Guide for Applicants

DOC Community Fund | Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori

Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

New Zealand Government

About this guide

This guide is for individuals or groups who are requesting grant funding from the Department of Conservation (DOC) Community Fund – Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori (DOCCF).

It outlines the eligibility and assessment criteria and provides an overview of the application and funding processes.

We recommend that you read this guide in full before completing an application.

Contact us

Please contact us if you have any queries related to the Fund.

Funds and Investment Team

Email: doccf@doc.govt.nz

Phone: 0800 86 20 20

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure that this guide is as clear and accurate as possible, the information it contains is general guidance only and does not constitute legal advice. In the event of any uncertainty, the applicant should obtain independent legal advice.

Cover Image: 'Rock Wren, Craig McKenzie

What is the DOC Community Fund?

The DOC Community Fund supports community-led conservation projects on public and private land. Projects must protect and restore threatened species and/or ecosystems.

Nature is in trouble and needs our help. New Zealand has the highest proportion of threatened indigenous species in the world and approximately two thirds of our ecosystem types are threatened.

We know that Community groups play a pivotal role in helping to protect and restore our unique species and ecosystems.

Eligibility

Can I apply for a grant?
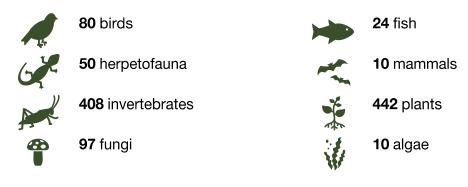Applicants need to meet **all eligibility criteria** listed below to apply.

- Your project must protect and restore **threatened species** and/or **threatened ecosystems**.
- Your project is community-led (*i.e. led by whānau, hapū, iwi, community conservation groups, not-for-profit organisations or umbrella groups*). Government departments and local authorities cannot apply.
- You are seeking funding for up to 3 years.
- You are applying for a minimum of $150,000 (excl. GST).

Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding.

The individual or group applying to the fund must be the same individual or group who will enter into a Deed of Grant with DOC if successful.

Threatened Species
A species threat status can be found on the New Zealand Threat Classification System website (link). **Threatened species** includes those defined as Nationally Critical, Nationally Endangered, Nationally Vulnerable and Nationally Increasing. Over **1,100** of our indigenous species are classified as threatened, including:

80 birds		**24** fish	
50 herpetofauna		**10** mammals	
408 invertebrates		**442** plants	
97 fungi		**10** algae	

Threatened Ecosystems

Threatened naturally uncommon ecosystems are those that would naturally occur over a small area in the absence of human activity. They often have highly specialised and diverse collections of flora and fauna. Of those 72 ecosystems, **45 are classed as threatened** exhibiting a high probability of being lost. These are listed in the table below:

	Critically endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable
Inland and Alpine	Outwash gravels Inland saline ecosystems (Salt pans) Inland sand dunes Old tephra plains /frost flats Leached terraces	Braided riverbeds Frost hollows Sandstone erosion pavements Volcanic boulder fields Volcanic dunes	Basic cliffs, scarps & tors Boulderfields of calcareous rocks Calcareous cliffs, scarps & tors Calcareous screes Moraines Young tephra plains
Geothermal	Fumaroles Geothermal stream sides Heated ground Hydrothermally altered ground		
Coastal	Coastal turfs Shell barrier beaches / chenier plains	Active sand dunes Calcareous coastal cliffs Dune deflation hollows Shingle beaches Stable sand dunes Stony beach ridges Ultrabasic sea cliffs	Basic coastal cliffs
Wetland	Ephemeral wetlands Gumlands Damp sand plains	Lagoons Domed bogs Dune slacks Seepages and flushes	Lake margins Blanket mires Estuaries
Subterranean	Cave entrances	Sinkholes	
Induced by native vertebrates	Seabird burrowed soil Seabird guano deposits Marine mammal haulouts		

Data collated from Naturally uncommon ecosystems. Manaaki Whenua.

More information can be found on Manaaki Whenua's website which contains images and descriptions of the types of Naturally Uncommon Ecosystems (link):

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on:
- Benefits for biodiversity
- Support of local hapū and iwi
- Sustaining biodiversity benefits beyond the grant
- Readiness, capability and capacity to complete the project

Projects are more likely to be funded if they:

- Collaborate and connect with others and engage the local community.
- Enable whānau, hapū and iwi to exercise their role as rangatira and kaitiaki.

Benefits for Biodiversity
Your project should have a significant impact in reducing the extinction risk to threatened species and/or protecting and enhancing threatened ecosystems.

