



Auckland Climate Grant Guidelines

August 2025, Version 1.0



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1. Auckland Climate Grant Purpose

This is a targeted grant programme to support community-led climate action. The Auckland Climate Grant funds projects that help to build community resilience by:

- a. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through community-based action.
- b. Increasing adaptation through community-based action.
- c. Supporting Māori-led responses to climate change

Project areas that are supported through the Auckland Climate Grant are illustrated by the diagram below however this diagram is not an exhaustive illustration of types of projects possibly supported.

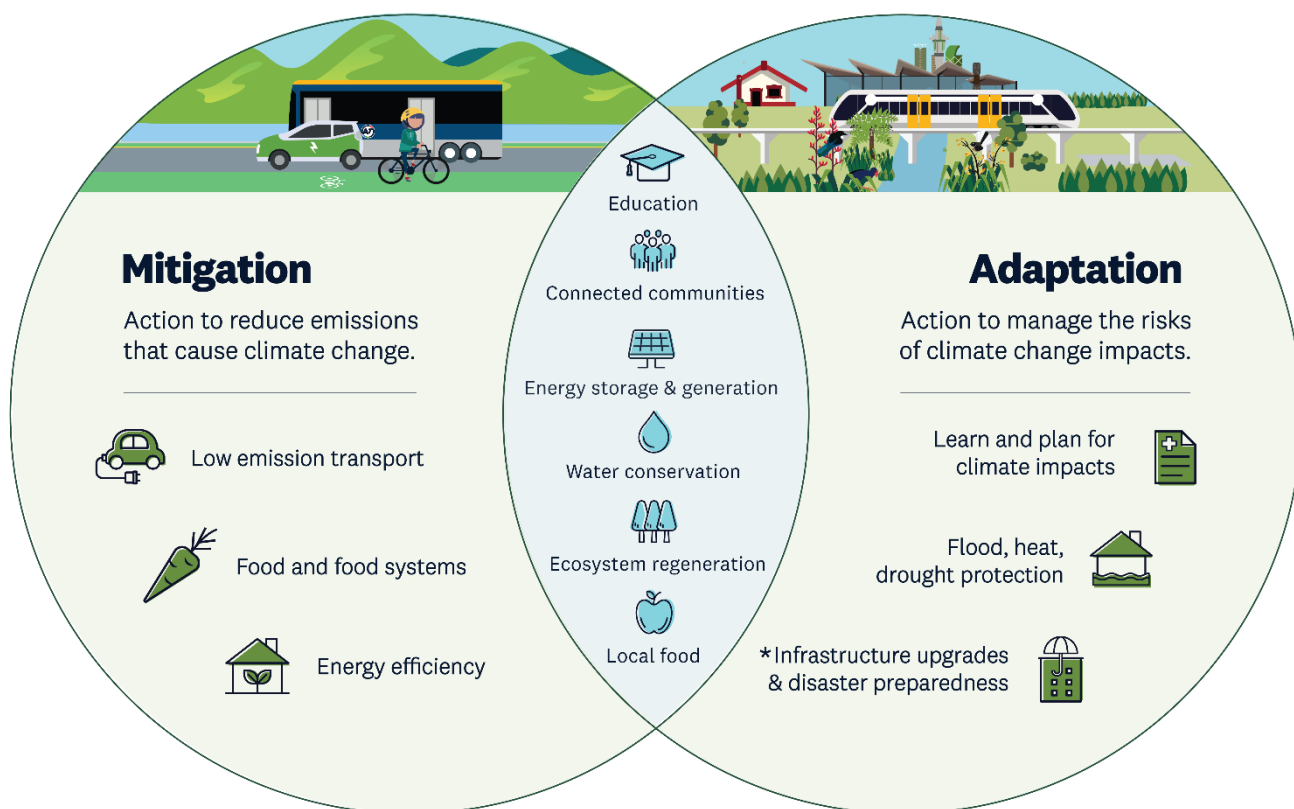
Example projects that contribute towards reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are illustrated on the left-hand (mitigation) and in the centre of the below venn diagram.

Example projects that contribute towards building community resilience and adaptation to climate impacts are illustrated in the right-hand side (adaptation) and in the centre of the diagram.

Māori led responses to climate change can sit anywhere within this diagram.

