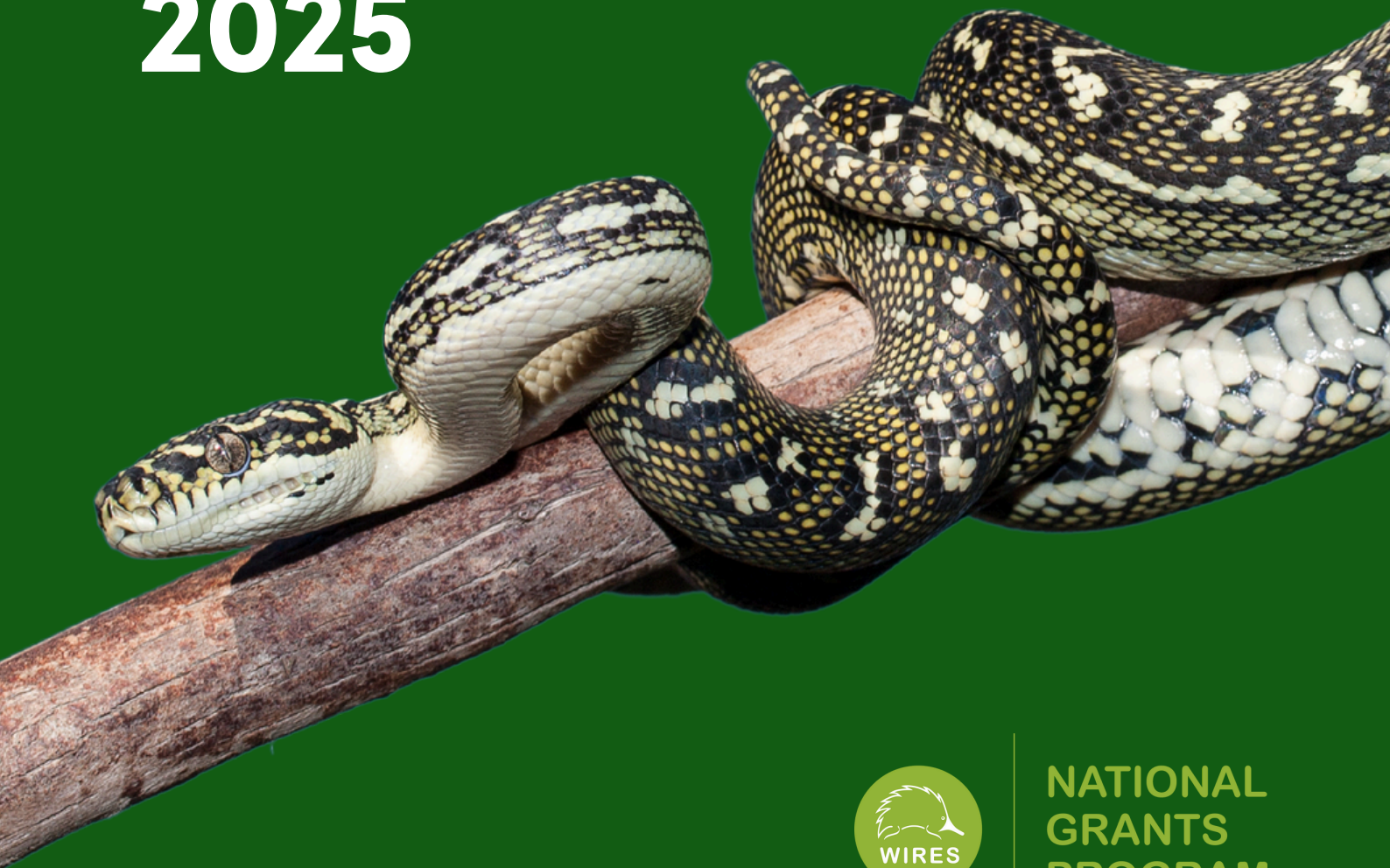# WIRES NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Guidelines & Eligibility Criteria

2025

WIRES

NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM

2025 WIRES National Grants Program – Guidelines & Eligibility Criteria

Contents

WIRES mission is to actively rehabilitate and preserve Australian wildlife and inspire others to do the same.

The primary objectives of any approved projects should be to improve outcomes for native wildlife and their habitats.

