 2022/2023

Regional Environment and Natural Heritage (RENH) Grant Programme

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Introduction

Auckland Council's Regional Environment Grants Programme is focused on the protection, restoration or enhancement of Auckland's regionally significant natural heritage areas and projects.

This guide outlines the grants programme eligibility criteria, application process and accountability requirements for successful applicants.

Applying for funding – First Steps

Before submitting your application, please make sure you:

- Read this guide carefully to ensure you fully understand the eligibility criteria, application process and accountability requirements.
- Register yourself or your organisation in the SmartyGrants system by going to <https://aucklandcouncil.smartygrants.com.au/>.
- Read the Auckland Council [Regional Environment Grant Programme Framework](#).

Who can apply for grants?

Applications are accepted from individuals, mana whenua, iwi, organisations and community groups who meet the general Community Grant eligibility criteria as well as regionally determined priorities outlined below. Projects can take place on public, Māori or private land, if appropriate permissions from the land manager are in place

Current grant recipients are eligible to apply for further funding on separate projects, dependant on completion of currently funded work.

General Eligibility Criteria

The Regional Environment Grants Programme will accept applications from:

- Community organisations, Charitable Trusts, Incorporated Societies, Co-operatives or Unions and groups under umbrella organisations
- Hapū, rohe, , whānau or marae organisations, iwi or any other Māori organisation
- Individuals and groups
- Note for grants over \$1,000 individuals and unincorporated groups will need to either nominate an umbrella organisation or receive grant payments as reimbursement
- Commercial entities

Applications are not accepted from:

- Political parties
- Applications to fund projects, programmes or facilities run by Auckland Council
- Auckland Council Council-Controlled organisations, including facilities owned and operated by Regional Facilities Auckland.
- Organisations receiving statutory funding from Auckland Council via compulsory annual levies or the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act
- Other local authorities, government agencies or public-sector entities.

Regional Environment Grants

Programme Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply to the Regional Environment grants programme services, projects or activities are required to be either:

- Regional in terms of scale and/or significance, or
- Regional in terms of impact or reach
- Address regionally determined priorities

Note: Funding for environmental projects or activities which do not meet criteria for regional funding may be available through the relevant Local Grant Programme.

Please contact Auckland Council Environmental grants staff for further information. Email: communityfunding@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or Ph. 09 301 01 01

Regionally Determined Priorities

Kaitiakitanga

Projects or activities that align with, enable and empower mana whenua and/or mataawaka in the exercise of kaitiakitanga in Tāmaki Makaurau.

Projects could include:

- Protection and / or enhancement of wāhi tapu and wāhi whakahirahira, significant or sacred sites.
- Protection, restoration and enhancement of taonga species and indigenous biodiversity.
- Weed and pest control on marae and in Māori communities.
- Cultural health monitoring programmes.
- Community and / or educational programmes that sustain and promote kaitiakitanga values and practices.

- Wānanga to share mātauranga in relation to te ao tūroa and to ensure the process otaonga tuku iho is maintained.

Conservation

Projects or activities should contribute to:

- The effective management of a regionally prioritised indigenous ecosystem or species (including threatened ecosystems; scheduled Significant Ecological Areas in the Auckland Unitary Plan or sites of ecological significance scheduled in the Auckland Council District Plan - Hauraki Gulf Islands Section).
- The delivery of a landscape level actions that connect to other restoration projects.
- The management of plant and animal pests identified in the Regional Pest Management Plan, particularly those affecting priority indigenous ecosystems or species in the Auckland region.
- The effective management or recognition of important geological sites in the region (including Outstanding Natural Features scheduled in the Auckland Unitary Plan or of geological items scheduled in the Auckland Council District Plan - Hauraki Gulf Islands Section).
- Supporting Māori outcomes.
- Kauri Protection projects: Projects that prioritise the health of kauri and kauri ecosystems e.g., Fencing projects on private properties to prevent stock pressures or treatment programmes to treat kauri that have kauri dieback disease.
- Projects that raise awareness, drive behaviour change and target education of industry, private landowners, schools and/ or community groups to protect kauri/ myrtles and reduce risk of kauri dieback disease and/ or Myrtle Rust.

