

Community Renewable Energy System Transition (CREST) Funding Program – FY2025-2026

Background:

As Western Australia advances toward a cleaner and more resilient energy future, community organisations are taking proactive steps to install renewable energy technologies such as solar photovoltaic (PV) and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). These renewable energy projects will reduce emissions and energy costs, strengthen energy resilience, and contribute directly to the City's targets of achieving **organisational carbon neutrality by 2030 and facilitating community progress to net zero emissions by 2050**.

The City of Melville is proud to launch the **CREST Funding Program** that will support these initiatives and ensure renewable energy systems installed on City-owned land are safe, high-quality, and deliver long-term financial, environmental, and emissions reduction benefits. The established CREST Funding Program will assist community organisations in taking the first step toward renewable energy solutions across City-owned assets.

What is the CREST Funding Program:

The **Community Renewable Energy System Transition (CREST) Funding Program** will see the City fund and implement feasibility assessments for the buildings of eligible community organisations that are successful in their CREST Fund application, and to identify the most effective renewable energy solutions. The feasibility assessments will inform the development of fit-for-purpose solar photovoltaic (PV) and BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) designs tailored to the facility, ensuring that proposed installations are technically robust, cost-effective, and compliant with industry standards.

The CREST Funding Program aims to empower community organisations to advance their renewable energy transition through practical, evidence-based planning and design. The outcomes of the feasibility assessment and detailed designs will enable community organisations to confidently invest in or seek external grant funding for the installation of renewable energy systems that align with the specific needs and capabilities of the building they occupy.

The CREST Funding Program is available for the 2025-2026 financial year with \$50,000 in funding available for up to 3 successful applicants. All eligible applications will be assessed against the program's evaluation criteria (detailed in this document), not all eligible applicants may be successful, and future rounds of this funding program are not yet confirmed and will depend on the Council's annual budget decisions.

Under the CREST Funding Program, the City will fund and project manage the entire feasibility assessment and design process for successful community organisation applicants. For more information on the inclusion and exclusions, please refer to the Scope of the CREST Funding Program in the next section.

Scope of CREST Funding Program:

The program will cover the following activities:

- **Feasibility assessment** of the community facility, including:
 - **Roof structural assessment** to confirm the building's capacity to safely support solar photovoltaic (PV) panels; and

- **Electrical assessment** to evaluate the existing electrical infrastructure and its suitability for integration with solar PV and/or Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
- **Development of tailored renewable energy system designs**, providing feasible, fit-for-purpose solar PV and/or BESS option that meet safety, technical, and regulatory requirements.

The above scope will be funded and coordinated entirely by the City, ensuring assessments and designs are consistent with the City's standards and the objectives of its Climate Action Plans.

Please note that the following are **excluded** from the CREST Funding Program:

- 1) Supply and install of solar PV and/or BESS renewable energy systems;
- 2) Ongoing maintenance of existing or future installed solar PV and/or BESS systems; and,
- 3) Building remediation, additions, maintenance and installations, including the findings from the feasibility assessment.
- 4) The provision of funding under the CREST Funding Program and the completion of associated works does **not** constitute a commitment or guarantee by the City to provide any additional funding.

CREST Funding Objectives

1. This program will help ensure that renewable energy installations by eligible community organisations are technically compliant, safe, and cost-effective, while also aligning with the City's Climate Action Plans by supporting the transition to low-carbon, and energy-efficient infrastructure.
2. Supports the net zero carbon emissions by 2050 target (Refer to the City's website here: (<https://www.melvillecity.com.au/waste-and-environment/environmental-sustainability/our-climate-emergency-declaration>))
3. Supports the community's transition to compliant and fit-for-purpose renewable energy systems (Action E3.3 of the [Community Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#))
4. Supports community organisations to deliver net positive community events (Action CL1.11 of the [Community CAP](#))

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicant must be an incorporated not-for-profit organisation
- Community organisations must hold a building or land lease agreement with the City of Melville and must operate all or part of a City-owned asset, facility, or land.
- Community organisations having a shared-use arrangement of the leased asset are allowed to make a joint application however, individually they must meet the eligibility criteria and all funding conditions.
- To ensure transparency and uphold the integrity of the application/selection process, all applicants must declare any potential conflicts of interest and confirm that no ineligible individuals have participated in any aspect of the application. Refer to the Ineligible Applicants section below to learn more.

Funding Conditions:

The City will not accept any applications submitted past the deadline or submitted via another method outside the SmartyGrants online portal, unless prior written permission was granted by the City.

Please note that the below funding conditions will be applicable only to successful applicants and the City will request further information before signing a formal funding agreement with the beneficiary organisation:

- Successful applicants must permit access to City officers and/or the City's contractors to the relevant facility during reasonable hours and with prior notification.
- Successful applicants must provide their utility bills for the past 12-month period and other relevant information within reason for the progression of the feasibility assessments and designs, when requested by the City.
- Community organisations having a ground lease must provide building plans (particularly roof structural drawings, electrical drawings and electrical single line diagrams) for the progression of feasibility assessment and design, where available.

