

Hume Enviro Champions Program Structure and Guidelines

Introduction

The Hume Enviro Champions program aims to build community capacity to lead projects that deliver environmental and sustainability benefits.

This is achieved through four interconnected areas:

- **How to Guide** designed to provide step-by-step information and activities to guide participants through essential knowledge and skills required to plan, implement and evaluate a community led environmental or sustainability project.
- **Training program** designed to provide skills and knowledge to participants in key areas of community environmental or sustainability project development, implementation and evaluation. This consists of a two-day introduction course followed by a series of masterclass sessions.
- **Online project applications** gives Council the information needed to streamline project processing and ensures that planning aspects have been met.
- **Council support** for community-led environmental or sustainability projects, which may include mentoring, meeting room hire, promotion through Council channels, networking and seed funding.

Who is eligible

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

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

Program structure

How to Guide

The How to Guide (Guide) provides important Hume Enviro Champions information.

This includes:

- A high-level overview of climate change, environmental issues and the role community has in making change happen.
- Program structure and alignment to Council's strategic plans.
- Behaviour change, leadership, community organising, decision making and advocacy.
- Project and community planning, design thinking, scoping and evaluation.
- Finding and effectively engaging your audience, pitch writing, resourcing, self-care

and celebrating success.

Each chapter contains a topic activity designed to build skills and knowledge.

It is highly recommended that the Guide is used as part of the program.

Introduction course

This two-day course introduces key topics covered in the masterclass sessions. It's designed for those wanting foundational project planning skills before committing to more advanced project design training.

The course is held over two consecutive Saturdays, 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 Guide, masterclass series and project support application.

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

Attending both sessions is strongly recommended to maximise learning, develop project ideas, and connect with peers and collaborators.

Participants do not need a project idea to attend.

Masterclass sessions

Held after the introduction course this series of masterclasses will further develop the knowledge and skills required to design, implement and evaluate a successful community-led project. Sessions will run for five hours and focus on a different topic.

Masterclass topics may include but are not limited to the following:

- Change Catalyst Essentials
- Community Communications Lab
- Collaboration for Impact

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 introduction course before attending the masterclasses.

Council support for projects

Council support is available to individuals and groups within the Hume community who have an idea for an environmental or sustainability project through the online project application.

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.

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](#).

Approval steps:

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)
6. Council staff notify the applicant of final approval outcome by email
7. Once approved, project activities can start.

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 two weeks.

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

If a project is declined, it may be that the project plan needs further development or revision, or that a valid WWCC has not been provided. Staff will email applicants as to the reasons an application has been declined.

Guidelines

1. General

- 1.1. The training program schedule will be finalised in January each year but may be subject to later changes.
- 1.2. The program structure is flexible, with participants able to engage in some or all of the program.
- 1.3. Some sessions 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 introduction 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 area of the program at any time.
- 3.3. Guidelines specific to each area of the program should be considered prior to registering for the introduction course or masterclass sessions or applying for Council project support.

4. Introduction 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 introduction 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.
- 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 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.
- 4.6. If the event is sold out and a place becomes available, people on the wait list will be notified in order of day and time of registration.

- 4.7. Records will be kept of all Eventbrite ticket sales, cancellations and wait lists 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.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. If registrations reach capacity (sold out), a wait list will be activated for people who would like to attend if a place becomes available.
- 5.4. If the event is sold out and a place becomes available, people on the waitlist will be notified in order of day and time of registration.
- 5.5. 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.

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 complete 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 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 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.
- 6.12. Project approvals will be via email and will include confirmation of Council support that will be provided through the program.