Helping local government
build stronger communities.

Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants 2026-29

Funding Guidelines

November 2026

lga South Australia

About these guidelines

These guidelines provide information to assist potential applicants in determining their eligibility for the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants and preparing an Expression of Interest (EOI) for funding under the SA Climate Ready Coasts (CRC) Program.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grant information on the LGA South Australia website
- the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and supporting compendiums and resources
- the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants EOI form available through SmartyGrants

CRC grants are designed to support councils delivering this important work, through funding and technical support where required. The Grants operate on a rolling basis to support flexibility and responsiveness. EOIs may be submitted at any time while funding remains available, up until June 2028. Councils are encouraged to contact CRC to discuss their proposal and seek advice to make the process as simple and efficient as possible.

All projects funded through the program must be completed by April 2029.

Introduction

CRC supports South Australian coastal councils to progress coastal hazard adaptation planning.

CRC's purpose is to accelerate coastal hazard adaptation planning and support a more strategic, coordinated and evidence-based approach to coastal management across South Australia. The 2026–2029 program builds on this work, with a focus on tailored support for councils, technical consistency, capacity building and progression of coastal hazard adaptation planning.

What is Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning?

Coastal hazard adaptation planning is the strategic and systematic approach of anticipating and responding to the risks posed by coastal hazard. These are likely intensified by climate change and sea level rise.

CRC 2026–2029 is delivered by LGA in partnership with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW), with funding support from the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund and the SA Coast Protection Board.

Further information about SA Climate Ready Coasts is available on the program's website: lga.sa.gov.au/climate-ready-coasts

About the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants

The Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants provide funding to help South Australian coastal councils progress coastal hazard adaptation planning.

Projects receiving funding must align with the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and supporting compendiums and resources. The Guidelines provide step-by-step guidance for preparing a Coastal Hazard Adaptation Plan (CHAP) and facilitate a standardised approach to coastal hazard adaptation planning, while allowing flexible application to different coastal contexts.

The Guidelines establish five stages of coastal hazard adaptation planning:

1. Scoping and preparation
2. Coastal hazard exposure
3. Risk and vulnerability
4. Adaptation actions and pathways
5. Implementation and monitoring.

CRC provides a mix of funding, technical expertise and project support across the CHAP process.

Generally, Stage 1 scoping and preparation will be led or supported by CRC, working in partnership with councils to establish the need for action and ensure the Project Plan meets council objectives and is consistent with the Guidelines. Stage 2 coastal hazard exposure assessments will generally be led by DEW to ensure councils have access to appropriate information and data.

Grant funding will primarily support council-led work required to progress subsequent stages of coastal hazard adaptation planning.

Relationship with the Coast Protection Grants

These grants provide a one-off funding opportunity in addition to the annual Coast Protection Grants managed by the Coast Protection Board with the support of DEW.

The Coast Protection Grants typically provide funding to support implementation of actions arising from CHAPs.

LGA and DEW are working closely together to ensure applications are directed to either funding pool as appropriate.

Who can apply?

All South Australian coastal councils and regional Local Government Associations are eligible to apply to this grant program.

Collaborations involving multiple councils are encouraged where this will support effective adaptation planning and achieve efficiencies or other regional benefits. Where multiple councils are involved, a lead organisation must be identified.

All eligible coastal councils remain able to access CRC support and submit an EOI.

How much grant funding is available?

CRC 2026–2029 has attracted $2.52 million in committed cash funding from the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund and the SA Coast Protection Board, with most of program funding support the progression of coastal hazard adaptation planning.

There is no minimum or maximum grant amount.

Funding will be determined on a case-by-case basis through assessment against the criteria in these guidelines and having regard to available program resources.

What are the co-contribution requirements?

Councils must provide a minimum of 20% of the total project costs through cash and/or in-kind support.

Direct administration and project management costs associated with delivery of the project may form part of an in-kind contribution. Councils must clearly identify and explain how any in-kind contribution has been calculated.

