

NSW Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative Factsheet 2

Local Landcare Coordinators

Preliminary guidelines for discussion

Under the \$15 million 2015-2019 NSW Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative, the Local Landcare Coordinators component will provide a network of locally-based coordinators to work with local Landcare groups and networks to build capacity and connections within communities.

The primary purpose of the initiative is to enable the effective participation of voluntary community based groups and networks, landholders and the wider community in natural resource management activities that manage and restore the natural environment, improve the sustainability of agricultural production, and build the resilience of communities.

Local Landcare Coordinators will work with their host organisations to increase the capacity of the group to:

- support and increase community engagement
- extend their coverage and provide support to more groups, networks and landholders
- undertake planning, develop partnerships and secure resourcing through project grants and other sources,
- monitor, evaluate and report on their projects and activities
- improve their ongoing governance and financial sustainability
- effectively participate in natural resource management activities that address critical agricultural sustainability and environmental issues
- link to programs of Local Land Services and other organisations to develop on-ground natural resource management projects in line with regional and state strategies.

Landcare is a community-based approach to managing and restoring Australia's natural environment, improving the sustainability of agricultural activities, and building the resilience of communities. Landcare refers to any community-based group operating in the sphere of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management in NSW and includes but is not limited to groups that describe themselves as Landcare, Bushcare, Coastcare, Dunecare, friends of groups, producer groups

The Local Landcare Coordinators component of the initiative provides for a network of up to 60 half-time (0.5EFT) Local Landcare Coordinators that will be contracted to host organisations for a period of up to 3.5 years from 1 January 2016.

The network of coordinators will work closely with existing Landcare support positions and programs, and be supported by the Community of Practice Initiative of the Landcare Landcare Coordinators Initiative. The data collected under the Initiative will assist in developing the business case for the Landcare Future Fund.

Applications to host a Local Landcare Coordinator will open on 14 September 2015. Detailed guidelines are currently being finalised, and your input is invited on the preliminary information provided on the following pages.



Local Landcare Coordinators – preliminary information

This preliminary information is provided to assist groups and networks with commonly asked questions about the Initiative whilst guidelines are being finalised, and your input is invited.

This information has been developed from:

- the advice to the Minister from the Natural Resources Commission following the roundtables held between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW
- experiences from the Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative
- input from a working group, with representation from Landcare groups, Landcare Coordinators and Regional Landcare Facilitators (community-based and Local Land Services based), Landcare NSW and Local Land Services.

Who can host a Local Landcare Coordinator?

Community-based groups or networks in natural resource management and/or sustainable agriculture will be able to apply to host a Local Landcare Coordinator. The program is being designed to complement the support arrangements already in place.

How will Landcare Coordinators be employed?

Host organisations may directly employ a Local Landcare Coordinator or, if they prefer may seek to enter into an arrangement with another body (such

as Local Government, Local Land Services, or another regional community umbrella organisation) to provide employment services for the group.

Assistance and support in employment and human resource matters will be available to host organisations under the Community of Practice component of the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative. Landcare NSW has developed a Landcare Employment Information Kit and ongoing support will be available via the Member Services Officer.

What tasks can Landcare Coordinators do?

Whilst the program provides for a high degree of autonomy for host organisations in the delivery of the program, the program has as its primary outcome the building and enhancement of capacity, rather than fostering dependency.

Administrative tasks associated with the day-to-day operation of a group or network, or the management of on-ground projects, are not to be the primary function of the coordinator's role. It is acknowledged however, that the ability of the group to be involved in strategic planning and implementation can be increased with administrative support.

How will this link with existing programs?

Local Landcare Coordinators will mesh with existing support arrangements.

Regional Landcare Facilitators will play an important role in facilitating a community of practice, and in assisting with the collection and aggregation of data from each region.

The Landcare Support Program Manager and the State Landcare Coordinator will work with each Local Land Services and the Landcare community in the region to identify current programs, and existing support roles, and ensure linkages occur.

How will the positions be supported?

Local Landcare Coordinators will operate as a network across the State, and is supported by two positions – the Landcare Support Program Manager and the State Landcare Coordinator.

Host organisations will be expected to fully participate in the network, with the Local Landcare Coordinator and a member of the host organisation to attend and contribute to the following activities:

Note that this information is preliminary only and is not the final position of the Joint Management Committee. Your comment is welcome.

- Induction and training – February 2016
- Midpoint review – Mid 2017
- Endpoint evaluation – Early 2019.

Host organisations will also be expected to participate in a Regional Community of Practice that will be established, (based upon existing arrangements should they exist), with input and support from the Regional Landcare Facilitator, Landcare NSW and Local Land Services.

