

WWF-NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION FUND APPLICATION GUIDELINES - 2023

Purpose

This is a guide for organisations who wish to apply to the WWF-New Zealand Conservation Fund (CF) for financial assistance for projects. It outlines the process for applying to the CF, the criteria used to assess applications, and our priorities for CF projects.

About the WWF-New Zealand Conservation Fund

WWF-New Zealand (WWF) believes that providing assistance to communities and schools to take conservation action is vital to conserving biodiversity in Aotearoa New Zealand. At WWF, we know that people learn the value of protecting the environment when they take action for themselves. By cleaning up and restoring their local stream or contributing directly to native species protection, people get a first-hand learning experience – one that can inspire a lifetime of sustainable living.

The CF funds a range of activities that help to protect or restore priority habitats in Aotearoa. It is targeted at established community groups with a proven track record of delivering conservation and restoration projects.

WWF is the Environmental Donation Manager for the [Tindall Foundation](#) and has delivered community and educational funding support in partnership with them since 2000.

Aims of the Conservation Fund

- To support community groups and educational facilities to deliver local habitat protection, species protection and restoration projects.
- To protect and restore habitats that WWF identifies as a priority.
- To promote increased coordination of habitat protection and ecological restoration on a grander scale.
- To raise awareness of biodiversity and conservation in the wider community.
- To encourage communities to become guardians of their environment, becoming active partners in protecting, sustaining and restoring our biodiversity for present and future generations.
- To increase the scale and effectiveness of community-led conservation action.

Eligible Organisations

The CF awards donations to the following organisations

- Small community groups employing less than five (5) staff (full-time equivalent)
- Locally constituted branches of national organisations with their own constitution, management committee and set of accounts.
- Environmental education providers
- Educational institutions (not for core education)

Your organisation must

- Be based and operating in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Be a not-for-profit entity; either an incorporated society, charitable trust, educational facility, company limited by guarantee (non-profit only) or a trust set up under legislation covering Māori organisations.
- Have transparent ways of making decisions written down in a constitution or set of rules.
- Have a track record, technical competence and experience in conservation, restoration or land management that enables you to deliver the project, or have guaranteed ongoing support from a competent organisation such as Department of Conservation (DOC), regional councils, etc.
- Have relevant HR policies and procedures in place if it employs staff.
- Understand your health and safety responsibilities, have appropriate procedures in place, and policies if it employs staff.
- Have suitable Child Safeguarding policies and/or procedures in place if children are participating.
- Be solvent and financially sustainable and demonstrate sound financial management having the necessary financial controls in place.
- Have your own bank account and demonstrate that you can manage funding from a number of sources, maintaining a clear separation of expenditure and tracking of projects.

The following are not eligible to apply for funding

- National or umbrella environmental or conservation organisations employing more than five (5) (full-time equivalent) staff. Please note – locally constituted branches of large organisations, such as Forest & Bird, can apply in their own right.
- Individuals or family/whānau groups.
- Trading companies or businesses (for-profit organisations).
- Government authorities - local, territorial or unitary authorities and regional councils.
- Government agencies or Crown entities.
- Overseas organisations.
- Animal charities - except where the project to be funded is directly benefiting threatened native species.

Project Criteria

The following criteria are used for assessing project proposals and applicants should demonstrate that they meet these criteria in the application form

- The project must be located in Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - The application must demonstrate that funds are being directly applied to eligible activities or costs (see below).
 - The application demonstrates that the project meets at least one of the CF priorities (see below).
 - The application demonstrates effectiveness and value for money.
 - The proposal must demonstrate robust project design, including a project plan with a clear vision and goals, and mechanisms to monitor and evaluate project outcomes.
 - The proposal must clearly demonstrate how the budgeted activities will contribute to the defined project outcomes.
 - The project has support from a cross section of the community, including iwi/hapū in the project area.
 - The project has support from the wider community in the form of voluntary labour, donations, effective partnerships, letters of support, etc.
 - The project is supported by DOC, local or regional council.
 - Demonstration of a good understanding of risk management, health and safety requirements and other legislative or regulatory frameworks that may impact on its projects.
 - Permission from the landowner to carry out the proposed work.
 - Projects involving investment in planting, fencing, etc. should have a guarantee that the land will be protected in the long-term, preventing changes in land-use that will undermine the project's goals.
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Land Tenure

The CF will support projects on land in a range of tenures including; privately owned, multiple-owned Māori land, local authority land and public conservation lands and waters (DOC estate). In relation to projects on the DOC estate, the CF will only support community groups and will not fund activities that DOC is responsible for undertaking as part of its functions under the Conservation Act 1987.

The CF will support projects irrespective of the protection status of the land. However, for projects involving the planting of native species or fencing, proof will be needed that there is a binding commitment from the landowner to protect these areas in perpetuity (e.g. a covenant). WWF encourages private landowners to protect valuable habitats and remaining remnants of natural vegetation with covenants through the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, local authorities or with Kāwenata through the Ngā Whenua Rāhui scheme for Māori-owned land.

