

# Hume Enviro Champions Program Structure and Guidelines

## Introduction

The Hume Enviro Champions program aims to build the capacity of the Hume community to lead community projects that improve environmental or sustainability outcomes.

This will be achieved through two interconnected areas of the program:

- A **training program** consisting of a two-day introductory course followed by eight masterclass sessions. The training program is designed to provide skills and knowledge to participants in key areas of community environmental or sustainability project development, implementation and evaluation.
- **Council support** for community-led environmental or sustainability projects, which may include mentoring, meeting room hire, promotion through Council channels, networking and seed funding. Online applications are open from February to November.

## Who is eligible

The program is open to anyone who currently lives, works, volunteers or studies in Hume and has a desire to lead community environmental or sustainability change in the Hume community.

Participants do not need a project idea or any previous experience to attend the training, just the desire to take action and drive positive environmental change in Hume.

## Program structure

### Introductory course

This two-day course provides an overview of the topics that are explored in the masterclass sessions. It is designed for those who want to learn some basic skills before committing to more in-depth learning or designing a project.

The course is held over two Saturdays in February, with each session running for five hours.

Topics covered in the course include:

- An overview of Council's environment and sustainability programs
- Working with Council and aligning projects with Council's strategic plans
- Creating behaviour change
- Designing a project plan
- Taking the next step with the masterclass series and project support application.

Participants will also network with previous program participants and Council staff. Facilitators will explore participants' specific areas of interest during the course.

Attendance at both sessions is highly recommended in order to get the full benefit of the training, begin to develop project ideas, and meet like-minded people and potential collaborators.

Participants do not need a project idea to attend.

## Masterclass sessions

Running from March to November, a series of eight masterclasses will further develop the knowledge and skills required to design, implement and evaluate a successful community-led project. Most sessions will run for 3 hours and focus on a different topic.

Masterclass topics include:

- Building relationships in the community
- Creating behaviour change
- Working with different levels of government and non-government organisations (NGOs)
- Community organising
- Storytelling and effective conversations
- Leadership and advocacy
- Communication tools
- Resourcing your project

Masterclass sessions will be held in community venues at different locations around Hume. A schedule of dates, times and facilitators will be published on the Hume City Council website in February.

Participants are welcome to attend all of the masterclasses, or just those that meet their specific needs and interests. There is no requirement to complete the introductory course before attending the masterclasses.

## Council support for projects

Council support is available to individuals and groups within the Hume community with an idea for an environmental or sustainability project. Online applications will be open from February to November.

If approved, Council staff will work with the project team on the most appropriate ways to support their project. Support may include:

- mentoring from Council's Environmental Community Development Officer
- promotion of project activities through Council communication channels
- networking with Council staff in areas aligned with project themes
- networking with community groups and organisations aligned with project themes
- room hire for meetings, workshops or events associated with project outcomes
- seed funding towards project expenses.

By approving a project Council takes no responsibility for its delivery. Any support provided will be at the discretion of staff and subject to Council's capacity to provide support at the time the application is received and approved.

Participation in the training component of the program is encouraged before applying for project support, but it is not a requirement.

Applicants are also encouraged to take advantage of the [Environmental Scholarships program](#).

## Application process

Applications for Council project support are open from February to November through SmartyGrants.

Applicants must upload a completed Project Planning Template as part of their application. The template is available for download on the SmartGrants application page and on the [Hume City Council website](#).

The approval process is as follows:

1. Application submitted through SmartyGrants
2. Council staff complete an initial review of the application
3. Council staff arrange a meeting with the applicant (either online or in person) to discuss the proposed project in more detail and determine appropriate Council support
4. Council staff notify the applicant of the outcome by email
5. If successful, the applicant must then provide a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and register the project on the Hume Volunteer Gateway
6. Council staff notify the applicant of final approval outcome by email
7. Once approved, project activities can then commence.

## Project evaluation and approval

Applications are evaluated for approval by Council staff. Projects will only be reviewed if the application form and Project Planning Template are complete.

