

NSW Landcare Enabling Program Fact Sheet

NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027

The Program is a multifaceted initiative that builds on the long-term partnership between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW.

Local Land Services is a State Government agency, part of the Department of Regional NSW, that is regulated via the *Local Land Services Act 2013*.

Landcare NSW is a registered not-for-profit organisation under the regulation of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission and the *Corporations Act 2001*.

The Program provides support to Landcare communities and volunteers by enhancing the coordination of connected volunteer groups to empower, educate, network and facilitate natural resource management outputs.

The NSW Government has committed record funding of \$59 million to Landcare in recognition of the critical role it plays in sustainable natural resource management and its return on investment.

If you have any questions regarding the Program, please email landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au

The Program objectives are to:

- increase the capacity of Landcarers to produce effective outcomes by developing their knowledge, skills and experience
- improve the efficiency of Landcare groups and networks by increasing the volume of Landcare activity relative to resource inputs
- increase the self-sufficiency of Landcare groups and networks through leveraging investment to activate a diverse range of funding sources.





This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

The Program will be delivered in phases

Phase 1 committed up to \$35 million funding to the NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027: Local and Regional Coordinators. Note this figure has increased from \$33.12m to \$35m to account for the increase in operational expenditure and changes to on-cost percentages and calculations.

The overarching goal is to build Landcare's capacity and financial sustainability. Funding was awarded through a targeted competitive grant process administered by Local Land Services as the funding source agency, with the support of the Department of Regional NSW.

Phase 2 committed up to \$8.3m to Landcare NSW to employ centralised Program staff and deliver enabling services to support grantees successful in phase 1 of the Program.

This support aims to assist the capacity and capability of Landcare groups and networks in NSW, increasing sustainability and reducing reliance on direct NSW Government funding in the medium to long term.

Phase 2 includes 5 themes:

- program management (includes eligible staff costs)
- Shared Services Hub
- Digital Landcare Solution
- State Community of Practice
- funding to develop and maintain strategic partnerships and leverage investment to increase Landcare's self-sustenance and reduce reliance on direct NSW Government funding.

Subsequent phases will be developed to cover remaining key initiatives of the Program which meet the support needs of Landcare, in alignment with the Program's objectives.

Themes to be explored include:

- state and regional partnerships between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW
- Aboriginal partnerships funding
- innovation and on-ground works that align to the Minister for Agriculture's priorities
- finalising Program reporting and evaluation

Relevant links

NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027 - Local Land Services

NEWS - Landcare NSW

Record NSW Landcare Enabling Program underway - Local Land Services

Roles supported under the Program

Information for new coordinators is available at the following link on the Landcare Gateway <u>Induction for new</u> Coordinators — NSW Landcare Gateway

Regional Landcare Coordinator

The Regional Landcare Coordinator is responsible for creating partnerships with regional and local organisations, raising the profile of Landcare in NSW and increasing funding to facilitate current and future projects. The Regional Landcare Coordinator will work with the Local Landcare Coordinators, Project Managers, Landcare groups, district networks and organisations in their area to support and empower them to:

- achieve their own goals
- participate in Landcare activities
- partner with Local Land Services and
- deliver on the target outcomes of the Program.

See link to job description HERE

Local Landcare Coordinator

The Local Landcare Coordinator is responsible for providing support to and assisting with coordination of local community volunteer Landcare groups. The Local Landcare Coordinator will work with their host organisation and the Landcare groups and organisations of their area to:

- support and empower them to achieve their own goals,
- participate in Landcare activities,
- partner with Local Land Services and other Government agencies and community organisations and
- deliver on the target outcomes of the Program.

See link to job description **HERE**

Regional Administration Support Officer (RASO)

The Regional Administration Support Officer (RASO) is responsible for supporting the Regional Body's progression towards self-sufficiency. The RASO will provide administration support to the host organisation and/or regional body, assisting with reporting, general Human Resources and payroll as required. Regional Administration Support Officers will work with the Regional Landcare Coordinators, Local Landcare Coordinators, Project Managers, Landcare groups and organisations in their area to support and empower them to achieve the goals and the target outcomes of the Program.

See link to job description HERE

Project work

The guidelines stipulate that funds available for Phase 1 are for successful grantees to employ up to 83 full-time equivalents (FTE) Local and Regional Landcare Coordinators and Regional Administration Support Officers. Funding also includes a one-off \$5,000 professional development bursary per 1 FTE for Local and Regional Landcare Coordinators.

