

# 2024-25 Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants Program Guidelines



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Energy,  
Environment  
and Climate Action

## Photo credit

Wombat, James Scott Doty

### Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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## 1. What is the Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants Program?

The Victorian Government's Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants (WRG) program provides funding to support authorised shelter operators and foster carers to rehabilitate sick, injured or orphaned wildlife with the goal of releasing these animals back to the wild.

The objectives of the WRG program aim to help wildlife rehabilitators to:

- improve the standard of wildlife care they can provide
- improve their facilities to treat, house and rehabilitate wildlife for release
- increase their knowledge/skills in the care of wildlife.

## 2. What are the funding details?

In 2024-25, the total funding allocation for wildlife rehabilitators is \$300,000. Grants will be capped at \$3,000 per eligible shelter operator and \$2,000 per eligible foster carer applicant.

The difference in funding acknowledges that shelter operators take in a larger number of animals and also provide support to foster carers to learn how to assess and care for many species of wildlife that come into care.

Note: to ensure equitable access across rehabilitators funding, priority will be given to rehabilitators who have not received WRG or other Victorian Government funding support in the last two years.

## 3. Who can apply?

To be eligible for these Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants, individuals must:

- be a wildlife shelter operator or foster carer authorised under section 28A of the *Wildlife Act 1975*.
- have the consent of the property owner if you are not the owner of premises
- have the landowner (public or private) consent for installation of nest boxes activities (if applicable)
- be actively caring for injured wildlife and keeping records

Note: We accept one application per authorised location only.

## 4. Who cannot apply?

The following individuals are not eligible to apply:

- a person that has been convicted of any offence under the *Wildlife Act 1975*, *Wildlife Regulations 2013*, *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* or similar interstate or federal legislation during the last 10 years.
- any person who does not hold a valid Wildlife Shelter Operator or Foster Carer authorisation under section 28A of the *Wildlife Act 1975*.
- any person who has an outstanding/unresolved Improvement Notice from the Conservation Regulator.
- any person who failed to complete the previous milestones in the agreement i.e. did not submit final completion reports or acquittal reports (WRG 2019 to 2023 rounds).

## 5. What might be funded?

The WRG program will fund the following activities and items:

- building new enclosures or extend/improve existing enclosures to meet recommended standards.

- purchase of equipment or items to improve standard of wildlife care
- food and water for animals' dietary and nutritional needs
- veterinary visits, treatment and medical care and supplies
- training courses and relevant educational materials for rehabilitators.

The full list of eligible items/activities are listed at **Appendix A**.

Note: - Items must be purchased and paid for between **1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025**.

- Approved grant funding is not transferable to support another person's project.

## 6. What will not be funded?

The WRG program will not fund the following activities and items:

- the purchase of land.
- activities that are already funded through another organisation or program (example: WIRES, Wildlife Victoria, local Council or other Victorian Government's initiatives)
- recurrent operating costs, for example rent and utility costs, and/or activities that establish expectation of ongoing funding.
- purchase of computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones.
- expenses associated with other animals (i.e., domestic pets) or wildlife that is not covered by your authorisation.
- marketing, advertising, fundraising or promotional activities and activities located outside the State of Victoria
- any other item or activity determined by the Assessors through the assessment process to be an inappropriate or unsuitable use of the funds.
- any item that is in contravention of the conditions of the shelter authorisation
- any illegal activity.
- use of fund for political campaigns or advocacy activities for political parties.

The full list of non-eligible items/activities are listed at **Appendix B**.

## 7. What are the assessment criteria?

First, applicants will be checked for eligibility to make sure that the applicant and their activities are eligible for funding.

First, applications will be checked for eligibility to make sure that the applicant and their activity are eligible for funding. After that, eligible applications will be assessed using the criteria listed below. Each criterion is given a percentage weighting to indicate its relative importance in the assessment process. Applications should address all relevant criteria.

