

Please note this is **NOT** a Grant Application form.

For information about opportunities to apply for individual project grants please contact your local Community Recovery Committee members or your Local Government Officers.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Background Information

This project is designed to contribute to the community recovery process of those Victorians who were directly affected by the Black Saturday bushfires in February 2009. It aims to provide a lasting contribution by helping to rebuild and regenerate through sustainable gardening activities.

The project is funded by the **Helen Macpherson Smith Trust**, an independent philanthropic organisation based in Victoria. In response to the bushfires' tragedy, the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust established a special \$2 million HMS Bushfires Grants Fund.

Sustainable Gardening Australia (SGA) is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation that actively promotes the benefits of sustainable gardening activities. SGA works closely with home and community gardeners, the horticultural industry and local governments across Victoria to achieve its objectives.

The project is designed to be a partnership between the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, SGA and bushfire affected communities as defined by the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRA). The project will provide the resources and facilitate the development of community based gardening activities as defined by the project objectives.

Project Objectives

To directly assist ten (10) communities in bushfire affected areas in one of two ways

STREAM 1

- To establish **Community Based Gardens** in four (4) distinct bushfire affected communities that will become perpetual community assets. These gardens will be accessible to multiple groups within that community as per the intent of this project. Each of these community gardens can be provided with:
 - ✓ A dedicated facilitator for 15 hours per week for the first 2 years of the project. This facilitator will be employed by SGA from the funds provided by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
 - ✓ The financial capacity (within the limitations of the project budget) to install the infrastructure needed to set up and establish a community based garden that will promote sustainability, education, community capacity building and social support to the entire community
 - ✓ A portable building, if needed, to be placed permanently onsite for training workshops, meeting areas, community forums and other purposes as determined by the ongoing community managers
 - ✓ 15 training workshops over a 30 month period that cover sustainable gardening, organisational management and business planning to ensure the centre remains viable and productive after the conclusion of the 2 year project establishment phase. (See attached schedule of workshops)

Note: As these gardens are to be available to a broad range of user groups, a plot based system will not be used in this model. The proposed gardens will be designed to have a variety of gardening and sustainable practice areas, all of which will be managed communally.

Labour needed to build the gardens is NOT included in the project budget. This must be sourced from local volunteers but may be supplemented by SGA industry contacts (pro bono) or through other in-kind sources.

STREAM 2

• The establishment of six (6) Productive, Organic and Diverse (**POD**) **Gardening Groups** whereby the community can learn new skills, develop new friendships and share experiences and resources related to sustainable and/or community gardening. Each of these PODs can be provided with:

- ✓ A manual of notes explaining how to setup, promote and run a local gardening group
- ✓ 2 x one day workshops (a couple of months apart) on a range of topics. (See attached schedule of workshops)
- ✓ Ongoing group support via the SGA website

In Addition

At the conclusion of this project SGA will produce and make available a 'How to' **Community Based Gardening Instruction Manual**, based on the information and experiences gathered throughout this project. This electronic resource will be accessible to other groups and/or communities across Victoria who wish to setup up a similar project within their local community. It can also form the basis of funding applications beyond the scope and capacity of this project.

Who Can Apply?

- Community Groups in Victorian bushfire affected areas that are committed to the development of Community Based Gardening Opportunities in their area.
- Organisations in Victorian bushfire affected areas that can provide a suitable location for the establishment of a Community Based Garden. There will be a requirement to allow open access to other members of the community who wish to participate in the establishment and ongoing management of the garden.
- Private individuals or commercial operations are not eligible to apply in their own right but may access the project through joining with other community members or by providing financial or in-kind support.

Community groups that include the following in their membership or activities will be well regarded:

- ✓ families, children and youth
- ✓ community capacity building and social support services
- ✓ community education including early years' learning, public schools and libraries
- ✓ gardening, environmental and sustainability practices
- ✓ multigenerational involvement
- ✓ equitable access to disability services

Applicants that are supported by multiple community groups will be well regarded

Expectations of the Project Applicants

- If a formal group structure (association/club etc) does not pre-exist this project, applicant groups should be willing to establish a formal association for the ongoing management of the gardens
- Applicant groups should have a reasonable expectation of accessing a suitable area of land of approximately 500sqm for the establishment of the community based garden. This land should be available under a long term lease arrangement with the provider of the land. If suitable land has been identified but has not yet been secured, applicant groups should still apply to be considered for this project as SGA and the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust may be able to assist with this part of the application process
- Applications that require the outright purchase of freehold land will not be considered for this project
- The private donation of land will be considered if the designated site is considered to be suitable for this project and the site does not require capital improvement beyond the capacity of this project budget

