

Environmental Education Program

Program Guidelines 2016



Closing Dates

Expression of Interest:	5pm Friday 8 April 2016
Applications by invitation only	5pm Friday 15 July 2016

Image source

Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby – *Growing resilience in our local community*

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. However, as appropriate, readers should obtain independent advice before making any decision based on this information.

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See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

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How to use this guide

This guide will give you an overview of the Environmental Trust's Education grants program, including information on organisations that are eligible to apply and the types of environmental education projects that we will fund.

They also outline how applications are assessed and what to expect if you are awarded a grant.

If you decide to apply for an Education grant, you should also refer to the Guidelines for completing your Expression of Interest.

Contact us

If you would like more information about this program or require assistance, please contact the NSW Environmental Trust on:

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Part 1: About the program

The [NSW Environmental Trust's](#) (the Trust's) [Environmental Education Program](#) is a contestable grants program seeking to support education projects that help address environmental problems in NSW.

The Trust is an independent statutory body established by the NSW Government to fund a broad range of organisations to undertake projects that enhance the state's environment. The Trust's main responsibility is to make and supervise the expenditure of grants.

Program objectives

The aim of the Environmental Education program is to support educational projects or programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge of, skills in, and participation in protecting the environment and undertaking sustainable behaviour(s), by funding projects that meet the following objectives.

Objective 1	Facilitate changes in behaviour of individuals and groups that will affect specific environmental problems.
Objective 2	Develop and promote education projects that improve the environment.

Funding available

There are two streams of funding available (Community and Government). Eligible applicants can submit a **maximum of three Expressions of Interest** (EOI) to either stream.

Our grants can cover the full costs of projects. However, joint funding will add value to your project, may make it more competitive or may be necessary to meet the objectives of your project.

	Program funds	Minimum grant funding	Maximum grant funding	Duration of funding
Community	\$500,000	\$5,000	\$100,000	Up to 3 years
Government	\$500,000	\$5,000	\$100,000	Up to 3 years

Competition for funds is normally high. In the last grants round (2015), the Trust received 176 EOIs requesting over \$12 million, which resulted in 29 invited applications. A total of 16 applications totalling \$1,084,144 were successful. The Trust implements a two-stage process for this program in recognition of the high demand and to reduce the burden on applicants until they have a greater chance of success (full application stage).

See the [Trust website](#) for information on successful projects.

What's new in 2016?

We haven't made any major changes to the program this year, so if you applied last year you will find the process and structure very similar. However, we do want to encourage applicant organisations to more clearly focus on and articulate:

- How you will demonstrate tangible environmental benefit (see page 4).
- That you have engaged collaborators, where relevant, to effectively design and deliver their projects (see page 3).

Important dates and milestones

The Program has a two stage application process, as outlined below. For more information about the application and assessment processes, go to pages 6 and 8.

<p>Stage 1 Expression of Interest</p> <p>Opens - 7 March 2016 Closes - 8 April 2016</p>	<p>Stage 2 Full Application (by invitation only)</p> <p>Opens - 6 June 2016 Closes - 15 July 2016</p>	<p>Funding</p> <p>Successful grant projects announced November 2016.</p> <p>Projects should aim to commence between 1 February and 30 June 2017.</p>
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Part 2: Eligibility

To be eligible, proposals must have a lead applicant and collaboration in place. The eligibility for lead applicants and your collaboration are outlined in this section.

Lead applicant

Each proposal requires a lead applicant. **A maximum of 3 EOIs can be submitted per lead organisation.**

If successful in securing a grant, the lead applicant will hold primary responsibility for delivery of the project. This includes administration and finance requirements, and performance of your collaborators.

The following organisations are eligible to apply as the lead applicant:

1. **Community stream:**

- ✓ community organisations
- ✓ community groups
- ✓ incorporated associations
- ✓ incorporated non- profit organisations
- ✓ non-commercial cooperatives

Community groups or organisations that are **not incorporated** are only eligible to apply if they arrange for the grant to be administered by an incorporated or government organisation.

(See **Nominating an administrator** on page 3)

2. **Government stream:**

- ✓ state government agencies and/or statutory committees
- ✓ local councils
- ✓ Local Land Services
- ✓ regional organisations of councils
- ✓ other local government controlled organisations
- ✓ universities

Collaborators

Collaborators are essentially project partners. To ensure the long term success of your project (sustained behaviour change) it is vital that you engage and collaborate with relevant stakeholders in your project design and delivery. Therefore, to be eligible, proposals (EOIs and invited applications) must demonstrate how collaborators will be involved in the project.

