

2019 Program Guidelines

NSW Environmental Trust's
Restoration and Rehabilitation Program



Closing date: 3pm Monday 3 December 2018

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Cover photograph: 2014/RR/0043 - Community based Emu conservation in the Bungawalbin catchment – EnviTE Inc. (Credit: G Hudson)

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OEH 2018/0467
September 2018

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How to use this guide

These program guidelines provide an overview of the NSW Environmental Trust's Restoration and Rehabilitation grants program, including the types of organisations that are eligible to apply for funding and the types of activities that may be funded under the program. The guidelines also outline how applications will be assessed and what to expect if you are awarded a grant.

If you decide to apply for a Restoration and Rehabilitation grant, you should read the [How to complete the application form guidelines](#) for completing your application.

There are two streams of funding available under the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program in 2018. When you have established which stream is most suitable for you, please ensure that you comply with the relevant requirements for that stream.

Enquiries or questions

NSW Environmental Trust

Telephone: 02 8837 6093

Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Part 1: About the program

The **Restoration and Rehabilitation program** is a contestable grants program seeking to achieve long-term beneficial outcomes for the NSW environment.

Funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, the program encourages and enables community and government organisations to protect, conserve and restore our valuable natural environment.

Program objectives

The Restoration and Rehabilitation grants program seeks to:

‘Assist community and government organisations to contribute to the ongoing sustainable management and stewardship of significant environmental assets and services in NSW’.

The program is implemented in accordance with a formal program logic (Appendix 1) that articulates the objectives and expected outcomes of the program.

Outcomes of the program will be delivered through achievement of the following program objectives:

1. Improve and protect the quality of ecosystems and environmental assets managed by community groups, land managers and stakeholders.
2. Enhance the management of environmental assets by facilitating the development of environmental expertise and stronger partnerships between individuals, community groups, governments and industry.
3. Provide an appropriate, effective and sustainable mechanism to deliver Government policy, priorities and outcomes.

What is new for 2018–19?

Following an independent evaluation of the program in 2017, the following changes have been introduced:

- Requirement for risk assessments to address failure to engage the community. The program guidelines include an example on how this risk can be addressed.
- More flexible application form that allows applicants to include links to external websites, and to provide more information to establish why works are needed.
- While organisations may submit up to three applications, a maximum of one will be funded. This is to spread funds more broadly around NSW and to provide capacity building opportunities for new applicants.

Funding available

Two funding streams are available in the 2018–19 round.

Program	Total funding available	Minimum grant funding	Maximum grant funding	Duration of funding
Community	\$2,000,000	\$5,000	\$100, 000	Up to 3 years
Government	\$2,000,000	\$5,000	\$100, 000	Up to 3 years

Important timeframes for this round

- Applications open 8 October 2018
- Applications close **3pm on 3 December 2018**
- Assessment of applications will commence in January 2019, with successful projects announced in June/July 2019.
- A grant agreement will be sent to successful applicants for signature. It must be returned to the Trust within 30 working days of receiving the offer, or the offer of funding may be withdrawn.
- Submission of the detailed Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and project budget must be received by the Trust within 40 working days of receiving the grant offer.
- Projects should aim to commence between 1 August 2019 and 1 November 2019.

Eligible applicants

Community

The following not for profit organisations can apply for the community stream:

- community groups
- incorporated associations
- incorporated non-profit organisations
- non-commercial cooperatives
- companies limited by guarantee
- non-government organisations
- trusts

Tip

Community organisations that are not incorporated are only eligible to apply if they arrange for their grant to be administered by another incorporated or government organisation.

Government

The following organisations can apply for the government stream:

- State government agencies and/or statutory committees
- Councils
- Regional organisations of councils
- Other local government controlled organisations
- Universities (only eligible to apply for funding for projects on their own land)

Important information

- Organisations may submit a maximum of three applications.
- One application per organisation will be funded.

Ineligible applicants

Individuals, industry joint ventures, and profit-distributing corporations (limited by shares) are not eligible to apply. If you are unsure, whether your group is eligible to apply, please contact the Trust on 02 8837 6093.