Projects are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- How the Hume community will benefit from the project, and its estimated reach
- The potential environmental or sustainability impacts of the project
- How well the project aligns with Council's strategic plans and objectives (see below)
- Whether the project is suitable for Council support.

Applications must demonstrate consideration of Council's strategic plans and objectives. Relevant Council plans include:

- [Council Plan 2021–2025](#)
- [Hume Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025](#)
- [Climate Action Plan 2023–2028](#)
- [Land and Biodiversity Plan 2023–2030](#)
- [Live Green Plan 2021–2026](#)

In most cases, projects are reviewed within around two weeks.

If a project is approved, planning for project activities can commence.

If a project is declined, it may be that the project plan needs further development or revision, or that a valid WWCC or registration on the Hume Volunteer Gateway has not been provided. Staff will email applicants to notify them of the reasons for a project application being declined.

# Guidelines

## General

- The training program schedule will be finalised in January each year but may be subject to changes during the year.
- Each area of the program structure is stand alone and participants may choose to engage with some or all of the program.
- Some areas of the program may be combined with other capacity building programs run by Hume City Council.

## Participation

- Participants must live, work, volunteer or study in Hume.
- Participants are encouraged to connect with community groups and organisations that align with their project idea.
- No prior knowledge or experience is required by participants to attend any part of the program.
- It is essential that participants demonstrate a passion for taking action to improve environmental or sustainability outcomes.
- Vegetarian catering will be provided at the scheduled introductory course and masterclass sessions. While every effort will be taken by staff to accommodate common dietary requirements such as Halal and gluten free, no responsibility will be taken by Council if the food provided is unsuitable for an individual's dietary requirements.
- Participants with specific dietary needs are encouraged to provide their own food for sessions they plan to attend.

## Program structure

- All aspects of the training program are provided by Council free of charge.
- Hume City Council may alter or cancel any part of the program at any time.
- Guidelines specific to each area of the program should be considered prior to registering for the introductory course or masterclass sessions or applying for Council project support.

## Introductory course

- Registration for the introductory course is essential. Registrations will be made available through Eventbrite.
- It is recommended that participants make every effort to attend both days of the introductory course.
- In consideration of staff organisers and those on the wait list, registered attendees who are unable to attend are required to cancel their ticket via Eventbrite and notify staff via email at [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au).
- Registered attendees who are unable to attend either day for any reason must notify the Environmental Community Development Officer via email at [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au) as soon as possible.
- If registrations reach capacity (sold out), a wait list will be activated for people who would like to attend if a place becomes available.
- If the event is sold out and a place become available, people on the waitlist will be notified in order of day and time of registration.

- Records will be kept of all Eventbrite ticket sales, cancellations and waitlists to ensure equitable distribution of tickets to eligible and interested community members throughout the year.

## Masterclasses

- Registrations for each Masterclass are essential. Registrations will open six weeks prior to each scheduled masterclass through Eventbrite.
- In consideration of staff organisers and those on the wait list, registered attendees who are unable to attend are required to cancel their ticket via Eventbrite and notify staff via email at [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au).
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## Project application process

- Online applications for Council project support will be open from February to November each year.
- Applicants are limited to one active project application at a time.
- Only applications that include an attached and completed Project Planning Template will be considered for review.
- Individuals and groups interested in applying for Council project support are encouraged to attend the introductory course and/or masterclass series to learn more about the program and completing the Project Planning Template. However, attending the training is not a requirement for the project support application.
- The Environmental Community Development Officer can also provide support with completing the Project Planning Template. Email [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au) for more information.
- Applications will be reviewed for approval by the Environmental Community Development Officer and Coordinator of Sustainability Engagement.
- Applicants will be notified of the review outcome within two weeks of submission.
- Applications with preliminary approval will be required to meet, in person (where practical), with the Environmental Community Development Officer for one to two hours, at a time and location that is suitable for both the applicant and officer. The aim of this meeting is to refine project plans and discuss Council support of the project.
- Preliminary approval does not constitute any agreement from Council to support the project.
- Support offered by Council may change or vary over time and all support provided is at the discretion of staff.
- Council support for projects will be dependent on factors such as staffing capacity at any given time, the project leaders' level of engagement with Council, and program budget constraints.
- Project approvals will be confirmed via email and will include confirmation of Council support that will be provided through the program.