Collaborators can help leverage time, expertise, material, resources, as well as reduce duplication. Your collaborators must:

- ✓ Have been actively involved in designing your project.
- ✓ Demonstrate the requisite capabilities and responsibility to help to deliver your project.

Collaborators might include state government agencies, councils, non-government organisations, community groups, landholders, environment groups or industry groups.

Nominating an administrator

Community groups/organisations may nominate another organisation to administer grant funds on their behalf.

The administrator must be a legal entity and Grant Agreements are prepared in the name of the administering body. Grant payments are made payable to the administrator who is responsible for dispersing funds on the grantee's behalf and the preparation of financial reports. An agreement should be reached between the grantee and the administrator in relation to project management. It is expected that the actual project implementation will be led by the applicant, and **not** the administrator.

Ineligible applicants

Under this program, the following are **not eligible** to apply for funding: fund:

- ✗ individuals
- ✗ industry joint ventures
- ✗ profit-distributing corporations

Past performance

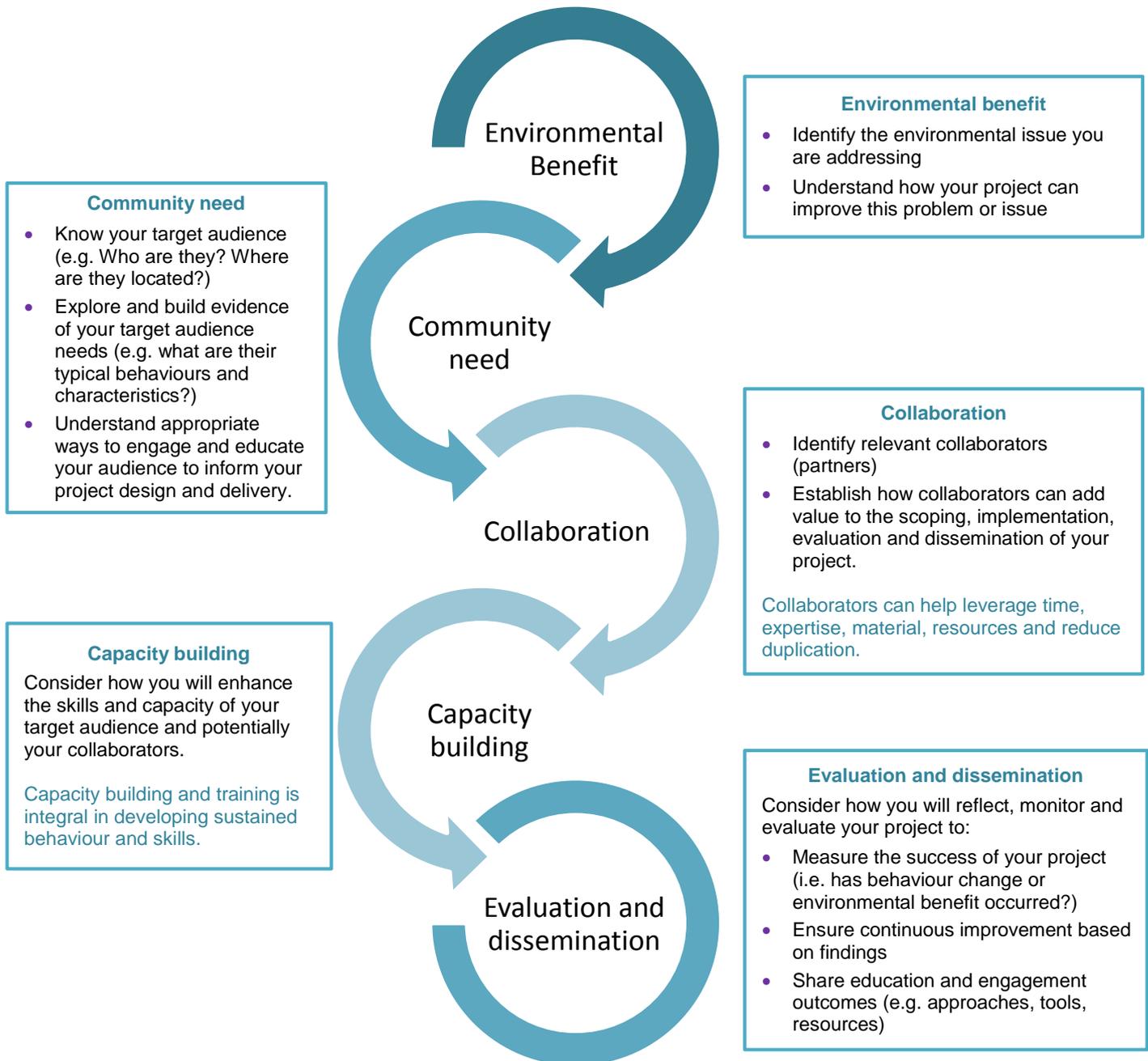
Please note that the Trust will take into consideration any record of past poor performance in respect of previous grants projects, or any history of non-compliance with statutory or regulatory obligations when assessing eligibility.