The proposed co-contribution will be considered alongside the overall project budget as part of the assessment of value for money.

What applications will be supported?

Funding is available for council-led coastal hazard adaptation planning activities, including:

- technical investigations
- risk assessments
- adaptation options assessments
- implementation planning
- economic analysis
- community and stakeholder engagement
- project management.

This list is indicative rather than exhaustive. Proposed activities must clearly contribute to the progression of coastal hazard adaptation planning and be consistent with the LGA Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines.

Grant funding is generally not intended to fund Stage 1 scoping and preparation or Stage 2 coastal hazard exposure assessments, which are supported through other components of CRC. Councils are encouraged to contact CRC to progress work on CHAP stages 1 and 2.

Funding may support planning for implementation, but is not intended to fund implementation of physical or non-physical adaptation actions. Funding is intended to support new adaptation planning projects, and/or the next stage of an existing/recently completed adaptation planning project. In certain circumstances, funding may also support a variation to an existing CHAP project, and these will be assessed using a modified criteria.

Minimum requirements

Projects receiving funding must:

- have a clearly established need for action
- be consistent with the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and relevant supporting compendiums and resources
- deliver work that meets relevant minimum standards established through the Guidelines
- include a minimum 20% council cash and/or in-kind contribution
- establish effective project governance arrangements, including an appropriate Project Steering Committee or Working Group with clear roles and responsibilities
- demonstrate appropriate project management, procurement, stakeholder engagement, risk management and decision-making arrangements
- work with CRC to identify appropriate points for independent review by the Expert Panel on Coastal Adaptation
- participate in agreed Expert Panel reviews and reasonably consider and respond to feedback arising from those reviews
- meet agreed reporting requirements
- be capable of completion by April 2029.

Eligible expenditure

Eligible expenditure includes:

- consultants and contractors
- project management and administration directly associated with project delivery
- community and stakeholder engagement
- technical investigations and analysis
- other specialist services necessary to deliver the agreed project scope.

Expenditure must be directly related to the approved project and incurred in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

Funding will not be provided for:

- infrastructure or physical works
- implementation of adaptation actions
- activities that do not contribute directly to coastal hazard adaptation planning
- projects or activities that are already fully funded from another source
- costs incurred before execution of the Grant Agreement, unless otherwise agreed
- core or ongoing council operational costs not directly related to delivery of the project
- existing staff salaries or wages, other than eligible in-kind contributions or project management to directly support project delivery
- funds to be distributed to individuals, including sponsorships, scholarships, donations or reimbursements
- grant writing, auspice or audit fees
- activities that are the core responsibility of another State or Australian Government agency.

Where a proposed activity may be more appropriately supported through another CRC delivery mechanism or funding program, CRC will work with the council to identify the appropriate pathway.

What is the application process?

Coastal Hazard Adaptation Grants operate through a rolling, single-stage EOI process. A separate full grant application is not required.

Step one – scope the project

Councils are strongly encouraged to contact CRC before submitting an EOI.

CRC can work with councils to understand their adaptation planning needs and help develop an appropriate project scope and funding proposal.

For councils commencing a new CHAP, this may include CRC working with the council to complete Stage 1 scoping and preparation and develop the Project Plan required by the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines.

The Project Plan should provide a sound basis for the EOI, including the project need, scope, governance arrangements, approach, engagement requirements, resourcing, budget and proposed delivery arrangements.

Step 2 – Submit an EOI

Once the proposed project is sufficiently developed, the council may submit an EOI through SmartyGrants.

As the EOI forms the basis for the funding decision, applicants will be required to provide sufficient information for the proposed project to be assessed.

This will include:

- the need for the project, and coastal hazards and risks being addressed
- relationship to any previous or existing coastal hazard adaptation planning
- proposed project objectives and outcomes
- scope and key project outputs
- proposed methodology and alignment with the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and supporting resources
- project governance arrangements, including the proposed Steering Committee or Working Group
- project management and procurement approach
- key project risks and proposed controls
- project timeframe and milestones
- detailed project budget
- proposed council cash and/or in-kind co-contribution
- council commitment and capacity to deliver the project.