2025 WIRES National Grants Program – Guidelines & Eligibility Criteria

Introduction

WIRES is Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation. WIRES has been rescuing and caring for sick, injured and orphaned native animals for 40 years, and our mission is to actively rehabilitate and preserve Australian wildlife and inspire others to do the same. WIRES operates a dedicated Wildlife Rescue Office assisting wildlife and the community across Australia 24-hours a day, 365 days a year, providing rescue advice and assistance for over 148,700 animals annually, as well as providing full-time mobile Wildlife Emergency Responders operating across New South Wales, South-East Queensland and Tasmania.

WIRES has committed to a 7.5-million-dollar National Grant Program to be rolled out over ten years. The WIRES National Grants Program has been designed to support best practice rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife, an increase in emergency preparedness in the sector, along with native species recovery projects to improve long-term outcomes in Australia.

The challenges currently faced by our wildlife and the wild places they call home are immense. At WIRES, we believe that collaboration is the key to delivering tangible project outcomes to effectively tackle these challenges. Projects that utilise the expertise of and share knowledge between wildlife rehabilitators, researchers, conservation professionals, First Nations people, citizen scientists and community groups will lead to the best outcomes for our precious native species.

Collectively, we can deliver the best long-term outcomes nationally for all native species.

Grant Program Overview

Have you got a project that will improve outcomes for native wildlife and their habitats?

The WIRES National Grants Program (WIRES NGP) has been developed to provide ongoing support for wildlife, and their habitats, across Australia. WIRES focus is on proposals that have tangible, positive and ideally long-term outcomes for wildlife. Funding granted through this program is one-off and is for projects of between 6-12 months duration.

This is a competitive grants program. Demand is likely to outweigh available funds, and therefore eligible applications will be evaluated by an external assessment panel. This assessment will be based on funding priorities, demonstrated need and the funds available.

Project outcomes should also support the objectives of the WIRES National Grants Program including:

- Building capacity and capability for the Australian wildlife rescue and rehabilitation sector
- Improving emergency preparedness and response capabilities to assist wildlife
- Preserving species and their habitat through projects leading to long term positive outcomes for native wildlife
- Raising community awareness and inspiring broader community involvement in supporting Australian wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and preservation

This may be achieved through:

- Strategic on-ground activities
- Citizen science projects
- Community engagement and capacity building
- Education initiatives

- Collaborative partnership projects

Priority will be given to projects and applicants that:

- have not previously been funded by WIRES
- deliver a co-contribution (cash and/or in-kind)
- meet multiple program objectives
- involve partnerships and knowledge sharing
- facilitate collaboration with First Nations people and indigenous organisations
- increase awareness of the need/solution in the community

Joint applications and community partnerships are strongly encouraged. Consideration will be given to ensure geographic equity nationally.

Funding Available

A total funding pool of up to $1,000,000 is available across four tiers or categories.

Eligible applicants are invited to submit proposals for:

Tier 1: Individually Licensed Wildlife Rescuers and Carers (maximum $2,000)

Tier 2: Licensed Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Organisations (maximum $8,000)

Tier 3: Environmental NGOs and Community Groups (maximum $20,000)

Tier 4: Consortia/Multi-partner Collaborations (maximum $50,000)

Key Dates

Item	Date
Applications open	9 am (AEST) 19th May 2025
Online webinar #1	12.30pm (AEST) 21st May 2025
Online webinar #2	7.30pm (AEST) 3rd June 2025
Applications close	5pm (AEST) 20th June 2025
Successful applicants notified	September 2025

Grant announcements and unsuccessful applicants notified	October 2025
Reports due – Final for 6mth, Progress for 12mth projects	March 2026
Final Report due and project completed – 12mth projects	September 2026

Eligibility

General Eligibility

Applicant must:

- be a legal entity, able to enter into a legally binding agreement
- must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking the project
- have the knowledge, experience and appropriate licences/permissions required to deliver the project and have been operating in this capacity for a minimum of two years
- be the organisation or individual completing the project
- be located in and conduct activities within Australia
- not have overdue progress or acquittal reports for previously funded grants
- have a demonstrated history of professional, proactive, and positive collaboration with other organisations and individuals, including WIRES
- submit the correct application form accurately and on time
- have the appropriate type and level of insurance for the activities that are the subject of this proposal
- have an Australian bank account
- not have a current active grant with WIRES

Project must:

