



Lead Environment Community Group (LECG) Grant Program

2016

Program Guidelines



Closing Date: 5.00 pm Friday 11 March 2016

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.

Office of Environment and Heritage NSW 59 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000 PO Box A290, Sydney South NSW 1232 Phone: (02) 9995 5000 (switchboard)

Phone: 131 555 (environment information and publications requests)
Phone: 1300 361 967 (national parks, climate change and energy efficiency information, and publications requests)

Fax: (02) 9995 5999 TTY: (02) 9211 4723

Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents

Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au

See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN 978-1-76039-271-0 OEH 2016/0081 January 2016

Funding 2016 - 2018

The Lead Environmental Community Groups (LECG) Grants Program is aimed at assisting eligible lead environmental community organisations to build the capacity of the NSW community in protecting and conserving our environment.

New in 2016

The 2016 round of the LECG Program sees a change in timing to the program.

The program will now offer grant funding for a three year period (instead of the traditional one year grant funding). This means that your application to the 2016 round will cover 2017 and 2018 as well. There will be **no call for applications** held in these years.

For more information

Visit the Environmental Trust LECG webpage.

Or contact the Environmental Trust

Telephone: (02) 8837 6093

Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Application submissions

All applications should be sent to: apply@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Part 1: About the program

The Lead Environmental Community Groups (LECG) Grant Program is administered by the NSW Environmental Trust. The Environmental Trust is an independent statutory body established by the NSW Government to undertake projects that enhance the environment of NSW. Its main responsibility is to develop grant programs that address priority environmental issues in NSW and to make and supervise the expenditure of grants. The Trust is administered by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

Program objectives

The Lead Environmental Community Groups (LECG) Grants Program is aimed at assisting eligible community environment organisations to build the capacity of the NSW community in protecting and conserving our environment.

LECG will support new or existing educational programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge of, skills

well. There will be no 'call for applications' held in these years.

New in 2016

The program will now offer grant funding for

the 2016 round will cover 2017 and 2018 as

a three year period (instead of a one year grant). This means that your application to

in, and participation in protecting the environment and undertaking sustainable behaviour. It will provide grants to assist eligible lead environmental community organisations in NSW to deliver community education and/or capacity building programs that:

- actively involve the community in projects to protect and enhance the natural environment
- raise community awareness and understanding of, and gathering information on, environmental issues with a view to bringing about behavioural change across the community
- empower the local community to take an active role in decision-making by building community skills and capacity and providing a greater sense of community ownership of our environment
- assist the community to deliver activities that support the government's state-wide environmental policies

Change of grant length

In the previous round, the LECG program provided grants for up to 12 months. To reduce the administrative burden for applicants of applying each year, as well as providing longer term security of funding, the 2016 round will be offering grants of up to three years.

New in 2016

Unlike the previous round, funding will be provided for three years.

The program will continue to offer grants under two funding streams. Stream 1 for larger NGOs seeking funding between \$20,000 and \$80,000 each year (maximum of \$240,000 in total over the three year funding period), and Stream 2 for smaller groups seeking less than \$20,000 each year (maximum \$60,000 in total over three years). LECG funding will provide **up to 50 per cent** of the full costs of an eligible organisation's community education and/or capacity building program

Funding available

A total of **\$1.8 million** (\$600,000 per year) has been allocated for the 2016 round of the program. This includes the funding allocation for 2017 and 2018.

Funding is available under two different streams:

Stream 1 \$20,000 - \$80,000 per year (Maximum \$240,000 over 3 years) Stream 2 Up to \$20,000 per year (Maximum \$60,000 over 3 years)

Who can apply?