If it is considered that negative past performance presents a substantial risk to the timely and effective performance of the project, an applicant will be asked to respond to the negative determination and this response will be taken into consideration alongside the overall merits of the EOI. Special conditions may be included in the funding agreement to address any issues of concern.

Part 3: What can be funded?

Guiding principles of environmental education projects

EOIs and applications should incorporate the following principles for effective and impactful environmental education projects. These principles are also reflected in the assessment criteria (see page 8).



Target audience focusses

We are seeking projects where there are opportunities or challenges in getting audiences to understand, care and act differently with regard to their environment, and in particular, projects applying innovative approaches to educate and engage their audiences.

Target audiences can be based on a range of characteristics, including geographical location, socio-economic status, specific needs, drivers, or interests.

The Trust uses a merit-based assessment process for all applications, so does not allocate specific funding for specific areas or regions of the state. However, in recognition of the historically low allocation of Education program grants to regional areas, we strongly encourage applications from regional and rural communities, or projects that incorporate regional collaborations or partnerships.

What the Environmental Trust will not fund

The following activities are **not** eligible for funding:

- ✘ Projects that, in the normal course of events, are clearly the core business of local or state government authorities or educational institutions.

'Core business' can be difficult to define as it varies for different organisations. As a general guideline, core business is essential business or legal responsibility of an organisation. The Trust will consider funding works that are related to core business but additional to the organisations usual work or responsibilities.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their project is not core business.

- ✘ Continuing administration/operational costs of organisations.
- ✘ Capital equipment purchases, unless it is more cost effective to purchase than to lease capital equipment for the life of the project. Costs for capital items should generally not exceed 20 per cent of the total project budget.
- ✘ One-off information activities and events (projects that will not lead [or contribute to] sustained change in behaviour and skills).
- ✘ Projects that fund devolved grants (i.e. projects offering grants to other organisations).
- ✘ Ongoing maintenance of projects to which organisations have committed as part of a previous grant or their core business operations.
- ✘ Reimbursement of salaries of existing state or local government staff who will be supervising or working on the project as part of their **usual** duties.
- ✘ Retrospective funding. That is, activities that have commenced before the grant is offered and accepted. You should plan to begin your proposed activity after **1 February 2017**.