Funding is available for both mitigation and adaptation projects.

Currently Auckland Climate Grant funding is not available for infrastructure upgrades & disaster preparedness projects. Expanded funding to support these activities will be available aligning with the second funding round estimated to be in February 2026.*



a. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Auckland Climate Grant programme will support community projects focused on providing resources, education, and opportunities that result in more Aucklanders engaging with climate change issues. It will support Aucklanders to take small practical steps which will result in behaviour changes in areas with the greatest potential for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Projects that may reduce greenhouse gas emissions could include:

- Projects that support Aucklanders to switch some journeys they currently make by driving to use of public transport, walking, bicycles, e-bikes or electric scooters.
- Projects that encourage Aucklanders to eat more plant-based meals, more often.
- Projects that encourage uptake of more efficient energy use by communities.

b. Supporting adaptation efforts

The Auckland Climate Grant programme will support initiatives that strengthen community adaptation and build climate resilience — from practical projects to capacity and capability building

Adaptation is a concept to describe how well people and ecosystems are prepared to deal with the impacts caused by climate disruption. Impacts of climate disruption will include more frequent and severe weather events, ocean warming and acidification, extended periods of drought and extreme temperatures, and rising food prices caused by these impacts.

Projects that contribute to adaption would support building stronger connections between neighbours and within neighbourhoods, at key community sites, and with community-based organisations. Priority would be given to communities most vulnerable to climate impacts.

Projects that help communities adapt could include:

- Ecosystem regeneration: regenerative agriculture (urban farms, food forests), nature-based solutions, soil stabilisation to prevent erosion and improve water retention, projects that aim to reduce urban heat.
- Capacity and capability building: initiatives that strengthen community skills, awareness, and collective planning for the future.
- Water conservation: measures to reduce and educate on consumption and transition to circular water systems.
- Energy efficiency: projects that lower energy use, with a focus on low-tech solutions and shared resources.

The Auckland Climate Grant does not support projects focused on general climate disaster preparedness, disaster response or recovery from immediate impact of events. For example, the Auckland Climate Grant would not fund purchase of survival kits or community emergency hubs.

Support for these projects will be available through upcoming Auckland Council programmes.

c. Supporting Māori-led responses to climate change

The Auckland Climate Grant programme will support projects that enable mana whenua and mātāwaka to respond to climate change and build climate resilience. The allocation of funding will recognise the partnership between Council and Māori-led organisations – particularly mana whenua in Council's role as a partner under Te Tiriti.

Projects that may support Māori-led responses to climate change could include and may be specifically focused on resilience

- projects that build capacity for Māori-led groups to develop climate action plans and potential climate action activities.
- projects to restore, rejuvenate and replenish mahinga kai (food production), and enable indigenous food sovereignty.
- projects that address electricity supply issues and support marae to act as emergency hubs in their rohe for natural disasters.

2. Scope

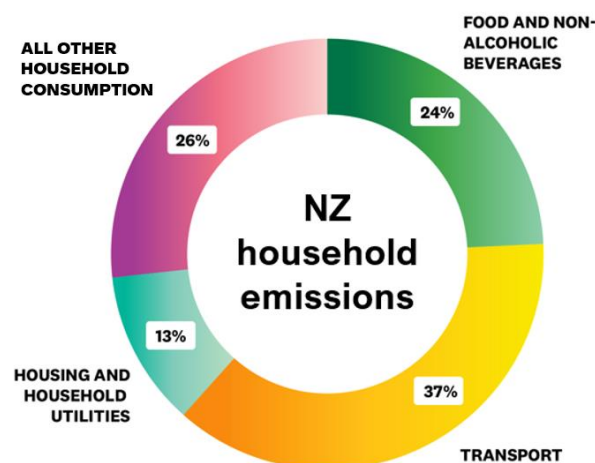
Projects supported through the Auckland Climate Grant programme should meet one or more of the following criteria.

