

Potential Funding Sources for Environmental Projects - Updated May 2026

Please note: This is not an exhaustive list Please note: Each fund has different eligibility criteria.			
Funding Source	\$ value and funding rounds	Description	Link/Contact Details
Grassroots (Fonterra)	Monthly application closing dates, prior to Board meetings.	Funding for amateur sport via sporting bodies and community organisations established for charitable educational or cultural purposes.	https://www.grassrootstrust.co.nz/apply-for-a-grant/
Hill Country Erosion Fund (Ministry for Primary Industries)	Contact your Catchment Management Representative at the Waikato Regional Council	Funding is distributed through Regional Councils.	https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-and-programmes/environment-and-natural-resources/hill-country-erosion-programme/
Len Reynolds Trust	Contact LR Trust to discuss any potential projects	Funds initiatives that align with vision of a Waikato where all children and young people are secure, resilient, and thriving, and where the environment is protected for future generations.	https://www.lenreynoldstrust.co.nz/our-criteria/
Lion Foundation	All year round applications. Board meets monthly. Allow 8-10 weeks processing time.	Wide range of community projects from sports and education to arts and social services.	https://lionfoundation.nz/criteria-for-applications/
Ngāti Tūwharetoa Mercury Development Group	Maximum \$2,000 per wānanga	The Development Group is charged with the task of supporting Ngāti Tūwharetoa in cultural, educational and environmental projects.	NTMDG - Project Tūwharetoa Maori Trust Board
Open Country & Nestlé	For Open Country farmers to plant one native tree and get second tree funded	Participating farmers will buy trees from local nurseries and will be reimbursed by Open Country later in season once trees are planted and verified on farm by Open Country.	https://www.opencountry.co.nz/en-nz/about-us/sustainability/tree-planting-partnership/
Restoring Wetlands Fund (Fonterra & Landcare Trust)	Grants of up to \$60,000 . \$250,000 per year available in total.	Funding is available for wetland projects within dairy catchments that contribute to improved ecological health and water quality	Restoring Wetlands Fund - NZ Landcare Trust
Sargood Bequest	Most grants under \$5,000. Applications for 2027 Grants open 1 September 2026	Community-focused initiatives that build connection, resilience and self-determination	https://www.sargoodbequest.org.nz/
Taiao Grant (Waikato-Tainui)	Maximum amount per application is \$100,000.	The grant is awarded to projects that align to the Vision and Strategy for Waikato Awa and the objectives set out in the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao	https://waikatotainui.com/taiao-grant/
Taupo District Council - Community Grant Fund	Check the Taupo DC Funding portal for dates	This community grant is for organisations and individuals in the Mangakino/Pouakani ward to support bring local projects to life	Mangakino-Pouākani Community Grant - Taupō District Council
Tikanga Ora Reo Ora (TORO) Grant (Waikato-Tainui)	Total contestable fund of \$400,000	Successful applications will enable tribal members and marae to build capacity in te reo Maaori me ngaa Tikanga.	Grants – Waikato-Tainui
Te Nehenehenui	Register on Te Nehenehenui's 'Kākaho' platform to view all funds options	Tribal members and marae may be eligible for grant to build capacity, practice kaitiakitanga through planning, development and implementing their environmental aspirations	Grants - Te Nehenehenui
The Tindall Foundation	Range \$5,000 to \$30,000. Applications by 31 March each year.	Fund priorities include: carers and young children, essential needs, social cohesion, resilient communities, rangatahi empowerment and climate resilience.	https://tindall.org.nz/donations-and-eligibility/
Transpower Community Care Fund	Winter round and summer round Up to \$15,000	Assists communities near Transpower's overhead lines and substations by investing in their local projects that add real value and long-term benefits to those communities.	https://www.transpower.co.nz/about-us/our-work-community/communitycare-fund
Trees that Count	Connects native tree planters with funders.	A community marketplace which matches funded/gifted trees with worthwhile planting groups.	https://www.treesthatcount.co.nz/
Trust Waikato	3 grant rounds per year (Feb, June, Sept)	Initiatives that increase community vibrancy, quality of life, resilience, participation and inclusiveness in the areas of: culture and arts, community development, environment, sports and recreation, Tangata whenua and wellbeing.	https://www.trustwaikato.co.nz/
Valder Conservation Grant (Forest and Bird - Waikato)	up to \$5,000 Sept each year	Conservation projects based in the Waikato region.	https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/valder-conservation-grant
Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust	Range \$5,000 to \$30,000. Applications by 31 March each year.	Assists organisations, agencies and individuals with projects that foster and enhance the sustainable management of ecological resources in the Lake Taupo and Waikato River catchments.	https://www.wceet.org.nz/funding/
Waikato District Council Sites and Significance to Maaori Fund	Contestable \$30,000 per year	The fund is to assist private landowners to conserve, protect, and preserve historic Maaori sites and areas within the Waikato District for the benefit of current and future generations.	Sites and areas of significance to Maaori fund
Waikato River Clean-up Trust (Waikato River Authority)	Approximately \$6m per year total allocation. One funding round/year	Fund rehabilitation initiatives to achieve the restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River	www.waikatoriver.org.nz
Waipa District Council Community Discretionary Fund	One application date. \$66,000 split between communities in the District	Discretionary funds to support community organisations who offer services or support in the Waipa district.	https://www.waipadc.govt.nz/our-services/grants-and-funding/community-discretionary-fund