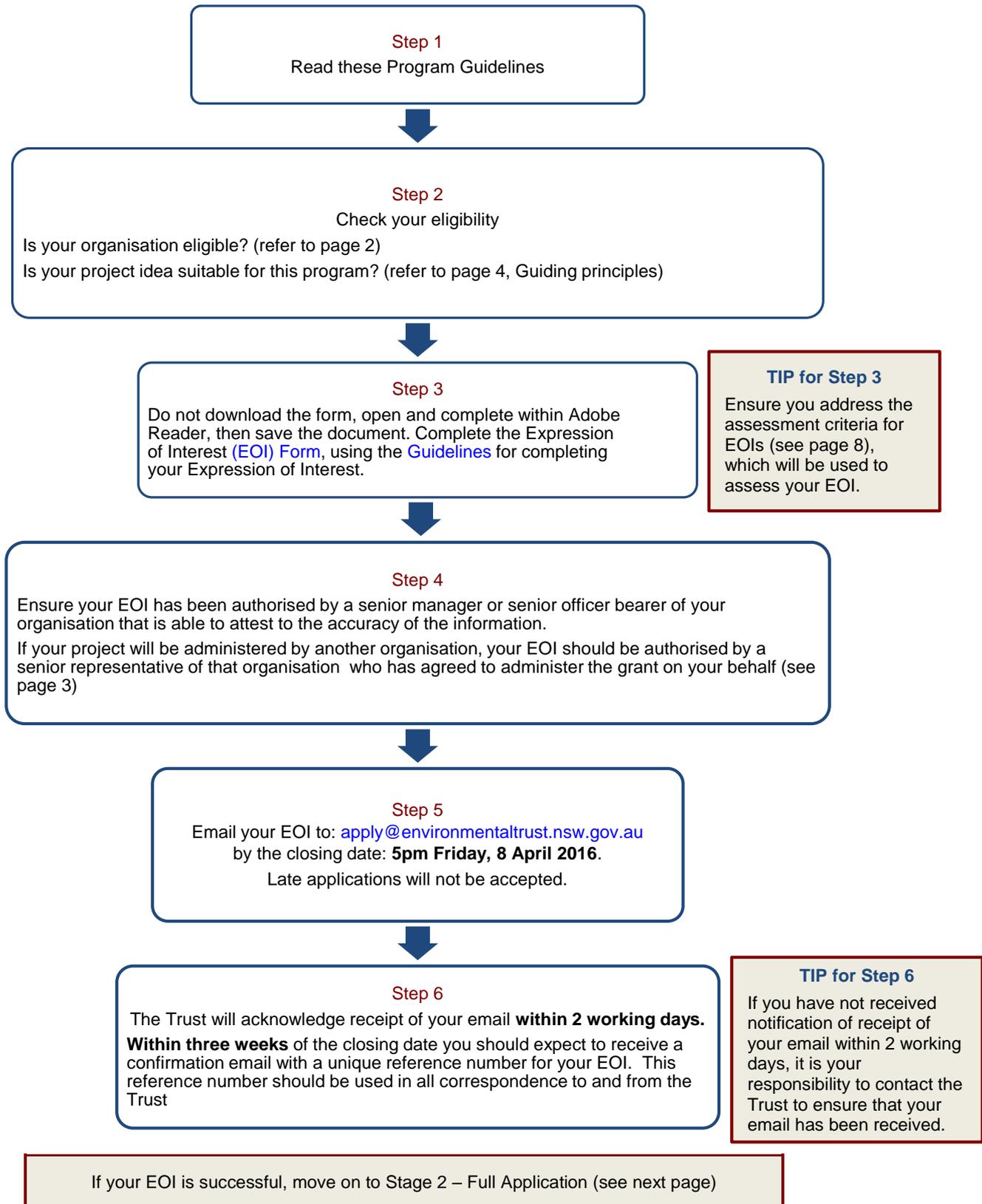
Examples of education projects funded in previous years are available on the [Trust's website](#)

Part 4: Application process

The Education Program has a two stage application process.