- results in activity that reduces greenhouse gas emissions or supports community-led adaptation to build resilience to climate impacts.
- supports mana whenua and mātāwaka to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate-related impacts.
- provides support and resources to Māori-led organisations and community groups to build organisational capacity and capability, develop strategic plans and develop sustainable funding models, increasing the total funding or support secured for climate projects in Auckland.
- increases participation in climate action activity by communities who emit the most (generally, higher income communities) targeting the highest emitting behaviours.
- increases participation in activities that support adaptation and build community resilience in priority communities who most need our support to respond to climate impacts.
- supports Aucklanders of different ages, abilities and ethnicities to take climate action.

3. Climate action activity areas

In Aotearoa, household consumption of goods and services are producing 71 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Auckland's household emissions continue to rise at a higher rate than population growth, while concern over climate change grows. Many people feel overwhelmed, don't know how to take climate action and face barriers to reducing emissions.

Most Aucklanders (86 per cent) are willing to change their lifestyle to ensure we meet our climate commitments, with two in five willing to make radical change. Reducing consumption emissions through empowering Aucklanders to make changes at the individual and community level is a key strategy to reduce Auckland's overall emissions profile. A breakdown of New Zealand household consumption emissions, shown below, highlights the areas of highest emissions and greatest opportunity for reduction by communities are transport, food and energy (household utilities).



Projects supported through the Auckland Climate Grant should address one or more of the following climate action areas. Priorities for the Auckland Climate Grant are drawn from Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan.

Future guidance on what types of activities we wish to support through these priorities can be found on Auckland Council's Live Lightly website, which provides advice and information for individuals and community groups on climate change and details on projects previously supported through the Auckland Climate Grant:

<https://livelightly.nz/auckland-climate-grant/>

3.1. Built environment and Energy

Projects that support a built environment and energy system that provides for a low carbon, climate disaster-resilient Auckland.

This could include:

- education and events to encourage the uptake of more efficient energy use by communities, use of renewable energy, and reduction in power costs for low-income Aucklanders.
- education and events to encourage public uptake of sustainable design and construction practices.
- education, events and resources to support retrofitting of non-Council community facilities such as community halls, marae or places of worship.
- Projects that support Aucklanders to reduce energy consumption.

Groups interested in applying for solar systems should get in touch by emailing hello@livelightly.nz for additional advice on the types of projects prioritised for support.

3.2. Transport

Projects that support low carbon, safe transport systems that deliver social, economic and health benefits for all. This will include innovative solutions that reduce the need for travel.

This could include:

- education, events and resources to encourage the use of public transport, walking, bicycles, e-bikes or electric scooters, rather than driving.

- improve access to communal and personal bicycle, e-bike or electric scooters in particular within under-served communities including bike hubs and bike loan programmes
- Improve access to co-working spaces supporting people to work locally and avoid travel

We work with Auckland Transport to align support for sustainable transport projects.

3.3. Food

Projects that support a low carbon, resilient, local food system that provides all Aucklanders with access to fresh, sustainable, affordable and healthy food and projects that support Aucklanders to make sustainable dietary choices.

Projects prioritised to help achieve emission reduction goals include:

- Projects that support communities to increase plant-based meals and therefore reducing emissions.
- Projects that support food growing projects such as community gardens may be supported if they have planned activity for education and behaviour change towards plant-based meals, as well as a framework for evaluating the impact.
 - If community gardening projects are supported (that increase plant-based meals), they would ideally prioritise using reused materials to construct gardens (that would otherwise be wasted) and secure sites long-term.
 - Gardens that are supported should prioritise crops that are typically greenhouse-grown or have a high transport footprint, and prioritise supply for the Auckland region.
- Projects that increase soil sequestration may be supported.

Projects prioritised to support climate resilience that relates to food security include:

- Regenerative practices such as improving soil health may be supported if they have a scientific method of demonstrating the improvement.
- Indigenous food systems. Projects that are underpinned by Mātauranga Māori and/or are Māori designed and led would be supported, as well as other food growing projects that help groups reconnect with their indigenous food traditions.

3.4. Māori-led projects

Māori-led projects that build capacity to respond to climate impacts and support mana whenua and mātāwaka to reduce emissions and build community adaptation to climate impacts .

Within the Auckland Climate Grants programme, Māori-led projects are those that:

- provide activities or opportunities for Māori individuals, whānau, hapū, iwi or other Māori communities to respond to climate impacts or build community resilience to climate impacts.
- have a foundation in Te Ao Māori philosophy and principles, and apply Māori language.
- the applicant groups or project leaders are predominantly Māori.

