

Local Government Program

2025–26
Grant Funding
Guidelines

Council Modernisation Grants

Released
October 2025



**Government
of South Australia**
Green Industries SA

Contents

About Green Industries SA.....	3
South Australia’s waste strategy.....	3
About Council Modernisation Grants	3
Grant funding overview.....	4
Conditions of funding.....	8
Submitting your application	9
Assessment process	10
Grant agreement	12

Acknowledgement of Country

Green Industries SA acknowledges and respects the Traditional Custodians whose ancestral lands we live and work upon, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual connections, and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country.

We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their nations in South Australia, and across Australia.

About Green Industries SA

Green Industries SA (GISA) is an enabler and driver of change, supporting the development of the circular economy through diverse collaborations which improve productivity, resilience, resource efficiency and the environment.

GISA works to transform how South Australians use and value resources, and the agency's objectives under the *Green Industries SA Act 2004* are to:

- promote waste management practices that, as far as possible, eliminate waste or its consignment to landfill
- promote innovation and business activity in the waste management, resource recovery and green industry sectors, recognising these areas present valuable opportunities to contribute to the state's economic growth.

[Learn more about GISA.](#)

South Australia's waste strategy

The Council Modernisation grants program supports implementation of [South Australia's Waste Strategy 2020-2025](#) and the draft [Accelerating SA's transition to a circular economy: South Australia's waste strategy 2025–2030](#) which will be finalised in late 2025.

South Australia's Waste Strategy 2020-2025 is underpinned by the internationally recognised waste management hierarchy, which is the guiding principle of the *Green Industries SA Act 2004*. Its efforts focus on the highest levels of the hierarchy considering social, environmental, and economic practicalities. A transition to a circular economy is also a priority and a guiding focus for the strategy.

The Council Modernisation Grants program emphasises:

- 5A. the higher rungs of the waste management hierarchy – avoid, reduce, reuse, and recycle – where unnecessary use of materials is avoided or reduced, materials are separated as close as possible to their point of generation, and safely used for their highest order purpose
- 6A. the principles of a circular economy – reduced reliance on virgin materials by keeping materials circulating in the economy for as long as possible, at their highest value use, and thereby reducing waste and pollution, and harm to the environment.

About Council Modernisation Grants

Since 2005 GISA, formerly Zero Waste SA, has funded metropolitan and regional councils to implement improved waste and recycling collection systems for residents. There has been increased emphasis on diversion from landfill using better performing kerbside systems in tandem with other initiatives, such as investment in education, regional planning, research and development, and infrastructure. These programs have been successful in promoting

safe, high-performance recycling systems to South Australian councils. However, data¹ shows that the overall average 3-bin recovery rate is below the metropolitan municipal solid waste diversion target of 60% by 2023 (including from high performing bin systems) and 70% by 2025, as set out in *South Australia's Waste Strategy 2020-25*. Further steps need to be taken to achieve the 2025 target.

Continuing with a 'business as usual' approach would limit the ability to maintain South Australia's exemplar leadership in the waste management and recycling sector and generate economic activity. There is an imperative to encourage innovation and best practice in the local government sector – to better utilise innovative resource recovery options and drive modernisation through:

- investment in technology and broader market testing
- researching and piloting of all aspects of circular business models and practices
- waste management and resource recovery service provision
- capacity and capability building.

By embracing modernised practices and technologies, South Australian councils can expect to reduce service costs, improve operational performance, and increase householder satisfaction and engagement.

Aim

The Council Modernisation Grants program aims to encourage South Australian councils to increase implementation of circular economy principles and improve waste management and recycling services through the introduction of innovative initiatives, strategies, actions and approaches.

Objective

The above will be achieved by implementing a range of applicable initiatives supported through the program, including:

- 7A. implementing trials of alternative collection arrangements for organics
- 8A. undertaking eligible market research/bin tagging
- 9A. regional waste management planning and coordination
- 10A. other initiatives as described in this guideline.

Outcomes

The modernisation measures should result in operational efficiencies, improved understanding of disposal behaviours, regional collaboration, or circular economy benefits for the community.