Clearly explain the threats identified and the activities you will undertake to address those threats. How will your proposed actions result in a positive impact for New Zealand's biodiversity?

Support of local hapū or iwi
For non-Māori-led projects, you are encouraged to seek the support of local hapū or iwi for their project. A letter of support can be uploaded as part of the application process. Māori-led projects are encouraged to demonstrate how they are exercising their role as rangatira and kaitiaki.

Sustaining Biodiversity Benefits Beyond the Grant
Projects must be enduring and contribute to long-term biodiversity improvements. Does your project require ongoing maintenance after the funding period? Consider how and by whom that will be achieved. How will ongoing work be funded?

Project Readiness and Capability and Capacity to Complete the Project
Your application will be assessed on how ready you are to deliver your project and how likely you are to achieve your projects goals. Your capability to deliver the project will be influenced by the people and skills you have involved, along with your experience.

Ensure you have the necessary permissions in place or are aware of what you require will help get the project underway quicker. Finally, your budget should be reasonable and appropriate for your project. Consider if your proposal provides value for money.

Application Process

When can I apply?

The Fund is open for applications and closes at **5 pm, Thursday 28 November 2024**. Applications must be received before this time for your project to be considered for funding.

The key timeframes for the funding round are provided below.

When	What
5pm 28 November 2024	Funding round closes.
December 2024	Shortlisting of applications, all applicants notified.
January / February 2025	Shortlisted applications assessed.
March 2025	Applicants notified of funding decisions.
May 2025 onwards	Expected start date, subject to agreeing Deed of Grant.

* These dates are indicative only and may change. Any change will be notified through the DOC Community Fund website: www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund.

How do I apply?

To apply, you'll need to submit an online application through **Enquire** (link), our application portal.

You need a RealMe login to access Enquire and the application form. RealMe (link) is a secure login service provided by the New Zealand government. It lets you use one username and password for various online government services.You will need to use your personal RealMe login to access the application form. **Note that RealMe serves as a login tool and does not share any of your data.**

How will my project be assessed?

The Fund typically receives many more applications than can be funded. Applications will be assessed through a two-stage process:

i.   Shortlisting of applications.
ii. Shortlisted applications assessed further.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of shortlisting in December 2024.

When can my project start?

If your application is successful, you will enter into Deed negotiation with DOC. This should take no longer than three months and, depending on the nature and complexity of your project, your project could start within a month of being notified.

Further information on reporting and payments will be provided to successful applicants.

Application Form Questions
Applications **must** be submitted via our online portal "Enquire".

Project Summary
- Project title: max 10 words
- Project summary (purpose of your project): max 500 characters
- Project contacts: key contact and secondary contact

Project Site
- Describe the project site and provide GPS coordinates
- Which DOC Region is your project located within?
- What type of land is your project on?
- Does any part of your project site have legal protection? (describe)

Project Focus
- What is your project focus? (threatened species and/or ecosystem/s)
- List the main species your project is focused on (choose from drop-down)
- List the main ecosystem/s your project is focused on (choose from drop-down)

Project Plan
- What are the current threats to the species/ecosystem your project is focused on?
- What are the key activities you will complete to address these threats? (deliverables)
- How will these activities reduce the risk of extinction for the species/ecosystem?
- What monitoring activities are you planning within the funded period?
- Is this project part of a larger, ongoing programme?

Biodiversity Benefits
- What are the outcomes you expect to achieve? (maximum of 5)
- How will you measure progress towards these outcomes?
- What are the expected outputs? (choose from list and add targets).
- How do you intend to sustain the conservation benefits beyond the funded period?
- Describe the wider biodiversity benefits your project will achieve.

Project Budget
- Provide project costs for the entire duration of the project (online budget table)
- Describe any co-funding and/or in-kind contributions (note this is not compulsory)

Permissions
- List the property owners for your project site. Do they agree to the project work?
- For work on **Public Conservation Land**, do you have a Community Agreement?
- Please identify any other consents, permits or licences needed.
- Do you have a current Health and Safety plan to support delivery of your project?

Iwi/hapū Support
- Is your project Māori-led?
- How have you engaged with iwi or hapū for this application?

Capability
- Please detail the key project personnel and their experience
- How are you collaborating and connecting with others to deliver this project?
- Provide a brief description of the governance structure of your organisation.
- Provide a summary of successfully completed projects of a similar nature.

Supporting Documents
- Up to 3 supporting documents (e.g map, restoration plan, support letter).