

Private **Forests**  
Tasmania



# Stems for **CO2** 2024

**Grant program guidelines**





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## Stems for CO2 2024 Grant Program

Private Forests Tasmania (PFT) is leading a program involving co-investment from PFT, farmers and the Tasmanian State Government Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT).

The Stems for CO2 Grant Program supports the implementation of commercial tree plantings in the agricultural landscape for modelling carbon abatement levels, improved farm productivity, water quality, biodiversity, reducing soil erosion, creating a future wood resource, and communicating and educating the Tasmanian community on the benefits of trees on farms. The program has been developed to assist farmers with up front establishment costs to successfully integrate trees into their agricultural enterprise.

Farmers will be invited to participate via an online application process.

Project applicants will need to demonstrate they have sufficient land available for tree plantings to ensure the scale of the planting footprint results in an economically viable resource. Further, the identified tree species must be shown to be appropriate for the site productivity and locality.

Successful sites will need to be assessed for their willingness to participate in carbon modelling activities and communications surrounding the project.

Total program funds available for the Stems for CO2 2024 are \$450,000. The maximum amount which a grant recipient can receive per hectare is \$2,500. The program will allocate funding based on applications received in 2024. Funding of the grants will be made progressively:

- 20% upon signing the grant deed;
- 50% upon a successful establishment and stocking; and
- 30% upon a favourable survival and maintenance report after 12 months.

**The program is targeted at farmers on private land in Tasmania for the purpose of incentivising the establishment of new commercial tree plantings.**

### 1. Program objectives

The program is designed to deliver a grant program that supports farmers to establish commercial trees on their properties within Tasmania.

Key objectives are outlined below:

- Carbon modelling conducted on successful grant recipient properties which identifies the expected carbon abatement of the plantings for their deemed length of rotation;
- Successful establishment of commercial tree plantings which are integrated into the agricultural landscape;
- Communicate the carbon benefits of commercial trees to farmers, producers and landowners.

### 2. Eligibility criteria

For any queries about the eligibility criteria phone [1300 661 009](tel:1300661009) or email [admin@pft.tas.gov.au](mailto:admin@pft.tas.gov.au)

Applicants will be asked to supply documentation to support their eligibility claims, as part of the application process, or as part of an audit process.

#### 2.1 Eligible applicants

To be eligible for a grant, applicants must:

- Be registered for tax purposes in Australia with an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST;
- Operate as a sole trader, partnership, trust or private company;
- Clearly demonstrate how the proposed activity and/or purchase will contribute to the program objectives;
- Agree to complete activities or purchases within the specified timeframes following grant approval;
- Provide a letter of consent from the landowner for the activity where the applicant is not the landowner;
- Provide evidence of costs of items to be funded e.g., quotations for contractors, works and materials;
- Commit to reporting to PFT following the completion of agreed activities or purchases;
- Commit to a minimum 50% in-kind contribution i.e. time, materials site preparation;
- Commit to having signage on site/s;
- Willing to make the site/s available for modelling, promotion of field days and case studies for a period up to and including the time of harvest;
- Willing to actively participate in multiple social media platforms; and
- Retain a current contract of Public Liability Insurance with a reputable insurer for insurance not less than \$20,000,000 for the duration of the project.

## 2.2 Ineligible applicants

Ineligible applicants include:

- Businesses not registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST);
- Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government bodies including government business enterprises;
- Regional natural resource management organisations;
- Research institutions;
- Peak bodies (bodies that represent their members and have a charter of advancing their members in terms of development, research, process and advocacy); and
- Political parties, political organisations or lobbyists.

## 2.3 Eligible expenditure

The type of activities eligible for funding in the program include activities associated with establishment of the proposed plantings including:

- Planning/GIS;
- Fencing works;
- Browsing control;
- Pest management;
- Fire management (tracking, burning);
- Mechanical site preparation (ploughing);
- Weed control;
- Planting;
- Operational supervision;
- Site survey (Differential Global Positioning System);
- Survival assessment;
- Replanting failed areas;
- Site inspections; and
- Monitoring and management of commercial trees during the establishment phase.

The types of purchases eligible for funding through the program include establishment costs such as:

- Seedlings;
- Fencing material;
- Fertilizer;
- Herbicides;
- The cost of preparing and submitting a Forest Practices Plan (FPP); and
- The cost of preparing and submitting an application to declare a Private Timber Reserve (PTR).