Auckland Council restoration advisors in your region may be able to assist you with developing a restoration plan for your site. Please email pestfree@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz to get in touch with one of our restoration advisors.

Healthy Waters

Projects or activities should contribute to the protection, enhancement or restoration of streams, waterways, wetlands, riparian and coastal margins.

- Funding is available for fencing of waterways and native restoration planting and plant maintenance within fenced-off areas.
- Fencing should be permanent 7- 8 wires properly strained, unless an alternative is better suited to local conditions such as flooding risk or land management considerations.
- To be effective, a minimum riparian strip width of 3-5 metres is required. Preference is given to projects with wider strips.
- All plants should be eco-sourced and appropriate to the planting area.
- Contribution towards Māori outcomes
- Educational and/or community programs surrounding water quality that promote waterway protection and erosion control. Projects currently delivered across Auckland and those with a limited reach are both eligible.

Auckland Council restoration advisors in your region may be able to assist you with developing a restoration plan for your site. Please email: pestfree@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz to get in touch with one of our restoration advisors.

Application process

What can you apply for?

The Regional Environment Grants Programme supports a wide range of projects and you can apply for any items needed to make your project successful with the exception of exclusions listed below.

Fund exclusions

Several exclusions exist for this fund. To find out what they are, please review the [Community Grants Policy](#).

Additional exclusions to those in the Auckland Council Grants Policy are:

- Activities or work that has already been completed including purchases already made (i.e. no retrospective funding).
- Activities or work that is required as a condition of a resource consent or mitigation requirements. This includes wetland or forest fragment planting and fencing required as part of subdivision consent/entitlement applications.
- Projects that are part of a current or known future subdivision consent application.
- Projects that may lead to a conflict of interest for Auckland Council as a consent authority or are identified as not in accordance with the Auckland Council's rules, policies or recommended best practice.
- Projects whose sole purpose is beautification.
- Projects that are currently identified and resourced in the work plan of Auckland Council, DoC, MfE or other managing agency.
- Projects being carried out as part of the requirements for tertiary qualifications
- Projects that are focussed on a specific local issue with limited scope for regional scalability. These projects can be supported by the Auckland Council Local Board funding programmes.

How much can you apply for?

The Regional Environment Grants Programme provides grants between \$5,000 and \$40,000 however smaller grants may be allocated.

In most cases you or your organisation must contribute at least 50% to the total project cost however in exceptional circumstances grants of a higher contribution towards total project costs may be approved.

You or your organisation's contribution towards the total project costs does not need to be financial and can include volunteer time or in-kind support.

You or your organisation's contribution towards the project must be clearly detailed in the application budget. For volunteer time this can be calculated at \$22.10 per hour for labour and \$30 per hour for professional assistance. For in-kind support this can be calculated using reasonable market rates. Please contact Auckland Council environmental grants staff for further information.

Multi-year project grants

The Regional Environment Grants Programme supports both one-off and multi-year project grants.

For one-off project grants, grant recipients will have 12 months to complete project work and grant accountability requirements.

A limited number of multi-year project grants are available. These grants allow applicants to apply once to receive funding annually for up to three years. These grants will be no more than approximately 20% of total available budget.

To apply for a multi-year grant applicants must:

- Provide a project plan and high-level budget for each year they are seeking funding. Detailed project budget information is required for the first year of funding.
- Multi-year grant recipients will be subject to grant accountability requirements at the end of each year that funding is provided. It is also expected that a longer funding relationship would mean project accountability would include detailed multi-year monitoring and evaluation.

Receiving a one-off project grant for one part of a staged multi-year project would not prevent applicants from submitting future applications for either one-off or multi-year project grants in subsequent funding rounds.

How to apply

The Regional Environment Grants Programme operates as a contestable process, this means:

- Applicants are invited to apply for a grant during scheduled funding rounds, with publicly advertised opening and closing dates
- Clearly defined processes will be applied to all applications
- Final allocation decisions are made in a public forum

When can you apply?

The Regional Environment Grants Programme has one annual funding round.

How many applications can you submit?

Applicants can submit more than one application to the Regional Environment Grants Programme, however applications will need to be for different projects or activities.

Applicants can also apply for grants from more than one grants programme for different projects and activities. For example, applicants can apply to both the Regional Environment Grants Programme and relevant Local Board grants programme. Applicants will need to identify any other council grant programmes they have applied to.

