DOC Community Fund | Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori

Guide for Applicants 2018/19

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

New Zealand Government

About this guide

Purpose

This guide is for individuals or groups who are requesting grant funding from the Department of Conservation (DOC) Community Fund – Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori (the fund).

It outlines the fund's eligibility and assessment criteria, provides an overview of the application and funding processes, and sets out the information you will be asked to supply.

Contact us

You are welcome to contact us if you have any queries related to the fund. For questions about:

- **delivering your project** (eg predator or weed control), please contact your local DOC office
- **the funding process** (eg application forms), please contact the Funds Team – phone 0800 86 20 20 or email doccf@doc.govt.nz.

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure that this guide is as clear and accurate as possible, the information it contains is general guidance only and does not constitute legal advice. In the event of any uncertainty, the applicant should obtain independent legal advice.

Cover Image: "Kowhai. NZ" by Bernard Spragg, CC - Zero

Contents

About the fund

The DOC Community Fund – Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori supports community-led conservation projects on public and private land.

Funds will be directed towards practical projects that aim to conserve New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity. This includes initiatives focusing on:

- protecting and restoring our natural habitats
- halting the decline and restoring healthy, sustainable populations of our native species.

Am I eligible for a grant?

Projects must meet all of the criteria listed below to be eligible to apply.

Eligibility criteria	
1	The project is focused on protecting and improving New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity.
2	The project is community-led *ie led by persons or entities other than government departments and local authorities. This includes landowners, Māori land trusts, not-for-profit organisations, umbrella groups and whānau/hapū/iwi.*
3	The project will be funded for up to 3 years.
4	The applicant is a legal entity who is able to enter into a funding agreement with DOC.

Note that individuals are also classed as a legal entity. The individual or group applying to the fund must be the same individual or group who will run the project. Government departments and local authorities are not eligible to apply to the fund.

What if my project activities can't be completed within 3 years?

The activities you are seeking funding for must be completed within 3 years. Applicants are welcome to reapply to the fund at the end of this period.

What if my project doesn't meet the fund's eligibility criteria?

If your project does not meet all of the eligibility criteria, you may not apply to the fund. However, there may be other funding options available to you – see www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/other-funding-organisations/.

When can I apply?

The fund opens for applications on **25 February 2019** and closes at **5 pm on 22 March 2019**. Applications must be received within these dates to be considered for funding.

How do I apply for funding?

To streamline the application process, we have developed two application forms for different-sized grants. If you would like to apply and your project fits the eligibility criteria listed on page 5 of this guide, complete the application form that best fits your project.

Small grants — For individuals or groups requesting **$20,000 or less**

Large grants — For individuals or groups requesting **more than $20,000**

Both application forms are available on the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund. We recommend that you read this guide in full before completing an application form.

How are applications assessed?

All eligible applications are assessed by a panel against the fund's assessment criteria and based on their merit compared with other applications.

Applications will be assessed solely on the information provided in the application form and supporting information.

Assessment criteria	
1	The extent to which indigenous biodiversity will be protected, restored or enhanced. *i.e. protecting, restoring and enhancing our natural habitats and native species*
2	The extent to which the project engages volunteers and the community in its delivery (eg iwi/hapū, landowners, non-government organisations (NGOs) and local councils).
3	Recognition will be given to projects that support Te Ao Māori and Māturanga Māori, respecting mana whenua values and aspirations for the environment.
4	The likelihood of success, demonstration of the required skills and capability to deliver the project, and the provision of a reasonable and realistic project budget.

General information about applying for a grant

What can the grant be used for?

Grants can be used towards activities that are focused on conserving New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity. This includes costs associated with training (including health and safety) where it is included as a component of a project that includes on-ground activities.

Funding for salaries and contractors is also eligible but applicants must demonstrate in the application form why these are vital to the completion of the project.

The fund cannot support:

- ✖ retrospective costs (ie costs incurred prior to a Deed of Grant being signed)
- ✖ reimbursement of landowner time or voluntary labour
- ✖ activities that individuals, organisations or councils are required to do by law
- ✖ proposals that are designed to generate personal or commercial profit
- ✖ the development of an activity for which public use will be restricted by copyright or patent
- ✖ debt repayment or the refinancing of loans
- ✖ participation in statutory processes or litigation
- ✖ venture capital
- ✖ land purchase
- ✖ academic scholarships
- ✖ local and central government fees and charges, with the exception of fees associated with submitting an application for resource consent, but excluding costs for the public notification of an application and other associated costs (eg related to hearings).

Do I need to provide a detailed budget?

The assessment panel will use the budget information provided in your application to determine whether the proposed costs are reasonable and realistic for the proposed activities.

