

Grants Program Guidelines



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About the program

Nature Foundation SA is an apolitical, not-for-profit, science-based fundraising nature conservation charity that works on our nature reserves and throughout South Australia to connect with and inspire others to save, protect, restore and sustainably manage South Australia's natural heritage.

Nature Foundation SA undertakes a regular grants program, funded by donations from our generous supporters. Grants are offered in a number of different [grant categories](#). Our grants program funds research that contributes to the conservation of South Australia's biodiversity and habitats, and supports university students and researchers in their work and careers. All research funded through the grants program aligns with and contributes to [our vision, values and objectives](#).

Nature Foundation SA has been offering research grants to postgraduate students since 2003. The creation of a formal process for distributing funds to Honours and PhD students has seen Nature Foundation SA award 384 grants in the field of biological sciences to a value of \$1.5 million dollars to universities and other research institutions between 2003 and 2018.

Our grants have funded a diverse range of research projects focussed on the protection and restoration of South Australia's native wildlife and habitats. A selection of research reports and case studies from previous research is available on our [Grants Program Achievements webpage](#).

Applications for funding will only be considered during specified grant rounds. The opening and closing dates of Nature Foundation SA grant rounds will be published on our [Applying For Grants webpage](#).

These grant program guidelines outline key information for applicants including: grant proposal requirements, grant categories, key priorities, eligibility and the grant application process. Any issues not covered by these guidelines will be considered by the Nature Foundation SA Land, Water and Science Committee on a case by case basis.

Grant proposal requirements

To ensure that we award grants to research projects that align with our vision, values and objectives, grant proposals submitted to the Nature Foundation SA grants program must meet a number of requirements. In addition, successful applications will need to meet any specific requirements of the particular [grant category](#) that is being applied for.

All grant funded projects must:

- be compatible with the [vision, values and objectives](#) of the Nature Foundation of SA,
- enhance the reputation of the Nature Foundation of SA,
- have clear aims (what you hope to achieve) and S.M.A.R.T.¹ objectives (how your aim will be achieved), and
- relate to nature conservation in South Australia.

¹ S.M.A.R.T – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time constrained

Required outcomes

Individual projects must demonstrate capacity to deliver on **at least one** of the following outcomes:

1. Support the objectives of [Nature Foundation SA nature reserves](#) or [Water For Nature](#),
2. Answer a question posed by Nature Foundation SA,
3. Significantly advance or solve a major environmental issue in South Australia.

If a request is for **multi-year funding**, the project must also:

4. Show how the money can successfully leverage additional funding from other organisations.

Criteria checklist

Successful grant applications will demonstrate a capacity to address **at least six** of the following twelve criteria:

- Develop an understanding of the ecological and landscape environments of [Nature Foundation SA nature reserves](#) or [Water For Nature](#).
- Enhance conservation and/or ecotourism strategies on [Nature Foundation SA nature reserves](#).
- Underpin Nature Foundation SA decision making within the organisation.
- Build Nature Foundation SA's profile by partner building, community recognition or creation of alumni.
- Assist in attracting donor funding by demonstrating material improvement in an aspect of South Australia's ecology.
- Directly support environmental, conservation and restoration in South Australia generally.
- Build environmental relationships and capacity within universities, the Department for Environment and Water, partner environmental non-governmental organisations and/or overseas organisations.
- Help Nature Foundation SA to be outward looking by linking with other organisations' research priorities.
- Support the new generation of researchers via Honours, Masters and PhD grants.
- Understand the ecology of an important plant or animal species.
- Understand the geology or palaeontology of South Australia.
- Connect people with nature.

Grant categories

Nature Foundation SA's grants program provides funding in the following categories:

- Grand Start Grants Program for Honours, Masters and PhD students
- Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant for Honours students
- Mike Bull Scholarship for Honours or PhD students
- Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship for Masters and PhD students
- Research Project Grants
- Community Grants.

Not all categories of grants may be on offer during each grant round.

Honours Year Grand Start Grants Program

Each Honours Year Grand Start Grant provides up to \$2000 as an operating grant for 1 year to assist an Honours student undertaking research. Projects may be field-based or involve non-field-based research such as geographic information system or remote sensing related projects or data analysis.

PhD/Masters Grand Start Grants Program

Each PhD/Masters Grand Start Grant provides up to \$3000 per annum for a maximum of 3 years as an operating grant to assist a PhD or Masters student undertaking research. Each grant recipient must reapply on an annual basis to receive new grants in subsequent years. A decision on whether to continue funding a scholarship will be based on the performance report for the previous year, submitted by the grantee, the comparative merit of other grant applicants, the alignment of the research with Nature Foundation SA's science and conservation goals, the success in leveraging additional funding from other organisations, and the availability of funds.

Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant

The Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant is an annual grant that provides \$1500 for 1 year to support an Honours student.

The student's research must focus on advancing the understanding of:

1. trends in the abundance and distribution of native populations of South Australian fauna and flora; or
2. soil, water, geology or climate where it will affect abundance and distribution of native populations of South Australian fauna and flora.

This grant was initiated in 2017 as a partnership between Nature Foundation SA and the [Scientific Expedition Foundation](#).

Mike Bull Scholarship

The Mike Bull Scholarship provides support to an Honours or PhD student. Applications are encouraged from across Australia with the research to be undertaken in South Australia.

This scholarship was established through the [Professor Mike Bull Research Fund for Emerging Young Nature Scientists](#) to continue Mike's wonderful legacy in animal behaviour, ecology and conservation. Mike was an outstanding scientist and was well known and revered for his mentorship of students.

Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship

The Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship provides \$12,000 per annum for up to 3 years to support a postgraduate student (PhD or Masters) at a South Australian University.

The student's research must fall within the Nature Foundation's objectives and be:

1. high quality scientific research that makes a significant contribution to the conservation of South Australia's biodiversity; or
2. in the field of biological science with a view to the resolution of an environmental problem or the conservation of South Australian wildlife.

This scholarship was initiated in 2002 by a generous donation from Mrs Marjory Edwards to establish a perpetual scholarship in conservation biology.

Research Project Grants

Research Project Grants are provided to support projects that assist South Australian wildlife in the natural environment.

Community Grants

Community Grants are provided to education-based programs involving the interlinking of conservation and science in association with Nature Foundation SA nature reserves or programs.

Key priorities

The key priorities for Nature Foundation SA grant funding are projects that:

- align with our [Science Strategy](#), and
- inform the management of [our nature reserves](#), or
- contribute to our Conservation Programs, or
- inform our [Water For Nature](#) program.

We have also developed a list of [potential research projects](#) broadly themed across arid nature reserve management, fauna and Water For Nature. Grant proposals that align with these key priorities and our list of potential research projects are likely to achieve a higher rate of funding success.

Other specific priorities may be identified for a particular grant round and these will be listed on our website during that grant round.

Science Strategy 2018-2023

Nature Foundation SA has developed its [Science Strategy 2018-2023](#) to deliver the best possible science based outcomes for conservation in South Australia and directly underpin the decision making of the Foundation.

The Science Strategy outlines the following broad research priorities for 2018-2023:

1. The ecological and landscape issues pertaining to [our nature reserves](#).
2. Ecological issues pertaining to either threatened or over-abundant species.
3. The material advancement of conservation and/or restoration of South Australian terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems.
4. To provide ecosystem resilience towards climate change.
5. To improve the connection between community and nature through activities including ecotourism, citizen science and/or other engagement methodologies.
6. Water - especially including but not limited to - [Water For Nature](#) activities, and the Murray River.

Conservation programs

Our conservation programs are diverse and focus on conserving native flora and fauna on our nature reserves, while managing threatening processes. We have developed a list of [potential research projects](#) broadly themed across arid nature reserve management, fauna and Water For Nature. The projects on this list will assist in the informed management of our nature reserves, and wetlands and floodplains where we work with private landholders, government and community. We are open to further development and collaborative refinement of these research projects and welcome partnerships with university students and researchers.

Our nature reserves

Nature Foundation SA currently owns and manages/co-manages the following six South Australian nature reserves for conservation purposes:

- Witchelina Nature Reserve: 421,000 hectares near Marree and Lake Torrens
- Hiltaba Nature Reserve: 78,000 hectares located in the Gawler Ranges on Eyre Peninsula
- Watchalunga Nature Reserve: 92 hectares located at the mouth of the Finniss River on Fleurieu Peninsula
- Tiliqua Nature Reserve: 85 hectares located north east of Burra
- Para Woodlands Nature Reserve: 320 hectares near Gawler, co-managed with the Department for Environment and Water
- Cygnet Park Sanctuary: 300 hectares near Kingscote on Kangaroo Island, co-managed with co-owners Jack May and the Patons.

Each nature reserve has a management plan which outlines conservation actions to be undertaken. For additional information about our Nature Reserves and the Sanctuary see [our nature reserves](#) on the Nature Foundation SA website.