Preparing your application

All applications must be submitted using the SmartyGrants online system.

Key application requirements:

- Complete all the mandatory sections of the application form. Incomplete applications will
- not be accepted.
- You will be asked to explain how your project or activity contributes towards fund outcomes
- You will be asked to attach quotes in your project budget to substantiate costs you are requesting funding to support.
- You will be asked to attach project information as appropriate to your application; this can include site details, photos, maps, restoration plans, planting plans and plant lists.
- You will be asked to attach bank account details if you have not received a grant payment from Auckland Council in the last 12 months.
- Please be aware that Council funding should not be regarded as a sole funding source for your activity.

Disclosure of Interest

All applicants must disclose if an Auckland Council councillor, local board member, a council employee or their immediate family has any interest or involvement in the activity they are seeking a grant for. You will be asked this question in the application form.

A councillor or local board member involved in a community organisation can be present at a meeting where the activity is considered, however, they may not take part in the decision process.

How will your application be assessed?

All eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria below. This application assessment will be the basis of funding recommendations presented to the Environment and Community Committee.

- Project impact
- Connection
- Māori outcomes
- Applicant Capacity
- Value for Money

Notification of decisions, funding agreements and accountability requirements

Notification of decisions

Fund allocation decisions for the Regional Environment Grants Programme will be made by the Environment and Community Committee. Once allocation decisions have been made all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email.

In the event that your application is not supported, a reason why your application has not been successful will be provided. Council staff where possible, will provide specific feedback on your project and suggestions for future grant applications.

Successful applicants

Once funding has been approved, all successful applications will receive a funding agreement. This is a formal document which outlines the conditions of the grant and the amount the grant is

for. The funding agreement will also outline the accountability reporting requirements. Grant recipients will be required to sign these agreements and return to Council to accept grants.

Accountability Requirements

All Auckland Council grants, including low value grants, are required to account for how the grants are spent.

Requirements include points below as relevant to your project:

- How the conditions in the funding agreement have been met
- How did your project contribute to the regional priorities?
- What were your project/activity outcomes?
- What changes did you make to the project/activity?
- Number of participants/attendees
- How did the grant make a difference to your project?
- What were the highlights?
- What were your learnings and what would you do differently?
- Proof of expenditure
- How you have acknowledged the Auckland Council support
- Photos during and at completion of your project
- What project measures, monitoring and evaluation approaches were used as part of the project and what were the results?

- How did the project contribute towards Māori outcomes?
- How has the Mauri (or life force) of the environment in which the project is impacting on, been improved or enhanced?
- Did you engage with other collaborators such as other community groups, manawhenua, entities or neighbours?

Project measures required will be appropriate to the project and may include (where applicable):

- Number of people involved, the number of volunteer hours and number of contractor hours
- General planting projects: Number of trees planted, size of area planted (m²) and plant survival rate (%)
- General fencing projects: Type of fencing installed, Metres of fencing installed and size of area protected (m²)
- Riparian fencing/planting projects: Length of stream protected, size of area protected (m²), type of fencing installed, length of fencing installed (m²), Number of trees planted, size of area planted (m²) and plant survival rate (%)
- Animal pest control projects: What animal pests were controlled, animal pest control method used, area covered by pest control (m²), number of animals controlled and monitoring results.
- Plant pest control projects: What plant pests species were controlled, plant pest control methods used and area of pest control (m²) and monitoring results.
- Maps showing actual spatial area of community conservation activities such as:
 - Native planting
 - Pest plant management
 - Rabbit management
 - Possum management
 - Rat management
 - Mustelid management
 - Linear metres of fencing for biodiversity restoration/protection
 - Hectares of habitat ring fenced for biodiversity restoration/protection
- Number of workshops or open days held and number of attendees.
- Monitoring results: Please provide results of any monitoring carried out during the project. e.g. vegetation monitoring, bird counts, invertebrate monitoring or water quality monitoring.

Please note:

Auckland Council will assess accountability reports to ensure they meet requirements. This may include a site visit by council staff.

Accountability reporting will form part of future funding assessments.

Contact Us

Contact the environmental grants team on 09 301 0101 or via email communityfunding@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

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