



Ngā Tukunga pūtea ā-
takiwa mō te taiao me
ngā taonga tuku iho o te
ao tūturu

Guide for Applicants

Regional Environment & Natural
Heritage Grant 2024/2025





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Introduction

The **Regional Environment & Natural Heritage (RENH) Grant Programme** has merged this year with the Community Coordination and Facilitation (CCF) grant to provide a unified funding opportunity supporting community-led conservation and environmental initiatives across Tāmaki Makaurau. This single grant programme will support community conservation projects at broader landscape scale level, whether on the ground activity or coordination efforts, all aimed at achieving regional biodiversity and water quality priority outcomes.

The grant operates under the [community grants policy](#). Please ensure you read this carefully and ensure your application complies with the policy.

These applicant guidelines will help you understand eligibility, application processes, and reporting requirements for the 2024/2025 RENH grant. The grant is popular and oversubscribed each year, so we encourage you to get familiar with what's required, to give you the best chance of success. We also strongly encourage you to talk to a council Conservation Advisor or Healthy Waters advisor before you begin to ensure you are applying for projects aligned with council's priorities.

For assistance, please reach out to: pestfree@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Grant focus and priorities

RENH helps achieve Auckland's regional conservation goals by supporting practical, impactful landscape scale conservation activities to protect high value ecosystems, habitats and threatened species. Successful applications will focus on:

- **Pest animal, weed, and plant disease management:** Targeting the control and eradication of invasive species (includes fencing, monitoring etc) to protect priority ecosystems (including terrestrial, fresh water and marine).
- **Restoration planting:** Enhancing biodiversity through [eco-sourced](#) planting in high-value ecological areas. Preference given where plants are sourced from nurseries that are accredited with, or working towards accreditation with, [Plant Pass](#) nursery biosecurity scheme.
- **Water quality improvement:** Initiatives focused on protecting, restoring, and enhancing water resources across catchments.
- **Outstanding natural features:** Safeguarding significant geological and ecological sites.
- **Community coordination:** Funding for facilitators or coordinators embedded in the community to boost collaboration, volunteer network expansion, and on-the-ground activity, strategic or operational planning, and capacity-building for long-term group / project sustainability.
- **Operational Costs:** Costs associated with the running of a conservation community group such as administration, travel, communication etc.

Funding priorities

RENH funding will support projects that:

1. **Protect and restore ecosystems:** Conserve priority habitats, threatened species, and [high-value ecosystems](#), sites with threatened species.
2. **Enhance community involvement:** Encourage volunteer engagement, build conservation group capacity, and promote strategic partnerships.
3. **Recognise Mātauranga Māori:** Respect and incorporate indigenous knowledge, values, and practices into conservation initiatives led by or designed in partnership with Māori.

Eligibility criteria and limitations

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include:

- Community organisations, iwi, hapū, marae and individuals involved in [regionally significant](#) conservation work.
- Groups contributing to Auckland's ecological health through community-led initiatives on private, Māori, or public land, as long as they have the necessary permissions.

Ineligible entities and projects

RENH will not fund:

- Projects by political parties, commercial entities, or projects already receiving specific Auckland Council funding.
- Projects focused solely on beautification or those limited to a very local issue.
- Activities that do not directly contribute to on-the-ground ecological or biodiversity goals, including legal expenses, medical costs, religious ministry, or political activities.
- See the council's [community grants policy](#) for a full list of exclusions

Please talk to a grants advisor if the following applies:

- You are a group that has never applied to either CCF or RENH in the past, or have not applied in the last 3 years, so we can help guide you.
- You are the recipient of funding in this financial year from the Environmental Services team
- Your work is solely on a regional or local park
- Your project area includes more than 50% crown land
- You have been declined for the same or similar project more than twice
- Your project includes things that are novel or different

Note: Projects fulfilling resource consent conditions, subdivision requirements, or that are solely commercial initiatives are ineligible.

Application process

1. **Scheduled funding rounds:**

- RENH operates as a contestable grant with designated application periods. ○
Application dates are publicly advertised, and all applications are reviewed based on a standardised process.