Waipa District Council Heritage Fund	Two contestable funding rounds per year closing 30 June and 30 December	Assist with the preservation & enhancement of environmental, cultural, and historical heritage in the Waipā district specifically physical works for heritage buildings, objects, natural vegetation, habitats, cultural or archaeological sites	Heritage Fund - Waipa District Council (waipadc.govt.nz)
Multi-year Waitomo Community Partnership Grant	This fund is for a 3-year period. Next open in 2027	Supports community organisations work that aligns with Council plans and contributes to any or all social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of communities in the Waitomo District.	Multi-Year Community Partnership Grant - Waitomo District Council
WEL Energy Trust	Quick Response - up to \$20,000 Community Support - above \$20,000	Not-for-profit orgs committed to delivering initiatives to enhance the lives of people within the WEL networks region. - Quick Response Grant has five closing dates per year - to get a project or idea moving or give a helping hand. - Community Support Grant has three closing dates per year - multi year funding or partnerships	Information About Grants Wel Energy Trust
Westpac Water Care Project (Westpac and NZ Landcare Trust)	Six grants of \$10,000/year to catchment groups	Available to small to medium emerging catchment groups to support sustainable initiatives for rivers, lakes, streams and wetlands.	Westpac Water Care Project - NZ Landcare Trust
Funding for predator control in Waikato	See link for funding options.		https://predatorfreenz.org/tools-resources/funding-support/regional-funds/waikato-funds/
Waikato Regional Council		Description	Link/Contact Details
Environmental Initiatives Fund	Up to \$40,000 per project. Applications open once per year	One-off grants to projects which directly enhance ecological outcomes or provide environmental education/raise community awareness.	https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/funding-and-scholarships/environmental-initiatives-fund/
Enviroschools Fund	Up to \$5,000 for the general grant Applications open twice per year	For registered Enviroschools to fund one-off grants to projects that directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education.	https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/funding-and-scholarships/enviroschools-grant-fund/
Integrated Catchment Management Directorate	Varies	Priority projects associated with riparian planting, fencing, hill country land retirement, afforestation. Contact your local WRC catchment management officer for more information.	Waikato Regional Council 0800 800 401
Natural Heritage Fund	\$40,000 - \$300,000. Applications open once per year. Contact WRC directly to discuss prior to making an application.	Support community led, collaborative projects that have long term, landscape scale, intergenerational ecological benefits, including assisting in securing public assets and public access.	https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/funding-and-scholarships/natural-heritage-fund/
Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund	\$5,000 maximum. Annual applications	Supports volunteer community groups and individual landowners undertaking ecological restoration through animal and plant pest control (primarily aimed at the purchase of materials to support these activities.)	https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/funding-and-scholarships/small-scale-community-initiatives-fund/

Department of Conservation		\$ value and funding rounds	Description	Link/Contact Details
Community Fund – Pūtea Tautiaki Hapori	Subscribe to doccf@doc.govt.nz for information on when next round is open	This fund supports community-led conservation projects on public and private land. \$9.2m in 2024/2025 round to 20 groups	https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/doc-community-fund/	
Nga Whenua Rahui	1 March - 30 April	Facilitates the voluntary protection (kawenata) of indigenous biodiversity on Māori owned land.	https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/funding/nga-whenua-rahui/nga-whenua-rahui-fund/	

Department of Internal Affairs - Hāpai Hapori	\$ value and funding rounds	Description	Link/Contact Details
Community and Volunteering Capability Fund	Always open	Grants for not-for-profit organisations for services and projects that improve leadership and strengthen the capability and capacity of New Zealand’s diverse community and voluntary sector.	https://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/community-and-volunteering-capability-fund/
Community-led Development Programme	Currently closed to new applications. Expected to re-open early 2027	Advice/support and will work with other agencies/authorities, tangata whenua, funders, businesses and local organisations to support achievement of locally-led initiatives.	https://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/community-led-development-programme/
Lottery Environment and Heritage	Small projects <\$250,000 Large projects >\$250,000 Next open early July 2026	Projects that increase access to NZ’s cultural heritage, preserve and protect NZ’s natural environment, preserve NZ’s history for future generations.	https://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/lottery-environment-and-heritage/
Oranga Marae	Contact local Te Puni Kōkiri/DIA office or Freephone: 0800 824 824 Email: oranga.marae@dia.govt.nz	The purpose of Oranga Marae is to support the physical and cultural revitalisation of marae as centres of Māori identity and mātauranga.	https://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/oranga-marae
Pacific Development and Conservation Trust	About \$250,000 /year. Grants range from \$2,000 to \$50,000. Feb & Aug each year	Promote sustainable development in the Pacific & NZ while conserving the natural environment and cultural heritage of its people.	https://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/pacific-development-and-conservation-trust-2/