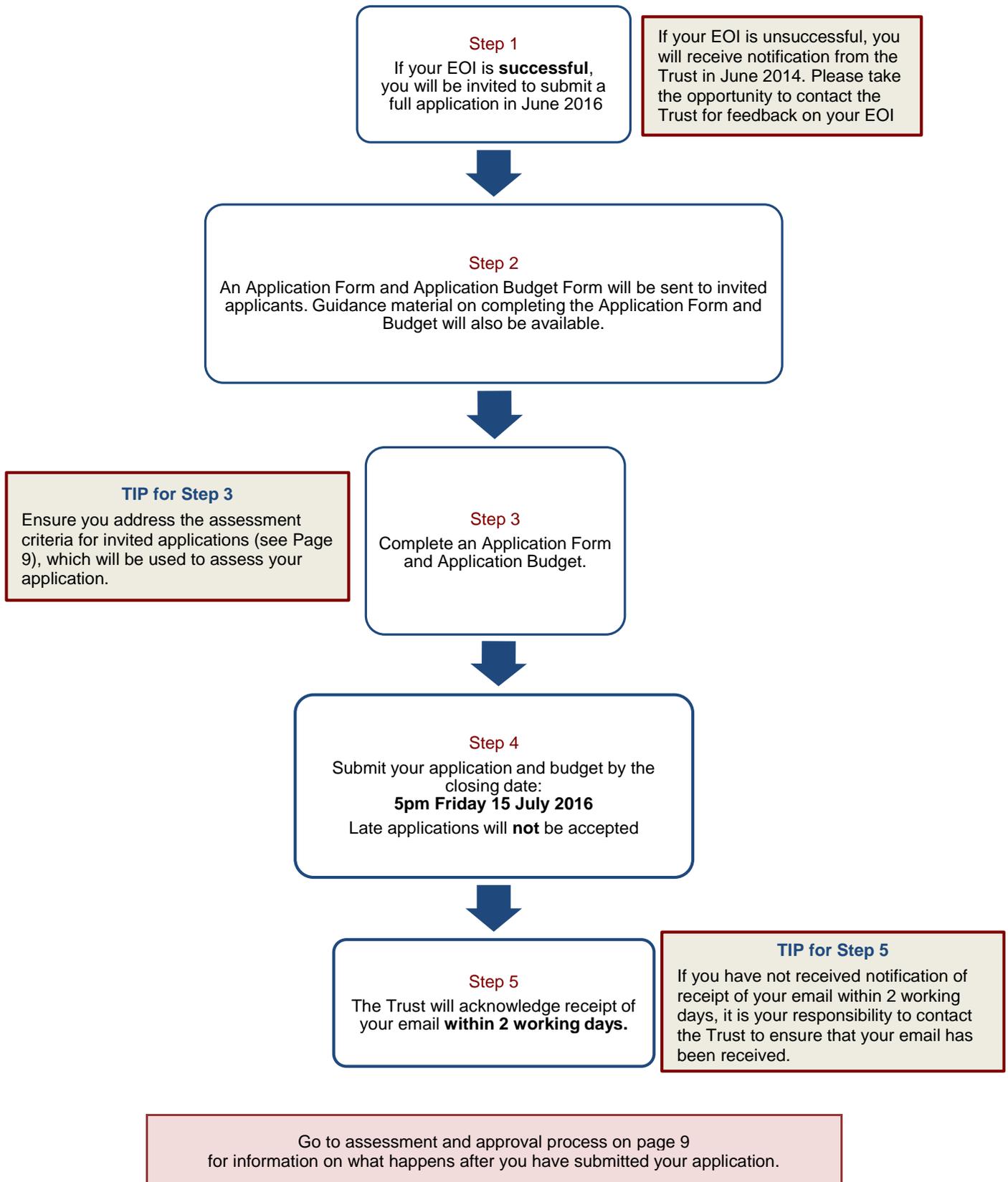
How to apply: Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

The following flow chart takes you through the steps of how to lodge an Expression of Interest in Stage 1 of the Education Program application process.



How to apply: Stage 2 - Full application (by invitation only)

The following flow chart takes you through the general steps of Stage 2 of the Education Program application process (Full Applications).



Part 5: Assessment

Selection for NSW Environmental Trust grants is a state-wide, merit-based process. Eligible applications will be assessed by the program's independent Technical Review Committee against the program assessment criteria.

There are separate assessment criteria for EOI (stage 1) and full application (stage 2). The full application assessment criteria, as you would expect, are more detailed.

Stage 1: EOI assessment criteria

Criterion 1 Environmental benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven environmental and educational needs and tangible environmental benefits.
Criterion 2 Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriateness and understanding of the target audience and proposed engagement methods. Ability to build capacity of the target audience.
Criterion 3 Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant collaboration established, and collaboration has been actively involved in project scoping. Appropriate mechanisms to engage collaborators established.
Criterion 4 Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriateness of objectives to address the stated environmental issues. Likelihood of success against project objectives.