This could include:

- projects that build capacity for Māori-led groups to develop climate action plans and potential climate action activities.
- projects to restore, rejuvenate and replenish mahinga kai (food production), and enable indigenous food sovereignty.

- projects that address electricity supply issues and support marae to act as emergency hubs in their role for natural disasters.
- educational projects to support intergenerational mātauranga on climate change, and prepare and empower Māori communities for the transition.
- projects that support the identification and protection of sites of cultural heritage impacted by climate change.

3.5 Communities

Projects that grow Aucklanders' participation in local climate action projects or build community resilience and adaptation to climate impacts.

This could include:

- education, events and resources to increase Aucklanders' participation in local climate action projects and support community networks building community resilience to climate impacts.
- skills development projects for communities related to resilience and climate action, including carbon literacy, teaching gardens and home energy efficiency.
- education, events and resources to support early childhood centres, primary and secondary schools, kura and tertiary institutions to support climate action by students, their whānau and wider community and build community connections to supporting increased resilience.

3.6. 2025/2026 Climate action activity priorities

For the 2025/2026 funding round, priority will be given to applications in these areas:

- Transport
- Energy
- Food
- Māori-led projects

Priority areas are updated on an annual basis.

4. Exclusions and lower priority areas

Costs outlined in the Auckland Council Community Grants Policy as exclusions will not be supported through the Auckland Climate Grant programme: These include:

- debt servicing or repayment
- legal expenses
- activities that promote religious ministry or political purposes
- medical expenses
- public services that are the responsibility of central government (e.g. core education, primary health care)
- physical works, e.g. improvements to community buildings that require consents or permits, prior to the necessary consents or permits being obtained (grants may be awarded in principle, but funds will not be released until all conditions are satisfied)
- purchase of alcohol
- travel and accommodation outside Auckland
- retrospective costs (where the activity has already taken place), unless this is necessary as a condition of the grant, or we are satisfied there are other mitigating circumstances.

- fundraising events or activities, especially where the beneficiary is a third party.

Lower priority areas for the Auckland Climate grant include some activities which support emissions reduction however are not a focus area for the Auckland Climate Grant. Projects in these areas have a lower likelihood of success in 2025/2026 funding rounds.

- projects focused on general climate disaster preparedness, disaster response or recovery from immediate impact of events.
- natural environment projects focused on conservation
- climate action projects focused on industry and the economy are out of scope for the Auckland Climate Grant programme.
- projects with a primary focus on waste minimisation. This includes food waste, composting, recycling, circular economy, repair cafes, and upcycling projects. Support for some of these projects is available through the Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund

Specific exclusions for the Auckland Climate Grant programme include:

- activities whose primary purpose is the private gain or advancing of private business interests without a significant public good component.
- purchase of vehicles and any related ongoing maintenance, repair, overhead costs or road user charges
- conference fees and costs
- funding for existing roles or organisational costs
- subscription services where these are ongoing and not associated with a specific event or outcome.
- replication of council services

5. Applicants

Applicants to the Auckland Climate Grant programme can include:

- community groups
- neighbourhoods
- mana whenua and mātāwaka applicants
- social enterprises
- businesses and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

Note the community/public benefits from projects run by business or business improvement district should significantly outweigh any private benefit the applicant would receive as a result of the project. It is recommended that applicants get in touch with Auckland Council to discuss their project before applying by emailing hello@livelightly.nz

- education providers (early childhood centres, schools, kura and tertiary institutions).

Note: In general applications from education providers for physical works on school facilities (for example installation of LED lighting or installation of solar panels) are not supported through the Auckland Climate Grant. Exceptions to this position may be made for projects that involve small scale physical works where there are direct links to educational outcomes for students and these are communicated to the wider community. Applications from education providers for physical works should have permission from the Ministry of Education or other facility managers at the time of applying. It is recommended that applicants get in touch with Auckland Council to discuss their project before applying by emailing hello@livelightly.nz

6. What can be applied for?

Grants of between \$1,000 and \$50,000 are offered through the Auckland Climate Grant programme with both response grants and strategic grants offered.

6.1. Strategic grants

Applicants can apply for strategic grants between \$15,000 and \$50,000.