- address one or more of WIRES National Grants Program priority objectives
- identify a current need or issue and propose/provide a solution
- result in demonstrable tangible outcomes for wildlife and/or their habitats
- begin after the grant funding commencement date and not require retrospective, recurrent or ongoing funding
- meet eligibility criteria for the appropriate funding tier
- be realistic in terms of deliverables, timeframe, and budget
- represent value for money compared with other proposals

WIRES does not provide funding for:

- Business as usual, ongoing operational expenses, including salaries
- items and activities already purchased/paid for

- re-granting to other organisations or individuals
- activities that duplicate existing services or programs available to the sector
- activities that harm or kill animals, or that WIRES deem have the potential for significant risk to animal health and welfare (including non-native animal control).
- profit making activities
- self-promotion activities, including advertising (unless it is directly related to funded project)
- catering
- fuel
- activities that repeat previously funded projects
- activities that significantly benefit the applicant (for example paying for the businesses own services)

Eligibility Tiers 1 & 2

Tier 1 – Individually Licensed Wildlife Rescuers and Carers

Funds of up to a maximum of $2,000 are available for licensed wildlife carers for projects that can be achieved within six (6) months. Funds are also available to registered vets or vet nurses applying for vaccination costs only.

Tier 2 – Licensed Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Organisations

Funds of up to a maximum of $8,000 are available for licensed wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisations for projects that can be achieved within six (6) months. Funds are also available to licensed vet clinics actively assisting with wildlife rescue, care and treatment.

Who is Eligible?

Individually licensed wildlife rescuers and carers and licensed wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisations. You must have held an appropriate permit per the state you operate in for a minimum of two (2) years:

NSW- NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) individual licence or membership to a licensed group (excluding WIRES members, as they are being supported through other funding programs)

VIC- Wildlife Shelter or Foster carer authorisation through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action or Rescuer with Wildlife VIC

SA- One of the following Department for Environment and Water (DEW) permits: Wildlife Carer Permit, Wildlife Rehabilitation Facility Permit, Retain Protected Animals Unfit for Release Permit.

TAS- Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit registered with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

WA- Fauna Possessing (Other Purposes) Licence registered with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

QLD-   Individual permit through the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation or membership with a DETSI licensed or endorsed group

ACT- Member of ACT Wildlife

NT- Permit to keep protected wildlife from Parks and Wildlife Commission or a member of a group with a permit

Groups do not need to have charity status to be eligible.

The applicant must:

- meet licensing requirements as outlined above for each state and provide a copy of their rehabilitation licence or vet licence
- have been actively rescuing and caring for wildlife for a minimum of 2 years and be able to provide evidence
- demonstrate that the proposed project will deliver significant long-term benefits for native wildlife and has the appropriate licences/approvals
- if an individual, provide a copy of their driver's licence or other authorised form of ID (e.g. passport)
- if an organisation, provide their ABN and, if applicable, their ACNC incorporation number
- provide a reference (must not be the applicant or a member of the applicant's immediate family)
- provide appropriate quotes for all budget lines of their proposal
- if applying for updates to, or repairs/replacement of enclosures/facilities, provide photos of existing set up. The applicant assumes full responsibility for ensuring these meet the expected requirements under the relevant state codes of practice for the species in question

What is Eligible?

Projects and items supported by the WIRES National Grants Program in Tiers 1 & 2 include:

- Rescue and care equipment – e.g. rescue carriers, transportable pens
- Authorised training courses to increase emergency preparedness – e.g. first aid
- Water tanks, hoses, and similar items to increase emergency preparedness
- PPE for rescue and emergency response - helmets, boots, gloves, and clothing
- Emergency equipment for rescuers & carers – Medical supplies, first aid kits, torches, radios
- Medical supplies for affected animals in care
- Urgent repairs/upgrades to existing enclosures/facilities

What is not Eligible?

Grant funding cannot be used for the following:

- Accommodation and travel costs (including fuel)
- Perishable items including food –the WIRES website provides details for other support programs including the Woolworths and WIRES Food for Wildlife Program ([Woolworths and WIRES - Wildlife Programs - WIRES](#))
- Purchase of capital assets including property and vehicles
- Works covered by insurance or other sources of funding including other grants

- Completed works
- Political lobbying and advocacy
- Legal expenses, rates, and taxes
- Business as usual, ongoing operational expenses, including salaries
- Compensation to wildlife rehabilitators/applicants for their own labour
- Activities required or funded under other arrangements, unless previous agreement has been sought
- Roadside fencing
- Firearms and other weapons (including dart guns, ammunition and training associated with firearms use)
- Any form of advertising that is not strictly related to project promotion (i.e. general organisation advertising)
- Prescription medications
- Administration or project management costs greater than 10% of the overall budget.