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.

A risk rating will be applied to your organisation and/or administrator. The applied risk rating will form part of your project’s assessment and will be used to determine additional special conditions in the funding agreement.

If it is considered that past negative 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 application.

Eligible activities

The table below gives examples of the kinds of activities that may be funded under a Restoration and Rehabilitation grant. It covers a wide range of on-ground restoration type activities however, grants are by no means limited to the examples provided.

Tip

The Trust welcomes applications for projects that address any of the program objectives, not just traditional biodiversity restoration.

Activity	Description
Bush regeneration (Assisted Natural Regeneration)	The practice of naturally restoring native plant communities and reinforcing an ecosystem’s ongoing natural regeneration process. Many activities listed below contribute to bush regeneration.
Weed management	The Trust will fund weed control initiatives defined under Regional Strategic Weed Management Plans (covering both Regional and state-wide priorities) that guide that jurisdiction’s implementation of the Biosecurity Act (2015) General Biosecurity Duty. Trust funding will only be available to support projects that seek to achieve environmental outcomes rather than economic outcomes (e.g. primary production). Funds may be requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implement weed control activities that address an environmental issue/problem (e.g. facilitate the recovery of a native plant species or community or ecosystem function). b. Protect an environmental asset (e.g. threatened species, population and Endangered Ecological Community). Please refer to the ‘Core Business’ and ‘Weed Management’ activities under the Ineligible Activities list to provide additional guidance on how to

Activity	Description
	<p>determine whether weed management activities are the statutory responsibility of land managers / holders.</p> <p>For further information refer to each Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan and DPI's NSW WeedWise webpage.</p>
Revegetation	<p>Introduction of local native plant species through the planting of tube-stock, direct seeding, brush matting or transplanting. Used typically only where a viable native seed bank does not already exist on a site.</p>
Pest animal management	<p>Strategic long-term control of feral pest animal species through physical intervention to facilitate the recovery of native animal and plant species. For best effect, projects should be aligned with Local Land Services management plans for the target species</p>
Fencing	<p>Installation of <u>wildlife friendly fencing</u> to restrict access to restoration areas including temporary protection of revegetation plots.</p>
Erosion control	<p>Works to protect soil stability (e.g. to prevent water quality degradation to adjacent waterways or wind driven sand/sediments on a localised level). The Trust will not fund clean-up activities that fall into waste management activities.</p>
Habitat creation	<p>Installation of natural and/or artificial structural habitat for fauna.</p>
Formalisation of tracks	<p>Upgrading or rationalisation of existing tracks which are causing degradation on sites of high conservation value. Upgrading of tracks or construction of new tracks for amenity or recreation purposes are not eligible.</p>
Signage and educational resources	<p>Educational or interpretive resources relating to the project outcomes that increase community awareness of the benefits associated with the project, and influence positive behavioural change.</p>
Capacity building	<p>Training, up-skilling and/or educating volunteers, community members and landowners in Natural Resource Management techniques to improve the tangible environmental outcomes of a project.</p>
Fire	<p>Strategic burning of an area to control weeds and stimulate growth of fire dependent species. Engagement with relevant fire authority (i.e. Rural Fire Service and/or National Parks and Wildlife Service) is typically required if burning is proposed. Cultural burning will also be considered.</p>
Project coordination	<p>Costs associated with coordinating or facilitating projects (see application budget guidelines). This could include funding to implement project-monitoring activities.</p> <p>Note: While this may be budgeted for, prioritisation will be given to projects that maximise on-ground activities.</p>
Threatened species	<p>On-ground works that provide direct benefits for threatened species, such as planting of feed/shelter trees, or the mitigation of known threats.</p> <p>Note: Appropriate licences must be obtained prior to commencing a project where works impact threatened species or occur within defined threatened ecological communities. Contact the Office of Environment and Heritage if you are unsure of which licences you need to obtain.</p>

Ineligible activities

The following activities are not eligible for funding.

