

Terms of Reference for the Environmental Partnership Fund

(To be reviewed in 2027)

The purpose of this fund

The Environmental partnerships Fund (Fund) exists to support proactive partnership work between Council and community groups to achieve environmentally focused activities/projects on publicly-accessible land and waterways.

Directly relevant to this Fund is the Ōtautahi Christchurch Climate Resilience Strategy; Goal 4: *'We are guardians of our natural environment and taonga'*, and the Biodiversity Strategy. *These will be achieved by regenerating forests, planting trees, restoring wetlands, enriching soil carbon and protecting native habitats.*

Who can apply to this fund?

1. Community organisations can apply to this Fund.
 - a. Preference will be given to Christchurch and / or Banks Peninsula-based organisations or partnerships who already have a successful track record of partnering with Council.
2. Applicants must be a legal entity registered in New Zealand, such as an incorporated society, or charitable trust.
3. This Fund will not support projects or organisations principally for advancing commercial or personal gain. Proposals and organisations must deliver an environmental outcome for Christchurch and/or Banks Peninsula.
4. Only one application per organisation will normally be accepted by this Fund each Council financial year (July to June).
 - a. Funding will usually be for up to three (3) years, with the potential to apply for up to 5 years for environmental projects with a longer-term timeframe.
5. This Fund can support either operational costs (e.g. staff time) or for specific project materials/equipment needed to successfully deliver tangible environmental outcomes that benefit Christchurch and / or Banks Peninsula.

Review Panel

Applications will be considered by the Council's Environmental Partnerships Panel. The panel will be made up of:

- Manager Regional Parks (Chair)
- Parks, Programmes and Partnerships Manager
- A representative from 3-Waters
- A representative from the Climate Resilience Team
- A representative from the Community Funding Team

Others may be added from time to time.

How proposals will be assessed

Proposals will be assessed against the following evaluation criteria and how they respond to the purpose of the Fund (i.e. the Council's Vision and Strategic Priorities and Biodiversity Strategy).

Applications should consider how they meet each of the following criteria.

Evaluation criteria	Explanation
1. Environmental	The extent to which the group or project is directly engaged in improving environmental outcomes for Christchurch and/or Banks Peninsula. Consideration will be given to the nature or scale of benefits provided and the significance of the issue or opportunity being addressed by the project.
2. Partnering capacity	The group or project have previously demonstrated their ability to partner successfully with Council and/or other agencies/groups/trusts. The fund may also support new groups that demonstrate a significant capacity to partner with Council going forward.
3. Deliverable	The applicant has the required skills, experience, resources or support to complete environmental work with Council.
4. Measurable	The project will result in measurable benefits or outcomes for Christchurch that will be monitored and reported on at the completion of the project.

Funding available

The following funding has been made available:

FY24/25 and FY25/26 - \$700,000 per annum

From FY26/27 onwards - \$1 million per annum

The allocation of money to projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis against the purpose of the fund and the evaluation criteria.

50% of the fund will be allocated by the Council as a contestable fund via one funding round per year, with any groups who meet the criteria, able to apply through Council's website.

The remaining 50% will be run as an internally-led discretionary fund throughout the remainder of the year to groups with a strong track record of partnering on environmental projects with Council.

To enable swift & responsive decision making:

1. Discretionary applications seeking up to and including \$50,000 will be decided by the Manager Regional Parks,
2. Discretionary applications seeking over \$50,001 will be decided by the Head of Parks based on a recommendation from the Manager Regional Parks.
3. All contestable fund applications will be decided by the Council, based on a recommendation from the Environmental Partnerships Panel.

In general, funds allocated should be spent within twelve months of receiving the Council funds. Multi-year applications can be considered provided the business case is compelling and satisfactory progress reports for milestones are provided in advance of each year.

Any unused funds will be carried forward to the next financial year.

How to apply

Applications to the Contestable Fund can be made from **01 July**. Decisions will be made and communicated to applicants by **October**.

Applications to the discretionary portion of the fund can be made at any time throughout the year to the until funds are exhausted. Applicants can generally expect decisions to be made within two months, depending on the scale of the grant being sought.

To apply applicants should complete the [application form](#) (*link to Council website application form*).

Applications are considered public information and will be considered in an open public meeting. If there are aspects of an application that should be kept out of the public domain, in accordance with the [Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act](#); this should be clearly shown in the application.

Grant Funding Agreement and Reporting

Before funding is drawn down, applicants will be required to sign a standard Council Funding Agreement (*link to form*).

To receive a grant from Christchurch City Council, groups are required to provide reporting on how the funds were spent. This is a condition of the [Community Grants terms and conditions](#) (*link to T's & C's*) that must be agreed before receiving a grant.

Organisations are required to spend the grant as per the resolution on the funding agreement. Any variation to this, not previously agreed to by Council, will require a return of grant money.

The same applies if the funded project is finished, with unspent grant funds. Unless approved for a change of purpose by Council, this will require a return of the unspent grant money.

Future funding can be withheld if reporting requirements are not met.

End-of-project report

An online [End-of-project report \(external link\)](#)– is due either when funding is fully spent or 13 months after the money was granted.

The following will generally not be funded.

- Retrospective costs incurred or settled before the agreed date of the funding agreement
- Debt servicing or re-financing costs
- Stock or capital market investment
- Gambling or prize money
- Payment of any legal expenditure, including costs or expenditures related to mediation disputes or ACC, Employment Tribunal, Small Claims Tribunal, Professional or Disciplinary Body hearings
- Payment of fines, court costs, mediation costs, IRD penalties or retrospective tax payments
- Purchase of land and buildings

- Activities or initiatives where the primary purpose is to promote religious ministry, political objectives, commercial or profit-oriented interests
- Medical or healthcare costs – including treatment and insurance fees
- Fundraising
- Entertainment costs or private social functions
- Air travel, accommodation, hotel/motel expenses
- Private benefit