Reporting Requirements

A Final Report will be due in March 2026, including:

- Receipts for items or services purchased using WIRES grant funding.
- Summary of outcomes from your Project.
- *See also Project Monitoring below*

Eligibility Tiers 3 & 4

Tier 3 – Environmental NGOs and Community Groups

Funds of up to a maximum of $20,000 are available for environmental NGOs and community groups. Projects must be achieved within twelve (12) months.

Tier 4 – Consortia/Multi-partner Collaborations

Funds of up to a maximum of $50,000 are available for collaborative multi-partner projects that can be achieved within twelve (12) months. One organisation must be nominated as the Lead Organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with WIRES. The application should identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support and the proposed contribution from each of the project partners.

The funds in these tiers include special allocations, awarded to honour three WIRES legends.

Who is Eligible?

The applicant must:

- have been actively working with wildlife or their habitats for a minimum of 2 years
- be registered as an Australian organisation with a current ABN and operate in Australia
- provide their ABN, and, if applicable, their ACNC incorporation number. In the case of consortia, the Lead Organisation must provide their ABN.

- provide letters of support from partners including the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources it will contribute (if any)
- provide evidence of any required consents where the proposed project site/s are not owned or managed by the applicant. Written consent is required from the property owner and/or property manager that allows for the implementation of the proposed project on each project site.
- demonstrate organisational capacity for delivering proposed project and have the knowledge, experience and appropriate licences/permissions required
- provide a reference (must not be the applicant or a member of the applicant's immediate family)
- provide appropriate quotes for all budget lines of their proposal
- if applying for updates to, or repairs/replacement of enclosures/facilities, provide photos of existing set up. The applicant assumes full responsibility for ensuring these meet the expected requirements under the relevant state codes of practice for the species in question
- demonstrate that the proposed project will deliver significant long-term benefits for native wildlife and has the appropriate licences/approvals

What is Eligible?

Projects and items supported by the WIRES National Grants Program must have tangible outcomes and could include:

- those that expand rescue and rehabilitation capacity at a significant scale
- habitat restoration and/or enhancement including provision of supplementary shelter, nest boxes and artificial hollows
- bush regeneration/revegetation using native plant species that are known to be indigenous to the site and represent the type of vegetation community existing on the site
- control of invasive weed species through physical, chemical, or biological treatments (physical treatments may include cultural burning practices)
- those that improve emergency preparedness, risk mitigation and emergency response from a wildlife rescue perspective
- group training that leads to tangible outcomes in line with WIRES NGP objectives
- community education and/or engagement campaigns
- flora and fauna surveys, habitat mapping, data recording, spatial mapping and modelling but only where these form part of a project that includes tangible positive outcomes for wildlife

We may also approve other activities. If you have a proposed activity that is not listed above, you must be able to demonstrate the need for the activity and the expected tangible outcome relating to wildlife and/or habitat.

What is not Eligible?

Grant funding cannot be used for the following:

- Accommodation and travel costs (including fuel)
- Any form of catering
- Purchase of capital assets including property and vehicles
- Works covered by insurance or other sources of funding including other grants

- Completed works
- The covering of retrospective costs
- Political lobbying and advocacy
- Legal expenses, rates, and taxes
- Business as usual, ongoing operational expenses, including salaries
- Compensation to volunteers for their own labour
- Activities required or funded under other arrangements, unless previous agreement has been sought
- Firearms and other weapons (including dart guns, ammunition and training associated with firearms use)
- Roadside fencing
- Administration or project management costs greater than 10% of the overall budget
- Any form of advertising that is not strictly related to project promotion (i.e. general organisation advertising)
- Office and technological equipment (including laptops and printers)

Please note: Contractor costs will be considered in the context of overall value for money for the proposal

Grant Conditions

Successful applicants must:

- read and sign the WIRES Grant Agreement
- provide bank details to enable prompt grant payment
- provide evidence of appropriate and current insurance (if requested)
- provide evidence of current rescue & rehabilitation licence held by state or any other licences/approvals required (if applicable)
- provide photos as required
- spend all grant funds within the agreed time period
- complete and submit reports as required
- account for grant funds by providing copies of invoices and receipts with your final reports
- agree to ad hoc project audits