Activity	Description
Administration	Existing day-to-day administration or operational costs of organisations. (See application budget guidelines).
Aesthetics, amenity, and recreation	Projects primarily focussed on improving aesthetics, local amenity or recreational opportunities. The focus of all projects must be on delivering benefits for the NSW environment.
Built environment	Construction, restoration or rehabilitation of buildings or facilities.
Core business	Activities where an existing organisation or individual is legally responsible for the task (e.g. implementing a Biosecurity Direction or Biosecurity Undertaking) or where funds obtained through a grant are used for cost-shifting purposes. Projects that, in the normal course of events, are clearly the core business of local or state government authorities or the applicant organisation (see page 8 of the how to guide for applicants).
Devolved grants	Offering funding to other organisations or individuals through a grant program. Projects where multiple landholders are identified and engaged in a catchment or regional scale project that is run by coordinating grantee, are considered to be partnership projects rather than devolved grant projects.
Equipment	Capital equipment purchases, unless it is evidently more cost effective to purchase than lease equipment for the life of the project.
Existing employees	Salaries of existing employees working on the project as part of their usual duties (instead this should be considered as an in-kind contribution). The Trust, will however, fund salaries of staff employed specifically to work on the project.
Facilitating changes of land tenure or resource licencing	Expenses associated with any activities resulting in the transfer of land, resource licencing (e.g. water extraction licences - either private or public) etc. between landholders will not be considered.
Maintenance	Ongoing maintenance of projects to which organisations have previously committed. Routine property maintenance such as lawn mowing and gardening is also ineligible for funding.
Project planning	Development of overarching project plans will not receive funding, however site management plans, which will be implemented as part of the project, may be considered.
Research	Projects that focus on research and are not specifically linked to on-ground outcomes for the project. Surveys, data collection, mapping etc. may be carried out for the purpose of gathering evidence required to demonstrate the effectiveness of on-ground works and approved project activities. Projects with a primary focus on the gathering of data or other research activities will not be funded.

Activity	Description
Retrospective activities	Activities carried out or committed to prior to accepting and signing the grant agreement.
Waste management	Projects with a primary focus on waste management and research. See Waste Less, Recycle More or the Environmental Research Grants Program for potential funding opportunities.
Weed management	<p>Projects that seek to implement weed control activities under Biosecurity Directions or Biosecurity Undertakings will not be funded. These weeds are the core responsibility of landowners and are enforceable by Local Control Authorities.</p> <p>Control of weeds that seek to achieve an economic outcome (e.g. to address a problem/issue impacting primary production) are the core responsibility of the landowner and will not be funded.</p>

Probity

The Trust places high importance on the integrity and transparency of program and project governance. It is vital that all funded projects are delivered in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements, as well as other accepted governance and project management standards. Value for money in project delivery is also a significant priority for the Trust. Audits may be carried out by the Trust to check on compliance with these requirements.

Procurement

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. It also includes ensuring that goods and services are only paid for once they have been satisfactorily delivered.

All contractors (including consultants) must be chosen on their merits and ability to effectively deliver the work. It is required that grantees will select contractors or consultants using a competitive process.

More detail is provided in the Application budget form, however, as an example: for any contract in excess of \$30,000, you must secure a minimum of three written tenders/quotations. Also, unless selected through an open competitive process, the value of work to any single contractor (or consultant) must not exceed \$30,000 in total during life of the funded project.

The conditions of tendering shall be the same for each tenderer on any particular tender process and all tenders must comply with the [NSW Government Code of Practice for Procurement \(2005\)](#).

Documentation relating to and demonstrating open competitive procurement must be retained by the grantee for audit purposes.

Statement of Business Ethics

All providers of goods and services, including project managers and project partners, are required to observe the following principles when carrying out work for your proposed project:

- help prevent unethical practices in business relationships
- declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest

All contracted and sub-contracted staff, or associated staff, are expected to comply with the Office of Environment and Heritage Statement of Business Ethics. If you employ sub-contractors in your work, please make them aware of this statement and our expectation that they will abide by it.

