

Welcome to this Western Renewables Link (WRL) project update, which marks the opening of the WRL \$4 million Local Grants Fund. In this edition, you'll find what kind of initiatives the fund supports, who can apply and how to submit an application.

\$4 million Local Grants Fund now open

The Local Grants Fund is part of the WRL Benefit Sharing Program, a commitment to share the social and economic value the project creates with communities along the proposed WRL route.

The fund will support local projects that strengthen community participation, enhance environmental health, improve shared spaces and help communities prepare for a cleaner energy future. Funding will be delivered regardless of whether the project proceeds.

The \$4 million Local Grants Fund is now open for eligible applications. Applications close at **11.59pm on Tuesday 30 June 2026**.



Grants up to
\$50,000

are available for smaller-scale initiatives.



Grants up to
\$300,000

are available for larger-scale legacy projects.

Who can apply?

Grants are designed to support a wide range of community groups, especially grassroots organisations and volunteer-led groups in the seven Local Government Areas along the proposed WRL route:

-  **Melton City Council**
-  **Moorabool Shire Council**
-  **Hepburn Shire Council**
-  **City of Ballarat**
-  **Pyrenees Shire Council**
-  **Ararat Rural City Council**
-  **Northern Grampians Shire Council**

Applying for or receiving a grant does not indicate support for the WRL project.



What are we funding?

We're funding projects that make a real difference for local communities. There are five funding categories, each with their own objectives.

Funding priorities



Community infrastructure

Upgrades and improvements to public places to help build connected, resilient, healthy and inclusive communities

For example:

New playgrounds, resurfaced sports grounds, community gardens, drinking fountains or picnic grounds in parks or creating places for people to gather



Environment

Nature conservation activities that support biodiversity and enhance habitats and water resources

For example:

Tree planting, creating wildlife habitats or improving local wetlands and bushland



New energy initiatives

Support for community facilities that improve energy affordability, resilience and education

For example:

Solar and battery systems, electric vehicle charging, energy resilience education programs or a community space adding backup power to support locals during an emergency



Community connection and participation

Initiatives that bring people together, improve inclusion and support participation

For example:

Participation, inclusion and accessibility programs, materials for creative or cultural programs, or simple essentials like marquees and BBQs for community events or to support fundraising activities



Emergency services

Support to encourage and train volunteers and help purchase equipment to assist with service delivery

For example:

Training, essential gear or equipment that helps volunteers respond to fires, floods, storms or droughts and the people, animals or infrastructure impacted by them

The examples provided in this flyer are intended as a guide only. Please refer to the program guidelines on our website for detailed eligibility, objectives and funding requirements and read in full before submitting a funding application.





Support with your grant application

To help you put together a strong application, we're offering free, independently facilitated grant writing workshops throughout April, followed by Q&A sessions with the WRL team.

These sessions will suit both first-time applicants and experienced grant writers looking for a refresher and will help you refine your project idea and approach while providing practical tips and tools that can be applied to future projects and funding opportunities. A Q&A session will be held after each workshop with practical guidance on eligibility and assessment criteria.

Register for one of our grant writing workshops or contact the program team via the [Local Grants Fund page](#) on the project website.



Become part of the Independent Local Grants Review Panel

If you are a local community member and would like a say in how Local Grants Fund applications are assessed, apply to be part of the Independent Local Grants Review Panel.

The panel will be made up of community representatives who will provide local insight and make recommendations so that grants reflect local priorities. Check out the [website](#) for eligibility details.

Applications to be part of the Panel will close at **11.59pm on 18 May 2026**.



Sponsorship Program - \$1 million over four years if project is approved

The Sponsorship Program provides \$1 million over four years, of which \$250,000 is available upfront, regardless of whether the WRL project is approved.

Sponsorships are available for events, activities and partnerships that build visibility by featuring the WRL branding and delivering promotional opportunities.

Funding tiers:

- **\$5,000 – Foundation**
- **\$20,000 – Momentum**
- **Legacy tier (\$15,000 a year for three years, available if the WRL project proceeds)**



About the project

The Western Renewables Link is a proposed electricity transmission line that will carry renewable energy from western Victoria to homes and businesses across the state and into the National Electricity Market. The project is critical infrastructure required to unlock the renewable energy potential of western Victoria as a key Renewable Energy Zone and will help to deliver clean and affordable energy to all Victorians.

Find more information online

Read more about the WRL Benefit Sharing Program and how you can get involved on the [project website](#) and the [program guide](#).

Sign up to the [project newsletter](#) on the website to receive updates on the program and notifications on when expressions of interest open.



Want to speak to a member of our team about the Local Grants Fund?

You can contact the team at grants@westernrenewableslink.com.au or on 1800 WRL WRL (975 975)

More information

Visit the project website westernrenewableslink.com.au for the latest project information.

Contact us

westernrenewableslink.com.au
1800 WRL WRL (975 975)
info@westernrenewableslink.com.au

Delivered by

AusNet