Grant funding overview

Funding is available to all South Australian councils and subsidiaries under the *Local*

¹ Green Industries SA, South Australia's Kerbside Waste Performance (state & regional report) 2021-22, 2023

Government Act 1999 that manage waste and recycling services (including organics) for residential and small business ratepayers. Services include:

- waste and recyclables collected through kerbside collected bins
- hard waste
- waste and recyclables collected at drop-off facilities
- public place recycling
- council-operated commercial collection services.

Priority areas

Priority areas which are eligible for funding under this program are identified below.

Other proposals which align with the program's aim, objective and outcomes relating to innovation and economic development are encouraged. It is expected that applications will include an assessment of community impact and/or consultation with other stakeholders, such as waste and recycling processing facilities.

Priority area A: Maximising collection of food waste through kerbside systems

Food waste makes up 40% of household residual waste (waste left over after recyclables are removed) and up to 22% of total household kerbside collected material. With around 3.3 kg per household of food waste presented for kerbside collection each week, it is one of the largest components of collected household waste in metropolitan Adelaide, impacting on council landfill costs.

All metropolitan Adelaide councils allow food waste to be placed in kerbside organics bins, however the efficacy of this approach varies between councils with differing collection frequencies, provision of kitchen caddies and accessibility of compostable liners.

Priority area A is for pilot projects to increase food waste diversion in 2 areas:

- Pilots across a geographic area to trial and evaluate alternative bin and collection systems models to encourage optimum uptake. This may include alternate bin collection frequencies where residents can select the frequency of their organics collection service/suite of services².

Applicants are encouraged to refer to the [SA Better Practice Guide – Sustainable Kerbside Services](#) for guidance on implementing alternative collection models.

- Feedback loops to households on how to minimise contamination and maximise waste diversion (may include bin tagging/technological solutions).

Note that trials should be for a minimum 12-month consecutive period with a view to continuing a service.

² Section 10(2) of the *Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010* requires metropolitan councils to provide a weekly general kerbside waste collection service (other than for recyclable waste or vegetative matter) in respect of residential premises within its area.

Refer to GISA's [Kerbside Food Waste System Grants](#) for financial support for the rollout of universal, area-wide 'high-performing food waste collection systems' incorporating a kitchen container/caddy, initial provision of compostable bags for diversion and education materials. Where required, funding for additional kerbside organics bins in regional areas may also be sought through this program and will need to be discussed with the Program Manager in the first instance.

Priority area B: Market research to assess ratepayer attitudes

Projects may include:

- market research to assess community attitudes relating to different collection service frequencies, and in support of proposed pilots or other modernisation initiatives
- research into the use of kitchen caddy systems in council areas where area-wide food waste systems have been implemented, to evaluate behaviour and acceptance and influence the design of financial support programs to enhance or maintain systems
- research to support the updating of regional waste strategies (see section below)
- research to assess ratepayer views on ways to provide feedback on use of waste and recycling services, such as providing itemised information in rate notices.

Priority area C: Regional waste management plan updates

Recognising the challenges of waste management in regional South Australia, GISA has supported regional councils to collaborate in the development of waste management plans since 2003–04. Regional waste management plans identify workable, efficient and cost-effective solutions for managing rural wastes.

Many of these plans require updating to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and provide future direction for improved efficiencies in regional services.

Plans should consider [South Australia's Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan \(2018\)](#), which provides guidance for the future infrastructure planning and investment in the waste sector. GISA is currently developing a Circular Economy Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan. This new plan will build upon the 2018 plan and the 2020 addendum, expanding the scope to support a more comprehensive circular economy approach. It aims to guide investment over the next 20 years and broaden the focus to include emerging waste streams, circular precincts, community circularity hubs, place-based assessment and higher-order hierarchy options such as reduction, reuse and repurposing.

Note: refer to the [Regional Transport Subsidies Program](#) for information on transport cost relief.

Priority area D: Public place recycling stations

Access to public place organic bin systems is increasingly important as South Australia transitions from single-use plastic to certified compostable takeaway products.

Previous audits undertaken of public place bins in metropolitan Adelaide indicated that, with the exception of containers covered under the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), minimal uncontaminated recyclable products are found in public place bins.

South Australian councils are invited to apply for matched funding for the introduction of public place bin station infrastructure with supporting visual cues aligning with [Which Bin](#). Stations will be required to include at a minimum a public place organic bin, CDS container collection infrastructure (in the form of a bin or collection racks), and a bin for residual waste.