Part of the Phase 1 funding deed reporting requirements, include the need for grantees to demonstrate that:

- funding was used for its purpose as specified in the funding deed i.e. salaries, professional development, captial expenses and operational expenses
- the activities performed and expenses claimed in each role reasonably match the position description and objectives of the Program whilst meeting the local and regional priorities of the local and/or regional area.

Generic position descriptions were provided as part of the Phase 1 resources (links provided above).

There is an expectation that position descriptions compliment and align with program objectives whilst meeting needs of their host organisation (direct employer).

Funded positions are not project management roles and expenditure associated with these roles should be clearly separated from other project funding.

What if a specific project is a local and regional priority?

It is reasonable to assume that local and regional coordinators may provide support to other groups and networks who are delivering projects, for example help with promotion of, assistance in organising events.

A local coordinator may also assist another Landcare group to prepare a funding application which builds skills and capacity in that group, however this is not the primary focus of these roles.

Employment costs and support

Coordinators and support staff must be paid at the minimum remuneration as set out in the <u>Program Guidelines</u> (PDF 260.07KB). Funding to successful applicants will be paid according to predetermined milestones and reporting timeframes outlined in the funding deed and budgets provided. Grantees cannot claim for payment of wages and Full Time Equivelent that exceeds the limits listed in their funding deed. Employment costs including base salary, on-costs are GST exclusive. Based on feedback provided by grantees, employment costs and operational expenditure cap limits, have been adjusted. Also any known calculation errors have also been fixed.

Under the Shared Services Hub, human resources support are available through a third-party called Peninsula (formerly Employsure). Advice is tailored to each employer based on one-on-one consultation to ensure the advice meets the needs of the organisation. For further information, please contact Olivia Meredith, Shared Services Hub Coordinator, Landcare NSW shared-employer-shape-unitarity ensured the organisation. For further information, please contact Olivia Meredith, Shared Services Hub Coordinator, Landcare NSW shared-employer-shape-unitarity ensured the organisation. For further information, please contact Olivia Meredith, Shared Services Hub Coordinator, Landcare NSW shared-employer-shape-unitarity ensured the organisation. For further information, please contact Olivia Meredith, Shared Services Hub Coordinator, Landcare NSW shared-employer-shape-unitarity ensured the organisation of the or

On-costs, no GST

The funding provided must cover employee entitlements for the full employment period up to 30 June 2027 including:

- superannuation
- leave entitlements
- annual leave loading
- workers compensation.

The FY23/24 on-cost percentage was set at 23%. The Minister approved changes to the on-cost percentages for the remainder of the program and adjusted to:

- FY24/25 23.5%
- FY25/26 24%
- FY26/27 24%

The **Wage Price Index (WPI)** in the grant guidelines is 2.5% for FY23/24. This will be adjusted to 3.5% WPI for Years 2-4 (FY24/25 - FY26/27). This represents the average forecasted % for the remainder of the program.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) splitting

As per grant guidelines, the preference is for full time arrangements for local and regional Landcare coordinator roles. These roles can be subject to part time or job-sharing arrangements (minimum 0.5 FTE) and can be refilled if they become vacant during the employment period.

Any changes to resource allocations such as amending 1 FTE into 2×0.5 FTE requires approval from Local Land Services.

Please email your change requests to <u>landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au</u> with a justification for the change and it will be considered.

For clarity, all roles must be a minimum of 0.5FTE.

Any reduction in FTE during the employment period may result in a corresponding reduction in awarded funding.

Operational costs and professional development – GST Applicable

Funding for Operational & Administration costs (OPEX) to a maximum of 17.5% of the base rate for each role is provided as per your approved budget.

NOTE: Expenditure cannot exceed your approved Budget within your executed Deed.

Under the guidelines, eligible costs can include but are not limited to:

- Phone and internet usage
- Travel expenses
- Office accommodation
- Bookkeeping and audit
- Insurance
- Human resources e.g. Using a recruitment agency to employ roles in the Funding Deed.

These costs must directly relate to the FTE roles under the Funding Deed for the period of the claim.