Participation in the Network will also include data collection and reporting to a common MERI plan developed for the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative.

How many Landcare Coordinator positions are available?

Up to 60 part time (0.5EFT) positions will be funded, for the 3.5 year period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2019.

These positions are in addition to the current existing level of support provided to the Landcare community by their regional Local Land Services, with a baseline audit of existing support to be undertaken by the NSW Natural Resources Commission.

What funding is provided under the Initiative?

Funding of \$50,000 per 0.5 EFT per financial year will be provided (ie \$175,000 for the period 3.5 year period per 0.5EFT).

Host networks are expected to meet:

- all employment costs (including on-costs),
- office and service overheads,
- travel costs to attend Network activities (note: accommodation and training costs will be provided under the Community of Practice component of Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative),
- operating costs in carrying out the role,
- management and reporting.

It is recognised that the budget is limited, and host organisations are encouraged to develop partnerships with Local Land Services, Local Government or other partners to provide additional support and resources for the role.

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What are the contractual arrangements?

The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative is managed by the Local Land Services Executive Support Unit, working closely with Landcare NSW under the direction of the Joint Management Committee. Contractual arrangements will be between the host organisations and the Local Land Services Executive Unit.

Contracts will be entered into with successful applicants for a period of 3.5 years (1 Jan 2016 to 30 June 2019). Funding will be provided on a year by year basis, subject to all requirements being met by the host organisation.

How will the positions be allocated?

Positions will be allocated under an open process whereby eligible networks or groups can apply to host a position.

Networks and groups within a region are strongly encouraged to develop a collaborative approach, involving Landcare groups / networks and Local Land Services, in determining the location of the positions in their region, to ensure that the new positions can complement and build upon the current support arrangements, as well as provide coverage for areas where support is limited.

Nominally between 2 and 3 EFT of Local Landcare coordinator positions will be made available within each Local Land Services region. Whilst the default is for each position to be 0.5EFT, other arrangements that can be shown to have been developed collaboratively by the Landcare community within a region, and are justifiable, will be considered.

Applications for Local Coordinator positions will be assessed regionally by a panel of Regional Local Land Services and Landcare NSW representatives. The Joint Management Committee reserves the right to bring parties of competitive tenders together to improve coverage and outcomes where possible.

Final approval of recommendations rests with the Joint Management Committee upon recommendation from the Local Land Services Landcare Program Manager.

How will eligibility to host a Local Landcare Coordinator be determined?

In assessing the eligibility and suitability of applicants to host a Local Landcare Coordinator, the following factors are under consideration:

Core purpose

Applicants will need to demonstrate that the core purpose of their organisation is compatible with the aims of the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative. Host organisations must be an incorporated not for profit organisation, and the organisation's governing documents (eg constitution, articles of association or similar), and strategic plan (if developed), must show that the organisation exists to promote public rather than private benefit, and must work across the whole community, not just for its members.

Coverage

Organisations will need to show the extent of the geographic coverage of their operations within their region, and what plans there may be to extend this coverage to any areas currently not serviced. Useful measures in establishing coverage include membership and/or the number of groups supported, as well as the % area of region covered and % of regions population covered by your area of operation (using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – Local Government layer <http://stat.abs.gov.au/itt/r.jsp?databyregion#/>).

Connectivity

Organisations should be able to show the number of current partnerships and linkages to other organisations within and external to their district of operation. Joint projects, funding sources, sponsorship and partnership arrangements, membership of working groups and/or representative bodies are useful measures to show the level of connectivity.

Capability

It is recognised that networks and groups are in different stages of development, and this impacts on their governance capability. The

Landcare NSW Governance Checklist provides a useful tool for groups to self-assess their capability. Organisations must be able to show they meet critical governance standards (highlighted in red in the checklist) to be eligible to apply. Assistance and help with governance related matters is available from Landcare NSW, via fact sheets and policy templates at <http://www.landcarensw.org.au/resources.php>, or by contacting the Member Services Officer.

How will organisations apply?

Organisations will be able to apply online, with guidelines and FAQ available to assist with the completion of the application form. Organisations are strongly encouraged to collaborate on determining the most suitable arrangements for hosting the Local Landcare Coordinators within their region.

Applications open on 14 September 2015 and close on 14 October 2015.

Note: - this preliminary info is not the final application guideline. Visit www.landcarensw.org.au for details of the online application process, and final guidelines.

More information

Local Land Services

Peter-John Layton
Manager Executive Projects
peter-john.layton@lls.nsw.gov.au
0407 418 042

Landcare NSW

Sonia Williams
Acting State Landcare Coordinator
swilliams@landcarensw.org.au
0411 113 590