Assessment Criteria	Consideration	Weighting
Describe how you will improve standards of care to achieve and align with the objectives of the program.	<p>Applications must demonstrate that the project aligns with improving standards of care to benefit wildlife welfare and release.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• application aligns with the program objectives</li> <li>• items requested in the application are eligible (<b>Appendix A</b>).</li> </ul>	30%

<p>Describe how the project demonstrates overall value for money whilst aligning with the objectives of the program.</p>	<p>Applications should demonstrate the proposed project is within reasonable budget cost and there is clear justification for the requested budgeted items.</p> <p>Applications must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are actively rehabilitating and caring for wildlife by providing a copy of their most recent shelter records (1 year) as evidence.</li> <li>• Items requested such as facilities or consumable must be relevant or appropriate to wildlife rehabilitation.</li> <li>• with photos evidence of existing facilities and/or new infrastructure proposals, quotes and plans.</li> <li>• their ability to complete the project on time and within the budget or your capacity to successfully complete the proposed activities.</li> </ul>	<p>50%</p>
<p>Demonstrate your capacity building to deliver objectives of the program</p>	<p>Capacity building will be assessed on how you apply learnings, knowledge/skills and resources for on-going project deliveries, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engage in ongoing mentor-mentee relationships or strong networks and connections.</li> <li>• ongoing learnings about wildlife care (evidence).</li> <li>• demonstrate records of the training courses or reference materials are <u>relevant</u> to your shelter authorisation.</li> </ul>	<p>20%</p>

## 8. What supporting documents or evidence are required?

The following documents must be attached to the application:

- copy of a valid shelter operator and foster carer authorisation
- Shelter Operators need to provide the most recent shelter records (one year) (**Appendix C**)
- Foster Carers need to provide the most recent shelter records from your supervising shelter (**Appendix C**)
- quote for any items that are valued equal to or greater than \$500 from any category – failure to provide this will make your application ineligible.
- layout or design and dimensions of enclosures, if seeking funding for new infrastructure (must meet the DEECA requirements)
- photographs of an existing facility or equipment if seeking funding to replace/renew them
- list of training courses, refer to (**Appendix D**)
- written consent from the property owner to undertake the activity if renting
- written consent from the land or property owner to undertake nest box activities.

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application, you can email them to [enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au) quoting your unique **GA-FRXXXX-XXXXX number** on the subject line. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

**Note:** all supporting, or evidence documents listed must be uploaded to the application before submission. No hard copy applications will be accepted.

## 9. What are the funding conditions?

### Funding agreements

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). The Victorian Common Funding Agreement is used for funding agreements with individuals and not for profit organisations.

It is recommended that applicants review the terms and conditions before applying. Information about the Victorian Common Funding Agreement is available on <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement>.

### Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity grant recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

- Wildlife Rehabilitator Authorisation Guide
- *The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*
- *The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Wildlife Act 1975*
- *Wildlife Regulations 2013*
- *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*
- *Guide to the Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2006.*

All recipients are required to comply with their authorisation conditions.

### Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this grant funding.

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form 'Statement by a Supplier' so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.

### Acknowledging Victorian Government support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge Victorian Government support. Promotional guidelines at <https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/grants> will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

### Payments

Payments will be made when:

- the funding agreement has been signed by both parties (recipient and DEECA)
- grant recipients provide supporting documents, or any additional information requested by DEECA
- other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met by recipient.

### Monitoring and Reporting

Grant recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the funding agreement. This may include:

- progress reports and/or completion reports
- acquittal documentation and audit requirements
- site inspections.

## Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at [www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy](http://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy). Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing [Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:Foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au).

## 10. What is the application process?

Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online portal.

To apply, go to the grant program web page <https://wildlife.vic.gov.au/grants/wildlife-rehabilitator-grants> and click on the 'start new application' button. You will receive a unique GA-FRXXXX-XXXXX number (write it down for future reference). To return to a saved draft application, click on the 'access saved application' button in the form.

## 11. Additional information

Additional information is available at <https://wildlife.vic.gov.au/grants/wildlife-rehabilitator-grants>.

If you require assistance submitting your funding application online, email [grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au)

For questions specific to the WRG program, please email [enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au). You can also contact DEECA Customer Contact Centre by calling 136 186.

## 12. What is the notification process?

All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application once the assessment process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application via email ([enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:enviro.grants@deeca.vic.gov.au))

## 13. Key dates

Applications open	Tuesday, 26 November 2024 (AEST)
Applications close	Wednesday, 5 February 2025 3.00pm (AEST)
Applicants notified	March 2025
Activities commence	March 2025
Final reports and acquittals submitted	April 2026



## 14. Checklist

Read these guidelines and the information about this grant program at <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/grants/wildlife-rehabilitator-grants> before applying. Please complete the following checklist.

- checked if you are, or your organisation is, eligible for this grant funding?
- checked if your activity is eligible for this grant funding?
- checked that you will be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in the delivery of your activity?
- checked that you have fully completed the application form by answering all relevant questions asked?
- prepared and attached the appropriate supporting documents requested?