If field-based research is undertaken on Witchelina or Hiltaba Nature Reserves, accommodation at the property may be available free of charge or at a reduced cost to researchers who have received Nature Foundation SA grants, subject to availability.

Water For Nature

Nature Foundation SA's Water For Nature program works with South Australian communities to source water and deliver community-driven projects that benefit wetlands and floodplains within the SA Murray-Darling Basin.

The [Water For Nature Five Year Environmental Watering Strategy](#) describes how we choose which sites need water, how much water they need and when. The [Water For Nature Strategic Plan](#) outlines how we will work with the community and government to help improve the health of our river. For additional information see the [Water For Nature](#) pages on the Nature Foundation SA website.

What can be funded

Nature Foundation SA funds individuals or organisations to contribute to nature conservation outcomes through research projects and community education-based programs in line with the [grant proposal requirements](#). Grants are generally intended to support operational activities. **Appendix 1** provides descriptions of the types of activities that can be funded, and also provides details of activities that will not be funded.

Who can apply

Unless otherwise specified, the following applicant eligibility requirements apply to Nature Foundation SA grants:

- Grand Start Grants program: Honours, Masters and PhD students enrolled at an Australian university
- Nature Foundation Scientific Expedition Foundation RL & GK Willing Grant: Honours students enrolled at an Australian university
- Mike Bull Scholarship: Honours or PhD students enrolled at an Australian university
- Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship for Masters and PhD students: Masters or PhD student enrolled at a South Australian University
- Research Project Grants: Australian based researchers with demonstrated credentials (not necessarily university based)
- Community Grants: South Australian community members and organisations.

Applicants must have a registered ABN or must nominate a payee (the person or organisation to which the grant will be paid, and who will be responsible for managing and acquitting the funds) with a registered ABN. Typically students will be named as the applicant, and their university will be nominated as the payee.

Who is not eligible to apply?

Applications will not be accepted from applicants, organisations or sponsored organisations that:

- have outstanding obligations/acquittal reports for projects previously funded by Nature Foundation SA
- are for-profit organisations (with the exception of educational institutions) or private companies
- are Commonwealth, State, or Local Government departments and agencies (except as a sponsor).

How to apply

Applications for funding will only be considered during specified grant rounds. Generally a grant round will open in March each year to coincide with the commencement of the Honours year. If funds are available, a second round may be opened in August. Grant rounds will be open for approximately 6 weeks before closing for the 4 week application assessment process. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application after the assessment process is complete.

The opening and closing dates of Nature Foundation SA grant rounds, and the proposed grant categories on offer for that grant round, will be published on our [Applying for Grants webpage](#).

Grant application process for applicants

1. Read the Nature Foundation SA Grants Program Guidelines (this document) to familiarise yourself with our grants program and to determine whether you meet the eligibility criteria for funding.
2. Familiarise yourself with our [key priorities](#). We recommend that you read our:
 - [Science Strategy 2018-2023](#)
 - [Potential research projects](#) that will inform our conservation programs
 - [Nature reserves](#), including management plan summaries if available (for research proposed on Nature Foundation SA nature reserves)
 - [Water For Nature](#) (for research related to the Water For Nature program).
3. Download the Nature Foundation SA Grants Program Application Form from our [Applying for Grants webpage](#).
4. Complete the application form in full, making sure you:
 - address the [grant proposal requirements](#),
 - demonstrate how your proposal aligns with the [key priorities](#), and
 - sign the application as the applicant.

For Honours, Masters and PhD student applications, your application form must be signed by your supervisor(s). The host organisation (or payee) must also sign the application form. Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

5. Submit **four signed hard copies of the completed application form** by the closing time and date. Late applications will not be accepted. Hard copy applications can be submitted by either:

Post: Grants Program
Nature Foundation SA
PO Box 448
Torrensville Plaza SA 5031

Hand delivered: Grants Program
Nature Foundation SA
32 Holden Street
Hindmarsh SA 5007

6. Email a **signed, digital version** of the completed application form to admin@nfsa.org.au with 'Grants Program Application' and the applicant name in the subject heading by the closing time and date. Late applications will not be accepted.

You must submit both hard copies and an emailed version of your application.

Required documentation

- If you are applying for the Roy and Marjory Edwards Scholarship Grant, you must attach the following to your application:
 - Your academic record and/or details of professional experience, and
 - A supporting statement from your university supervisor or departmental head (maximum 1 page).