2. **Before you apply:**

- Talk to a conservation or healthy waters advisor about what you want to apply for

3. **Application submission requirements:**

- Clearly outline project alignment with RENH priorities, including goals, expected outcomes, and budget breakdown.
- Provide all relevant supporting documents and costs (e.g., quotes, project plans, site maps).
- For projects involving community coordination or facilitation, detail the role of the coordinator/facilitator in achieving conservation objectives. See Appendix 1 for suggested rates
- **Provide evidence of landowner permission** for your project area (if you have been working there for many years, consider renewing this permission)
- Co-funding of projects is encouraged, and usually at a minimum of a 50% applicant contribution, which may include volunteer hours calculated at the Living Wage rate of \$27.80 per hour.

4. **Multiple applications**

- Applicants are encouraged to submit one application that covers all projects or activities for their individual organisation. However, umbrella organisations that are applying on behalf of other individual groups, may submit multiple applications

5. **Multi-year applications**

- We will consider multi-year applications for up to three years. Grants for subsequent years will be dependent on the successful achievement of project goals and availability of funds in future years

6. **Health and safety compliance:**

- All applicants must ensure Health and Safety measures are in place, including a risk assessment for the project site.

(Note for grants over \$1,000, individuals and unincorporated groups will need to either nominate an umbrella organisation or receive grant payments as reimbursement)

Assessment criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

1. **Regional impact:** Projects that contribute significantly to Auckland's conservation goals, targeting high-priority areas and regionally significant ecosystems.
2. **Track record:** Applicant's demonstrated ability to complete projects effectively, including financial planning and resource management.
3. **Project feasibility:** Is there a need for the project, are the goals achievable, budget realistic and sufficient to deliver the proposed outcomes.
4. **Promotes action:** Extent to which the project enables on-the-ground conservation activity and opportunities for greater community involvement.
5. **Māori engagement and outcomes:** Evidence of efforts to connect and develop relationships with mana whenua and mataawaka, and the integration of Te Ao Māori values into project planning and execution.
6. **Collaboration and partnerships:** Strength of partnerships with other conservation organisations, mana whenua, schools, businesses and local entities to extend the conservation impact. Applications from umbrella organisations that can incorporate multiple individual groups would be preferred.

Accountability and Reporting

Successful applicants must provide detailed reports to demonstrate project impact and financial accountability.

Reporting requirements:

- **Progress reports:** Regular communication with your local Conservation Advisor on project milestones and community engagement.
- **Final report:** Summary of outcomes, including measurable conservation achievements (e.g. number of pests controlled, trees planted, water quality improvements) ○
 - **Data sharing:** Sharing of project data with Auckland Council including trap locations/results, bird monitoring, survey findings etc
 - **Collaboration metrics:** Document partnerships, volunteer contributions, and community engagement statistics.
 - **Project impact:** For coordination efforts, report on enhanced volunteer network, group activity (volunteer numbers and hours), strategic improvements, and capacity-building outcomes.

Timeline

Application period opens	Friday 7 February 2025
Applicant workshops	Wednesday 12 and 19 February 2025 – online workshop to help you apply. Times tbc
Application deadline	Friday 7 March 2025 - Final date to submit the application.
Notification of decisions	June 2025 - Applicants are notified of the outcome.
Funding agreement issued	July 2025 - Successful applicants receive a funding agreement that must be signed to access funds.
Project commencement	From August 2025 - Projects can start once funding agreements are finalised.
Progress reporting	Ongoing - Regular updates are required during the project. The schedule will be outlined in your funding agreement.
Final reporting	Within 1 month of project completion - A final report summarising outcomes and achievements is required.

Need assistance?

For any questions or application guidance, please contact the Environmental Grants team at communityfunding@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or call **09 301 0101**.

APPENDIX 1 – Suggested rates for coordinators etc

What for	Rate	Notes
Living wage:	This is now \$27.80 per hour as of 1 Sept 2023.	CCF won't fund anything below the Living Wage.
Volunteer roles (as part of the applicant contribution calculation):	\$27.80 per hour for general volunteers. Market rate for specialised volunteers.	General volunteer time can be calculated using the living wage. Specialized volunteer hourly rates can be calculated according to comparable market rates.
Coordinator / facilitator roles:	Between \$35 and \$50 per hour generally.	Depends on the complexity of the role and the area covered. The maximum CCF will fund is \$50 per hour.
Manager positions:	Around the \$50-\$55 per hour.	Depends on the complexity of the role. The maximum CCF will fund is \$55 per hour.
Specialised contractors	e.g., contracted to support specific specialised tasks like writing strategic plans for a short period of time: Can be higher, and at market rate.	As an example, a contractor who is engaged for a specific short-term specialised role (planning, review etc) rather than an ongoing role.