The LECG Program has two streams of funding for different sized organisations. Specific eligibility requirements for each stream are outlined below, however, to be eligible for this program, all organisations shall:

- Tip All applicants will be required to prove why they should be considered a 'lead' or 'peak' environmental community organisation.
- Be a lead environmental community organisation
- Be a non-government, not-for-profit organisation
- Have a full time presence in NSW
- Have the protection and enhancement of the environment as one of their primary objectives
- Be an organisation that is:
 - the peak representative of a specific field of environmental activity across NSW

and/or

- an umbrella organisation providing the full spectrum of activities within NSW expected of a peak environment organisation
- Have their own constitution and be incorporated under the law of a state or territory as an incorporated association, company or cooperative society
- Have annual audited financial statements

Stream 1 Larger Peak NGOs Grants between \$20,000 and \$80,000 per annum

Stream 2 **Smaller Community NGOs** Grants up to \$20,000 per annum

Membership thresholds:

i. Minimum voting financial membership of 60 (for organisations whose membership consists primarily of individuals)

and/or

ii. Minimum membership of 5 affiliated bodies with an aggregate membership of 200 or more (for organisations whose membership consists primarily of other bodies)

Membership thresholds:

Minimum voting financial membership of 30 (for organisations whose membership consists primarily of individuals)

and/or

li. Minimum membership of 5 affiliated bodies with an aggregate membership of 200 or more (for organisations whose membership consists primarily of other bodies)

Ineligible organisations

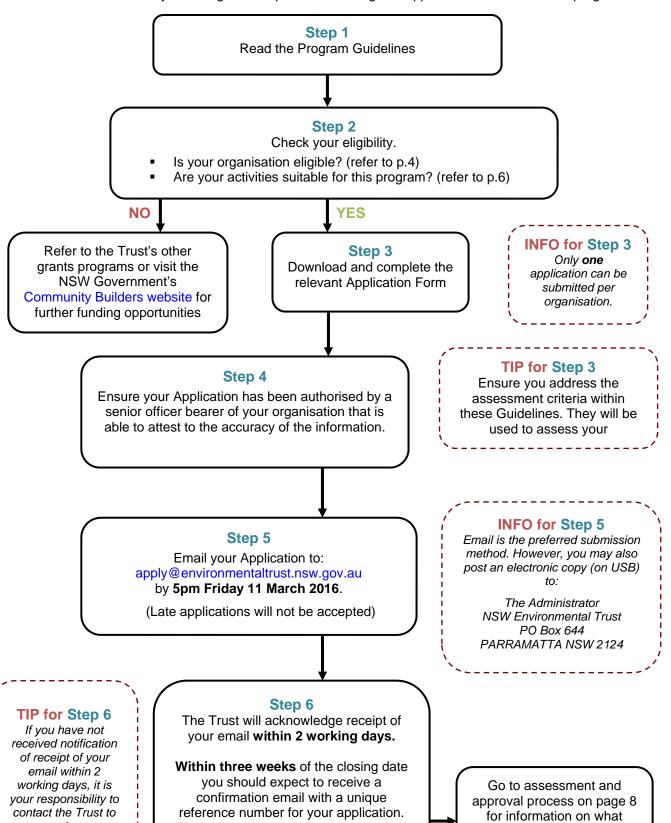
The following organisations are considered **ineligible** for funding under the LECG program:

- Local organisations a local organisation is one which is concerned only with a specific project or a small number of issues within a specific geographical area or a defined district. Local organisations include Landcare, rivercare, bushcare, revegetation or similar groups.
- Landcare and other 'care' Networks and Regional organisations.
- Environmental education centres and local environment centres.
- Organisations with limited community involvement and whose main activity is fundraising and grant making.
- Industry associations (i.e. organisations that represent the interests of profit making industries).
- Organisations whose main activities are commercial or fee for service, even if not-for-profit.
- Organisations which are established under state legislation (including councils and LLS).
- Any applicant with a record of past poor performance in respect of previous grants projects, or any history of non-compliance with statutory or regulatory obligations.

Part 2: Application process

How to apply

This flow chart takes you through the steps of how to lodge an application under the LECG program.



This reference number should be used

in all correspondence to and from the

Trust

ensure that your

email has been

received.

happens after you have

submitted your application.

Part 3: Developing your project

Eligible activities

The program will support new or existing education or capacity building programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge of, skills in, and participation in protecting the environment and undertaking sustainable behaviour. Proposed programs must align with the LECG Program objectives (page 3).