Note that GISA funding cannot be used for bin collection and processing costs.

Priority area E: Regional waste management/circular economy coordinators

Seed funding of up to 33% will be available per annum, for a maximum of 2 years, to support joint-funded regional coordinator positions. To be eligible, regions must submit a project on behalf of 3 or more councils with the incumbent coordinator to progress waste management and/or circular economy initiatives across the region.

Applications will require:

- details of other funding committed/to be provided from a minimum of at least 3 councils (may include additional sources of funding such as regional development organisations)
- a minimum contract term of 2 years for the coordinator role
- details of hours to be worked (FTE) by the incumbent
- a work plan of the projects to be progressed by the incumbent, which could include outcome-based activities, such as:
 - community education activities
 - waste contracts and freight related matters
 - progressing resource recovery facility or circular economy developments.

Note that funds may be provided 3-monthly in advance. A condition of the funding will require the coordinator to be hosted within a Regional Local Government Association (RLGA) or Regional Development Association (RDA) office, and be employed by one of the partner councils, the RLGA or RDA. Funds will not be approved for the engagement of consultants.

Priority area F: Using technology to innovate

South Australian councils are invited to consider how technological innovation can be developed and applied to their waste management and resource recovery services. In doing so, councils should expect more efficient and effective operational performance and better environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Other eligible projects

- Review/detection of contamination (at time of collection), bin-tagging and education of householders to inform potential solutions.
- Projects which improve source separation and kerbside performance particularly regarding the quality and volume of kerbside organics and comingled materials (or reduce residual waste yields).
- Innovative bin systems, such as further separation of streams/additional streams offered to residents), place-based solutions such as systems that encourage residents to utilise community drop-off facilities for aggregation of recyclables will be considered.
- Education as part of a pilot program. Kerbside bin collection system pilots must incorporate *Which Bin* household education resources (available via GISA).

Conditions of funding

Eligibility criteria

The Council Modernisation Grants program is available to any council or local government subsidiary established under the *Local Government Act 1999 (SA)* delivering a project within South Australia in accordance with these guidelines. GISA has the discretion to not consider incomplete applications.

Applicants must:

- be a council or local government subsidiary established under the Local Government Act 1999 (SA)
- be solvent and able to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with Green Industries SA
- comply with all relevant federal and state laws, regulations and any applicable EPA requirements.

Projects must:

- be delivered in SA for the benefits of South Australian communities
- contribute to delivery of the program aim, objective and outcomes
- contribute to the implementation of South Australia's waste strategy
- align with one or more of the priority areas A to F, or 'other eligible projects' as mentioned above.

What will not be funded

Grant funds will **not** be available for:

- retrospective projects (to be eligible, projects must start after the application closing date, 31 October 2025)
- projects targeting:
 - energy from waste outcomes
 - hazardous waste kerbside collections in metropolitan Adelaide
 - 'stand-alone' education and market research (unless part of a pilot project)
- any project deemed more appropriate to fit under an alternative grant funding program (administered by GISA or another organisation) such as:
 - Kerbside Food Waste System Grants
 - Recycling or Circular Infrastructure Grants
 - GISA's *Which Bin* household education program (direct GISA assistance is available to councils)
- any project that GISA deems to be inconsistent with the program aim, objective, and outcomes

Funds under this program are **not available** for:

- operating costs
- fees for legal and accounting services
- fees associated with insurances
- vehicle purchase, hire, lease, and/or repair
- applicants operating costs including but not limited to rent, electricity, water, and subscription, lease, or licensing fees.

Funding availability

Applications for grants from **\$15,000** to a maximum of **\$100,000** (excluding GST) per project are invited. Priority will be given to applications which have a budget already allocated.

All applicants must:

- contribute at least 50% of total project costs (that is, match the grant funding) from sources other than the South Australian and Australian governments, and not including 'in-kind' (non-financial) payments
- have projects completed within 2 years of the grant being offered, with priority given to projects which have a completion date before 30 June 2027.

Collaborative applications with project partners such as other industry organisations, associations and representatives from targeted market segments are welcomed.

Applicants unsure about the eligibility of the proposed project should contact Justin Lang on 0419 948 931 to discuss the matter further.