## Appendix A – Eligible Items

What items may be funded?		
Period of expenditure: Items must be purchased and paid for between <b>1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025</b> .		
General infrastructure and equipment		
Enclosures <sup>1</sup>	Incubators	Shelters
Fencing & fencing items for enclosure (minimum of 2 metres in height) (no barbed wire)	Plumbing of water to pens	Nesting boxes (Installation on public or private land must provide a letter of consent from the land manager or landowner)
Aviaries	Portable cages / pet packs	Water tanks, hoses, pond, or other facilities to assist in the rehabilitation of wildlife
Heat boxes or heat pad	Binoculars / monocular (up to \$300)	Spotlights (hand-held only)
Rescue equipment	GPS (up to \$300) <sup>2</sup>	Personal Protective Equipment <sup>3</sup> (PPE) (e.g., gauntlets, eye protection, gloves, snake gaiters etc.)
ICU <sup>4</sup> basic unit only (appropriate level of authorisation)	Fogger <sup>5</sup>	Other enclosure furniture such as UV lights for reptiles
Personal first aid kits and Personal protective equipment	Crop needles for feeding	Shelter signage
Other items deemed appropriate and not listed on the ineligible items list in Appendix B below		
Training courses and educational materials		
First aid training	Wildlife Reference manuals <sup>6</sup>	Workshops, conference registrations <sup>7</sup> , webinars
Books (you must list the name/s of the books to help assessors)	Training Courses (must relate to wildlife authorisation and apply learnings in their operations).	
Consumable items (maximum limit of \$1,500 per applicant - no stock piling)		
Veterinary fees and supplies, Consultation and treatment, X-ray or other procedure (with local veterinarians).	Fuel (capped at \$300)	Milk formula and replacement, fresh food and vegetables.
Appropriate medications for wildlife first aid and / or prescribed by a veterinarian practitioner	Vaccinations or booster costs for lyssavirus	Other feed including fresh, dried and frozen.
Cleaning products (disinfectant including F10 disinfectant, hand wash, hand sanitiser, tissues, etc)	Medical supplies including gauze, cotton tips, bandages, thermometers, and nursing pads	Tip fees are permitted providing you comply with Condition 12 of <a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/wildlife-rehabilitator-authorisation-guide">https://www.vic.gov.au/wildlife-rehabilitator-authorisation-guide</a>

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to *DEECA Wildlife – Rehabilitation Authorisation Guide: Things you need to know, June 2023*

<sup>2</sup> Wildlife tracking research permit is required if it is used to track animals.

<sup>3</sup> Exclude PPE for Emergency Response.

<sup>4</sup> Intensive Care Units (oxygen concentrator and advance unit are not eligible) (no Veterinary Grade)

<sup>5</sup> A fogger is eligible for carers who keep birds in indoor rooms. It can be filled with a disinfectant like F10 and used to fumigate the room if they have had issues with chlamydia or beak and feather disease.

<sup>6</sup> According to your level of authorisation (not Veterinarian manual)

<sup>7</sup> Capped at \$300 per recipient for cost of registration fees. Flights, accommodation, and food are not eligible.

## Appendix B – Non-Eligible Items

What items will not be funded?		
General infrastructure and equipment		
Generators, solar panel, hot water system	Dishwashers, freezers, fridge, washing machine	Computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phone, smartphones, GoPro
Trees for rehabilitation, mulchers and landscaping (plants or grass seeds)	Firearms, captive bolt, dart guns, ammunition and related equipment	Vehicle mounted spotlights (handheld spotlights are acceptable)
Trailers – all types including car, boat, ride on mower, etc	Electric fencing unit, virtual fencing or barbed wire fencing	Voroscope
Any vehicle servicing, maintenance or registration	Synthetic grass or plastic flooring (outdoor)	Promotional materials including magnets, business cards, flyers, promotional items, reflective stickers
Vehicle purchase including motorbike	Chainsaws including pole chainsaws	Radio telemetry
High powered ICU (oxygen concentrator) and veterinary grade equipment	Donation boxes	InfraRed and motion-sensing surveillance cameras, wireless wildlife trail cameras
Shipping containers	Microscope	Urine refractometer or analyser
Training courses		
Firearms, captive bolt and darting training and licence	Flights and accommodation to attend training; fuel for interstate travel	Snake handling training
Arboriculture courses (such as Tree climbing)	TAFE course (Other)	Advanced level First Aid Training including wilderness
Consumable items		
Vouchers for consumable items, including fuel vouchers	Insurance (all types)	Letha barb for euthanasia
Credit to vets	IV drips	Legal expenses
Utility costs including rates, electricity, water, gas, and sewerage bills	Scheduled chemical capture drugs listed in Schedule 4 and 8 in the <i>Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2006</i> .	Species <sup>1</sup> not covered by your Authorisation. <a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/wildlife-rehabilitator-authorisation-guide">https://www.vic.gov.au/wildlife-rehabilitator-authorisation-guide</a>

Please refer to *DEECA Wildlife – Rehabilitation Authorisation Guide: Things you need to know, 2023*.