Step 3 – Assessment

EOIs will be reviewed by the CRC Working Group, comprising representatives of LGA and DEW.

The Working Group may seek further information or clarification from an applicant during assessment. This may include providing feedback and requesting changes to the proposed project, scope, approach or budget before a funding recommendation is finalised.

The Working Group will assess the proposal against the criteria below and make a recommendation to the CRC Program Sponsor, the LGA Executive Director Member Services.

The Working Group and/or Program Sponsor may seek advice from the CRC Executive Steering Committee if required.

The Program Sponsor will make the final funding decision.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome following the decision, which will be provided within 8 weeks following submission of the EOI.

Rolling assessment

Applications are not assessed through a competitive funding round.

Each EOI will be considered on its merits against the assessment criteria and having regard to available program resources.

Because funding is allocated progressively, assessment will also consider the relative need and benefit of the proposed investment and CRC's capacity to continue supporting coastal adaptation planning across South Australia.

Assessment criteria – new funding

The assessment criteria support consistent consideration of EOIs but do not create a competitive ranking process. Funding decisions will also have regard to the amount of funding available and CRC's capacity to support other councils and program priorities.

Eligibility – pass/fail

Is the applicant and proposed project eligible for funding under these guidelines?

Need – 25%

To what extent does the project respond to material and/or urgent coastal hazards and risks, and represent a priority for progressing coastal hazard adaptation planning?

Assessment may consider:

- the nature and significance of the hazards and risks being considered
- the demonstrated need for action
- the council's current stage of adaptation planning
- the importance and timeliness of progressing the proposed work
- the relative need and potential benefit of the proposed investment in the context of coastal adaptation planning across South Australia.

Approach – 25%

To what extent is the proposed methodology appropriate, technically robust and aligned with the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and supporting resources, and likely to deliver the intended outcomes?

Assessment may consider:

- clarity of the project objectives, scope and outputs
- appropriateness of the proposed methodology
- alignment with relevant requirements and minimum standards in the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines
- integration with previous and subsequent stages of adaptation planning
- proposed stakeholder and community engagement.

Delivery – 20%

To what extent do the proposed governance, project management, procurement and delivery arrangements provide confidence that the project can be successfully delivered?

Assessment may consider:

- project governance arrangements, including the role and membership of the proposed Steering Committee or Working Group
- clarity of responsibilities and decision-making arrangements
- project management arrangements and available council resources
- proposed procurement and consultant management approach
- realistic milestones and timeframes
- demonstrated organisational commitment to the project.

Value for money – 20%

To what extent does the proposed budget and council co-contribution represent value for money, having regard to the proposed scope, outcomes and use of available CRC resources?

Assessment may consider:

- whether costs are reasonable and appropriate for the proposed work

- the relationship between the level of investment and anticipated project outcomes
- council cash and in-kind contributions
- opportunities to use existing information and resources
- efficiencies arising through collaboration, integration with other work or other funding sources.

Risk – 10%

To what extent has the applicant considered the key risks to successful delivery of the project?

Assessment may consider:

- identification of material project and delivery risks
- proposed risk controls and management arrangements
- risks associated with governance, procurement, resourcing, stakeholder engagement or technical delivery
- the likelihood that identified risks could affect project outcomes, timeframe or use of grant funding.

Variations to funded projects

CRC recognises that project circumstances may change during delivery, and new opportunities arise to expand or adjust the scope of a project to better meet the intended outcomes.

Councils are strongly encouraged to discuss proposed changes to an approved project with their Project Steering Committee and the CRC Program Manager as early as possible.

Variations may include changes to:

- project scope or deliverables
- project methodology or approach
- project budget
- project milestones or timeframe.

Variations not requiring additional funding

Changes to project scope, deliverables, budget allocation or timeframe that do not require additional CRC funding may be approved by the CRC Working Group.