Under the guidelines, the following costs are ineligible:

- activities associated with the day-to-day core business of Landcare, for example, weeding, rubbish removal, soil management, biodiversity etc. While regional and local coordinators may participate in activities such as these from time to time these will not be funded under this program
- capital expenditure above \$5,000 per item (an Asset Register will be required)
- the repayment of existing debts or budget deficits
- administrative and operational costs not related to the roles specified under this program
- staff wages, salaries and/or employment costs for roles other than those specified in the program guidelines
- vehicle usage or hire not directly attributable to the program
- fixed or non-fixed equipment (except the employment support costs specified as eligible costs)
- costs incurred in the preparation of an application to this program or related documentation
- costs that require recurrent or ongoing funding from the NSW Government
- costs relating solely to marketing, advertising (other than for recruitment purposes for the program), or product promotion, including education and information campaigns
- costs for the implementation and delivery of other funded projects (including from another NSW Government source) by the roles specified under this program
- costs already funded by other grant funding, including from another NSW Government source, for the same costs over the same period.*

^{*}In other words, if your hours worked are being paid from another funding source (including another NSW Government source), you cannot claim these **same** hours under the Program. It would be deemed an ineligible cost.

Evidence of Operational & Administration Cost Expenditure

Please record ALL expenditure that is relevant to your FTE reporting for this financial year. These costs must directly relate to the approved role FTEs listed within your Funding Deed.

- Costs should be excluding GST.
- Expenditure cannot exceed your approved Budget within your executed Deed.
- Please ensure that expenditure items listed are per line and that adequate financial evidence can be provided if requested.
- If you have disbursed funds to third parties Please provide evidence that you have paid these funds for operational costs I.e. in the form of a ledger or proof of funds disbursement through a bank account.

Professional Development

Local and Regional Landcare Coordinators are supported to undertake professional development activities identified in collaboration with their host organisations to assist them to better serve their communities in their role.

The professional development allowance was paid upon execution of your Funding Deed and can be spent over the lifespan of the funded project (4 years). These claims are capped at \$5,000 per Role ID/FTE for Local Landcare Coordinator and Regional Landcare Coordinators only.

Allowable expenditure under the Grant Guidelines states that PD expenses, up to \$5,000 per local and regional coordinator role (pro rata) over the employment period. Successful Applicants will need to demonstrate a direct link between the skills and experience obtained and the expected capabilities of the roles. As such, claims can only be made up to \$5,000 per coordinator (pro rata).

Professional development activities must be from one of the approved LLS categories (see below). If they are not listed under the eligible activities, they must be approved by Local Land Services (LLS) before being undertaken and confirmed by LLS in writing during the acquittal/completion processes.

Any activities outside of the approved LLS categories require prior approval by LLS, evidence of this will be required. If required, please submit your requests to landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au prior for approval.

This includes for travel, accommodation and/or staff time costs associated with attending the professional development activity. Cost can only be claimed from the Applicant - costs cannot be claimed by individuals or personal credit cards.

Activities undertaken must be able to demonstrate how the course provided benefit to the role. Reporting of professional development expenses will be captured in the Program's reporting obligations.

Eligible professional development activities under the Program include:

- Conferences and Subscriptions Where they directly relate to the role e.g. attendance at State gatherings or Landcare Conferences
- Technical training/courses Required to undertake the role eg: First Aid, 4WD training, Computer skills, Grant & Governance training
- Community Engagement and Well-being training E.g.: RuralBiz, Art of Hosting, Mental Health First-Aid, role specific professional coaching
- Leadership training E.g.: leading teams and community groups
- Academia training That directly relates to the role
- Best Practice Management in natural resource management, agriculture or sustainability
- Social media, website training and/or media training

Once the professional development bursary is spent, no further professional development funding is available under the contract.

For any proposed professional development activities which are outside of these categories, or if unsure, please email landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au

Whilst the professional development funding is attached to each coordinator role, it is strongly recommended that the following be considered:

- split roles how will the funding be divided equally? Factors such as area of influence, level of activity and support provided by each local and regional staff member may be a consideration
- planning for turnover of staff, if a coordinator employed in year 1 spends all their allocated \$5,000
 professional development funding in that year, and then leaves the role, no new funding is available for
 subsequent staff filling that role
- what training and/or skills development will be offered through community of practice events.

The grantee is responsible for managing the expenditure of professional development over the life of the Program. To be fair and equitable, it is recommended that the professional development funding amount be split pro-rata across FTE and across each financial year.

Scenario: If you have funding for 1FTE and have split the role into two, 0.5FTE and 0.5FTE, then the professional development amount of \$5,000 should be pro-rata among these two roles of \$2,500 each. If the role is 0.6FTE then the pro-rata professional funding amount would be \$3,000.

Regional community of practice

Regional community of practice will be supported by Landcare NSW and will be primarily designed by the Regional Landcare Coordinator on an annual basis in consultation with the State Community of Practice & Events Coordinator, grantees, Local Landcare Coordinators and relevant stakeholders.