## 2.4 Ineligible expenditure

The following are NOT eligible for funding:

- Purchases or expenses related to day-to-day operations of a business;
- The purchase or transport of livestock or feed; and
- The purchase of machinery, tools and equipment.

- Purchase of crop or pasture seed;
- Construction, repairs, or modification of infrastructure such as sheds, bridges, culverts and tracks;
- Replacement of damaged equipment such as pumps;
- Repair of dams and/or other stream water storages;
- Any general operating expenses – funding will not cover expenses such as electricity, lease/rent payments, telephone, uniforms etc. that are part of the ongoing expenses of the farmer;
- General public liability costs for the farmer;
- Significant or purely private benefit, including but not limited to boundary fencing;
- Any item which is included in the applicant's in-kind contribution; and
- Any other non-establishment costs.

Please contact Private Forests Tasmania if you are unsure whether other activities qualify.

## 3. Assessment criteria

All eligible applications for this program will be competitively assessed against the criteria set out below. Because the program has limited funding, not all eligible applicants will be successful.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposal with Private Forests Tasmania staff via the helpline before preparing their submission.

Private Forests Tasmania reserves the right to limit the grant amount offered and negotiate timeframes and instalment schedules, as determined by the assessment panel.

Should funding not be fully allocated in this round, or alternatively, additional funding partners emerge, further funding rounds may be advertised, at the discretion of Private Forests Tasmania.

Eligible proposals will be competitively assessed against the following criteria. These criteria are weighted towards projects with demonstrable viability and those providing the greatest contribution towards furthering the aims of the program.

### 3.1 Applicant capacity and value for money

The applicant must demonstrate:

- The capacity of the applicant to deliver the project – most notably outlining relevant experience and/or plans to engage relevant experience, and ability to complete the proposed activities or purchases within the specified timeframes;
- That the scale and proposed works are appropriate to the aims of the program.
- A strong commitment and capacity for ongoing maintenance of project sites and, where appropriate, purchases beyond the duration of the program funding; and
- Value for money – notably the level of co-investment of funds and in-kind resources (e.g., labour, expertise, equipment).

### 3.2 Project strategic value

The applicant must demonstrate:

- The project's relative commercial value – including proximity to processing facilities, economic scale for a future wood resource, commercial species, practical planting configuration; and
- The project's relative value – the visibility of the project to a prominent arterial route, the applicant/landowner's willingness to open the planted site/s to promotional events/field days/signage, modelling and monitoring activities, willingness to provide financial data which would allow economic analyses on the benefits of the planted sites, willingness to participate in media/social media events and stories.

### 3.3 Site factors

The applicant must demonstrate:

- That the project is located on a site that is suitable for your chosen tree species– i.e., the right species in the right location (appropriate rainfall, soil type, drainage, site productivity, consistent with enterprise suitability mapping, browsing damage and woody weeds can be controlled, practical orientation, accessibility for tree establishment, maintenance and harvesting activities).

### 3.4 Permits and insurance

It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that they have all necessary approvals and permits that are required to lawfully undertake any works.

Applicants must ensure they hold appropriate levels of insurance.

### 4. Timeframes

No applications will be accepted after the closing date.

Description	Date/Time
Program opens	February 1, 2024 at 2pm
Program closes	March 1, 2024 at 5pm
Applications assessed from	March 15, 2024
Applications notified (estimated date)	May 1, 2024

During the assessment process Private Forests Tasmania may, at its discretion, require further information to support or clarify an application.

This information must be provided within three working days, unless otherwise advised. Failure to provide further requested information within the timeframe may result in the application being unsuccessful.

Applications will receive a notification on the progress of their application, where possible, 60 working days after the program has closed.

### 5. Application process

Private Forests Tasmania uses an online grants management system called SmartyGrants. This system is easy to use and accessible via mobile phones, tablets, laptops and personal computers.

A separate grant application is required for each individual property.

Applications will be assessed by a program assessment panel (the panel) for final evaluation. Applicants should ensure they receive and retain an email notification when they submit their application, as confirmation that their application has been submitted.

