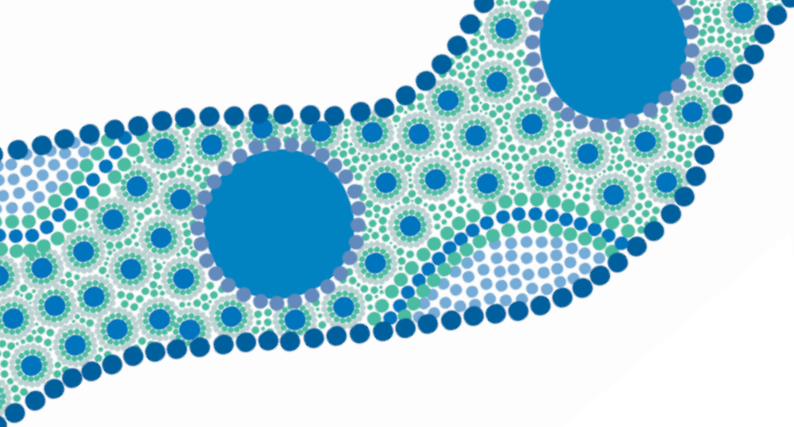




2026/27 Grants Program

Guidelines & information pack for applicants

rwcc.nsw.gov.au/grants | community@rwcc.nsw.gov.au



Acknowledgement of Country

Riverina Water County Council acknowledges the Traditional and continuing Custodians of the land we supply water on, the Wiradyuri people. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, as well giving our respect to all First Nations Peoples living in this community. We recognise the deep cultural connection Wiradyuri and First Nations communities have with the lands and waters of this region.

Living Water (2023), Owen Lyons



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Introduction

At Riverina Water, we know that water is more than what flows from the tap – it sustains our lifestyles, our livelihoods, and the places we call home.

Our customers and community are at the heart of everything we do. Alongside delivering safe, reliable water every day, we are committed to supporting projects that strengthen connection, celebrate who we are, and care for the environment we share.

The Riverina Water Grants Program is one of the ways we invest in our region's future. By providing meaningful funding opportunities to community organisations across Wagga Wagga, Lockhart, Greater Hume and Federation councils, we help bring local ideas to life – whether that's improving vital community spaces, making local events possible or protecting our natural environment and resources.

Through this program, we aim to reflect the aspirations and needs of our communities, fostering projects that make a lasting difference. Together, we can create thriving places where people feel connected, valued, and inspired.

We look forward to seeing the creativity, passion, and dedication of this year's applicants, and to supporting initiatives that will continue to make the Riverina a great place to live, work and play.



Andrew Crakanthorp
Chief Executive Officer



Cr Gail Driscoll
Chairperson

2 | Key information

Program timeline



Applications open: 9am, Monday 31 August 2026



Applications close: 12pm noon, Monday 12 October 2026



Assessment of applications and administration: 21 October to 4 December 2026

Approval of grant allocations: Thursday 10 December 2026 Board Meeting

Notification of outcome to applicants: By 18 December 2026

Deadline for project completion and acquittal: By 31 January 2028

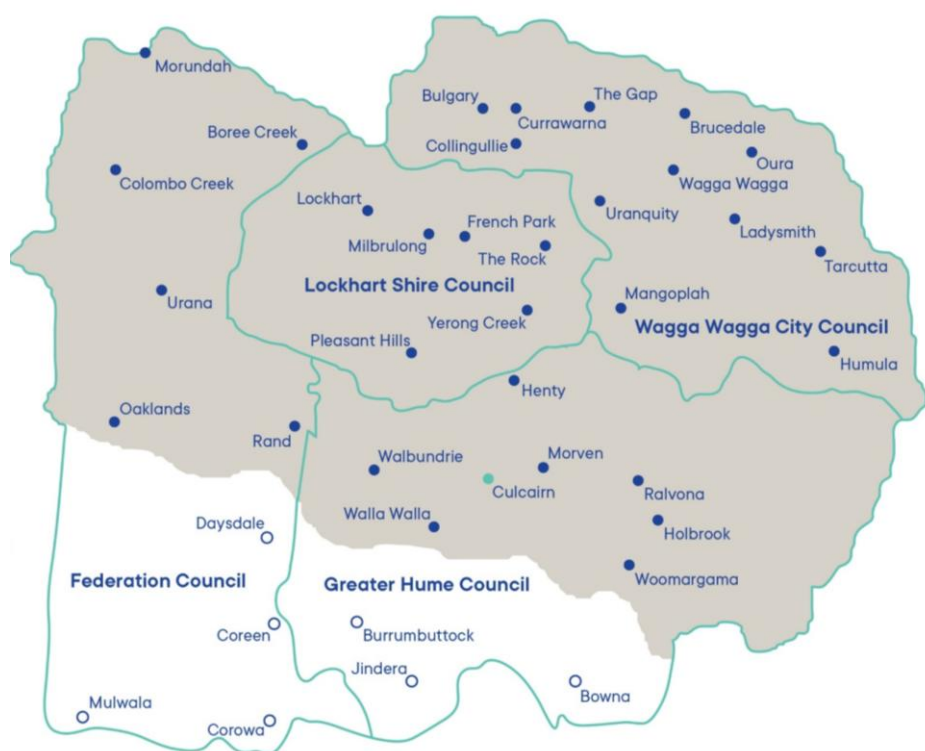
Grant funding allocations per local government area (LGA)

