



# **VGT Community Grants Program Guidelines**

**Grants Open  
17 May 2024 – 12 July 2024**

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

## 2. THE PROGRAM

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT), a community-led group with support from Agriculture Victoria offers funding support for community-led gorse control projects. **Funding will be available to community group organisations only.**

### Program Objectives

- Reduce the impacts of gorse on environmental, agricultural, and social values
- Strengthen community and stakeholder connections for better gorse outcomes
- Build community knowledge and capacity in managing gorse
- Promote best practice gorse management



**Funding is granted based on dollar-for-dollar landholder contribution. Priority will be given to projects that maximise public benefit. The VGT Community Grants Program provides up to \$8,000 to support small-scale community-led gorse control projects.**

It is expected that most landholders in the project area will already possess knowledge required to successfully implement gorse control activities so will require little support to achieve results.

The VGT requires that the key use of funding will be to provide incentives to private land managers for gorse control activities. **Applicants must ensure:**

- That proposed participant landholders have agreed to undertake the project and will complete gorse control works voluntarily once they are made aware of the project.
- That administration time is dedicated to the project, including to notify targeted landholders of their responsibilities and requirements, to estimate the initial area of their gorse infestations and the size of the area treated during the project.

## 3. PRIORITY AREAS

The VGT will place a priority on funding projects that deliver in the following areas:

Areas that maximise the public benefit of gorse control actions, for example gorse control on waterways with high riparian vegetation values, infestations that are isolated, infestations threatening indigenous vegetation especially grasslands, infestations threatening high value agricultural land and projects addressing high priority actions outlined in CMA strategies and plans. Applications that complement other gorse control programs such as DEECA's Good Neighbour Program or Local Government Programs.

## 4. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- Funding is available for small-scale gorse control projects on private land and leased crown land.
- The VGT is not seeking to directly fund works on publicly managed land.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have participating landholders yet to receive VGT community grant funding.
- It is important that all participating landholders are made aware of the importance of follow-up control works. Landholders must sign a 3-year voluntary work agreement that commits them to maintaining all necessary follow-up gorse control at their expense. The VGT will not provide funding for follow-up control works.
- Applicants must state a commitment to collect relevant data on achievements.
- Projects must provide data collected and project updates to the VGT at least every 6 months (from the time of project approval) or as requested by the VGT Community Pest Management Officer.
- **Applications must:**
  - include **a clear project area map, showing all properties in the project.**
  - include **clear individual property maps outlining gorse infestations to be treated.** Each property map must include an approximate measure (ha) of gorse to be treated and the property location in reference to the project area map. Projects can complete their property maps by using (not limited to) Google Earth <https://www.google.com.au/earth/> or Lassi Maps. <https://maps.land.vic.gov.au/lassi/>
  - Include **photographs of gorse infestations** to be treated for individual properties involved.
- The Project Checklist (section 14) and List of Participating Properties (section 15) within the Grant Application form must be completed and submitted. Applications omitting these sections will not be considered for funding.
- Successful applicants will sign a Grant Agreement Contract.
- Incentives to participating individual properties is capped at \$1,500 per property ownership.
- **Landholder matching monetary contributions:**
  - Groups must ensure landholders match all VGT on-ground funding incentives. **This must be a \$1: \$1 monetary contribution.**
  - Incentives should be given on a reimbursement basis, after landholders have provided paid invoices for work completed.
- **Example: On-ground gorse control works totalling \$6,000 on an individual property.** A landholder must pay the full cost (\$6,000) of control upfront and obtain a receipt. Once control work has been inspected and approved by the group's Project Officer, the landholder can then be reimbursed up to \$1,500 of VGT funding.
- **The Grant Agreement Contract** must be signed and returned to the VGT, and funding paid to successful applicants, **BEFORE:**
  - any purchase of herbicide for control works occurs.
  - any gorse control works are completed on the target properties within the project.
- The VGT cannot fund gorse control works that have been completed prior to the Grant Agreement being signed and returned.

- One hundred per cent of project funding will be paid to successful applicants on submission to the VGT of a signed Grant Agreement Contract and invoice with the correct grant amount and VGT acceptance of this.

### Final Project Reporting

Once a project is completed, projects must complete and submit a Project Completion Report to the VGT detailing activities undertaken and costs incurred. A template for the Project Completion Report will be available from the VGT.

- Reports must include **clear individual property maps outlining gorse infestations that have been successfully treated**. Each property map must include an approximate measure (ha) of gorse treated and the property location in reference to their project area map. Projects can complete their property maps by using (not limited to) Google Earth <https://www.google.com.au/earth/> or Lassi Maps. <https://maps.land.vic.gov.au/lassi/>
- Reports must include a **before and after photo** for each property.
- The VGT may request receipts from project officers to confirm that incentives have been distributed in accordance with the VGT Grant Guidelines 2024/2025.
- The VGT may audit project areas for evaluation purposes.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Grants under this program are only available to Victorian community group organisations (e.g., Landcare/Friends of Groups). A minimum of two landholders is required.
- Projects must be completed by 30 June 2025.
- Projects must demonstrate they will help achieve the goals of the [Victorian Gorse Control Strategy](#).
- Projects must promote and distribute information that aligns with the [Gorse National Best Practice Manual](#) to participating landholders.
- Funding will only be provided for gorse control works on private land and leased crown land.
- Applicants must determine if any Works on Waterways permits are required and obtain these and attach to their application.
- Applicants must determine if any project activities will impact cultural heritage sites and obtain and attach appropriate documentation or approvals to their application.
- The VGT may request quotes to be provided for gorse control if they feel information provided in the application was not sufficient to make an informed decision.

## 6. INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND COSTS

Funding cannot be spent on:

- ✗ Landholder incentives above what is outlined under the General Conditions section of these guidelines
- ✗ Project administration
- ✗ The purchase of capital items
- ✗ Travel
- ✗ Costs associated with the establishment and maintenance of an organisation

- ✗ Consultancy fees
- ✗ Field days and catering
- ✗ Revegetation works and materials
- ✗ Funding for personal protective equipment

## 7. PROJECT ASSESSMENT

A panel comprising VGT representatives will assess applications and make final recommendations for funding approval.

Following the panel's recommendations, project activities and outcomes may be amended. This will be a consultative process between the VGT and applicant to ensure project activities align with available funds.

The VGT has the right to request additional information to ensure an informed decision is made e.g., request quotes.

If the requests are not met it may impact on the success of the project application.

## 8. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

One hundred per cent of project funding will be paid to successful applicants on submission to the VGT of a signed Grant Agreement and invoice with the correct grant amount and VGT acceptance of this.

## 9. KEY DATES

Activity	Date
Applications open	17 May 2024
Applications close	12 July 2024
Successful applicants notified by email	22 July 2024
Signed grant agreement and invoice submitted to the VGT	5 August 2024
Submit completion report	30 July 2025 (or prior to)

## 10. SUBMITTING GRANT APPLICATIONS

Grant applications should be submitted **by close of business 12 July 2024** to [info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](mailto:info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au). Please contact the VGT Community Pest Management Officer, on 0417 593 250 if you require further information.

## 11. SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

A letter of offer will be emailed to successful applicants confirming the funding amount and/or recommended amendments to project activities.

## 12. UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email and receive a letter outlining why the decision was made.