Tip The Trust particularly encourages:

- Innovative programs that target environmental issues or areas where there are opportunities or challenges in getting people to understand, care and act differently
- Cost effective programs that will lead (or contribute to) sustained behaviour and skills rather than one-off information activities and events
- Programs that actively involve the community to protect and enhance the natural environment
- Programs that empower the local community to take an active role in decision-making by building community skills and capacity

Ineligible activities

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

- Any activities that are inconsistent with the objectives of the program.
- On-going administration and/or operational costs of organisations.
- Programs that fund devolved grants (i.e. programs offering grants to other organisations).
- Ongoing maintenance of projects or programs to which organisations have committed as part of a previous grant or their core business operations.
- Capital equipment purchases, unless it is more cost effective to purchase than to lease capital equipment for the life of the program. Costs for capital items should generally not exceed 20% of the total program budget.
- One-off information activities and events (programs that will not lead or contribute to sustained change in behaviour and skills).
- Retrospective funding that is, activities that have commenced before the grant is offered and accepted.

In-kind funding and contributions

LECG funding will only provide **up to 50%** funding for the full costs of an organisation's community education and/or capacity building program. Please ensure you advise us if you:

- have secured funding from another source (this cannot be another Environmental Trust grant, or any investment already identified as a contribution towards another Trust grant)
- have current applications lodged with other funding sources

Tip

All applicants are expected to contribute at least 50% of the project costs through direct financial and/or in-kind investment.

Partnerships

Having or obtaining the support of other organisations/groups can significantly add value to a program by spreading 'ownership' of the program to a wider audience and sharing responsibility for outcomes. You should provide evidence of any program partners' support when submitting your application.

Conflict of interest

Applicants are required to declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest that they may be aware of in relation to the awarding of a grant. This is particularly relevant where the program is to be carried out by the applicant or a contractor closely associated with the applicant, or where the applicant will derive a personal benefit from the program. Each situation will be assessed on its merits, and the governance arrangements in place to manage potential/ perceived conflict.

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 its grant programs. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

Guiding principles

Applications should incorporate the following principles for effective and impactful community environmental education and capacity building programs.

Community need

- Know your target audience (e.g. Who are they? Where are they located?)
- Explore and build evidence of your target audience needs (e.g. what are their typical behaviours and characteristics?)
- Understand appropriate ways to engage and educate your audience to inform your project design and delivery.

Capacity building

 Consider how you will enhance the skills and capacity of your target audience or collaborators.

Capacity building and training is integral in developing sustained behaviour and skills.

Environmental Benefit Community need

Collaboration

Capacity building

Evaluation and dissemination

Environmental benefit

- Identify the environmental issue you are addressing
- Understand how your project can improve this problem or issue

Collaboration

- Identify relevant collaborators (or partners)
- Establish how collaborators can add value to the scoping, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of your project.

Collaborators can help leverage time, expertise, material, resources and reduce duplication.

Evaluation and dissemination

Consider how you will reflect, monitor and evaluate your project to:

- Measure the success of your project (i.e. has behaviour change or environmental benefit occurred?)
- Ensure continuous improvement based on findings
- Share education and engagement outcomes (e.g. approaches, tools, resources)

Part 4: Assessment criteria

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

The table below outlines the assessment criteria for assessing all applications.

Assessment criteria

Criterion 1 Consistency with the LECG eligibility requirements

- compliance with eligibility requirements
- clear justification of 'lead' or 'peak' environmental community organisation status
- clear demonstration of on-going participatory volunteer/community involvement in organisational operations

Criterion 2 Proven environmental and educational needs and tangible environmental benefits

- clear explanation of the environmental issue to be addressed
- demonstrated need for the project

Criterion 3 Appropriateness of proposal

- stated objectives and activities are aligned with program objectives
- clear explanation of activities to be undertaken and methodology to be used
- objectives clearly targeted towards achieving expected outcomes
- · clear specification and understanding of target audience and proposed engagement methods
- demonstrated evidence that similar or existing programs/products are not duplicated

Criterion 4 Ability of the organisation to deliver the project to a high standard

- demonstrated knowledge, skills and expertise within relevant fields
- capacity and commitment to undertake and complete activities

Criterion 5 Efficiency (value for money) and effectiveness

- extent to which the budget supports the projected objectives and whether it will ensure the viability of the project overall
- the likely impact of the proposal relative to the amount of funding
- appropriateness of the mix of expenditure in the total budget
- · feasibility of the project to measure how the proposed activities will enable the objectives to be met
- how well the proposal addresses risk factors that have the potential to jeopardise the achievement of expected outcomes

