

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Friday, 1 April 2022

CULTURAL BURNING TO PROTECT LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Traditional Owners are being supported to lead land management and cultural burning on Country, as part of the Andrews Labor Government's ongoing work towards Aboriginal self-determination.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today opened the first round of the Cultural Fire Grants, boosting Traditional Owner led cultural land and fire management practices.

The \$6.3 million grant program will assist Traditional Owners continue undertaking cultural burning across the Victorian landscape.

Traditional Owners undertake cultural burning for a range of reasons associated with caring for Country – including promoting revegetation, producing food and game, and maintaining spiritual connection with Country.

Supporting Traditional Owners to practice cultural fire and other land management activities plays a key role in supporting self-determination while also helping to keep our state safe – with 169 cultural burns planned across public land for the next three years.

The program will support existing two-way learning and partnerships between Traditional Owners and the state's emergency services agencies, supporting the Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy.

Grants will be available to Traditional Owners with and without formal recognition in two streams – large grants of above \$200,000 and smaller grants up to that amount. Applications are open until 22 April.

The 2021-22 State budget invested \$22.5 million over four years to reinvigorate Traditional Owner-led cultural land and fire management practices as part of the broader Reducing Bushfire Risk funding.

For more information visit: <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/cultural-fire-grants>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're empowering Traditional Owners to deliver cultural burning and share their knowledge of land management and Country, a vital part of Victoria's nation-leading path to Aboriginal self-determination."

"Cultural burning promotes revegetation, improves production of food and game, and maintains spiritual connection with Country while also keeping the Victorian community safe."

Quote attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"Our First Peoples have been undertaking cultural burning to manage Country for centuries – an important step in self-determination is ensuring this vital traditional practice continues, led by Traditional Owners."