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Part 1: About the program

Closing date for expressions of interest: 3pm, Monday 22 July 2019

Who we are

The NSW Environmental Trust (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.

The Trust is currently administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). From 1 July 2019 OEH will cease to exist as an entity and its functions will be succeeded by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

What the program is about

The Environmental Education Grants Program is a contestable grants program aiming to support educational projects that develop, broaden and transform the community’s knowledge, skills, and intrinsic motivation to undertake sustainable behaviour and encourage participation in the protection of the environment.

The objectives of the program are to:

- facilitate change in the values and behaviour of individuals and groups to improve specific or broad environmental problems
- develop and promote education projects that improve the environment and address sustainability challenges.

A new program direction

The Environmental Education Grants Program was evaluated in 2017–18. The evaluation found that the program is well regarded, efficiently managed within the Trust and addresses a market gap. The evaluation also found that the program could be adjusted to reflect contemporary best practice environmental education which incorporates transformative learning for sustainability principles and practices. These adjustments include (but are not limited to):

- incorporating value-based engagement methods that seek to engage with the target audience’s intrinsic values, worldviews and motivators, with the view of achieving longer term transformative changes in behaviour and practice
- developing a clear program logic to communicate how funded projects contribute to longer term transformative learning, behaviour and practice
- providing additional support to both prospective applicants and funded projects in both the development of their project, and the ongoing management of their project
- refining project indicators to fewer but more meaningful measures
- staging the implementation of the program.

The Trust has considered all recommendations from the evaluation and where practical, these will be gradually phased in over the next few years.
Transformative learning for Sustainability

‘Transformative learning is about eliciting changes in the identity of the learner through motivation, practice and feedback. It is about challenging underlying beliefs and frames of reference about an attitude and world belief, through critical reflection, open discourse and implementing new understandings into practice.’

What’s new for 2019

Changes to the funding structure

The Environmental Education Program will be delivered through two funding tiers to provide opportunities for different types of projects and allow for further innovation in the latest methods of education. Funding is no longer split between separate Community and Government streams. All eligible groups (see page 5) can now apply to either funding tier.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding tier</th>
<th>Total annual allocation for the 2019 round</th>
<th>Funding amount per project</th>
<th>Project timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,000,000 up to $60,000</td>
<td>up to $60,000</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$1,000,000 from $60,001 to $250,000</td>
<td>from $60,001 to $250,000</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of funding tiers

Tier 1

Tier 1 will fund grants of up to $60,000 for projects running for 2–3 years.

This tier is best suited towards implementing local projects that address a specific issue.

Tier 1 projects are expected to be similar in nature and scope to the projects run under the past Environmental Education Grants Program. However, projects are now expected to:

- engage with target groups in the development stage
- move beyond ‘workshops and educational materials’ towards engaging and experiential activities
- allow for innovative ideas and adaptive management
- measure and report on the rate of participation and satisfaction by target groups
- provide qualitative and quantitative evidence of the differences they have made to environments and/or human/organisational practices.

Applications for Tier 1 will be made via our new online Grants Management System.
Tier 2

Tier 2 (Scheduled to open July 2019) will fund grants of between $60,001 and $250,000 for projects running from 3–5 years.

This grant stream follows a new approach intended to enable emerging contemporary thinking in the design of solutions to difficult environmental problems.

Projects are expected to:

- address the systemic causes of problems
- include social research or co-design in project development to ensure solutions are carefully targeted to the practical realities of people's lives
- move beyond the formula of 'workshops and educational materials' towards engaging, experiential, personally transformative or agency-building activities
- take risks and trial innovative ideas
- conduct small scale field tests, prototyping, or piloting of ideas, and then amend project plans based on learnings, prior to full implementation
- leave a sustained legacy in environments/systems that assist long-term shifts in human/organisational behaviours
- measure and report on the impact on the environmental problem they are tackling, as well as changes to organisational/human systems and environments.

An important outcome will be transformations in thinking and assumptions by the project teams themselves, so that projects can learn their way towards making sustained differences in hard to solve problems.

Grantees will work with Trust Administration and leading environmental education and behaviour change experts for up to 12 months investigating and planning their projects in line with these expectations, before implementing projects over the following two to four years.

More information about the Tier 2 program will be available in the guidelines to be released in July 2019.

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 11–13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of Interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Monday, 17 June 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>3pm, Monday, 22 July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Application (by invitation only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Monday, 16 September 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>3pm Monday, 21 October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td>January–February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement of successful grant projects</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Part 2: Eligibility

Who can apply?