Part 5: Assessment and approval process

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

INFO for Step 1 Step 1 See page 5 for Your Application is submitted and receipt is acknowledged by the Trust. information on (March 2016) how to apply Step 2 Trust Administration will check whether your application is eligible and complete for assessment purposes. **INFO for Step 3** The Trust establishes an independent Technical Step 3 Committee for each grant The LECG Technical Committee will assess the merit of your program. The Trust's Technical Committees are proposal (April 2016) by using the assessment criteria outlined on made up of people with page 8 and make recommendations to the Environmental Trust. knowledge and experience relevant to each grant Trust Administration staff may also contact you or your nominated program and include at least referees for further information about your application. one representative of community groups and one representative of industry. Step 4 **INFO for Step 4** The Trust, having considered the Technical Committee's The Trust will meet in March recommendations, will determine which applicants will receive 2015 to make decisions on grants (May 2016). LECG Program grants. Unsuccessful Step 5 applicants will Successful applicants announced **INFO for Step 5** be notified by by the Minister for Environment Successful applicants may not the Trust and (June 2016). receive the full amount are requested and may be subject to A summary of the project will be encouraged to special, as well as general, published on Environmental Trust seek feedback. conditions of funding. website and you will receive a letter from the Minister Go to managing your grant on page 10 for information on what happens when your grant has been awarded.

Part 6: Managing your grant

The flow chart below gives you an idea of what to expect if you are awarded an LECG grant.

The Grant Agreement

You will be required to sign a Grant Agreement that sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant.

A copy of the standard Grant Agreement can be accessed on the Trust's Grants process web page.

INFO

Before you receive your Agreement, your Grants Administrator will confirm a final schedule of payment and reporting dates with you that aligns with your project activities.

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

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan)

Develop and submit an M&E Plan at the beginning of your project.

If your grant is less than \$20,000 you will not be required to complete an M&E Plan.

INFO

The M&E Plan is a more detailed version of the Activity description you will have completed as part of your application and will help you to gauge the impact your project has.

The Trust has a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to help you develop your M&E Plan.

Project Measures

Complete Project Measures at the beginning of your project, and update your 'measures' with each progress report (see reporting).

NFO

Project measures are a standardised list of indicators that are used to judge the impact of a project.

Invoicing

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

INFO

Your payment will be made when we receive your Signed Grant Agreement, M&E Plan and Project Measures.

Reporting during your Grant

Grantees are required to prepare and submit progress reports periodically throughout their projects. The timeframe for reporting and payments will be agreed with your Grants Administrator when the grant is awarded, and outlined in your Grant Agreement. For the LECG program it is anticipated that a Progress Report will be due in May each year.

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 will be 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 M&E 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.

Final reporting

When your project is complete, grantees are required to submit a final report reflecting on achievements against the project's objectives. A reporting template will be available on the Trust 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 will feedback on your project, and if the requirements of the grant agreement have been met, your grant will be formally acquitted.

Part 7: Obligations of successful applicants

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Demonstrate that any previous Environmental Trust grants received by your organisation are progressing, or have been completed, to the Trust's satisfaction.
- Provide written evidence from any project partners who are contributing funds to the project, where requested.
- Confirm a final schedule of payment and reporting dates relative to project activities.
- Sign a Grant Agreement that sets out terms and conditions associated with the grant. Copies of the Trust's Grant Agreements for specific programs are available on the Trust's website.
- Develop and submit a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the project. Grants totalling less than \$20,000 over the three years will not be required to complete a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.
- Complete Project Measures (see below).
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Forward a tax invoice to the Trust for each instalment of their grant, plus GST if applicable.
- Seek prior approval to alter proposed outputs, objectives, time-frame or budget changes greater than 10 per cent.
- Comply with all conditions contained in the Grant Agreement.
- Provide progress report(s) where requested and a final report in accordance with the Trust's reporting guidelines, including an independently certified financial statement of expenditure (where applicable), to enable the Trust to assess the project's outcomes. This should also include a report on project measures (see below).
- Acknowledge the Trust's support in all promotional material or any public statement 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. Confidentiality requests will be considered by the Trust during the application phase.
- Negotiate the expected outcomes of the project if you don't receive the full amount requested in your application.