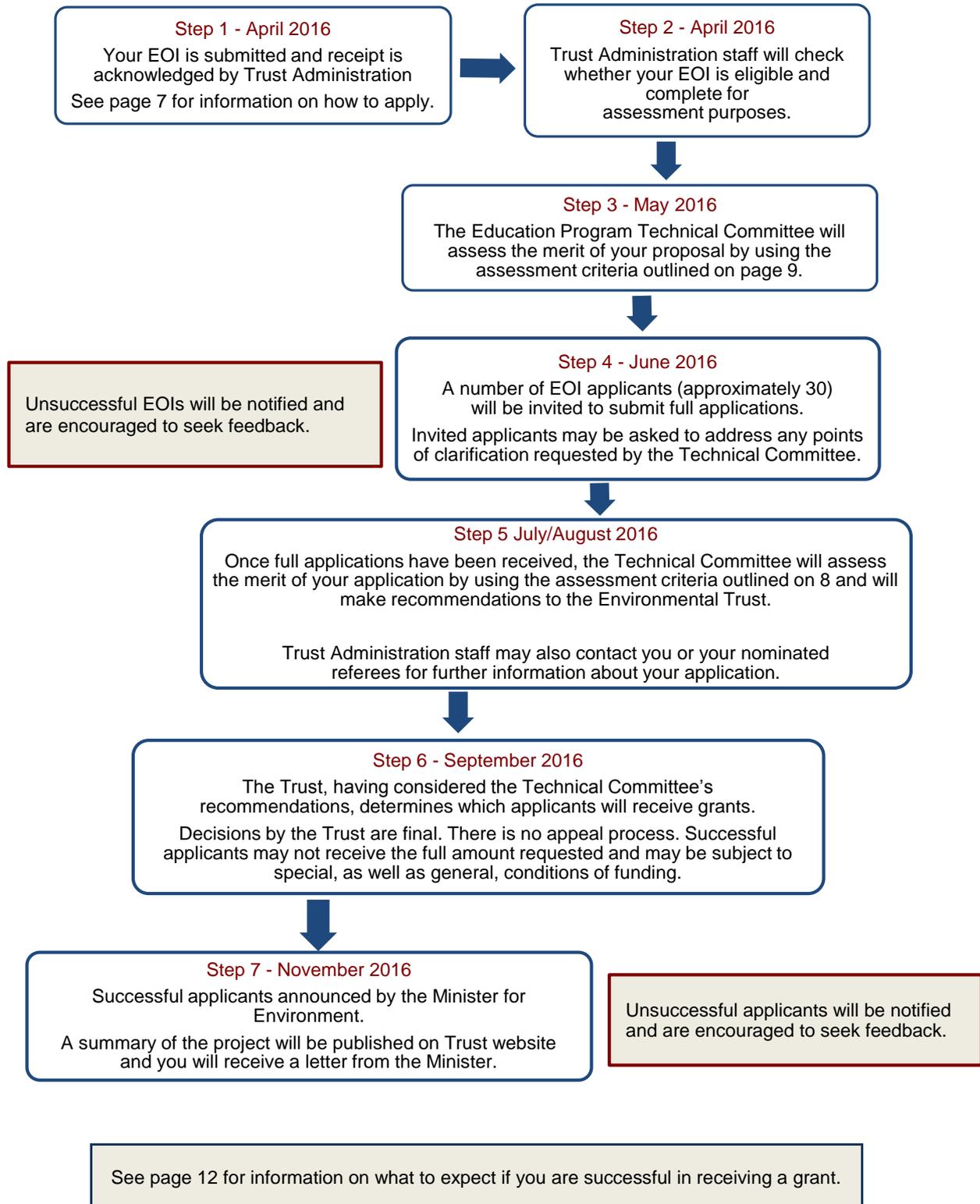
Please refer to [How to complete your Expression of Interest](#) to see how questions in the EOI Form relate to the assessment criteria.

Stage 2: Full application assessment criteria (by invitation only)

Criterion 1 Tangible environmental benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear explanation of the environmental issue to be addressed i.e. is there a need? Likelihood the project will make a difference to this issue. Demonstrated evidence that similar or existing programs/products are not duplicated. Degree of originality or innovation of your approach (not essential).
Criterion 2 Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear specification and understanding of target audience. Likely impact of target audience communication and engagement strategy. Extent to which project activities build capacity of target audience.
Criterion 3 Project team and collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength and appropriateness of the collaboration. Appropriateness of proposed engagement of collaborators. Relevance of project team expertise. Relevance of expertise of collaborators.
Criterion 4 Project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the project plan to show how the proposed activities will enable the objectives to be met (including project evaluation). Stated objectives and outcomes are measurable, either quantitatively and qualitatively. Clear explanation of how outcomes will be evaluated and disseminated. How well the project plan incorporates measures to monitor and address identified risk factors. Feasible time frame for achieving proposed objectives and outputs.
Criterion 5 Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the budget supports the proposed outputs and whether it will ensure the viability of the project overall. The likely environmental impact of the proposal relative to the amount of program funds sought. Appropriateness of the mix in the total budget for materials and other direct project costs and in-kind contributions to the project. Demonstrated commitment of the applicant to continue to support and achieve the project's outcomes beyond the life of the grant. Transferability for dissemination of project outcomes.