The Landcare NSW State Community of Practice & Events Coordinator will assist with the rollout of this element of the Program.

Reporting under the Program

Reporting requirements

A key focus of the Program is to improve reporting efficiencies, data capture, collection, analysis and display/promotion through the digital Landcare enabling component.

It is important that grantees keep the Program team informed of any new and changing staff employed under the Program. Please email landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au to keep the team informed.

The type of employee information to be collected should include:

- an employee Identifier/reference number
- name, contact details and role
- commencement dates
- termination date (if applicable)
- employee status (e.g. full-time, part time or casual)
- average hours worked per week
- copy of position descriptions.

Other information that is required by the Program includes:

- evidence of continued membership with Landcare NSW
- name, contact details and role of staff funded under the Program in third party arrangements.

Privacy laws and data sharing

Information from grantees and funded roles is required to effectively manage the Program. This includes personal information such as contact name, email, phone number, primary address of business, Landcare NSW membership details and financial information relating to the funding deed.

In some cases, this information needs to be shared between the Local Land Services and Landcare NSW Program team to enable the provision and management of enabling services. The information obtained by Landcare NSW and Local Land Services will be collected, stored and archived/destroyed in line with the Privacy Act 1988 and Australian Privacy Principles.

Contact details for all roles

Please ensure all contact details are kept up-to-date by emailing <u>landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au</u> with details (name, position, host organisation, email, phone) for all Local Landcare Coordinator, Regional Landcare Coordinator, Regional Administration Support Officer roles.

This is required to co-manage the program including program induction and may be shared with Landcare NSW providing administrative support.

Financial reporting

As per the conditions of your NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027: Local and Regional Coordinators Funding Deed, it is a requirement that you provide annual updates on the delivery of your project.

These contractual reporting and evaluation requirements (including financial expenditure) relate to the employment of staff and expenditure of professional development.

Grantees will need to report annually on financial commitments, spend, and status of acquittal of grants.

In addition to completing this form, LLS may meet with your organisation quarterly, at their discretion, to discuss the Program and role/s.

You must deliver the agreed amount of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) roles for a period of four years, ending 30 June 2027. You should refer to the approved FTEs in your Funding Deed for the number of roles you have committed to deliver.

Please ensure you are keeping accurate and correct records to support any claims for payment, as in the event of an audit you will be required to produce these.

Grantees are encouraged to review the NSW LEP Overview Presentation prepared to assist grantees in understanding what information will be required for the reporting period, in addition to the Coordinator Activity Tracker and case study requirements.

Important note: The Grant Management Office (GMO) are unable to process claims until all expenditure is compliant and LLS has provided endorsement.

Detailed Progress Report/Claim Forms **MUST be submitted by 15 July each year** for the following financial periods:

- 1/7/23 30/6/24
- 1/7/24 30/6/25
- 1/7/25 30/6/26
- 1/7/26 30/6/27

Installments will be released upon evidence of compliant expenditure of the prior instalment amount listed in the Deed for the financial period.

Note:

- wage costs must be ex GST, professional development and operational costs can include GST.
- You must provide the Department with any additional information if requested to support review of your project.

Completing the Claim form:

Confirmation of project information will be required within the Claim form for each project in your SmartyGrants account.

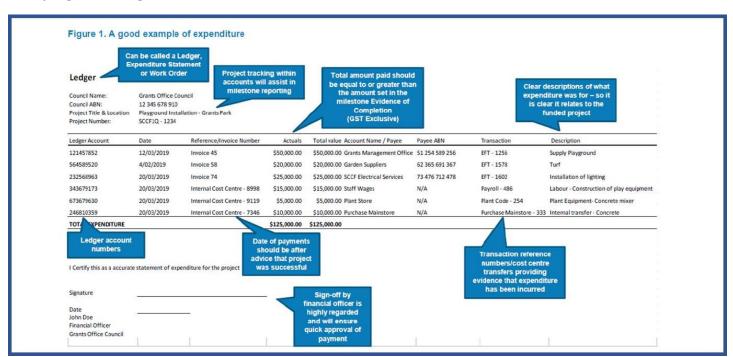
The person who set up and submitted the original project application will receive a notification from Smarty grant to the email registered in the smarty grants account.

Where projects cannot evidence the full payment they received for the Financial Year, an adjustment of the next Financial years invoice may be required.