Conflicts of interest

All staff and contractors are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. You are also expected to advise of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest when you do business. This includes procurement, grants, direct negotiations, sponsorships, partnerships, third party service provisions, etc.

Staff recruitment

The Trust will not pay for staff already employed by your organisation that will be supervising / project-managing or working on the project as part of their usual duties. The Trust may however, pay for staff employed specifically for your project, provided a formal externally advertised recruitment process has been undertaken.

At a minimum, the following must be done:

- job description must be prepared
- job must be advertised (either internally or externally)
- candidates must be assessed on merit, with all candidates asked the same questions

Further information and guidance can be found in the how to guide.

NB: Recruitment of staff cannot occur until after you have been awarded a grant.

Third party assistance

While applicants are encouraged to seek collaboration from other project partners, careful consideration is required around any commercial relationships. Applicants are welcome to seek third party assistance to develop their project and complete their application, however please be advised that any costs associated with this service cannot be reimbursed using Trust funding.

Likewise, any third party assistance provider involved in the development of the project application should not be eligible to tender for contract activities for that project (due to unfair advantage).

Project Implementation Plan

The Trust's Monitoring and Evaluation framework has changed. Instead of the traditional M&E Plan, grantees are now required to implement a new project management framework (and tool) referred to as a 'Project Implementation Plan' or PIP. The PIP seeks to assist grantees to define their projects, including:

- the outcomes to be achieved i.e. environmental, social and project management (mandatory)
- what, and when, activities will be undertaken to achieve each outcome
- how activities will be implemented, monitored and evaluated.

In your application you will prepare a preliminary PIP to broadly define project outcomes and activities in your application. If you are successful in securing a grant, you will then complete a more detailed PIP (using a template prepared by the Trust) within two months (40 working days) of receiving correspondence confirming your grant. Refer to page 11 'Managing your grant' for more information.

Both the preliminary and detailed PIPs contain a 'Project Management' outcome that includes mandatory activities such as project planning and budget preparation and monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) that grantees must plan for and include as part of the implementation of your project.

Monitoring and evaluation

Your PIP will require you to build a strong monitoring and evaluation framework into your project plan so that environmental improvements can be effectively measured and demonstrated. The implementation and evaluation of each activity will allow for adjustments to be made to improve outcomes.

Monitoring. The Trust seeks to establish effective and consistent monitoring of project activities across the program. The use of monitoring methods will vary depending on the nature of the work being carried out, however, our aim is to ensure that minimum standards are created by establishing the following:

1. Consistent monitoring methods are used to measure activity implementation and progress e.g. photo monitoring, mapping, participant surveys etc.
2. Benchmarks/baseline data at the commencement of projects and individual activities that may be used to clearly demonstrate the outcomes your work is achieving over the life of the project.

