

Australian Geographic Society 2010 Funding Guidelines

The Australian Geographic Society (AGS) was established by Dick Smith in March 1988 and he described it as:

"...a group of people sharing similar fundamental aims and contributing funds and support for projects and activities."

These were defined as:

- Funding scientific research;
- Conserving the environment;
- Recognising and encouraging the spirit of discovery and adventure;
- Spreading knowledge of Australia to Australians and to the world.

SPONSORSHIPS

Each calendar year the Society donates approximately \$150,000 to maintain its programme of sponsorship of Australian adventurers, scientific and environmental research, and community projects. Over the years it has spent more than \$8,000,000 supporting Australian endeavour in all these fields.

Australian scientists, community organisations and individuals developing projects in Australia and abroad are welcome to apply for Society sponsorship.

2010 AVAILABLE SPONSORSHIPS

In 2010 there are two types of sponsorships available through the Australian Geographic Society:

Project Sponsorships (up to \$15,000)

Seed Grants (up to \$3000)

Nancy Bird Walton Sponsorship for Female Adventurers (one \$5000 grant)

The total amount made available for each funding round and the number and types of projects sponsored is at the discretion of the Sponsorship Panel.

PROJECT CATEGORIES

There are four main categories for Australian Geographic sponsorships:

Science

Science sponsorships are usually awarded to assist specific research projects, often to support university postgraduate students in their studies. Sponsorships are awarded across all disciplines.

Community

Community sponsorships are awarded to individuals and groups to assist with conservation and cultural initiatives, often at a grassroots level.

Adventure

Adventure sponsorships are awarded to individuals and teams undertaking adventures in Australia and abroad. Recipients come from a wide cross-section of Australian society and are not limited to younger people seeking world firsts.

Environment

The Society's environment sponsorships are usually awarded to support community-based initiatives such as wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, plant and animal education programs or bush conservation.

Project Sponsorship

Each quarter up to \$15,000 is made available for Australian Geographic Society Project Grants.

Project Grants range up to \$15,000.

Funding provided by the Society for Project Sponsorship target all four Project Categories.

Each application will be assessed against the following criteria:

- What is the aim of the project/event?
- How will the project/event benefit the local community?
- Is the project consistent with the aims of the Society?
- How will the recipient communicate the goals of the project to a wide audience?

Please note that a maximum of \$15,000 can be allocated to any one project, however the majority of Project Sponsorships given are for less than this amount. The average project sponsorship is for \$5000.

Seed Grants

A maximum of \$20,000 is allocated to Seed Grants in each funding round. The number of grants awarded is dependent on the amount of money each successful grant is requesting.

Seed grants range up to \$3000.

Funding provided by the Society for Seed Grants targets all four Project Categories. The majority of Seed Grants given are between \$500 and \$1500.

Projects covering more than one project category and/or opportunities for volunteer involvement are encouraged.

Each application will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The application requests no more than 20% of project costs up to an amount of \$3,000.
- The aim of the project.
- How the project will benefit the local community
- How the goals of the project be communicated to the wider community.
- The projects alignment with the aims of the Society.

Special Criteria for Seed Grants

Scientific projects

Projects must begin during the funding year.

Where possible should:

- extend over a number of years
- have tangible/assessable outcomes

Adventure projects

Projects must be the first adventure sponsored by the Australian Geographic Society for the main contact person.

Events

Events must be in the first year of operation.

Exclusions for Seed Grants and Project Sponsorships

The following will not be funded by the Australian Geographic Society; projects that:

- require Society endorsement of commercial products, services, companies or individuals
- restrict access to events, programs and services by the widest audience possible
- endorse organisations or individuals of a political, religious and/or race specific nature
- do not have a written contract between the sponsored individual/organisation and the Society
- conflict with current or pending Society sponsorship agreements
- include overseas appeals or “volunteer tourism” projects
- projects raising funds for other non-profit organisations and charitable causes (see FAQ for further information)

FAQ

Any tips on submitting my application?

Yes! Try these for starters, and if you have any questions call the Society Administrator to talk about your project.

- Complete all the application form – it makes our life easier plus you have a better chance of getting funding the more we know about your project. Check the vital details: name, phone number, email and how much you are asking for.
- Stick to the suggested word limits – provide only what is necessary and make it concise and catchy! Remember we have the Editor of Australian Geographic plus a number of writers on our sponsorship panel, a well written application will make a much better impact.
- Include a detailed budget – we rarely fund an entire project, or the total amount requested. By supplying a detailed budget you show us that you have thoroughly looked into the project to be undertaken and you also give us options as to what we may fund that is necessary for you to complete the project successfully.
- Get someone to check your application – Run your application by someone who is not familiar with your project. As a number of projects sponsored are followed up for stories in the Australian Geographic journal, we need to know that the project is of interest to a wide audience and that you can communicate the outcomes. Remember, our sponsorship panel are not all scientists but all have an equal say on the outcome – if you confuse them with the summary of your project you probably won't get funded!

Should I apply for a Seed Grant or Project Sponsorship?

The majority of grants given out range between \$500 and \$3000, in other words, you are more likely to get a Seed Grant. Project sponsorships are usually reserved for larger projects and may not be given out every round. If this is the first time you are applying for an Australian Geographic grant, a Seed Grant is your best option.

If I miss out on a seed grant, can I apply next round?

Yes, if your project begins in the year of funding you can apply during the next funding round. However, we do advise that prior to re-submitting your application to contact the Society Administrator on advice regarding your original submission.

I have already received an Australian Geographic Society Seed Grant, can I apply for another?

Yes – if you are applying for a new scientific, community or environment project that is in its first year. If you are an adventurer and have received AG funding in the past we encourage you to include new people in your team to be eligible for a second Seed Grant or to apply for Project Sponsorship.

Why don't you sponsor projects that raise funds for other non-profit organisations and charitable causes?

The Australian Geographic Society recognises the need for projects that raise awareness and funds for worthy charitable causes. Due to an increasing number of sponsorship requests, we are unable to financially support these types of projects. In order for us to remain a viable not for profit organisation, we need to ensure that projects we sponsor financially can put our message of awareness of natural heritage and conservation causes to the widest possible audience.

Where an adventure application is received that also consists of raising funds for other non-profit organisations, the application will be judged on the merit of the adventure only. If this type of application is successful the AG Society may choose to publicise the adventure component of the project, rather than the fundraising aspect.