Note:

- Costs can only be claimed from the Applicant Costs cannot be claimed by individuals or personal credit cards
- Any underspends on wages cannot be rolled over to subsequent years. This money will be returned to the overall LEP funding for future Phases.

Example general ledger



Example of asset register

FIXE Organisation nam					
ASSET NAME	JOB ID LINKED TO DESCRIPTION	ASSET #	SERIAL #	PURCHASE DATE ACQUISITION NOTES COST (ex GST)	
Total				\$0.00	\$0.00

Professional Development evidence:

You will need to provide the following information:

- Name of Activity
- Professional Development Activity Category
- Role ID attached to activity
- Expenditure amount
- Evidence of Professional Development attended
- Total Professional Development expenditure for the financial year

Where multiple attendees are listed for a Professional Development activity (group attendance) - evidence will only be required to be uploaded once if listed on same evidence document.

A copy of approval by LLS if not an already an approved course (see list in claim form).

Submitting Your Claim Form (GMO reporting)

All reporting will be submitted via Smarty Grants where it will be reviewed by Local Land Services to determine approval of professional development costs, and ensure all activity reporting has been submitted.

Grantees will receive a notification from Smarty Grants detailing a form is required to be completed. This will be sent to the contact who submitted the application.

If your key contact/s have changed, please email the Grants Management Office GMO@regional.nsw.gov.au

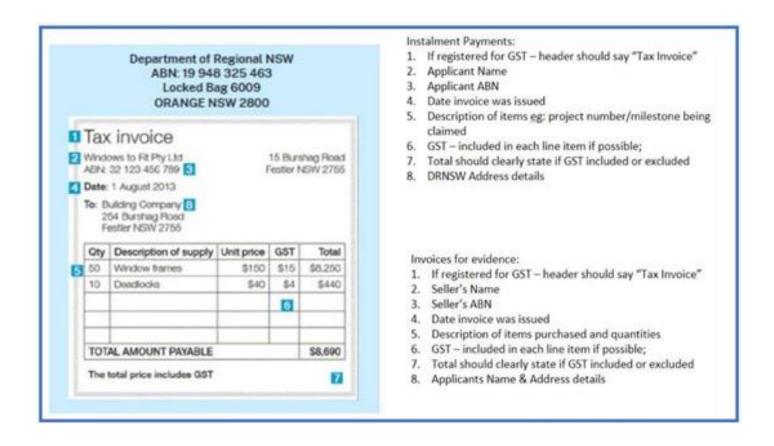
Invoicing

Once endorsed by Local Land Services, confirmation will be forwarded to the Grants Management Office (GMO) for compliance and finance check before payment is made.

If Local Land Services does not accept a progress report as satisfactory, a revised progress report must be submitted within ten business days upon receipt of Local Land Service's request.

As part of the Claim process, you will be required to generate an invoice per financial year to release your Instalments.

Amounts for each Invoice will be generated as part of your Claim process and invoices must be in the following format and addressed to:



Activity and progress reporting

All personnel in funded roles will need to use the CAT for tracking activities undertaken as part of the Program. This includes the new Regional Administration Support Officer. The CAT data has been instrumental in measuring the impact of the previous program.

Data collected through the activity tracker will be available via a dashboard, allowing coordinators and their hosts to use this data for other reporting, communications and promotions.

CAT access and data management is stored and managed through Local Land Services. Data collected through the <u>Coordinator Activity Tracker</u> (CAT) will be available via a dashboard, allowing coordinators and their hosts to use this data for other reporting, communications and promotions.

Outputs currently collected include:

- labour hours
- area of works (ha)
- the length of stream and bank works (m)
- the no. native plants
- grant funding (success)
- did the activity involve any Aboriginal engagement? (% yes)
- communication products
- workshop/meetings attended
- training events undertaken
- online workshop/meeting attended
- field days organised/attended
- on ground activity undertaken
- grant applications submitted
- monitoring undertaken
- state gatherings attended
- RCoP activities/events attended
- professional development undertaken.

A minimum of 10 **CAT submissions** per month for a 1 FTE on a pro rata basis. i.e 0.6FTE would be required to submit 6 entries per month (based on role start date).

CAT dashboard

CAT summary data can be viewed by all Program participants via TEAMS on the CAT dashboard. The CAT Dashboard is developed in Microsoft Power Bi and hosted within the Department of Primary Industry and Environment's (DPIE) Microsoft Teams. An organisational email address in your name is required to access the dashboard via DPIE Microsoft Teams.