Your budget should provide a detailed breakdown of all estimated project-related costs (expenditure) for the full duration of the project. You should provide enough information for the assessment panel to fully understand how the requested funding will be used.

Do I need to be registered for GST?

Applicants do not need to be registered for GST to apply for funding. However, government funding is a taxable activity. If your organisation is conducting a taxable activity and its annual income exceeds $60,000 per annum, it **must** be registered for GST.

For more information, see www.ird.govt.nz/gst or phone the Inland Revenue Department on 0800 377 776.

Do I need to include GST in my budget?

If you are registered for GST, you will need to provide all costs as GST exclusive.

If you are not registered for GST, you will need to use GST inclusive costs in your budget.

Example:

Organisation A – GST-registered group:

Budget is GST exclusive.

Resources *Resources required to complete the activity*	Estimated cost *GST exclusive*	Funding requested *GST exclusive*
50 rat traps and housing @ $100 / trap (GST excl.)	*$5,000*	*$5,000*
20 possum traps @ $200 / trap (GST excl.)	*$4,000*	*$4,000*
Total costs	$9,000	**$9,000**

Organisation A is granted **$9,000** from the fund. GST is added at the time of invoicing = $10,350.

Organisation B – Non-GST-registered group:

Budget is GST inclusive.

Resources *Resources required to complete the activity*	Estimated cost *GST inclusive*	Funding requested *GST inclusive*
50 rat traps and housing @ $115 / trap (GST incl.)	*$5,750*	*$5,750*
20 possum traps @ $230 / trap (GST incl.)	*$4,600*	*$4,600*
Total costs	$10,350	**$10,350**

Organisation B is granted **$10,350** – inclusive of GST.

More information on how to invoice DOC for grant payments is provided on the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund.

Does our project need co-funding?

Co-funding is not a requirement. However, applicants who are requesting very large grants and/or proposing projects that involve multiple stakeholders are expected to have a component of funding from other sources.

Volunteer contributions are encouraged and will be considered favourably. If applicable, you should include the estimated number of volunteer hours in your application. In-kind contributions can also be included in 'other funding sources'.

Health and safety

DOC is committed to best practice health and safety and adhering to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA). Therefore, it is important that you / your organisation has the necessary health and safety policies, resources and expertise to safely undertake and complete your project.

All applicants who are approved for funding will be required to have a project-specific Health and Safety Plan in place that is suitable to support the safe delivery of the project. If you are working on public conservation land (PCL), your plan will be approved by the local DOC Operations Manager.

Further guidance on the HSWA, including resources to assist in the development of Health and Safety Plans, can be obtained from WorkSafe New Zealand: https://worksafe.govt.nz/managing-health-and-safety/.

You may include costs associated with health and safety as part of your application.

Do I need to provide evidence of landowner support?

Private land

If your project includes work on private land, you will need to confirm that you have landowner(s) approval. If your application is successful, you will need to provide evidence of landowner approval(s) before a Deed of Grant can be signed.

Public conservation land

If your project is being undertaken on PCL, you will need to obtain written approval in the form of a Community Agreement from your local DOC office before starting your project. If your application is successful, your local DOC office will work with you to finalise a Community Agreement (if you do not have one in place already).

Other public land

If your project includes activities on public land other than PCL, you will need to provide written confirmation from the land manager / authorised representative that they are complying with their duties and obligations under the HSWA in respect of you working on the land they administer/manage before a Deed of Grant can be signed.

Permits, licenses or approvals

You must confirm the details of any consents, permits or licences that are needed to deliver your proposed project. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Wildlife Act authorisations (approval to hold, catch, handle or release wildlife)
- specialist certification (eg Growsafe certification)
- resource consents.

We recommend that you check what approvals you may need early in the process and factor sufficient time and costs into your project timeframe and budget. If you are successful, you must secure all approvals prior to a Deed of Grant being signed.

Other tips on writing a good application

- ✓ Write in plain English, avoiding jargon, clichés and overused phrases. Write so that the assessment panel will understand what you want them to know (with no assumption of prior knowledge).
- ✓ Strongly align your application with the fund's purpose and criteria, and present it clearly and concisely for the best chance of success.
- ✓ Ask a colleague or third party to peer review your application.
- ✓ Answer all of the questions. If you are unsure about a question, refer back to this guide. If you are still uncertain, contact us by phoning **0800 86 20 20** or emailing doccf@doc.govt.nz.

Supporting information

There is an option to include additional information in support of your application. Any supporting information must be directly related to the project proposal, the issue you are trying to address or the solution being proposed. Examples include (but are not limited to) a:

- Restoration Plan

- Pest Management Plan

- Species Management Plan

- Biodiversity Strategy for your local area.