Reporting Requirements

Reports will be due as per the above key dates and include:

- Receipts for items or services purchased using WIRES grant funding
- Summary of progress on your Project.
- *See also Project Monitoring below*

Special Grants

The Mikla Lewis OAM Habitat Restoration & Enhancement Grant

When Mikla Lewis OAM founded WIRES back in 1986, little did she envisage that 40 years later the organisation would have expanded from a single branch in Sydney to 29 branches and more than 4480 volunteers. She decided to form

WIRES, with the help of a small group of people from various environmental organisations, following a report of an injured ibis in Sydney's Hyde Park when none of the existing animal welfare bodies had either the jurisdiction or the resources to implement a rescue. Mikla's foresight and knowledge led to the rescue and rehabilitation of thousands of native animals. To this day, she continues to be a dedicated WIRES volunteer. This grant will be awarded to a project, or projects, that involve habitat restoration, renovation or enhancement.

The Pat Connors Avian Grant

Pat Connors was a long-term member of WIRES. He developed WIRES first rescue and rehabilitation database and call recording system pro-bono and supported it for well over a decade. Pat's contribution enabled WIRES to provide rescue advice and assistance for more than 2 million animals since its creation. Pat sadly passed away in December 2020 and the grant is to honour Pat's outstanding contribution and his passion for birds. This grant may be awarded to one large avian project or a series of smaller avian projects.

The Helen George OAM Mammal Grant

From the moment WIRES was founded, Helen George's expertise in wildlife rescue & care was invaluable. Helen's involvement with WIRES as a carer, trainer, and mentor lasted more than 30 years, until her passing in 2017. When WIRES received its very first call for a wombat in distress, it was Helen's advice that was sought. Over the years, Helen developed and delivered mammal training courses and trained hundreds of volunteers. This grant is a tribute to the invaluable support and expertise Helen provided to WIRES and is a nod to her particular love of wombats, macropods and bats.

How to Apply

Applications for the 2025 WIRES National Grants Program are open from 9am (AEST) Monday 19th May 2025 and close 5pm (AEST) Friday 20th June 2025 (Application Period). To apply for a WIRES Grant, applicants must meet the eligibility criteria and accurately complete the application form for the appropriate funding tier and submit on time.

Please note that due to limited funding and a competitive assessment process, not every application that meets the eligibility criteria may receive a WIRES Grant.

Application Process

Once applications open:

- Click on this link to access the WIRES Grant Portal https://wires.grantplatform.com/
- Create account and log in. Please note that you will need to tick "Yes" to receiving notifications if you wish to be sent confirmation of application submission.
- Read information on the home page
- Click on "Start application"
- Select your State/Territory
- Select "WIRES National Grants Program 2025" and then the appropriate tier
- If you wish to leave a partially completed application, make sure you press 'Save + close' and log out
- You can log back in and continue to edit your application form until you are ready to submit

- To submit your application, select the 'Submit application' button. Note, no changes can be made once this is selected
- You will receive a confirmation email when your application has been successfully received. If you do not receive an email, please ensure you check your junk mail

Application support

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend an online information session. These will provide essential information for developing and writing your application and give you the opportunity to ask questions.

WIRES National Grants Program webinars will be held:

- Daytime session: Wednesday 21st May 12.30pm (AEST)
- Evening session: Tuesday 3rd June 7.30pm (AEST)

Please take the time to ensure you only submit an application if you meet all the conditions listed.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the email address provided on the application is checked regularly. For questions about the application process email: grants@wires.org.au.

Assessment

All applications will be assessed by the external Technical Review Panel under the following criteria:

- Consistency with WIRES priority objectives
- Tangible improvements in outcomes for native wildlife and their habitats
- Need of the proposal, relative to other proposals
- Project quality and achievability
- Project sustainability beyond the current funding opportunity
- Degree of collaboration
- Geographic diversity
- Value for money
- Applicant experience, expertise and professionalism
- Compliance with previous funding opportunities
- Ability to raise awareness of the identified issue and its solution(s)

Following assessment, WIRES will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us. WIRES may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.

Grant Agreement and Payment

WIRES requires successful applicants to complete and return a grant agreement, along with bank account details, evidence of relevant insurances and a project risk assessment. We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both the applicant and WIRES have signed the agreement. WIRES is not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

A payment schedule will be defined for each project. Funding for projects may be released in a staged process, with an initial payment paid at the commencement of the project and final payments processed upon receipt of progress reports.