Assessment Criteria

Your application must address all assessment criteria listed below. The City will assess your application based on your responses to each assessment criterion. Priority will be given to applications that address the assessment criteria to the greatest extent:

Assessment Criteria	Weight	Example of Potential Inclusions as Evidence
Demonstrate the need for the CREST Funding Program.	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider why you are applying for this funding program - Current challenges and the opportunities to overcome these challenges - Outcomes or Benefits – environmental, financial, health, etc. - Alignment with the CREST Funding Objectives
Demonstrate efforts to reduce electricity consumption and its associated carbon emissions* *The City acknowledges that some community organisations may have limited control in their occupied building's fit-out. In these instances, please demonstrate educational/behaviour change initiatives.	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy efficient operational behaviours - Use of high energy efficiency rated appliances - Have 100% electrified operations (consider your hot water system and cooking appliances' fuel source) - Switching to LEDs, sensor lights, etc. - Educational programs/initiatives implemented by the organisation to reduce consumption or increased energy efficiency - Use of suggested energy saving practices or similar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Switch Your Thinking resources ○ Synergy energy saving tips ○ Energy saving quick guide

Assessment Criteria	Weight	Example of Potential Inclusions as Evidence
Demonstrate existing financial capacity to fund solar PV and/or BESS installations in the near future.	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank statement - Financial statement

What will not be considered

Ineligible applicants include:

- Any Commonwealth, State or any Government Agency including Education, excluding Parents and Friends associations;
- City employees and elected members who are affiliated with the community organisation are not permitted to apply for this funding program. However, other committee members affiliated with community organisation may apply, provided that City employees and/or elected members are not involved in the preparation, submission, or management of the application
- Privately owned and operated community organisations that are not located on City-owned land or buildings
- An applicant that has failed to provide satisfactory acquittal reporting for any previous City of Melville funding;
- An applicant that the City considers to support, promote or facilitate violence, intolerance or discrimination;
- An applicant that has outstanding debts to the City;
- An applicant who is in legal conflict with the City;
- An applicant that conducts themselves in a way considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interests of the City.

Ineligible projects/items include:

- Lobbying of Elected Members and City Employees is not permitted, and letters of support from Elected Members and City employees will not be accepted
- Proposals that directly contravene the City's policies;
- Activities that are considered to be the responsibility of other government departments;
- Activities that are considered to be beyond the scope of inclusion for the CREST Funding Program as per this document;
- Large capital equipment, including but not limited to renewable energy systems, grey water systems, electric vehicle charging infrastructure or hot water systems;
- Facility/building maintenance and building upgrades;
- Ongoing operational costs such as employee salaries, utilities, rent;
- Retrospective activity costs.

What you will need to consider before you submit your application

- Timeframe:
 - Applications open: Monday, 01 December 2025, 8:00am.
 - Application close: Sunday, 18 January 2026, 4:00pm.
 - Applications Evaluated by City: by the end of February 2026.
 - Outcomes notification via email and on SmartyGrants: within 8 weeks of application closure.

- All questions in the application form must be answered and any requested attachments provided. Please avoid responding to questions solely by saying 'refer to the attached document'. You are, however, encouraged to reference attachments in support of your response.
- You will need to provide your Certificate of Incorporation (if applicable), and a signed letter of support for the project.
- This funding program is available for community organisations occupying City-owned land and/or buildings only. Please confirm your eligibility by referring to the eligibility criteria above.

How to submit your application Using SmartyGrants

Applications are submitted via an [online application form](#) on the SmartyGrants portal, with a link provided on the City of Melville [website](#). While accessing the user-friendly SmartyGrants online portal, please keep the following in mind:

- If you haven't used SmartyGrants before, you'll need to set up a login and password.
- SmartyGrants allows you to complete sections of your application in stages, save your progress and return to it later. Your application will be stored online but you're encouraged to keep a local copy in case there are any technical issues, e.g. loss of internet connection.
- Refer to the [SmartyGrants Help Guide for Applicants](#) for guidance, if relevant, before you start the application form.
- Allow plenty of time to complete your online application, so that if you run into difficulties, there is time to fix it.
- As part of completing the form, you will need to upload supporting documents. Files must be no greater than 25mb but are best kept under 5mb each.
- To avoid losing your work, remember to regularly save your progress in SmartyGrants every 10-15 minutes, as the form logs you out after 30 minutes of inactivity.
- Make sure you hit the Submit button when you are ready. If the Submit button is grey, there is something incomplete or an error in your answers. Check all sections highlighted red.
- Once you have submitted you will be sent an email confirmation. If you don't hit Submit, we cannot see your application, and it will not be considered.

Assessment Process

Your application will be assessed by the City of Melville. The City reserves the right to request further information in considering any application as well as the right to reject any application. [The decision made by the City is final.](#)

[All applicants will be notified of their application outcome in writing within six weeks of the application closing date.](#)

Funding Agreements

Successful applications must enter in a written funding agreement with the City before any progress is made. Please ensure that the authorised person from your organisation signs the agreement, e.g. the club President.

The City reserves the right to withdraw support or stop the project if you do not comply with Council policy or any written agreement entered into.

Recognising the City's financial assistance

Your funding agreement outlines some of the ways you must acknowledge the City of Melville's financial assistance.

'Proudly supported by City of Melville' logo

Please display the logo on your marketing materials related to the project. There is a mono or colour version to choose from, as well as reversed options (for use on coloured backgrounds). You cannot use this logo for any other purpose.

Communications

In social media and other communications, please include a line "This project is supported by the City of Melville's CREST Funding Program."

Please tag the City of Melville in social media posts.

Speeches

Please acknowledge the City of Melville's financial assistance through any public address announcements.

Contact

Should you require assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the team. If you have a disability and find our application process inaccessible, please contact us for assistance or alternative application methods:

Call **1300 635 845** or **9364 0666**
or email **sustainability@melville.wa.gov.au**

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