The Auckland Climate Grant strategic grants will support programmes and activities aligning with one or more priority activity areas (Transport, Food, Energy or Māori-led) with tangible or clearly quantifiable emissions reduction and/or adaptation outcomes.

Allocation decisions for strategic grants are made by the Community Committee. Strategic grants will be expected to have more significant impacts than response grants and could potentially be used to either expand best practise projects or develop innovative new responses to the climate challenge.

6.2. Response grants

There will be a single round of Response grants (typically of up to \$15,000) offered this financial year, supporting programmes and activities to grow community participation in climate action, and amplify existing community action, particularly among priority communities such as youth, Pacific peoples, marae, and rangatahi Māori. Allocation decisions for Auckland Climate Grant response grants are made by the General Manager Environmental Services.

The response funding round will align with other Auckland Council grant programmes supporting preparedness and adaptation. Details on the application process and priorities and criteria for other funding will be confirmed in early 2026.

6.3. Funding timeframe and multi-year grants

The funding timeframe for projects is, in general, one to three years, after which the project objectives should either have been achieved, the project should be directly funded by Auckland Council through a non-contestable process, or the project has become self-funding.

For 2025/2026 single year grants are offered through the Strategic grant round.

7. Funding rounds

	Opening date	Closing date	Funding decisions
Strategic grants			
Annual round	1 September 2025	30 September 2025	December 2025
Response grants			
Round one	February 2026	March 2026	April/May 2026

8. How to apply

The Auckland Climate Grant operates as a contestable process. This means:

- applicants are invited to apply for a grant during scheduled funding rounds, with publicly advertised opening and closing dates.
- clearly defined processes will be applied to all applications.
- final allocation decisions will be published in a public forum.

8.1. Preparing your application

All applications must be submitted using the SmartyGrants online system. Applications for response grants do not need to be written; audio, video or image files can be submitted.

Support is available with the application process. Details on funding webinars and drop-in sessions are available at <https://livelightly.nz/auckland-climate-grant/>. To access applicant support please contact Fran Hayton on hello@livelightly.nz or 09 301 0101

Key application requirements:

- Please complete all of the application form.
- You will be asked to explain how your project or activity contributes towards fund outcomes.
- You will be asked to attach quotes in your project budget to substantiate costs you are requesting funding to support.
- You will be asked to attach bank account details if you have not received a grant payment from Auckland Council in the last 12 months.
- In general, Council funding should not be regarded as the sole funding source for your activity. In most instances applications that can demonstrate a 50% contribution towards project costs from other sources of funding or in-kind contributions are preferred.

8.2. Disclosure of Interest

All applicants must disclose if an Auckland Council councillor, local board member or council employee has any interest or involvement in the activity for which they are seeking a grant. You will be asked this question in the application form.

8.3. Application assessment

All eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria below. This application assessment will be the basis of funding recommendations. For strategic grant applications funding recommendations will be reported to the Community Committee. For response grant applications funding recommendations will be reported to the General Manager Environment Services.

1. Alignment with grant purpose – greenhouse gas emissions reduction, resilience to climate impacts and support for Māori-led responses to climate change
2. Māori outcomes
3. Unmet community need and project reach.
4. Collaboration with other groups, schools, mana whenua or organisations
5. Likelihood of success.

8.4. Notification of decisions

Once allocation decisions have been made, all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email.

If your application is not successful, a reason will be provided by council staff where possible, and suggestions provided for future grant applications.

If your application is successful, you will receive a funding agreement, which is a formal document that outlines the conditions of the grant and our accountability reporting requirements. Grant recipients are required to sign these agreements and return them to the council to receive funding.

8.5. Meeting our accountability requirements

Accountability and reporting requirements are specified in the funding agreement between Council and the successful grant recipient. The accountability and reporting requirements may include:

- Evidence of the project's financial and non-financial inputs and outputs, a description of the activities delivered, measures and outcomes achieved and the likely long-term impact of the project.
- Financial summary of project costs and income, evidence and findings of surveys, participant questionnaires and project evaluation, challenges, highlights and learnings.

8.6. Contact

For further information on the Auckland Climate Grant programme or assistance with applications, contact:

Fran Hayton email: hello@livelight.nz phone: 09 301 0101