Additional documentation

- You may be required to provide the following upon request from Nature Foundation:
 - A letter or other evidence of support, if working with a particular organisation or landholder, and/or
 - Evidence of any scientific permits, ethics approvals or other permits/approvals required for your project.

Note

- The funds sought by applicants generally exceed those available. As a result, you may not be successful in obtaining a grant or you may not be offered the full amount of money requested.

Grants and the GST

- It is strongly recommended that applicants seek independent legal and financial advice to determine all taxation obligations before submitting an application.
- Successful applicants that are registered for GST will have their grant grossed up by 10% to offset the GST payable on the grant. Organisations that are not registered for the GST will not have their grant grossed up, and must include GST amounts in their application. If successful, organisations cannot have their Grant Agreement transferred to another body because of GST registration.

How applications are assessed

Applications for funding are reviewed in a two stage process by Nature Foundation SA staff and members of the Land, Water and Science Committee based on these Guidelines.

Stage one – application screening

Application screening is undertaken by a minimum of one member of the Nature Foundation SA Land, Water and Science Committee, together with a minimum of one Nature Foundation SA staff (generally the Conservation Programs Manager).

Once the round has closed, the applications are screened to check that:

- the [applicant is eligible](#) to apply,
- the application meets the [grant proposal requirements](#) outlined in these Guidelines, as well as any specific requirements for each individual [grant category](#) applied for, and
- the application has been completed in full and all essential information has been provided.

Applications that do not meet minimum stage one requirements will not progress to stage two.

In assessing your application at Stage one the following criteria will be considered:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Quality | The quality of the proposed project, including clear aims and S.M.A.R.T. objectives. |
| Applicant ability/capacity | The ability and capacity of the applicant (person(s) and/or organisation) to carry out the proposed project. |
| Value for money | The extent of value for money given the direct benefits; the costs proposed are reasonable and realistic; level of complementary funding/in-kind support; and cost of comparable projects. |

A shortlist of applications will be selected to progress to Stage two.

Stage two – assessment against criteria

Applications that are shortlisted for Stage two are assessed by all available members of the Nature Foundation SA Land, Water and Science Committee, together with the Nature Foundation SA Conservation Programs Manager.

In assessing your application at Stage two the following criteria will be considered:

| | |
|---|---|
| Key priorities | Alignment of the proposed project with the key priorities for Nature Foundation SA grant funding (i.e. strong alignment with key priorities versus weak alignment with key priorities). |
| Conservation outcomes | The contribution of the proposed project to long-term conservation outcomes and the capacity of the project to meet the outcomes sought (i.e. very high value conservation outcomes versus very low value conservation outcomes). |
| Scientific rigour | The level of scientific rigour in the proposed project (i.e. robust and appropriate methods versus inappropriate methods). |
| Project and technical feasibility | The likelihood that objectives will be achieved within stated timeframes. |
| Value for money | The extent of value for money given the direct benefits; the costs proposed are reasonable and realistic; level of complementary funding/in-kind support; and cost of comparable projects. |
| Whole program funding distribution | The extent to which funding the project contributes to an equitable allocation of funding across key priorities and South Australia. |

A list of projects proposed for funding will be recommended by the Land, Water and Science Committee during each grant round based on the funds available at the time of assessment. The Nature Foundation SA Council will consider the recommendations from the Committee and approve the successful projects to be funded for each grant round.

Notification of applicants

If your application is successful

Successful applicants will receive written notification from Nature Foundation SA. You will then receive an agreement detailing the terms and conditions of the funding provided.

All applicants will be required to sign the agreement and comply with its conditions, which will include requirements to:

- report on how you have spent the money provided (grant acquittal)
- provide a final report (and progress report(s) for multi-year grants) on the outcomes from the funded project
- provide Nature Foundation SA with a copy of any published work related to the funded project
- complete a short Media Report with photographs for potential use by Nature Foundation SA
- provide a brief presentation about the project at a meeting, AGM, conference or similar, if requested to do so by Nature Foundation SA
- acknowledge the financial support of Nature Foundation SA in all related printed material and public statements/presentations
- enable Nature Foundation SA to access information and data developed by the funded project
- have/be covered by public liability insurance.

For university and research institution based applicants, intellectual property will be managed in accordance with the host organisation's intellectual property policy. Applicants independent of a university or research institution will need to come to an agreement with Nature Foundation SA regarding intellectual property.

Payment will be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement. Generally funding will be provided to the applicant or payee in advance of the funded activities being undertaken, however there is a requirement that any unused grant funds be returned to Nature Foundation SA. You are required to keep receipts for all purchased items and may be asked to provide copies to Nature Foundation SA to support records of your expenditure. For multi-year grants, funding will be phased, with a progress report required prior to the release of further funds.