Project Timelines

Objective	Dates	Comments
INFORM Victorian bushfire affected communities of this project	Sept/Oct 2010	The SGA Project Coordinator will contact local Community Recovery Committees, local govt, schools, n'hood houses, community groups etc in bushfire areas. Both informal and public meetings can be facilitated where appropriate or as requested by the community. Written communications may be sufficient to promote the project in many areas.
INVITE participation from bushfire affected communities via the attached Expression of Interest Form (Eol)	Sept/Oct 2010	If necessary community groups can ask SGA's Project Coordinator for assistance and clarification when completing this form. Details are provided on the Eol.
RECEIVE completed Eol forms from interested community groups	Oct/Nov 2010	There is no closing date for lodging a completed Eol. However communities are encouraged to apply during these two months in order to be considered. If four suitable communities have not been found during this time, further Eols will be accepted until the project is fully subscribed. All communities who lodge an Expression of Interest will be contacted to advise of the progress of their application. Applicants who are considered not to be ready to participate in Stream 1 of the project will be offered an opportunity to access Stream 2
SELECT four communities to participate in the 'Establishing Community Based Gardens' phase of the project	Late Nov to early Dec 2010	Two communities will be selected for the planned installation of gardens between June and November 2011 Two communities will be selected for the planned installation of gardens between February and June 2012
EMPLOY a local facilitator in each of the four communities selected for the 'Establishing a Community Based Gardens' phase of the project	Dec/Jan 2011 Jun/Jul 2011	Two communities will be provided with a local facilitator from January 2011. This will be a permanent part- time position for the 2 years of the project. Two communities will be provided with a local facilitator from July 2011. This will be a permanent part- time position for the 2 years of the project.
CREATE Community Based Gardens in the four selected communities, made possible by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the vision, goodwill and skills of the local communities	June 2011 to Dec 2012	Two gardens will commence construction in June 2011. A further two gardens will commence in November 2011
PROMOTE sustainable gardening through the setup, training and support of local POD gardening groups	Jan 2011 to Dec 2012	POD Gardening Groups will be established as required. Communities who do not want to participate in the creation of a Community Garden Asset can apply to create a POD group at any time

Community Based Gardens in Bushfire Affected Areas of Victoria

Schedule of Workshops Provided

Stream 1 – Community Based Gardens

Gardening Workshops – 2 hours	Organisational Workshops – 2 hours
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainable Garden Design 2. Understanding Soils and Other Growing 3. Composting and Worm Farming 4. Effective Irrigation Systems 5. Plant Propagation from Seeds and Cuttings 6. Growing Summer Vegetables 7. Growing Winter Vegetables 8. Grafting and Budding Fruit Trees 9. Pruning and Maintaining Fruit Trees 10. Natural Remedies for Plant Pests and Diseases 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting Up a Club or Community Association 2. Financial Management for Clubs and Associations 3. Preparing a Successful Funding Application 4. Setting Goals and Working Collaboratively 5. What To Do When Things Go Wrong

Note: In order to maximise opportunities for all members of bushfire affected communities to engage in sustainable gardening initiatives, the gardening workshops will be open to all interested gardeners in the community. However these workshops will only be delivered in communities where a Community Based Garden is being established under this project.

Stream 2 – POD Gardening Groups

Workshop 1 – Full Day (6 hours)	Workshop 2– Full Day (6 hours)
<p>Establishing a POD Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding group dynamics • Informal team building • Leadership • Communication • Running meetings and events • Resources <p>Gardening After the Bushfires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-fire soil issues • Sustainable garden designs • Natural soil improvement • Compost and Mulch • Water capture and Irrigation • Habitat Gardens • Seasonal Vegetables 	<p>Sustaining a POD Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting new members • Ongoing motivation • Delegating roles • Conflict resolution • Connecting with other PODs • Utilising external resources <p>Regenerating through Gardening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit Trees and Perennial Plants • Plant propagation • Natural methods of pest control • Seed collection and saving • Harvesting produce • Pruning and seasonal care of plants • Gardening Q&A session

Note: In order to maximise opportunities for all members of bushfire affected communities to engage in sustainable gardening initiatives, the gardening workshops will be open to all interested gardeners in the community. However these workshops will only be delivered in communities where a POD (or PODs) is being established.