# Guidelines

## 1. General

- 1.1. The training program schedule will be finalised in January each year but may be subject to changes during the year.
- 1.2. Each area of the program structure is stand alone and participants may choose to engage with some or all of the program.
- 1.3. Some areas of the program may be combined with other capacity building programs run by Hume City Council.

## 2. Participation

- 2.1. Participants must live, work, volunteer or study in Hume.
- 2.2. Participants are encouraged to connect with community groups and organisations that align with their project idea.
- 2.3. No prior knowledge or experience is required by participants to attend any part of the program.
- 2.4. It is essential that participants demonstrate a passion for taking action to improve environmental or sustainability outcomes.
- 2.5. Vegetarian catering will be provided at the scheduled introductory course and masterclass sessions. While every effort will be taken by staff to accommodate common dietary requirements such as Halal and gluten free, no responsibility will be taken by Council if the food provided is unsuitable for an individual's dietary requirements.
- 2.6. Participants with specific dietary needs are encouraged to provide their own food for sessions they plan to attend.

## 3. Program structure

- 3.1. All aspects of the training program are provided by Council free of charge.
- 3.2. Hume City Council may alter or cancel any part of the program at any time.
- 3.3. Guidelines specific to each area of the program should be considered prior to registering for the introductory course or masterclass sessions or applying for Council project support.

## 4. Introductory course

- 4.1. Registration for the introductory course is essential. Registrations will be made available through Eventbrite.
- 4.2. It is recommended that participants make every effort to attend both days of the introductory course.
- 4.3. In consideration of staff organisers and those on the wait list, registered attendees who are unable to attend are required to cancel their ticket via Eventbrite and notify staff via email at [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au).
- 4.4. Registered attendees who are unable to attend either day for any reason must notify the Environmental Community Development Officer via email at [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au) as soon as possible.
- 4.5. If registrations reach capacity (sold out), a wait list will be activated for people who would like to attend if a place becomes available.
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- 4.7. Records will be kept of all Eventbrite ticket sales, cancellations and waitlists to ensure equitable distribution of tickets to eligible and interested community members throughout the year.

## 5. Masterclasses

- 5.1. Registrations for each Masterclass are essential. Registrations will open six weeks prior to each scheduled masterclass through Eventbrite.
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## 6. Project application process

- 6.1. Online applications for Council project support will be open from February to November each year.
- 6.2. Applicants are limited to one active project application at a time.
- 6.3. Only applications that include an attached and completed Project Planning Template will be considered for review.
- 6.4. Individuals and groups interested in applying for Council project support are encouraged to attend the introductory course and/or masterclass series to learn more about the program and completing the Project Planning Template. However, attending the training is not a requirement for the project support application.
- 6.5. The Environmental Community Development Officer can also provide support with completing the Project Planning Template. Email [envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:envirochampions@hume.vic.gov.au) for more information.
- 6.6. Applications will be reviewed for approval by the Environmental Community Development Officer and Coordinator of Sustainability Engagement.
- 6.7. Applicants will be notified of the review outcome within two weeks of submission.
- 6.8. Applications with preliminary approval will be required to meet, in person (where practical), with the Environmental Community Development Officer for one to two hours, at a time and location that is suitable for both the applicant and officer. The aim of this meeting is to refine project plans and discuss Council support of the project.
- 6.9. Preliminary approval does not constitute any agreement from Council to support the project.
- 6.10. Support offered by Council may change or vary over time and all support provided is at the discretion of staff.
- 6.11. Council support for projects will be dependent on factors such as staffing capacity at any given time, the project leaders' level of engagement with Council, and program budget constraints.
- 6.12. Project approvals will be confirmed via email and will include confirmation of Council support that will be provided through the program.