Assessment process

The following flow chart outlines the various assessment and approval steps throughout the entire Education Program application process.



Part 6: Managing your grant

If you are successful in receiving an Education Program grant, you will be notified in November 2016. Upon commencement and for the duration of your project you will work with Trust Administration to prepare reports and required documentation (outlined below).

TIP The Trust's Grants Administration team are on hand to answer questions and help you prepare and develop the required documentation.

Getting started

If you are awarded an Education grant, you will be required to submit the following documents **before** starting your project.

1. Project Plan

The [Project Plan](#) provides a framework for how you will deliver your project, monitor progress and manage risk, and enables you to determine whether you achieved what you set out to do.

It is a more detailed version of the Project Planning section you will have completed as part of your invited application

If your grant is between \$5,000 and \$20,000 you will not be required to complete a Project Plan.

2. Project Measures

The [Education Program Project Measures](#) spreadsheet is a standardised list of indicators or 'measures' that are used to 'estimate' the impact of your project.

You are required to report against your estimated measures throughout your project (see 'During your project' below).

The estimated measures completed as part of your invited application would be used to complete this spreadsheet.

3. Grant Agreement

The Grant Agreement sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant.

A copy of the standard [Grant Agreement](#) can be found on the Trust's Grants process web page. Note that the standard conditions of this agreement will not be changed.

The Trust may also place additional conditions that are specific to your project. Your Grants Administrator will discuss these conditions with you.

4. Tax Invoice

A tax invoice is required for the amount of each instalment of your grant, plus GST if applicable.

Your first instalment will be made when we receive your signed Grant Agreement, Project Plan and Project Measures.

During your project

Grantees are required to prepare and submit progress reports periodically throughout their projects. The timeframe for reporting and progress payments will be agreed with your Grants Administrator when the grant is awarded, and outlined in your Grant Agreement. Generally speaking, progress reports are required every 12-15 months.

The Trust recognises, however, that variations to your project are sometimes inevitable and these can be negotiated with your Grants Administrator at any time throughout your project.

A reporting template is available on the [Trust website](#).

Each report allows grantees to provide details on activities, achievements and expenditure. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on the implementation and application of the Project Plan and Project Measures.

Each report is reviewed by a representative of the Trust with the relevant technical expertise. If your report demonstrates that your project is progressing well, the next instalment of your grant will be authorised by the Trust and your Grant Administrator will provide you with feedback from the reviewer.

Completing your project

When your project is complete, grantees are required to submit a final report reflecting on achievements against the project's objectives. A [reporting template](#) is available to download from the Trust's website.

Like progress reports, your final report will be reviewed by a representative of the Trust. Your project will also be reviewed by the Trust's [Dissemination Program](#) team, which collaborates with grantees to add value to successfully completed grant projects.

Your Grants Administrator will provide you with feedback on your project, and if the requirements of the grant agreement have been met, your grant will be formally acquitted.

General obligations

Signing the Grant Agreement commits you to fulfilling the following obligations. The standard conditions of this Agreement will not be changed at the request of grantees. If your organisation is not willing to sign the agreement then you should not submit an EOI. Some key commitments are outlined below:

- Comply with all conditions contained in the Grant Agreement.
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Start your project within two months of receiving funding.
- Ensure that all procurement (purchasing) and employment is undertaken in line with your organisation's internal policies and guidelines. Community organisations should follow accepted procurement and employment standards and regulatory requirements that are consistent with the expenditure of public funds.
- Seek prior approval for budget changes greater than 10 per cent (while being aware that project administration costs should never be more than 10 per cent of the direct project costs).
- Seek prior approval from the Trust to alter proposed outputs, objectives or timeframes.
- Provide progress and final reports in accordance with the Trust's reporting guidelines. This should also include a report on project measures.
- Include the relevant financial reporting with all progress and/or final reports.
- Acknowledge the Trust's support in all promotional material or any public statements about your project. Your acknowledgement must include the Trust's logo in written material.
- Be prepared for all knowledge gained as part of the grant to be made publicly available whether that be publishing the final report or promoting the project via other avenues available to the Trust.

Privacy

- We use the information you supply to us for processing and assessing your application. While we do not publicly release your application as a matter of policy, we may be required to do so under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* or other lawful requirement.
- The Trust may also disclose information you supply to us for the purpose of evaluating and/or auditing its grant programs. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

More information on the [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#) is available on the website.