LGA	Funding pool	Grant amounts
Wagga Wagga City Council	\$40,000	Applicants can apply for funding amounts in \$5,000 increments up to a maximum of \$40,000
Lockhart Shire Council	\$20,000	Applicants can apply for funding amounts in \$5,000 increments up to a maximum of \$20,000
Greater Hume Council	\$20,000	
Federation Council	\$20,000	

Riverina Water supply area

Only applications from within our supply area that are to be delivered in our supply area, are accepted.

Please note we do not supply water to most parts of Culcairn; and only provide water to parts of Federation and Greater Hume councils.



3 | Grants program objectives

Applications must meet at least one of our program objectives

Caring for Country & Water

- › Support for community projects that protect, respect and enhance our natural environment and water resources.
- › This includes initiatives that:
 - Conserve water through improved infrastructure or community education
 - Promote water literacy and sustainable water behaviours
 - Restore or protect local environments, including native habitats and biodiversity
 - Build community resilience to climate change
 - Share or apply Traditional ecological knowledge
 - Create or improve shared green spaces, gardens or nature-based projects

Connected & Inclusive Communities

- › Support for projects that strengthen social connection, improve access, and celebrate community identity and wellbeing.
- › This includes initiatives that:
 - Improve or enhance community infrastructure such as halls, clubrooms or meeting spaces
 - Support inclusion and participation for underrepresented groups, including First Nations people, people with disability, young people and multicultural communities
 - Promote health, wellbeing, social connection and resilience
 - Celebrate local identity through events, storytelling or shared experiences
 - Encourage volunteering, partnership and community-led development

Culture, Creativity & Place

- › Support for projects that enable creative expression and celebrate local identity, culture and diversity.
- › This includes initiatives that:
 - Deliver public art, murals or creative installations in shared spaces
 - Support participation in music, performance, visual arts or cultural activities
 - Celebrate First Nations culture, language and storytelling
 - Explore community identity, heritage or local values through creative means
 - Provide platforms for youth, multicultural and intergenerational expression

4 | Eligibility requirements

To be eligible, applications must:

- › Demonstrate how the application meets at least one of the program's objectives (as per section 3 of this document)
- › Meet the supply area requirements (as per section 2 of this document)
- › Be either an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation; or Council committee, as constituted under section 355 of the Local Government Act

Incorporated not-for-profit bodies are organisations that are registered and approved as not-for-profit bodies by NSW Fair Trading including:

- › Charities
- › Organisations with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) or Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) status
- › Cooperatives
- › Trusts that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

Auspice and sponsoring organisations

Organisations that are not incorporated may seek a sponsoring organisation to auspice their application for example your local Council.

Individual artists must have a sponsoring organisation. Details of the sponsoring organisation and proof of it will auspice must be supplied in your application.

It is preferred that any Section 355 Committee that is successful in receiving funding should invoice Riverina Water via their Council.

Riverina Water will not fund projects by:

- › Individuals or groups of individuals (with the exception for individual artists, who may apply if they are sponsored by an incorporated organisation)
- › Unincorporated organisations without an appropriate sponsoring organisation
- › Organisations without an ABN
- › For-profit commercial organisations, including registered clubs
- › Local Government Councils; excluding council committees constituted under Section 355 of the Local Government Act (please note Councils may auspice)
- › School, university, or technical college, including organisations seeking funding to support these (e.g. P&C committees, alumni groups)

5 | Additional information

Assessment considerations

The grants program is a competitive application process. Applications are assessed by a panel comprised of Riverina Water staff, Board members and representatives from the relevant Council.

When assessing applications, the panel will give consideration to factors such as:

- › Alignment with the grant outcomes and guidelines, and the proposed positive impact on the community
- › Whether Riverina Water is the primary funding body
- › Ability for the project to be delivered in the timeframe, and the applicant's ability to deliver
- › Any in-kind and/or financial contribution made by the applicant organisation
- › Whether the proposed budget and project are feasible
- › The level of previous funding provided to the applicant organisation by Riverina Water and other bodies
- › How Riverina Water is recognised for its funding

Riverina Water cannot support late applications, or applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria or the assessment criteria. This includes failure to attach compulsory documents, budgets, or other required information. Assessment panels may recommend part funding. The decision is carefully considered with the view of maintaining the integrity of the proposal.