In considering a proposed variation, the Working Group will consider whether the change:

- remains consistent with the purpose and intended outcomes of the original grant
- provides a sound basis for continued delivery of the project
- remains consistent with the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Planning Guidelines and other applicable grant requirements
- has implications for project deliverables, budget, risks or completion timeframe.

Variations requesting additional funding

Requests for additional CRC grant funding require approval by the CRC Program Sponsor.

The CRC Working Group will assess requests for additional funding and make a recommendation to the Program Sponsor. Further information or changes to the proposed variation may be requested before a decision is made.

Councils should be aware that access to additional funding is not automatic and will be considered on a case-by-case basis against the following non-weighted criteria:

Outcomes

To what extent will the variation support achievement or extension of the coastal adaptation planning outcomes of the original project?

Opportunity

To what extent does the variation respond to an important opportunity, issue or requirement that was not reasonably known or anticipated when the original funding was approved?

Existing funding

To what extent has the council considered opportunities to reprioritise expenditure or rescope activities within the existing project funding?

Value

To what extent does providing additional funding represent value for money for the council and CRC?

Co-contribution

To what extent will the council contribute additional cash and/or in-kind resources towards the proposed variation?

Program impact

What impact would approving the additional funding have on CRC's capacity to support other councils and program priorities?

Reporting requirements

Successful applicants are required to provide progress reports every six months and a final report following completion of the funded project.

Reports will be submitted electronically through SmartyGrants.

Progress reports will provide information on:

- progress against agreed milestones and deliverables
- project expenditure
- emerging issues and risks
- any proposed or approved changes to the project
- upcoming activities.

LGA may seek additional information where required to monitor project progress or compliance with the Grant Agreement.

Grant recipients may also be asked to participate in CRC knowledge-sharing activities so that experience and lessons from individual projects can support coastal adaptation planning across South Australia.

Final Report

At the conclusion of the project, the grant recipients will be required to provide a final report. The report must include:

- a summary of the work undertaken and project outcomes
- confirmation of delivery against agreed outputs and milestones
- a financial statement
- key lessons from project delivery
- next steps for the council's coastal hazard adaptation planning

Grant Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with LGA .

The Grant Agreement will establish requirements relating to matters including:

- the approved project scope and deliverables
- approved project budget and co-contribution
- project milestones and timeframe
- milestone payments
- progress and final reporting
- project variations
- acknowledgement of funding
- intellectual property rights
- insurance
- GST
- treatment of unspent grant funding.

The successful grant recipient must sign the Grant Agreement within 30 days of receiving it.

Grant funding will be paid against agreed milestones once the Grant Agreement has been executed.

Projects must be completed by the date specified in the Grant Agreement and no later than April 2029.

Applicants should cost projects exclusive of GST. Where applicable, approved grant funding will be grossed up to include GST.

Unspent grant funds must be returned to LGA in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

How to apply?

Expressions of Interest must be submitted through SmartyGrants.

Councils are strongly encouraged to contact the CRC team before submitting an EOI to discuss their proposed project, scoping needs and available CRC support.

EOIs can be submitted at any time while program funding remains available, with June 2028 the latest date for submission.

Applicants should allow sufficient time for the funded project to be established, procured and completed by April 2029.

It is recommended that applicants choose the option of previewing the form to make sure applicants are aware of the requirements prior to submitting the form. Please refer to the

Help Guide for Applicants https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/ for further support.

Further information

Please refer to the Climate Ready Coasts Program webpage or contact:

Michael Arman
Program Manager, SA Climate Ready Coasts
ClimateReadyCoasts@lga.sa.gov.au

Annabel Sandery
Principal Adviser Coastal Resilience
Department for Environment and Water
annabel.sandery@sa.gov.au

(08) 8224 2000

lgasa@lga.sa.gov.au

148 Frome St Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 2693 Adelaide SA 5001

lga.sa.gov.au

lga. South Australia

Helping local government
build stronger communities.