Once this email address is provided, you will receive an email from Microsoft advising that you have been added as a guest to DPIE and the Program within Microsoft Teams.

Grantees and employer's of funded roles can also gain access to the CAT dashboard. Please contact LLS via email at landcare.admin@lls.nsw.gov.au

Gateway

Gateway is the central website for the Program where information can be found about coordinators, Landcare groups and contacts for the Program team. It is also the interim platform for participants to be informed about the Program.

All participants in the Program can get access to the Gateway via a login. This will allow you to maintain your group listing, add news and events for your group and where general information can be created and shared.

The site contains useful tools and resources along with helpful step-by-step videos for managing and creating content, and for using the Program tools including case studies CAT and the CAT dashboard.

If you require access to, or assistance with the Gateway, please email lep@landcarensw.org.au

NSW Landcare Gateway web link www.landcare.nsw.gov.au.

Case studies

Local and regional coordinators are required to develop case studies that showcase outcomes from the support they provide for Landcare. Case studies tell the stories of Landcare while also stimulating reflection on issues and challenges.

The case studies also provide a broad library of knowledge and learnings across key themes. It is the intent of the case study library to be a resource for the whole Landcare movement, helping other Landcarers to overcome issues and inspire them to take on new challenges. Case studies are developed on the NSW Landcare Gateway website and are reviewed by the Program team prior to publishing.

All coordinators are required to submit **two case studies** per reporting period via the Case studies should be loaded to Gateway with the following naming convention LEP_[funding deed no.]_role e.g. LEP_025_RLC

Please ensure that Program branding requirements and acknowledgements are met when creating your case studies.

Annual survey

It is anticipated that a survey targeting coordinators, grantees, volunteers, Local Land Services and Program staff will be developed in the near future.

This will be mandatory for people participating in the Program and extended to people who are being supported by, or benefited by, the Program.

Types of data* that may be required by the Program may include:

- number of volunteers
- number of volunteer hours (participation hours)
- number local groups/networks supported (annual survey?)
- volunteer benefits
- number participating partners
- name of participating partners (govt/non-govt)
- number of member groups
- number of members
- as well as qualitative measures to show improvements gained.

Membership

It is a requirement of the Program that grantees remain members of Landcare NSW throughout the Program lifecycle. Contact Landcare NSW at memberships@landcarensw.org.au for specific information about membership including what membership covers, renewals and updating member contact details: MEMBERSHIP WITH LANDCARE NSW - Landcare NSW.

Conduct

As per the grant guidelines, successful grantees must not participate in any anti-competitive conduct. It is a condition of the Program that no gifts, benefits, or hospitality are to be made to any Local Land Services or other NSW Government employee participating in the grant process at any time.

Any contravention of this condition may result in an applicant's proposal not being considered.

It is expected that all Program participants (grantees, coordinators, RASOs, Program staff) maintain a high standard of conduct throughout the Program. The Program Charter provides a useful Guide for program participants: Program Charter & Guidelines — NSW Landcare Gateway

^{*}it is acknowledged that this data may be provided in other forms of reporting e.g. financial reporting, evaluation surveys, CAT and the like.

Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest (COI), whether perceived or real, should be managed in every organisation, whether government or non-government especially when employing and managing staff, and receiving government grants.

Every host organisation should have a COI register and keep this register maintained at all times. Mitigation measures must also be in place and managed by the host organisation.

Communicating and promoting the partner

As part of the funding deed, you are required to acknowledge the Program in your communications. The Program should be acknowledged using the logo and acknowledgement stack shown in examples in <u>Branding & Acknowledgement Guidelines</u> provided on the NSW Landcare Gateway.

The acknowledgement words to be used must be used as prescribed in this guide.

It is also encouraged to look for ways to promote the partnership between LLS and provide opportunities for LLS and its Minister to participate in media coverage or other promotion of the Program. Please get in touch with the Program Communications Coordinator at communication@landcarensw.org.au to notify us of these opportunities.

Communication flow

Host organisation key contacts will receive a notification from Smarty Grants relating to any contract correspondence and/or reporting forms to be completed.

For all contract communication queries please email <u>GMO@regional.nsw.gov.au</u> quoting your application ID in the subject heading.

For all communication regarding resourcing and reporting of the Program e.g. enabling components and anything that is not covered in the contract, please email lls.nsw.gov.au

For any queries relating to the enabling services provided by Landcare NSW i.e. Digital Landcare, Aboriginal Partnerships, Shared Services Hub and Community of Practice, please email lep@landcarensw.org.au