Applications should include clear timeframes, deliverables and associated payments. Successful applicants will be provided a grant offer from GISA, with payments issued in accordance with milestones and upon completion of specific deliverables as set out in a grant agreement. Timing of payments is at the discretion of GISA, giving consideration to agreed deliverables and budget availability.

The total annual budget allocated to the Council Modernisation Grant program is outlined in [GISA's Business Plan](#) and is subject to change.

Submitting your application

All applications must:

- use the relevant application form, available on the GISA website or provided by GISA staff
- be submitted with a declaration signed by an appropriately authorised representative from the applicant organisation such as the chief executive, executive officer, chairperson, or equivalent
- be no more than 20 pages in length, and no more than 10 MB in size (including attachments)
- be submitted electronically (MS Word or Adobe .pdf file) to justin.lang@sa.gov.au by **5 pm ACDT, Friday 7 November 2025** with the subject line Council Modernisation grant application.'

All applications will be acknowledged as 'received' via return email within 2 business days of the submission date. If an application is sent via email and not acknowledged within that timeframe, please contact Justin Lang on 0419 948 931.

Late applications will not be assessed. GISA has ultimate discretion in relation to management of late applications.

Further information

For further information, or to discuss your application and eligibility, contact Justin Lang at

justin.lang@sa.gov.au or on 0419 948 931.

Assessment process

Applications will be reviewed by GISA staff to confirm eligibility with reference to the eligibility criteria outlined in these guidelines. GISA has ultimate discretion in eligibility assessment.

All eligible applications will be assessed by an evaluation panel convened by GISA against the assessment criteria included in these guidelines. The evaluation panel will assess applications based on the information provided in the application form and supporting documentation provided by the applicant with their application. The evaluation panel may be comprised of GISA staff and/or external specialists at GISA's discretion. All panel members will uphold confidentiality and conflict of interest principles.

If required, additional written information may be requested from the applicant to assist with the assessment. Failure to provide information requested by GISA in a timely manner may terminate the assessment process and the application may be deemed ineligible for funding.

A site visit and/or interview with eligible applicants may be requested as part of the evaluation.

GISA may conduct due diligence checks on project partners named in the application as required for project delivery. The applicant must ensure that project partners agree to cooperate with this requirement and provide information at GISA's request.

GISA reserves the right not to award funding to applicants where the due diligence risk (including that of project partners) is unsatisfactory or is not able to be effectively managed.

GISA has the ultimate discretion in relation to its funding decision and applicants should note that irrespective of eligibility and merit, there is no guarantee that an offer of funding will be made.

The evaluation panel will recommend projects to be funded and funding amounts to the appropriate GISA delegate for decision.

The duration of the assessment process may vary depending on the nature of applications and GISA staff availability. As a guide, the duration between the submission of the application and any additional supporting information requested by GISA (if applicable) and the decision regarding funding approval should take no longer than 6 weeks.

GISA will consider evaluation panel outcomes and budget availability when making final decisions regarding application success.

Assessment criteria

GISA has the discretion to not consider incomplete applications. The following minimum criteria in your application must be assessed as sufficient for the application to be regarded as eligible for potential grant funding.

Eligible applications will be assessed against the criteria below.

Non-weighted criteria

Each of the following criteria will be scored out of 10 and must score at least 5 to be considered for funding approval.

Project management/capacity to deliver

Capability and capacity to manage the project is demonstrated through adequate market research, staff experience, key items identified in budget and relevant quotes.

Timing

Demonstrate in the budget a timeframe for each step in the project process. Preference will be given to projects that can be completed/commissioned within 2 years from offer of grant. Projects that commence from 1 July 2026 may be considered favourably.

Risk

Applicants will be required to undertake project risk management including undertaking a risk assessment of the key risks associated with their proposed project. Guidance is provided in the application form.

Applications should identify appropriate and relevant risks and strategies to mitigate risk when assessed as 'medium' in accordance with template provided in the application form.

Weighted criteria

The following criteria each have a different maximum score as indicated in the criteria headings. Those with a higher maximum score are deemed to be weighted higher than others and will contribute more to the overall decision-making process when considering which applications are recommended for funding approval.