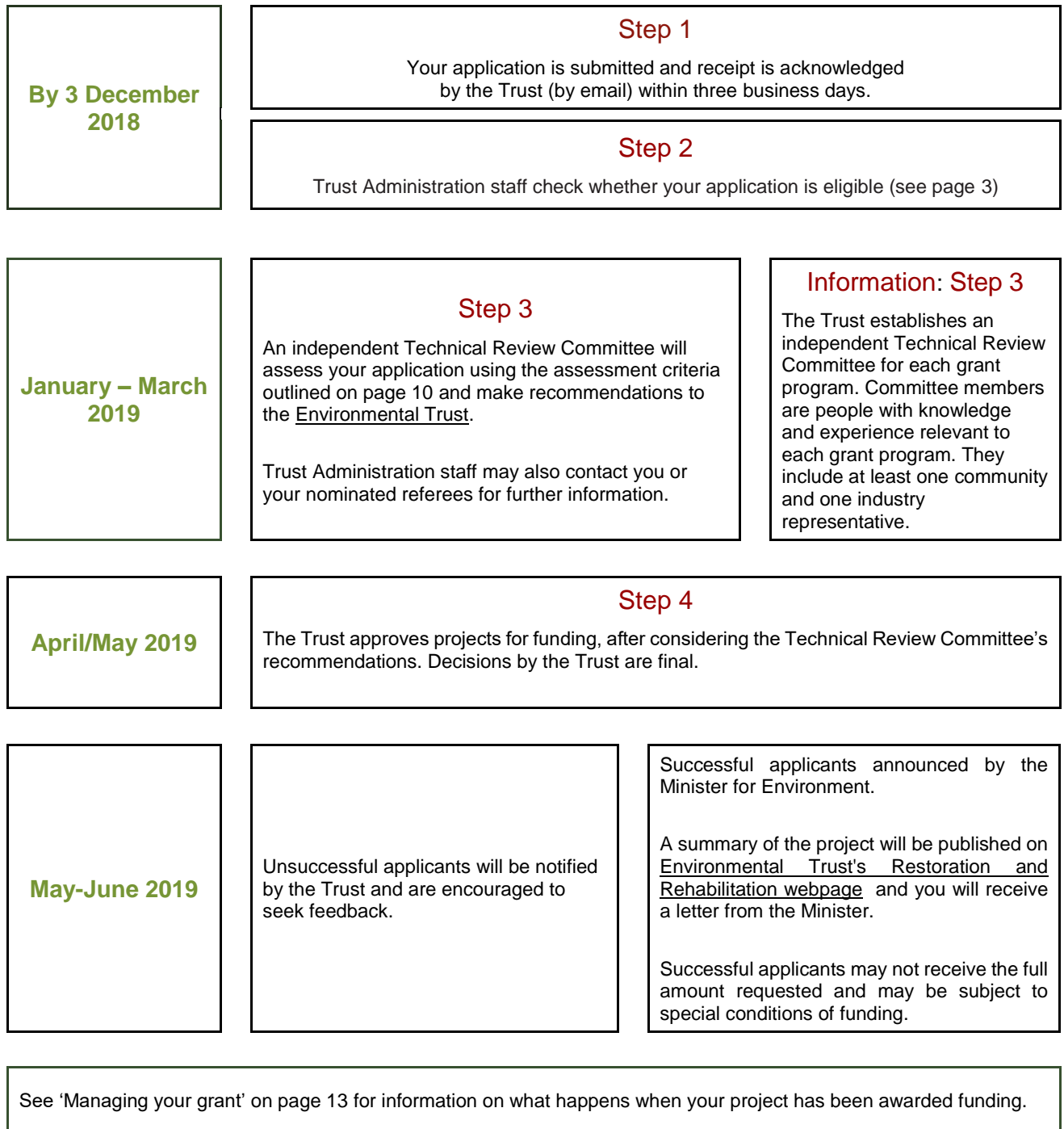
Note

The Trust has developed a new [Monitoring Directory](#) to clearly explain the required monitoring methods for all the different types of activities you may undertake in your project.

Evaluation. These methodologies also vary between projects however, they should occur as part of your project's annual review (incorporating adaptive management concepts) and reporting process. This may involve people from your organisation, with relevant stakeholders/partners, examining the implementation of your PIP over the previous stage, assessing strengths and weaknesses then integrating improvements/changes (for both activities and timing) into a revised work plan for the following year.

Part 2: Assessing your application

The flow chart below explains what will happen after you have submitted your application. For information on how to apply, see How to complete your Application Form.



Assessment criteria

Selection for Trust grants is a state wide, merit-based process. Eligible applications will be assessed by an independent Technical Review Committee (TRC) against the assessment criteria set out in the following table.

The application forms will allow the TRC to assess your project. Your application should be prepared with these criteria in mind. Refer to [How to Complete the Application Form](#) for guidance on which parts of your application relate to each assessment criteria.

1. Tangible environmental outcome (Questions A1 – A11)

- clear explanation of the environmental issue to be addressed
- demonstrated need for the project, and appropriateness of proposed actions
- the project will make a clear contribution toward the Restoration and Rehabilitation program objectives.

2. Project activities and outcomes (Questions B1 – B6)

- activities clearly targeted towards achieving proposed outcomes
- project demonstrates long term benefits beyond the life of the grant.