Nature Foundation SA will:

- maintain a current file for each funded grant
- monitor the progress of grant activities
- acknowledge all grant recipients and their research projects in its Annual Report
- will publish research project final reports on its website.

If your application is unsuccessful

All ineligible or unsuccessful applicants will receive written notification from Nature Foundation SA.

Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to contact Nature Foundation SA for feedback regarding their application.

More information

For further information on the guidelines or to discuss your project or application, contact Nature Foundation SA or see our website.

Phone: 1300 366 191

Email: admin@nfsa.org.au

Website: www.naturefoundation.org.au

Grants webpage: www.naturefoundation.org.au/conservation/grants

Appendix 1

What can be funded

Nature Foundation SA grants are generally intended to support operational activities. The Land, Water and Science Committee together with the Nature Foundation SA Council will have the final say on what can be funded. The table below describes the types of activities that can be funded; however this is not an exhaustive list.

| Activities | Description |
|--|---|
| <p>Deliver a research program / research project</p> | <p>This funding is directed to short-term programs / projects (of 1-3 years duration). These may be new or continuing. Examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transport / travel (vehicle allowance, hire car, fuel, intrastate or interstate flights, ferry, boat hire) to / from / during field work • accommodation • food / meal allowance • consumables (e.g. field / laboratory) • scientific analysis including laboratory analysis (e.g. tissue / genetic) • contractors / professional services (e.g. for laboratory analysis, coxswain) • materials for field work (e.g. enclosure construction) • subscription to satellite service for fauna tracking • housing animals • report production including posters. |
| <p>Purchase equipment</p> | <p>These grants are to purchase equipment so the applicant is better able to undertake its work. Funding can be used to purchase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • software and hardware* • program / project supplies and equipment • communication equipment • equipment and resources for field work / volunteers • equipment and technology for monitoring / surveys (e.g. radio tracking, video cameras, microphones, camera traps). <p>Applications must include details about how often the equipment will be used, and who can access the equipment.</p> <p>If equipment is purchased by a student applicant, unless otherwise agreed, that equipment will remain the property of the university or other research organisation with the intention for it to be made available to future researchers. Nature Foundation SA may request the return of any equipment purchased with grant funding.</p> <p>*Not-for-profit organisations should consult with Connecting Up (www.connectingup.org) regarding their eligibility for donated software/hardware or for discounts before applying for funds for these items.</p> |

| Activities | Description |
|--|--|
| Deliver a community event / project / program | <p>Community events, projects and programs should promote people’s participation and inclusion in nature conservation.</p> <p>Events are to be held in South Australia and grants may be provided to cover the cost of venue hire, equipment hire or purchase, materials and/or catering.</p> |
| Provide learning and skill development opportunities for volunteers or members of a community organisation | <p>Projects related to nature conservation that complement the organisation’s goals will provide learning and skills development opportunities for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisations to provide members with the knowledge and skills they need so the organisation is better able to achieve its objectives • volunteers that will assist them in their volunteering role. <p>Examples of eligible items include: payment of training/provider fees, including travel costs associated with the provider delivering training in remote areas; purchase of textbooks and other learning resources required e.g. participant handbooks, learner guides.</p> |

What is not funded

The Land, Water and Science Committee together with the Nature Foundation SA Council will have the final say on what is not funded. Nature Foundation SA grants will not fund the following; however this is not an exhaustive list:

Core operational expenses including:

Ongoing expenses to conduct your services such as:

- administration fees to the applicant’s host organisation (payee)
- wages, rent, purchase or lease of land, lease of vehicles, insurance, telephone, internet
- core operational staff – e.g. chief executive, administration staff, accounting staff
- training for paid staff
- existing debts or shortfalls
- police checks / DHS screening
- marketing and promotion of the organisation or existing services
- ongoing costs of programs and services

Duplication of funding including:

- research projects
- items, projects, programs or equipment that are already funded or are the core responsibility of other state and commonwealth government departments

Other:

- wages / monetary reimbursement for time for students if that student is the applicant
- personal pursuits, or hobbies

- funds to distribute to other bodies
- retrospective funding for any activity
- activities that will be implemented interstate or overseas
- fundraising activities, prizes, competitions or donations
- overseas facilitators or speakers
- international airfares

The following items are generally not funded but may be considered based on the assessment of merit:

- participation in interstate events (e.g. to present at a conference).