To be eligible proposals must have a lead applicant and collaborators. Lead applicants must follow the guiding principles for defining their collaborations (pages 7 and 8) and consider the assessment criteria for their engagement of collaborators (Criterion 3, page 11). The eligibility criteria for lead applicants and your collaborators are outlined below.

Lead applicant

Each proposal requires a lead applicant. A maximum of two expressions of interest (EOIs) can be submitted for the Tier 1 funding stream. However, only one project may be funded. 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:

- Community organisations
- Community groups
- Incorporated associations
- Incorporated non-profit organisations
- Non-commercial cooperatives
- State government agencies and/or statutory committees
- Local councils
- Local Land Services
- Regional organisations of councils
- Other local government-controlled organisations
- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils
- Registered NSW Aboriginal Corporations

Collaborators

Collaborators are your key project partners. Collaborators will assist you to reach and target the primary and secondary audiences you have identified. They also provide a valuable source of expertise and skills to ensure the long-term success of your project (sustained behaviour change). It is vital that you engage and collaborate with other relevant stakeholders in your project design and delivery. Therefore, to be eligible, proposals (EOIs and invited applications) must show how collaborators will be involved in the project.

Note that at the EOI stage you will only need to indicate that collaborators have been contacted and that they show a willingness to collaborate. However, if you are invited to submit a full application, you will need to provide written confirmation expressing the commitment offered by each of your collaborators.
Collaborators can also help leverage time, expertise, material, resources, and reduce duplication. Your collaborators must:

- be actively involved in designing your project
- have, and can show, the requisite capabilities and responsibilities to help to deliver your project.

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

**Nominating an administrator**

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:

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

**Consideration of past performance**

Please note that the Trust will take into consideration past poor performance in respect of previous Trust funded 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 grant 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 and/or sustainability education projects. These principles are also reflected in the assessment criteria (see pages 11–12)

**Environmental Benefit**
- Identify the environmental issue you are addressing.
- Understand and clearly demonstrate the *theory of change* underlying your project (i.e. in what ways can what you propose to do to improve this problem or issue).
- Look beyond the traditional focus on single behaviours to broader approaches considering practices, values, worldviews, and changes in organisations and institutions.

**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, characteristics, values, and worldviews).
- Understand appropriate ways to engage and educate your audience to inform your project design and delivery.

**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.

**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.
Evaluation and dissemination

- Consider how you will reflect, monitor and evaluate your project to:
  - Measure the success of your project (i.e. has transformational learning or environmental benefit occurred?)
  - Ensure continuous improvement based on findings.
  - Share education and engagement outcomes (e.g. approaches, tools, resources).

Target audiences

The target audience will be the key beneficiary of your project activities. The Trust is seeking:

- projects where there are opportunities or challenges in engaging audiences to understand, care and act differently about their environment
- projects that apply innovative approaches to educate and engage their audiences
- target audiences that must be able to improve the identified local environmental issue or problem or be able to engage with those that can.

When selecting a target audience, you should carefully consider a community’s characteristics including geographic location, socio-economic status, specific needs, drivers, or interests.

Note: 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.
- 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% 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.

‘Core business’ can be difficult to define as it varies for different organisations.

Generally, 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 organisation’s usual work or responsibilities.
• 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.
• Retroactive funding i.e. activities that have commenced before the grant is offered and accepted. You should plan to begin your proposed activity after 1 March 2020.
Part 4: Application process – Tier 1

Tier 1 of the Education Program has a two-stage application process.

How to apply: Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

**Step 1**
Download and read the Program Guidelines (this document).

**Step 2**
Check your eligibility:
- Is your organisation eligible? (refer to pages 5 and 6)
- Are your activities suitable for this program? (refer to pages 7–9)

**Step 3**
Access the [Grants Management System (GMS)](http://gms.example.com) to register and complete an Expression of Interest. The GMS will automatically assign you a project reference number. This reference number should be used in any correspondence with the Trust.

The GMS will close to EOIs at 3pm Monday 22 July 2019

Ensure you address the assessment criteria within these Guidelines. They will be used to assess your application.

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

**Step 1**
If your EOI is successful, you will be invited by email to submit a full application via the GMS in September 2019.