3. Planning and method (Questions B1 – B6)

- sound project planning and method
- How well the identified monitoring activities demonstrate the success of the project
- how well the proposal addresses risk factors that have the potential to jeopardise the achievement of expected outcomes
- time frame is realistic for achieving the proposed outcomes
- likelihood of project to build community capacity to protect the environment and strength of collaboration.

4. Capacity to deliver (Questions C1 – C5)

- demonstrated knowledge, skills and expertise in relevant fields of the applicant and/or project partners
- degree of community involvement and how this will be achieved
- capacity and commitment to undertake and complete the project
- demonstrated commitment to continue to support the project's outcomes beyond the life of the grant.

5. Value for money (Project budget and question C4)

- extent to which the budget supports the projected objectives and whether it will ensure the viability of the project overall
- the likely environmental benefit of the proposal relative to the amount of grant funds
- the reasonableness of the budget items
- appropriateness of the mix in the total budget between:
 - materials and other direct project costs
 - professional expertise
 - In-kind support (e.g. equipment, machinery) and/or cash contributions from applicant and other organisations
 - voluntary expertise/labour.

Part 3: Managing your grant

If you are successful in receiving a Restoration and Rehabilitation Program grant, you will be notified in May / June 2019.

Getting started

If you are awarded a Restoration and Rehabilitation grant, you will be required to submit the following documents before starting your project.

Tip

The Trust’s Grants Administration team are on hand to answer questions and guide you on the preparation and development of the required project documentation.

1. The Trust will send you a Grant Agreement of which must be returned signed within 30 days of notification that your grant has been awarded.
2. Submit draft detailed Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and final project budget (both documents follow templates supplied by the Trust) within 40 working days of grant notification. Assistance (e.g. webinars) will be available to help you develop your PIP. The date of submission becomes the commencement date for your project.
3. Submit a Tax Invoice for the first instalment of your grant.
4. Gather benchmark / baseline data in accordance with your PIP so your project will clearly demonstrate the social and environmental outcomes being achieved.
5. Grantees will receive notification from the Trust once your PIP is finalised and **approved**.

Grant Agreement	Tax invoice
<p>The Grant Agreement sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant.</p> <p>The Trust may also place additional conditions specific to your project. Your Grants Administrator will discuss these conditions with you.</p> <p>If you would like to read a copy of a standard Grant Agreement used by the Trust, please contact Trust Administration. Note that submission of a detailed draft PIP with finalised budget will be the first milestone of your grant agreement.</p> <p>Note: The grant agreement is a standard document for all grantees. The agreement will not be changed at the request of the grantee.</p>	<p>A tax invoice for each instalment of your grant is required, including GST if applicable.</p> <p>The first instalment will be made once the following documents have been received by the Trust:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. signed Grant Agreement (within 30 working days) b. draft detailed Project Implementation Plan (within 40 working days) c. finalised project budget (within 40 working days).

During your project

Grantees are required to prepare and submit Progress Reports after each stage throughout their projects. Reporting and payment schedules will be outlined in the Grant Agreement. Progress Reports provide the grantee with the opportunity to review their own progress, as

well as provide the Trust with updates (including supporting evidence) on activities, achievements and expenditure, in line with approved PIP.

Tip

Progress reports are required at the completion of each stage of works.

Each progress report will also include a work plan, consistent with the PIP, that covers the forthcoming stage's activities. Preparation of the work plan (e.g. at Stages 2 and 3) should occur after you have conducted a self-evaluation of the previous stage's activities with your project stakeholders/partners. Lessons learned and any incomplete or new activities, with revised implementation timeframes, should be integrated into a revised annual work plan.

Each report is reviewed by a representative of the Trust with technical expertise relevant to your project. The revised annual work plan will also be used by reviewers to determine whether grantees have thought critically about the previous stage's work, and addressed any outstanding issues or problems adequately.

If your report demonstrates that your project is progressing well, the next instalment of your grant will be authorised and your Grant Administrator will provide you with feedback from the reviewer. If the project is underperforming, funding instalments may be withheld while you work with your Grants Administrator to identify and implement strategies to bring the project up to speed.