WIRES NGP funding is exclusive of GST. Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. WIRES recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. We do not provide advice on tax.

Project Monitoring

Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your organisation or your ability to complete your project as agreed.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:
- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement.

We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds. You <u>must</u> retain receipts and invoices for the duration of the project.

The amount of detail you are asked to provide in your reports will be relative to the project size, complexity, and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct project audits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information, or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

Project Variation Requests

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement.

If you want to propose changes to your project, including the agreed budget, you must request a variation BEFORE the project end date.

Funding Acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the WIRES National Grants Program, including in a brochure or publication, websites, promotional and advertising materials, displays and signage, public announcements and activities relating to the project funded under the program, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

This project received grant funding from WIRES through their annual National Grants Program.
For more information go to National Wildlife Grant Programs - Wildlife Programs - WIRES

Logo Use

Any and all promotional materials, print media, digital media (websites, blogs, social media etc.) used in promotion of the grant should also include the WIRES logo. The logo's colour, shape, form, font or design must not be modified in any way. All instances & usage of the logo should be forwarded for approval prior to publication to marketing@wires.org.au with the subject heading "WNGP Logo Approval". WIRES will endeavour to reply & grant approval or feedback within 48 hours upon receipt. Please factor this process in any application or usage of the logo.

The logo must not be used to give the impression WIRES has published a product or endorsed another organisation without prior approval or consultation.

For any media requests or enquiries, please contact the WIRES Media Team at media@wires.org.au.

Social Media

Tagging WIRES on social media, where character limits allow, will help us cross-promote projects and share your stories with our wider community.

Please use the following handles and hashtags:

ACCOUNTS
Instagram: @wireswildliferescue
Facebook: @WIRES.wildlife.rescue
LinkedIn: @wireswildliferescue
X: @WIRESWildlife

OFFICIAL HASHTAGS:
#WIRESNGP
#WIRESWildlifeRescue

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I apply if I have received a WIRES grant in the past?

Yes, however priority will be given to those applicants who have not received a WIRES grant in the past two years. Applicants with outstanding acquittals from previous grants are ineligible for further funding until all reporting requirements are met.

Can I apply if I am currently receiving funding from WIRES?

Organisations or individuals with active WIRES grants are ineligible for further funding, until the current grant is acquitted.

Can we submit more than one application?

Yes, more than one application from one organisation can be accepted but please keep in mind that funding available for projects per organisation is limited.

Can I submit my application after the closing date?

No, late applications will not be considered for funding unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.

How do I apply for a grant?

See above section "How to Apply for a Grant"

Can I send a hard copy or email application?

No, all applications must be submitted through the WIRES Grant Portal.

How will I know if my application has been received by WIRES?

If you ticked "Yes" to receiving notifications about your application, you will receive an automatically generated email when you submit your application successfully.

Please note, an issue with your email firewall might block the confirmation email. Please ensure you check your spam / junk mail folder. If you are still unsure whether your application has been submitted successfully, contact WIRES Programs Team.

When will I be notified if my application is successful?

Successful applicants will be notified as per key dates above. WIRES may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.

Please ensure that the email address provided on the application is checked regularly.

Who decides which projects get funding?

WIRES is committed to ensuring that the assessment process is fair and transparent. The process is as follows:

1. WIRES will conduct an eligibility check. Applications that are incomplete or ineligible will not progress.
2. Applications that are complete and eligible will be collated according to funding tiers.
3. These collated applications will be assessed by the external Technical Review Panel.
4. Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

How will my submission be assessed?

Your application will be assessed against the WIRES Assessment Criteria and against other proposals in the same funding tier. Applications with the highest scores and that meet our funding priorities will be successful.

If my application is successful, when will I receive my grant distribution?

Once we receive the signed grant agreement, required documentation and bank account details, WIRES will pay the agreed amount into the nominated account and notify you of this in writing.

How do I report on my grant?

WIRES will notify you when it is time to complete your progress or final report. Reporting is undertaken through the WIRES Grant Portal.

What do I do if my project is not completed before the final report is due?

We understand that occasionally there are delays to your project. Please contact the WIRES Programs team at the earliest possible time to discuss any project or reporting delays.

If you still have questions or require any further information after reading our FAQs, you can email grants@wires.org.au

WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST WITH YOUR APPLICATION & THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME