

Community Energy Upgrade Fund Program

Canonical: <https://northmoregordon.com/grants-and-programs/community-energy-upgrade-fund-program/>

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Funding program archive

This page preserves a dated funding-program record and links it to current project-planning guidance.

Publication date: the source publication date.

Status note: This archive does not confirm that applications are open, funds remain available or the earlier eligibility and co-funding settings still apply. Verify the current administrator page and guidelines.

What this article reported

The Australian Government is partnering with local governments to deliver the \$100 million Community Energy Upgrades Fund. The fund will help improve energy efficiency, reduce operating costs and lower greenhouse emissions. The Australian Government will support local governments through co-funding energy efficiency and electrification upgrades of local government facilities.

The fund will provide grants to local governments for improvements that may include:

replacing high energy use heating in council pools with energy-saving heat pumps

installing energy-efficient lighting at sporting fields, libraries and community centres

investing in other energy efficiency upgrades

Who is this for?

Local councils for community facilities like local pools, sporting clubs and community centres. The assistance will help councils cut their emissions and reduce their energy bills.

Funding Amount:

Grants between \$25,000 and \$2,500,000 to cover up to 50% of eligible expenditure. Applicants must contribute at least 50% of the agreed eligible project costs.

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How to use this information now

Before relying on a grant, confirm the current round, applicant and project eligibility, eligible expenditure, co-contribution, assessment process, closing date and evidence obligations. Build the technical case so the project remains understandable with grant support shown separately.

Separate source-reported facts from forecasts, targets and commentary. For a current project, retain the official source, version, effective date, assumptions and decision record in the evidence file.

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What is the Community Energy Upgrade Fund Program?

The Community Energy Upgrade Fund Program is a \$100 million Australian Government initiative that partners with local governments to improve energy efficiency, reduce operating costs, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. The program co-funds energy efficiency and electrification upgrades for local government facilities, particularly community assets like pools, sporting clubs, and community centres. It represents a practical pathway for councils to achieve emissions reductions while managing budget constraints through shared investment.

Who is eligible to apply for the Community Energy Upgrade Fund?

Local councils are the primary eligible applicants, with funding directed toward community facilities including local pools, sporting clubs, libraries, and community centres. The assistance is designed to help councils cut emissions and reduce energy bills across their facility portfolios. Eligibility focuses on local government entities managing community infrastructure rather than private operators or other organization types.

What types of improvements can the Community Energy Upgrade Fund support?

The fund supports energy efficiency and electrification improvements including replacing high-energy heating systems in council pools with energy-saving heat pumps, installing energy-efficient lighting at sporting fields, libraries and community centres, and implementing other energy efficiency upgrades. These project types address both operational cost reduction and emissions reductions, with particular emphasis on heating system replacement and lighting improvements in high-use community facilities.

What are the funding amounts and cost-sharing requirements?

Grants range from \$25,000 to \$2,500,000, with the program covering up to 50% of eligible expenditure. Applicants must contribute at least 50% of agreed eligible project costs, requiring councils to demonstrate financial commitment alongside government support. This cost-sharing structure means a council seeking the maximum \$2.5 million grant would need to fund at least \$2.5 million in eligible project costs themselves, requiring careful project selection and budget planning.

What should councils verify before relying on this grant for project planning?

Before incorporating grant funding into an investment case, councils should verify current application timelines, eligibility requirements, and funding availability through the administering body's current program guidelines. A grant page remaining online does not establish that applications are open. Councils should confirm the current round's specific conditions, application deadlines, and any changed eligibility criteria. We recommend treating unconfirmed grants as a separate scenario in business cases, with the project assessed on our operational merits independently of conditional funding support.

How can Northmore Gordon assist with Community Energy Upgrade Fund applications?

We help councils identify suitable projects for the grant, manage the application process, implement approved projects, and deliver measurable outcomes. Services include energy audits to identify opportunities within council facilities, feasibility studies to assess technical and financial viability, investment case development to support applications, project management during implementation, and measurement and verification to demonstrate achieved energy savings and emissions reductions to funders.

How should councils treat grant funding in their energy project investment decisions?

Councils should prepare investment cases presenting projects with and without conditional grant contributions, clearly identifying the point at which management would need to revisit the decision if support is delayed, reduced, or unavailable. This approach keeps the operating merits of the project visible alongside funding options. Our guidance recommends recording exact program names, sources, application status, and next actions separately from project appraisal, distinguishing discovered, assessed, applied, conditionally approved, and paid stages to maintain transparency in financial planning.

What information should councils prepare before approaching Northmore Gordon about grant applications?

Councils should prepare a project brief documenting the community facilities or systems targeted for improvement, current energy costs and consumption patterns, operational constraints or specific problems driving the upgrade need, available energy data or interval metering information, proposed project timeline, and the specific decision being sought—such as audit scope, feasibility assessment, or application readiness. This preparation enables Northmore Gordon to establish an appropriate assessment scope and realistic application strategy aligned with grant program requirements and deadlines.