The Trust recognises that variations to your project are sometimes required and these may be negotiated with your Grants Administrator at any time throughout your project.

[Reporting templates](#) are available to download from the Trust's webpages.

Completing your project

When your project is complete, grantees are required to submit a final report reflecting on achievements.

Like progress reports, a representative of the Trust will review your final report. An evaluation of grantee performance is made at this point and a risk rating applied. This rating will be used when assessing future applications.

Your Grants Administrator will provide you with feedback on your project, and formally acquit your grant.

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 that you supply to us for evaluating its grant programs. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

Ultimate Goal: Contribute to the ongoing sustainable management and stewardship of significant environmental assets and services in NSW.

Program Objective: Enhance the management of environmental assets and services through the facilitation and creation of social capital between individuals, community groups, governments and industry.		Program Objective: Improve and protect the quality of a diverse range of ecosystems and environmental assets and services managed by community groups, land managers and stakeholders.		Program Objective: Provide an appropriate, effective and sustainable mechanism to deliver Government policy, priorities and outcomes through the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program	
Intermediate Social Outcomes		Intermediate Environmental Outcomes		Intermediate Governance Outcomes	
Capacity building	The capacity of organisations and communities to conduct environmental activities, practices and projects is enhanced and supported.	Ecosystem assets and services	Measurable improvement to ecosystem function and services at locations that hold important environmental assets / services and cultural significance.	Policy	The program contributes to the delivery of government priorities and/or value adds to the achievement of other on-ground government initiatives.
	Knowledge and skills on environmental asset and service practices are documented, shared and applied on-ground.		Good practice environmental management actions are applied to support measurable and sustainable environmental outcomes.		The program is consistent with all relevant government policy and legislation.
	Groups and organisations develop skills and experience to engage and recruit members of their local and broader communities to participate in environmental management activities.		Pilot innovative techniques and methodologies through on-ground activities that lead to broader community and industry adoption and improvement of on-ground good practice.		The program design and delivery acknowledges and respects Aboriginal culture and traditions and promotes consultation and engagement of the Aboriginal community and organisations where possible and relevant.
	Emerging groups develop skills and expertise in defining, measuring and improving ecological processes that lead to successful ecosystem rehabilitation.		Project outcomes are determined using effective, standardised monitoring methods which are applied on all projects.		Projects are delivered in accordance with the approved project application / plan and stated objectives are met.
	Groups have improved capacity to source and secure funds and/or resources for the ongoing maintenance of projects.		Monitoring		Short term monitoring established for each project to measure achievement of project objectives.
Community Engagement	Community awareness on the value and importance of healthy environments, and the issues affecting their local environment, are raised, and they are motivated to take action.		Medium to longer term project outcomes are monitored to measure sustainability of investment and benefit to the environment.		All projects are acquitted and grant funds expended appropriately through grantees meeting their reporting and other obligations.
	Lessons and opportunities arising from projects are shared and used to generate interest and involvement in future projects and for adaptive management purposes.				
Increased participation	An increase in the involvement of a broad cross section of the community in environmental management actions supported by the ERP program.				
	Cultural land and water management perspectives are acknowledged to promote and engage Aboriginal community participation in the planning and implementation of on-ground activities.				
Partnerships developed	Community, government and industry organisations engage in partnerships and strengthen collaborations.				
Monitoring	Project outcomes are determined using effective, standardised monitoring methods which are applied on all projects.				
	Short term monitoring established for each project to measure achievement of project objectives.				
	Medium to longer term project outcomes are monitored to measure how social capital has influenced / benefitted delivery of on-ground activities and environmental stewardship.				
Foundational activities & assumptions					
Development of program guidelines, application forms, budget and project planning and reporting templates.	Grant program advertised in appropriate communication channels e.g. workshops, networks, news, Trust webpage etc.	Applications received and assessed by suitably qualified Technical Review Committee with recommendations going to Trust for approval.	Adaptive management based on effective application of the program evaluation framework.		

