

# Future Earth Australia Community Science Initiative

## Eligibility and Selection Criteria for Communities

Future Earth Australia, in collaboration with Thriving Earth Exchange, is currently seeking expressions of interest from community organisations and groups in Australia which are interested in undertaking a community science project to address that community's sustainability priority or issue.

### Contact

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### Eligibility

Community-based organisations, Indigenous groups, advocacy, non-profit organisations or other community groups with adequate level of organisation to co-lead a community science project are eligible to represent communities as lead applicants.

Expressions of interest must include a research proposal that:

- a) Can be justified on that basis that it will benefit the group in question, and
- b) Is related to sustainability of the community, area or people you work with/in (multifaceted issues which affect the longevity of that community that involve environmental, social, economic, technological and cultural elements).

The priority of this initiative is that the community science project answers a sustainability need of a community or group like yours.

Examples of the kinds of areas that a community science project could cover, include (but are not limited to):

- Consumption, waste and circular economy
- Ocean and coastal adaptation to environmental and climate change
- Community-empowered climate adaptation, particularly for disasters like bushfire and flood
- Diverse and resilient local food economies
- Improving water security and quality
- Defending biodiversity, protecting precious species and building biodiverse places

Preference will be given to historically marginalised and/or under-served communities. These include:

- Regional and rural applicants
- Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander groups
- Operate in a Local Government Area in the first, second or third quintile on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, [see this map](#))
- Groups with up to 5 active personnel (paid or voluntary)

### Selection Criteria

This section provides guidance on how expressions of interest will be selected by Future Earth Australia. Treat it as indicative and use it as a guide and if you're not sure whether your group is eligible, please don't hesitate to contact Eleanor. **We would prefer you to get in contact than assume you're not the right fit!**



1. A community is clearly identified in the project application

A community:

- Is a group of connected or organised individuals who live in the same or a similar place; who are collectively subject to the same jurisdiction; who have one or more characteristics in common; or who share a sense of fellowship given common interests, responsibilities, goals or attitudes.
- May include local or regional governments, Indigenous groups, community-based organisations, or other advocacy, non-profit organisations, or groups.

2. The Community Leader requesting to launch a Community Science Project must have formal or informal authority to speak and act on behalf of the community referenced in the application.

Community leaders must:

- Be part of the community.
  - Including being trusted by peers, is a conscientious representative of the whole community.
  - For a local government entity, the leader must have support of their city/town leadership to pursue a project.
- Have the time, capacity and resources to work in partnership with a scientist and Future Earth Australia (i.e. at least 2 hours per week)
- Be able to identify a second community leader who can support them on the project.
- Seek broad civic engagement in the project, preferably not framed around controversy but around the potential for collaborative action.
  - Where there is controversy, Thriving Earth Exchange will work with the community and scientists to design a project that can speak to the issues in the controversy, but we can't guarantee that the project will end the controversy.
- Support from other community/city leaders on the priority presented to Thriving Earth Exchange
- Commit to the community science process and its outcomes.
  - Devote the necessary time and search for resources (this commitment may take the form of resources, in-kind contributions, visible community support, or other forms of engagement)
- Express an interest and willingness to communicate community knowledge and context to scientists and others on the project.
- Express an interest and willingness to communicate the value and applicability of science to local constituencies and decision makers.
- Be willing to follow up with Future Earth Australia about what worked and what didn't in their project.

3. The community and their priority or project idea are appropriate for Future Earth Australia.

*Note: Projects are developed and iterated upon early in the Scoping process to ensure the following criteria are met, and to maximise community impact. Projects are not expected to be fully developed at the time of application.*

- We will select and develop projects that:
  - Advance solutions to community priorities related to sustainability.
  - Provide meaningful action and outcomes that directly benefit the community.
  - Are achievable through volunteer effort, in-kind support, and other resources available through Thriving Earth Exchange. *(Note: There is no restriction against the community or scientist securing their own funding for the project through grants, foundations, donors, etc.)*
  - Will be completed in 6-18 months from the time a scientist is matched with the project.
  
- 4. The Community Leader and their team must exhibit the following:
  - Willingness to act as an active member of the Future Earth Australia and Thriving Earth Exchange community and be willing to offer advice and experience to other projects.
  - Willingness to share results, outputs and lessons learned with the Future Earth Australia and Thriving Earth Exchange community, for use/adaptation by other communities.