



MARY MACKILLOP TODAY HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM 2025

Embracing and Valuing Diversity in Nature and Community

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The 2025 Mary MacKillop Today Highways and Byways Small Grants Program is now open to receive applications.



IMAGE: Geoff Bassett from Farm Mojo spoke to land managers about natural resources management at a sustainable farming field day convened by Gwymac in Inverell, NSW (2022 small grants recipient).

Applications close 5.00pm AEDT Tuesday 1st April 2025.

We are delighted to launch the Mary MacKillop Today Highways and Byways Small Grants Program. Highways and Byways Programs are now part of the work of Mary MacKillop Today. The Missionary Sisters of Service, who founded Highways and Byways, have a long history of friendship with the founders of Mary MacKillop Today – the Sisters of St. Joseph. Our Small Grants Program will benefit from the shared strengths of both organisations.

The theme of our 2025 Small Grants Program – ‘Embracing and Valuing Diversity in Nature and Community’ - recognises that we are entering challenging times for many Australians as the growing impacts of climate change continue to cause severe damage to land, homes and communities, especially in rural and regional Australia. Extreme weather events are affecting communities that are already under stress through previous disasters, with rebuilding challenges, the realities of everyday financial stresses, and limited employment opportunities in vulnerable communities.



Our fragile ecosystems are experiencing unprecedented stress. This is reducing the environmental capital on which current and future economies depend. Social, environmental and economic impacts are already apparent.

Since 2020, Highways and Byways Grants have had a focus on **environmental initiatives** working on ecological restoration and healing of the land, particularly in small rural and regional communities. We have also been keen to support any projects which have a particular emphasis on recognising that **Indigenous knowledge and connections to Country** are vital for sustainability and healing our land.

This focus continues in our 2025 program – ‘Embracing and Valuing Diversity in Nature and Communities’.

We recognise that divisions along political, social, cultural, environmental and personal lines are more pronounced than ever. We are keen to support projects that work to **find common ground and embrace difference**, enabling diverse groups to come together to learn from each other, especially local environmental initiatives.

2025 SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

In 2025, we therefore invite initiatives which bring greater community understanding of working in unity with nature, not against it. We also invite projects which demonstrate a practical and respectful use of Indigenous knowledge.

Grants of up to \$5,000 are available for projects that:

- Contribute to building strong and resilient communities, especially in areas affected by extreme weather events.
- Build unity and find common grounds of understanding and shared knowledge across an initiative.
- Encourage partnerships amongst individuals, groups and/or organisations.
- Foster engagement, diversity and cultural connections by sharing knowledge and skills in local community-based programs/events.
- Support intergenerational and Indigenous/Non-Indigenous exchanges of knowledge and skills for the sustainable and/or regenerative management of the land.
- Provide opportunities for program participants to develop leadership or other personal and community-building skills.



INCLUSIONS – WHAT WILL BE FUNDED

Projects that align with our program theme and objectives will be considered as grant recipients. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Environmental and ecological restoration and regenerative initiatives
- Programs for vulnerable communities
- Wellbeing programs
- Community events
- Training programs
- Workshops

Expense items eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of tools and equipment
- Garden materials, including plants and seeds
- Resource materials
- Contractors and consultant costs, including speaker fees
- Travel and accommodation costs
- Marketing and communication activities
- Meeting costs including venue hire and catering costs

EXCLUSIONS – WHAT WILL **NOT** BE FUNDED

Funding is not available for:

- Projects that do not align with the program objectives
- Expos
- Salaries and wages
- Costs not directly associated with the project
- Retrospective costs
- Projects that promote a particular faith or religious adherence, or support or promote a political party

Please get in touch with us if you are unsure whether your project and/or cost/s meet these requirements.

ELIGIBILITY

Funding is available to community groups or organisations which can demonstrate that they are, at minimum, an Incorporated Association or similarly constituted entity. Organisations that do not meet these criteria may be auspiced by a legal entity.

Funding is not available to individuals, trusts, or schools (except Parents/Friends Associations that meet minimum incorporation requirements).



CONDITIONS

- Applicants need to demonstrate that the project addresses the relief of social or environmental disadvantage or inequality through locally-led action.
- Projects are to be completed within 12 months unless otherwise negotiated.
- Grants allocated will be up to \$5000. Grants do not comprise a GST component.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a final report and evidence of funding acquittal. We may also request a mid-year update.
- Grant recipients may be visited by a representative/s of the Small Grants Program at a mutually agreed time.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have not previously received funding from Highways and Byways.
- Previous grant recipients must have met all grant acquittal requirements.
- Successful applicants will be notified in writing by May 2025.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must complete an application form and submit it to Mary MacKillop Today Highways and Byways Small Grants Program by:

5.00pm AEDT Tuesday 1 April 2025.

Applications can be submitted in one of the following ways:

- Online

Click on the 'Apply Now' link via our website at www.hb.org.au/grants/

- Email

Download an application form via our website, complete and email to:
highwaysandbyways@marymackilloptoday.org.au

- Hard copy

Download an application form via our website, complete and mail to:
Mary MacKillop Today Highways and Byways Small Grants Program
PO Box 1646, North Sydney NSW 2059

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information please contact Chrys Fernando:

Phone: (02) 8912 2777

Email: highwaysandbyways@marymackilloptoday.org.au

Or visit our website: www.hb.org.au/grants/