If no confirmation is received, please phone 1300 661 009 or email [admin@pft.tas.gov.au](mailto:admin@pft.tas.gov.au)

## The Process:

1. Stems for CO2 2024 Grant Program opens – the grant guidelines are advertised and published on Private Forests Tasmania's website.
2. Applicant submits a completed grant application form via SmartyGrants.
3. Following submission of the application via SmartyGrants, applicants will receive an automatic receipt of this application. This receipt will include details of the application and a unique application ID.
4. Eligible grant applications received are assessed by the panel.
5. Additional information may be requested from applicant by the panel if required.
6. Site visits may be required to be undertaken as part of the assessment process.
7. Decisions are made as to which grant applications are successful (with or without conditions).
8. Successful applicants are advised (unsuccessful applicants may not be advised until grants have been finalised with successful applicants).
9. Grant agreements are finalised and grant agreement signed.
10. Successful applicants undertake the agreed activities and purchases.
11. Grant program evaluation.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposed application with Private Forests Tasmania prior to submitting.

### To apply, applicants must:

- Read and understand the full program guidelines before commencing the application. The application form is designed to help structure applicants' responses to the eligibility and assessment criteria;
- Ensure all information submitted in the application is true and correct;
- Understand that meeting the eligibility criteria will not automatically result in a successful grant;
- There will be no opportunity to change an application once it has been submitted. Applicants should therefore ensure all supporting documentation provided is accurate and is attached prior to submitting;
- Complete the appropriate application form online using the SmartyGrants system;
- Submit application in Entity, Business or Trading name which links to ABN; and
- Ensure application is lodged by relevant signatory.

- Include any necessary attachments.
- Submit via SmartyGrants online system by, 1 March 2024, 5:00pm.

## 6. Assessment panel (the panel)

Applications will be assessed by a program assessment panel (the panel) for final evaluation. The panel will include representatives from PFT and an independent individual with expertise in forestry and/or agriculture.

The panel members will assess assessment criteria. The panel may seek further information from the proponent. The panel may also approve a project in part and/or recommend changes to the project.

If an incomplete application is lodged, Private Forests Tasmania may contact the applicant to advise of any required information and the timeframe for this to be submitted. If the applicant is unable to meet this requirement their application will be declined.

### 6.1 Conflicts of interest

Private Forests Tasmania will take reasonable measures to ensure those involved in assessing and making decisions about applications do not have conflicts of interest.

## 7. Successful applicants

Private Forests Tasmania will provide written notification of the assessment outcome to each applicant. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with Private Forests Tasmania. This will set out the terms and conditions of the grant and state the maximum funding to be provided.

Following this, the grant funds will be made available progressively to carry out the agreed activities and purchases. Applicants should note that no contractual agreement will exist until the applicant signs the grant agreement with Private Forests Tasmania and the offer may lapse if not signed in the timeframe specified.

Additional funds will not be provided under any circumstances. If additional costs are incurred, these must be met by the applicant.

### Successful applicants are:

- Responsible for ensuring that they have read and understand all aspects of the grant agreement, associated terms and conditions and any other documents provided by Private Forests Tasmania;

- Will need to provide a satisfactory report to Private Forests Tasmania to demonstrate proof of completed activities and purchases;
- Are required to advise Private Forests Tasmania of any changes which may affect the completion of the agreed activities or purchases;
- Are required to provide access to the property for modelling purposes and field days for a period up to and including time of harvest; and
- If the property is sold the applicant must advise Private Forests Tasmania of ownership change.

## 8. Appealing a decision

The appeals process is designed to ensure that all applicants have been treated fairly and consistently in applying for Private Forests Tasmania grants. Private Forests Tasmania will consider appeals relating to administrative process issues in grants management.

All requests must be in writing and should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, Private Forests Tasmania, 30 Patrick Street, Hobart 7000. Email [admin@pft.tas.gov.au](mailto:admin@pft.tas.gov.au).

Your request must be received within 28 days from the date of Private Forests Tasmania notifying you of the decision about your application. For further information about the process, contact [admin@pft.tas.gov.au](mailto:admin@pft.tas.gov.au).

## 9. Grant payments

Successful applicants will be asked for their bank account details to process grant payments. This bank account must be in the same name as the individual, business or organisation that applied for the grant. Applicants may be asked to provide a copy of their bank statement or a letter from their bank to confirm their bank account details.

Providing incorrect bank account details may result in funds being paid to an incorrect account. These funds will need to be returned to us before we attempt another grant payment. This process may result in significant delays in funding being received. Additionally, we cannot guarantee that funds paid to an incorrect bank account will be returned to us.

If a grant recipient's:

- Situation changes;
- Does not complete the activities or tasks required under the funding agreement;
- Does not use any or all of the funding provided; or
- The information provided to us is found to be false or misleading, the recipient will be required to return all funds to Private Forests Tasmania.