Eligible Expenditure

The CF will pay for the following costs and activities relating to habitat protection and ecological restoration projects

- Administration and operational expenses; e.g. wages for positions that are directly applicable to programme delivery – subject to clear and transparent governance and management arrangements.
- Development of restoration or management plans (by consultants or staff).
- Project delivery expenses (materials/equipment/contractors).
- Costs associated with species translocations or re-introductions including feasibility studies.
- Costs associated with the ongoing running of a nursery if this is the most effective method of securing eco-sourced native plants or can demonstrate increased community involvement or awareness raising.
- Fencing (materials/equipment/contractors).
- Eco-sourced plants and associated preparation and maintenance costs.
- Equipment and tools.
- Costs associated with monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes.
- Volunteer expenses; travel costs, refreshments, training.
- Publicity and promotional materials (posters/leaflets/photos/video production/interpretation signs etc.) and other community outreach and engagement activities that help to raise public awareness of the project in the local community.
- Capital assets are supported, but the total request/purchase must not exceed \$3,000 per application.
- Skill training (facilitation/venue hire/equipment/materials).

Exclusions

What we do not fund

- Awareness raising without a call to action.
- Funding for the same or a similar project for more than 3 years consecutively.
- Public health or disabilities services.
- Core education, curriculum-related equipment, activities etc.
- Research or academic projects from outside a community without its direct involvement.
- Sports and recreation activities/projects.
- Drama, art or performing art projects.
- Projects outside the geographic borders of Aotearoa New Zealand, overseas travel and expenses, and exchange programmes.
- Building or land purchase and associated costs, including repair or construction, landscaping and ground maintenance.
- Capital assets or equipment costing more than \$3,000.
- Donations to support individuals including scholarships, international travel to conferences, events or for research.
- Personal loans.
- Endowment funds.
- Religious or political advocacy, advancement, lobbying or marketing.
- Venture capital initiatives.
- Urgent or retrospective applications.
- Sponsorships.
- Work that a landowner is required to do by law.
- Costs associated with applications or processes under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Establishment costs of setting up incorporated societies, charities or other bodies.

Conservation Fund Priorities 2023

Priorities for CF funding for 2023/24 are

- New Zealand native species conservation projects, with a particular focus on threatened species.
- Environmental restoration projects in areas with high biodiversity.
- Projects that are addressing climate change issues and/or promoting positive biodiversity outcomes (and, ideally, meet the [IUCN](#) and [WWF](#) criteria for 'nature-based solutions', such as planting projects).
- Initiatives that are māori-led or have relationships with hapū /iwi and promote mātauranga māori and indigenous knowledge.
- Projects that are community-driven and bring people together around a shared conservation goal.
- Projects that engage children and young people, including environmental education initiatives.
- For education-focused projects/initiatives, educational learners would:
 - Participate in an **action-based project**
 - Learn through experience and participation
 - Make meaningful contributions to improving their local environment
 - Involve people in their community
 - Gain skills and are encouraged and/or supported to take future action for the environment as a result of participating

Additionally, WWF is particularly interested in supporting community-initiated marine projects, such as:

- Projects focused on marine/coastal protection or restoration.
- Projects promoting sustainable, environmentally friendly fisheries initiatives (e.g. projects aimed at preventing the accidental catch of threatened species when fishing).
- New Zealand native marine species conservation projects.

Additional preference will be given to groups that

- Are working at a wider-scale and the project has ecological outcomes including:
 - Protecting the integrity of existing good quality habitats
 - Restoring connectivity between existing habitats
 - Providing buffers to remaining habitat remnants
 - Restoring ecological processes
 - Habitats of threatened indigenous species
 - Remaining remnants of high-quality habitat
- Are working to meet priorities identified in local biodiversity strategies or action plans (if one exists).
- Create opportunities for local economic development, employment or social development.
- Are part of a multi-agency partnership supported by the local or regional council and/or the Department of Conservation.
- Are cooperating with or can provide support and advice to other community groups working in their area.

Application Process

Application submission

The Fund will be open from 14th of August till the 10th of September 2023. Applications can be made at any time during the open period. All applications must be submitted before 11:59pm on Sunday, 10th of September using the online application form on our website.

Please note that the CF provides one-off grants of up to a maximum of \$15,000, for a funding period of one year. Previous recipients may re-apply to consecutive funding rounds up to three years, or in some circumstances five years, but repeat funding for recipients is not guaranteed and CCF should not be considered an on-going source of funding. New applications will need to be made for each successive year.

Please check your records carefully to see if your organisation has already received up to five grants for this or similar projects (either via CCF or EEAF grants). Contact WWF if you are unsure whether you are eligible for further funding.

Application assessment

In your application form you need to clearly demonstrate how you meet the Fund criteria and priorities.

You may be asked to supply additional information in support of your application. This may take the form of supporting letters, operational plans, copies of constitutions, accounts etc.

If you meet the eligibility criteria but the Fund is oversubscribed, we will prioritise applications that best meet Fund priorities. This decision is final, there is no right of appeal and WWF is not obliged to give reasons for the decision or enter into any correspondence. If your application is unsuccessful, we will notify you by email. You will be able to reapply to a future funding round.

Every effort will be made to complete the funding decision-making process and let all applicants know the outcome within two months of the closing date.

Successful recipients

Donations offered to successful applicants will be subject to a funding agreement between WWF-New Zealand and the recipient, and may be paid in a number of instalments payable at agreed milestones and dependent on progress and reporting requirements having been met.

From time-to-time, WWF will evaluate the effectiveness of the Fund and an evaluator may contact and interview Fund recipients. Recipients will be required to participate in and cooperate with this process.

**For more
information**

If you have any questions in relation to the Fund please contact WWF-New Zealand on:

WWF-NZ Grants Administrator
Free Phone: 0800 435 7993
Email: community@wwf.org.nz