<sup>1</sup>**Note:** You must not acquire, receive, possess, destroy (euthanise) or dispose of the following wildlife: whales, dolphins, seals, marine turtles, platypus, fish, deer, non-indigenous quail, pheasants and partridges.

## Appendix C – Shelter Records

Which Shelter records are required in this round?

- Shelter Operators – Records from Oct 2023 to Nov 2024
- Foster Carers to obtain records from your Shelter Operators

You can download a copy of the Wildlife shelter record sheet from <https://www.vic.gov.au/wildlife-rehabilitation-shelters-and-foster-carers>

[Wildlife shelter record sheet](#)

[Wildlife code book](#)

[Species code for use on wildlife shelter record sheets](#)

## Appendix D – Training attendance Record

This template was developed from applicant feedback from previous years. Each year in the Wildlife Rehabilitator Grants application form, a question asks you to list training/course details you have completed over the years. This template is for you to update once you complete training or attend conferences. Simply upload the template into the application form without having to re-type the information each year <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/grants/wildlife-rehabilitator-grants>

Name of course/ training/conference	Provider name of course/training /conference	Location of course/training /conference	Date completed	Comments about course/training/ conference if applicable
<b>Example</b> Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference 2022	National Wildlife Rehabilitation Group	Melbourne	13-15 August 2022	Attended the conference
Together for Wildlife webinar series	Zoos Victoria, Australian Veterinary Association, IFAW, RSPCA Victoria, University of Melbourne, and DEECA	Online	21 June 2023	Online training and support opportunities offered by the Together for Wildlife collaboration

## Appendix E - Important Notice on Avian Influenza

High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) is a highly infectious disease that can cause severe illness and death in poultry. A new global strain of HPAI H5N1 differs from previous avian influenza strains, as it not only causes substantial mortality in poultry but also can cause the deaths of large numbers of wild birds and some mammals.

**HPAI strain H5N1 has not been detected in animals in Australia to date.**

### What should I look for?

With the increased risk of HPAI H5N1 arriving in Australia, it is important that you are aware of HPAI. By being aware, you can take steps to minimise the risk of disease transfer to themselves and other animals. The most important sign to be aware of is sudden death. Other signs of H5N1 are:

- lack of coordination, tremors, swimming in circles
- twisted necks or other unusual posture
- inability to stand or fly
- diarrhoea
- depression, decreased food and water intake
- difficulty breathing, coughing or sneezing
- swelling around the head, neck and eyes
- cloudiness or change in colour of the eyes.

HPAI should be considered if a high proportion of your collection or group of birds or wildlife become ill very quickly – progressing from normal to severe illness or death within 24 to 48 hours.

### If you find sick or dead wild birds or other wildlife, or notice symptoms in your collection:

- **AVOID** contact with sick or dead wild birds and other wildlife, and their environment. Do not touch or collect sick or dead wild birds and other wildlife.
- **RECORD** what you see, the location the animal was found. Do not touch the animal.
- **REPORT** to DEECA:
- Please report clusters (5 or more) of sick or dead wild birds of any species, anywhere in Victoria.
- Please report even one.
- Sick or dead penguin or pelican
- Sick or dead bird of prey (e.g. hawks, owls, eagles)
- Sick or dead black swan
- Sick or dead marine mammal (e.g. seals, sealions, dolphins).

### What do I do if I suspect Avian Influenza?

Avian Influenza is a notifiable exotic disease and any suspected or confirmed cases must be reported immediately to Agriculture Victoria on the Emergency Animal Disease **Hotline on 1800 675 888 (24/7)**. For more information, please visit the webpage to Agriculture Victoria <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/avianflu> or Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action – Wildlife webpage [High pathogenic avian influenza \(wildlife.vic.gov.au\)](http://wildlife.vic.gov.au)

[deeca.vic.gov.au](http://deeca.vic.gov.au)