## 10. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under the Program attract GST. Grant payments to successful applicants, who are registered for GST, are increased to compensate for the amount of GST payable.

Where GST applies to the grant funding, a valid tax invoice must be supplied by the successful applicant to Private Forests Tasmania.

The receipt of funding from this Program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

It is strongly recommended that prior to submitting an application, potential applicants seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications for receiving the grant.

## 11. Acquittal

An acquittal is a statement made by a grant recipient, confirming that the grant funding was used as per the funding agreement. Unless otherwise stated, it is a requirement that all Private Forests Tasmania grants are acquitted.

### 11.1 How to acquit a grant

An acquittal form will be provided to recipients, asking for information about the activities and expenditure relating to the grant. Evidence such as quotations, invoices, receipts, statements, reports, etc., are required to support the acquittal.

Private Forests Tasmania may ask recipients to provide a Statement of Expenditure certified by an independent, professional auditor. In this situation, the recipient will be responsible for the cost of obtaining the certified Statement of Expenditure.

### 11.2 Failure to complete an acquittal

Failure to lodge a valid acquittal by the due date will result in the recipient being required to return the funding to Private Forests Tasmania. In this situation Private Forests Tasmania will invoice the recipient.

## 12. Administration and contact details

The program will be administered by Private Forests Tasmania on behalf of the Crown in the Right of Tasmania.

Program enquiries and further information should be directed to Private Forests Tasmania, phone 1300 661 009, email [admin@pft.tas.gov.au](mailto:admin@pft.tas.gov.au). Private Forests Tasmania can also assist you with technical and marketing information. Phone our helpline 1300 661 009.



Note - all applicants must take care to provide true and accurate information. Any information that is found to be false or misleading may result in action being taken and grant funds, if already provided, will be required to be repaid to Private Forests Tasmania.

### 13. Other investment initiatives

Based on the information you provide and your willingness to participate, Private Forests Tasmania may potentially invite you to participate in other investment Programs and initiatives.

Private Forests Tasmania is discussing with a range of industry partners and third-party investors for trees, carbon and biodiversity, who may be interested in collaborating with landowners to plant more trees.

Based on your application, Private Forests Tasmania may contact you and potentially suggest additional investment options.

### 14. Publicity of grant assistance

Private Forests Tasmania disburses public funds and is therefore accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, Private Forests Tasmania may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, the purpose of the financial assistance, and any other details considered by Private Forests Tasmania to be appropriate.

### 15. Right to information

Information provided to Private Forests Tasmania may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the Right to Information Act 2009.

### 16. Confidentiality

Private Forests Tasmania may use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging its functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes and performance of the Program and related uses.

Private Forests Tasmania may also:

1. Use information received in applications for any other business.
2. Use information received in applications and during the delivery of the project for reporting purposes.

### 17. Personal information protection

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act 2004. This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it related, on request to Private Forests Tasmania. A fee for this service may be charged.

Private Forests Tasmania values the privacy of individual personal information. Private Forests Tasmania is committed to protecting the information it collects and uses by compliance with the obligations provided under the Personal Information Protection Act 2004 or its successors. Your information has been collected for the purposes of responding to the matters indicated in this form, including receiving information from Private Forests Tasmania in relation to forestry matters.

In order to carry its business and provide services Private Forests Tasmania may require personal information about clients, customers, contractors and third parties and may collect non-personal information where required. Private Forests Tasmania will ensure that your personal information will not be used or disclosed to other companies, institutions and authorities unless required or permitted by law.

Private Forests Tasmania has implemented technology and security policies, rules and measures to protect the personal information under its control from unauthorised access, improper use, unsanctioned alteration, unlawful or accidental destruction and accidental loss.

Private Forests Tasmania will destroy personal information where it is no longer required (except where required to be kept in compliance with the Archives Act 1983). Private Forests Tasmania will take reasonable steps to ensure that personal information is accurate, complete and up to date. You may choose to be removed from all Private Forests Tasmania communications at any time.

For full details of our privacy statement, please visit [www.pft.tas.gov.au](http://www.pft.tas.gov.au)

### 18. Disclosure

The following applies to all successful applicants:

- Despite any confidentiality or intellectual property right subsisting in the grant funding agreement or deed, a party may publish all or any part of the grant funding agreement or deed without reference to another party.
- Please note that all obligations under the Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tas) or the Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth) still apply.

### 19. Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Crown in Right of Tasmania, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains.



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The Crown in Right of Tasmania does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by an applicant that are in any way related to the Program.

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