Such attachments are an important component of your application. However, please be mindful that emailed applications must be no larger than **10 MB** including all attachments.

Please only attach supporting information that has been specifically requested; do not provide any other documents, emails or other correspondence to support your application for funding as they will not be forwarded to the assessment panel. A map can be included in addition to the examples listed above if not included in your supporting document.

How do I submit my application?

All applications must be submitted electronically. Once you have completed your application, email it with any supporting documents in **a single email** to doccfapplications@doc.govt.nz.

Please ensure you insert your **organisation name** into the **subject line** of your email, eg:

Upon submission, you should receive an automatic response. If you do not receive an acknowledgement email within 1 working day, please contact the Funds Team by phoning **0800 86 20 20** or emailing doccf@doc.govt.nz.

Applications must be submitted no later than **5 pm on Friday 22 March 2019.**

When will I find out if I have been successful?

The key dates for the 2018/19 funding round are provided in the table below. These dates are indicative only and may change. Any change will be notified through the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund.

Date	Event
25 February 2019	Funding round opens for applications
22 March 2019	Funding round closes
April–June 2019	Assessment panel considers applications
July 2019	All applicants are notified of decisions in writing
July–September 2019	Successful applicants finalise and sign a Deed of Grant and, if applicable, confirm Community Authorisation to work on PCL
From September 2019	Projects begin

Next steps for successful applications

If your application is successful, you will receive an offer of funding letter from the Funds Team, which will confirm who your local DOC Relationship Manager is. You will work with the Funds Team to refine and confirm your project details and agree to the terms and conditions of a Deed of Grant.

If your project is being undertaken on PCL, you will need to obtain written approval in the form of a Community Agreement from your local DOC Relationship Manager before starting your project.

Once a Deed of Grant has been signed by DOC and you / your organisation, the project can begin.

When will I receive my funding?

The first grant instalment will be made once the Deed of Grant has been signed. This is an upfront payment of 50% of the grant approved for year 1 of the project. Funding will then be paid in instalments throughout the project, which will be every 6 months or sooner if you have fully expended the previous grant instalment. Please note that the standard payment schedule and the percentage of the upfront payment can vary depending on your project and the size of the grant awarded.

Successful applicants will be required to provide the Funds Team with two project progress updates per year and a final report using the templates that are available on the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund.

At least 10% of the funding approved for the final project year will be retained to be paid upon completion of the project once evidence of full grant expenditure has been provided and the final project report has been submitted.

Resources to support the delivery of your project

Resources to support the delivery of your project (including guidance documents and reporting templates) can be found on the DOC website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund. We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the resources available on this page.

Further support for completing an application

Technical advice

To connect with a DOC ranger in your area, please contact your local DOC office. Rangers can help provide practical advice on tools, best practice and safety information. If you do wish to seek advice, we suggest that you allow enough time for this step in your application process. To find your nearest DOC office, see www.doc.govt.nz/footer-links/contact-us/office-by-name/.

Advice on predator control initiatives

A factsheet that includes additional guidance to assist you in completing your application is available for download on the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund.

For other specific advice on predator control initiatives, you can contact your local Predator Free Ranger – see www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050/predator-free-rangers/all-predator-free-rangers/.

Advice on the funding process

For general advice on the funding process, contact the Funds Team by phoning **0800 86 20 20** or emailing doccf@doc.govt.nz.

Useful resources

Below is a selection of useful resources that will assist individuals and groups in running successful conservation projects.

Title	Description	Hyperlink
DOC Community Fund – predator control factsheet	Additional guidance for applicants seeking funding for predator control projects	www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund
DOC community project guidelines	How to start, improve or evaluate a conservation project – information on guidelines and best practice	www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/run-a-project/
Toolkit: Predator Free 2050	Get the tools and guidance you need for your community PF2050 project – includes beginner tips, trap and bait profiles, how-tos and funding resources	www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/predator-free-2050/toolkit-predator-free-2050/
Predator Free New Zealand	Trapping best practice	https://predatorfreenz.org/tools-resources/trapping-best-practice/
NatureSpace	Information and resources for restoration groups	www.naturespace.org.nz/resource-centre
CommunityNet Aotearoa	A practical 'hands-on' resource to help community groups get up and running	https://community.net.nz/resources/community-resource-kit
Conservation Volunteers – 'In Safe Hands Toolkit'	A safety management system for community groups involved in environmental activities	http://conservationvolunteers.co.nz/what-we-do/in-safe-hands-toolkit/
Wellington City Council	A safety guide for volunteers undertaking environmental projects	https://wellington.govt.nz/services/environment-and-waste/environment/biodiversity/taking-action/volunteers-and-support/health-and-safety-for-volunteers