**Step 2**
Access the GMS using your existing login details to complete and submit a full application.

The GMS will close to full applications at 3pm Monday 21 October 2019

If your EOI or full application is unsuccessful, you will receive notification from the Trust. Please take the opportunity to contact the Trust for feedback on your EOI or full application.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1: Environmental benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Proven environmental and educational needs and tangible environmental benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 2: Target audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriateness and understanding of the target audience and proposed engagement methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to build capacity of the target audience.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 3: Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Relevant collaboration established, and collaboration has been actively involved in project scoping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate mechanisms to engage collaborators established.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 4: Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriateness of objectives to address the stated environmental issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Likelihood of success against project objectives.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1: Tangible environmental benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Clear explanation of the environmental issues and sustainability challenges to be addressed i.e. is there a need?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Likelihood the project will make a difference to this issue. Clear description of the theory of change underlying the project and the inclusion of more systemic and transformative approaches (considering practices, values, worldviews, and systemic change).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrated evidence that similar or existing programs/projects are not duplicated (this does not include expansion of pilot projects or implementation of plans developed through previous programs/projects).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Degree of originality or innovation of your approach (not essential).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion 2: Target audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Clear specification and understanding of target audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Likely impact of target audience communication and engagement strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Extent to which project activities build capacity of target audience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 3: Project team and collaborators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Strength and appropriateness of the collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Appropriateness of proposed engagement of collaborators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relevance of project team expertise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relevance of expertise of collaborators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 4: Project planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality of the project plan to show how the proposed activities will enable the objectives to be met (including project evaluation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stated objectives and outcomes are measurable, either quantitatively and qualitatively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Clear explanation of how outcomes will be evaluated and disseminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How well the project plan incorporates measures to monitor and address identified risk factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Feasible time frame for achieving proposed objectives and outputs.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 5: Value for money</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Extent to which the budget supports the proposed outputs and whether it will ensure the viability of the project overall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The likely environmental/sustainability impact of the proposal relative to the amount of program funds sought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appropriateness of the mix in the total budget for materials and other direct project costs and in-kind contributions to the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrated commitment of the applicant to continue to support and achieve the project’s outcomes beyond the life of the grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Transferability for dissemination of project outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment process

**Step 1 – 22 July 2019**
Your EOI is submitted in the GMS and you are assigned a project reference number (See page 10 for information on how to apply).

**Step 2 – July 2019**
Trust Administration will check whether your application is eligible and complete for assessment purposes.

**Step 3 – September 2019**
The Education Program Technical Review Committee will assess the merit of your proposal by using the assessment criteria outlined on page 11.

**Step 4 – September 2019**
Selected EOI applicants will be invited by email to submit full applications. Invited applicants may be asked to address any points of clarification requested by the Technical Review Committee.

**Step 5 – November 2019**
Once full applications have been received, the Technical Review Committee will assess the merit of your application by using the assessment criteria outlined on pages 11–12 and will make recommendations to the Environmental Trust. Trust Administration staff may also contact you or your nominated referees for further information about your application.

**Step 6 – November – December 2019**
The Trust, having considered the Technical Review Committee’s recommendations, determines which applicants will receive grants. Decisions by the Trust are final. There is no appeal process. Successful applicants may not receive the full amount requested and may be subject to special, as well as general, conditions of funding.

**Step 7 – January – February 2020**
Successful applicants will be announced by the Minister for Environment. A summary of the project will be published on the Trust website.

Technical Review Committee

The Trust establishes an independent Technical Review Committee for each grant program. These committees are made up of people with skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the specific program, and include at least one representative from the community and one from industry.
Part 5: Managing your grant

If you are successful in receiving an Environmental Education Program grant, you will be notified in February 2020. Upon commencement and for the duration of your project you will work with Trust Administration to prepare reports and required documentation (outlined below).

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

**Work Plan**
You must develop and submit a project Work Plan at the beginning of your project. The Work Plan is a more detailed version of the activity descriptions you include as part of your application and will help you to gauge the impact of your project.

**Project Measures**
You will be required to complete project measures at the beginning of your project and update your measures with each progress report (see During your project, page 14).

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

The Trust’s Grants Administration team are available to answer questions and help you prepare and develop the required documentation.

**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 Funding Agreement. Generally speaking, progress reports are required every 12 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.

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 work 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. Like progress reports, your final report will be reviewed by a representative of the Trust.

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 Funding Agreement commits you to fulfilling the following obligations. The standard conditions of this agreement will not be changed at the request of grantees. Some key commitments are outlined below:

- Comply with all conditions contained in the Funding Agreement.
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Start your project within two months of receiving funding.
- To conform to relevant governance and probity standards, the Trust requires all grantees to follow NSW Government procurement procedures. This relates to all major budget items, such as the purchase of materials, or the engagement of contractors or consultants. The Trust will instigate random audits of grantees to ensure compliance.
- Seek prior approval for budget changes greater than 10% (while being aware that project administration costs should never be more than 10% of the 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 NSW Government 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.