Applications must score at least 50% of the allocated maximum score for each criterion below to be considered for funding approval. Those with the highest tallied score for weighted criteria will be given preference as a funding recommendation.

Benefits of the project (20)

- The improvements in municipal services such as collection efficiency, cost effectiveness, customer service, community impact/support and environmentally responsible waste management and resource recovery practices.
- The potential for the project to be scaled for wider uptake across the local government sector with learnings from all intellectual property shared through case studies and presentations.
- Contribution of the project to enable a more circular economy for South Australia.

Project viability (10)

A business case which demonstrates the initiative will result in or contribute to:

- economic development benefits
- reduced costs and/or more efficient and effective services
- improved services within the community
- improved access to public place recycling.

Contribution to the circular economy/upper tiers of waste management hierarchy (10)

Fostering local economic activity and improved public services that:

- reduces emissions and waste
- helps achieve economic development objectives
- promotes activities at the highest levels of the waste management hierarchy – where materials are used for their highest order purpose.

Value for money (10)

This will consider the expected benefits of the project regarding landfill diversion, reduced contamination of organics and recycling streams, and improved circularity outcomes for the community and South Australia against the total project cost and funding requested. The extent that grant monies are leveraged with other funding and whether there is an existing budget allocation for the initiative will also be considered.

Access and rights to intellectual property

Applicants and their project partners (if applicable) must be able to demonstrate they have access to any intellectual property necessary to carry out the project. It is expected that in most cases there would be dual ownership (with GISA) of any intellectual property resulting from the project.

A condition of funding is that all intellectual property, reports, findings and outcomes will be shared to benefit the broader sector.

Privacy and commercial-in-confidence considerations

All applications will be treated as commercial-in-confidence. GISA reserves the right to include third party evaluations as part of the assessment process and has the ultimate discretion in relation to publicity for successful applications.

Insurance

The applicant must hold and maintain Public Liability insurance and Professional Indemnity insurance (or equivalent) to the value of at least \$1 million per claim for the duration of the proposed project.

Councils covered under the Mutual Liability Scheme are encouraged to ensure all sub-contractor(s) or service provider(s) engaged for project delivery hold and maintain both Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance valued at a minimum of \$1 million per claim for the duration of the proposed project and personal accident insurance where volunteers are expected to be involved with projects.

Approvals required

All required approvals, such as a council resolution, are to be provided within 3 months of the initial notification of the success of the application.

Grant agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with GISA. This agreement will set out the terms of the grant, conditions, payment schedules, project timing, key performance indicators, reporting requirements and other matters.

A copy of the standard grant agreement can be provided on request.

Duration

Grants may be provided for eligible project costs incurred for a maximum period of 24 months from the date of execution of a grant agreement, or as otherwise negotiated and agreed by GISA. The duration of the grant will be detailed in the grant offer.

Reporting

GISA requires successful applicants to provide regular reporting on the project's progress and outcomes. The reporting will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Reporting requirements and payment milestones will be included in grant offers and agreements.

Publicity, promotion and case studies

Successful applicants are not permitted to publicise projects without gaining prior written approval from GISA via Matt Scales, Associate Director Engagement and Communications or his nominated delegate. GISA has ultimate discretion about publicity of projects and GISA must be acknowledged in all media and promotional activities relating to successful projects. Terms and conditions regarding publicity will be included in grant agreements.

All successful applicants must be willing to cooperate and participate in the development of case study and/or other public-facing materials based on funded projects if requested by GISA. Case study and other materials will use information of a non-sensitive nature and will be available to successful applicants for their own promotional and/or educational purposes following initial publication by GISA.

All successful applicants must, if requested, supply a high-resolution logo, and authorise its use on the GISA website, and agree to be listed as a program participant on GISA's ['projects funded' webpage](#).

The value of grants will also be listed against the successful applicant's name on the GISA website, with a short description of the funded project.

Unsuccessful applications

Applicants who have been unsuccessful in receiving grant funding will be notified in writing.

When the reason for an unsuccessful outcome is not related to funding limitations, the applicant may request a review of the outcome within 30 calendar days of the decision being issued. GISA will undertake an independent decision review and notify the applicant of the outcome of the review, confirming the original decision or issuing a new decision.

Please contact the Program Manager for further information.