Preparing your application

- › Before completing an application, become familiar with these guidelines
- › A Word document copy of the application form questions is available to download. This document is to help prepare and plan your application and should not be submitted. Applications must be submitted by the online portal for consideration.
- › Budgets must be submitted and clearly display how grant funds are used and ensure they are for eligible components only. See excluded projects for more information.
- › A minimum of one quote must be provided for goods, equipment, supplies and services. If you are an individual artist preparing an auspiced application, you should include at least one quote that is not for your own services.

- › If your project requires a development application, land owner consent, public liability insurance (for example, events) etc then this information must be included
- › Applicants can apply once per Local Government Area
- › Projects must be deliverable within the grant timeframes
- › Applications must be submitted online via the Riverina Water grants portal and will only be considered if all mandatory documentation is provided. Missing or changed documentation cannot be provided after the closing date.
- › Applicants must provide accurate financial information as part of the submission process, such as a statement of income and expenditure
- › Applicants may include letters of support. Letters of support are not mandatory but may strengthen your application when they are from groups who are confirming a role they will play in your project.
- › The requested grant amount and budget figures provided should be exclusive of GST. Riverina Water will add GST if your organisation is eligible to your grant payment if successful. Please factor this into your application planning
- › Please include the value of in-kind support from your group or organisation including labour for example \$25 per hour for unskilled labour and \$50 per hour for skilled labour
- › Consider your project milestones and how you will need the requested funding delivered. For example, 80% upfront and the remainder closer to completion

Successful applicants

If you are successful, you will receive formal notification about your approval via email, including any specific conditions attached to the grant. If unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing and give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome.

If your application is successful, you will be required to do the following:

- › Acknowledge, by execution of the funding agreement that, Riverina Water is not in any way liable for any incident arising out of the use of the funds provided under the program
- › Supply any other documents per your approval letter as requested by Riverina Water
- › Funding may not be used for any purpose other than for which it is granted, without the written permission of Riverina Water
- › Riverina Water will not be responsible for shortfalls in project budgets if the applicant is unable to meet project costs
- › You may be required to undertake a risk assessment and provide this to Riverina Water. Please liaise directly with third parties for example property owners in regard to

this. The risk assessment does not form part of the application process but may be required as part of project delivery

- › Funding will not be paid until all requested information has been supplied
- › Recognise Riverina Water as a sponsor through acknowledgement and promotion; and participate in activities organised by Riverina Water to promote the funding
- › Riverina Water may visit you during the project period or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. Riverina Water may also inspect your records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit
- › It is the responsibility as the applicant to notify us if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation. We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due
- › Comply with any special conditions that may be attached to the funding offer noting the amount of financial assistance offered may vary from that requested
- › Issue Riverina Water with a tax invoice for the grant amount, plus GST, if applicable
- › Upon execution of the funding agreement, and receipt of a valid tax invoice, Riverina Water will pay funding as per agreed funding milestones to be determined based on your project
- › Provide a copy of the organisation's Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance for \$20M as a minimal insured amount (for projects with a public activity component only). For more information, please contact your insurer
- › Applicants are required to submit an acquittal form at the completion of the project
- › Applicants are advised that Riverina Water is not in any way liable for any incident arising out of the use of the grant funding provided under this grant program. By signing the funding agreement, applicants acknowledge this condition
- › A conflict of interest will occur if your private interests conflict with your obligations under the grant. Conflicts of interest could affect the awarding or performance of your grant. A conflict of interest can be real (or actual), apparent (or perceived), and/or potential
- › Grants are assessable for income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek help from the Australian Taxation Office. We do not provide advice on tax
- › Recipients complete an acquittal report to demonstrate the expenditure of funds; including copies of receipts/invoices, photos or video files, media releases including social media posts etc

- › Acquittals must be submitted by the deadline. If acquittals are not received, future applications may not be considered Riverina Water can seek return of grant funding.
- › Any unexpended funds must be returned to Riverina Water

Government information (Public Access) Act

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 applies to documents in the possession of Riverina Water. In response to requests made in accordance with the Act, in some circumstances copies of grant applications may be released, subject to the deletion of exempt material.

Excluded projects

- | | |
|---|--|
| › Projects outside the Riverina Water supply area | › Works that are the responsibility of government bodies |
| › Projects requesting retrospective funding for monies that have already been spent on works completed | › Recurring or ongoing expenditure (for example annual maintenance costs or ongoing maintenance) |
| › Projects that are unlawful or irresponsible | › Funding to undertake studies or investigations. |
| › Projects that have not submitted mandatory documentation | › Funding for the development or provision of commercial ventures |
| › Funds that will be distributed to other persons/organisations in the form of a donation, gift or prize | › Costs for the provision of services and support activities not related to the proposed project for example catering |
| › Funds that will contribute to organisational running costs i.e. wages, insurances, rent, administration | › Payment for development approval, project planning and management costs that total more than 5% of funding requested |

Contact us

Need help with your grant application?

Our Riverina Water community engagement team is here to help:

Email: community@rwcc.nsw.gov.au | **Phone:** 6922 0608 (business hours)

For full information on the grants program, visit rwcc.nsw.gov.au/grants