2018 Program Guidelines

NSW Environmental Trust's
Protecting our Places Program

Closing date: 3pm Monday 8 October 2018

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Cover photograph:

Organisation: South West Rocks Aboriginal Corporation
Project name: Protecting cultural sites amongst the sand dunes of Smoky Beach

The dunes behind Smoky Beach have one of the largest middens in NSW and contain the burial sites of our ancestors. This site is being impacted by inappropriate recreation use by 4WD, motorbikes and sand boarders. Our project will fence the vehicle and pedestrian access to the beach to prevent indiscriminate tramping through the dunes. We'll install interpretative displays in the camp ground and at the beach access with key messages about cultural significance along with regulatory rules. We'll increase public awareness amongst the local community and holiday makers by placing those same messages at retail suppliers. Together with National Parks and Wildlife Service staff we'll deliver discovery ranger programs in camping grounds and at the local primary school. These activities will protect our sites and increase awareness, understanding and appreciation for our Country.

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See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

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How to use this guide

These program guidelines provide an overview of the NSW Environmental Trust's Protecting our Places 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 Protecting our Places grant, you should read the How to complete the application form guidelines for assistance in completing your application.

Enquiries or questions

NSW Environmental Trust

Telephone: 02 8837 6093

Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Part 1: About the program

‘the program encourages and enables Aboriginal communities to protect, conserve and restore cultural landscapes and waterways that are of importance to Aboriginal peoples and their communities.’

Woods Point restoration project. Photo: Biraban Local Aboriginal Land Council

The Protecting Our Places Program is a contestable grants program for Aboriginal community organisations and groups, seeking to achieve long-term beneficial outcomes for the NSW environment.

Funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, the program encourages and enables Aboriginal communities to protect, conserve and restore cultural landscapes and waterways that are of importance to local Aboriginal communities.

The program provides opportunities for Aboriginal communities to address local environmental and cultural priorities, as well as developing their project management skills and encourage new collaborations and positive relationships with other organisations, government and stakeholders.

The program is based on the following three principles:

- alignment with NSW Government policy
- respect for Aboriginal culture
- pursuit of best practice governance standards.

Program objectives

The Protecting our Places grants program seeks to assist Aboriginal communities to take greater ownership of their projects, build capacity to undertake those projects and deliver quality environmental and cultural outcomes.

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

1. To facilitate the sharing and protection of Cultural knowledge with and between Aboriginal groups, government and public stakeholders and to contribute to the improvement and the management of environmental and cultural resources on Country.
2. To increase the amount of culturally significant Aboriginal Land protected, restored, enhanced and managed by local Aboriginal groups, land managers and stakeholders and support connection to Country.
3. The Protecting our Places program is an appropriate, effective and sustainable mechanism to deliver Government policy, priorities and outcomes.

To help explain what the Trust is looking for from funded projects, please look at the ‘program logic’ (Appendix 1) that outlines the objectives and expected outcomes of the program.

Funding available

- A total of $600,000 is available for the 2018 round of the program.
- Grants up to a maximum of $60,000 are offered.
- Each project must be implemented over two stages i.e. Stage 1 – Planning, followed by Stage 2 – Implementation (where the plan prepared during Stage 1 is implemented)
- Specific funding limits are set for both stages of the project.
- Specific timeframes are set for both stages of the project.
- An additional $5000 will be allocated per grantee for organisational capacity building training and mentoring. This allocation will be administrated by the Trust.
- $1000 of approved grant funds will be quarantined within the project budget to cover the cost of independent financial auditing.

The table below provides a summary of budget items and timeframes for 2018 Protecting our Places Program (POP) projects:

	Maximum grant funding available	Organisational capacity building allocation	Maximum project value	Duration of funding
Stage 1: Planning	$10,000	$5,000	$15,000	6-12 Months
Stage 2: Implementation	$49,000	-	$49,000	18-24 Months
Financial auditing	$1,000	-	$1,000	-
Total	**$60,000**	**$5,000**	**$65,000**	**24-36 Months**

Note

1. The $1000 allocated for the purposes of project auditing is a mandatory budget item for each project. These funds will be used to pay for a certified service provider to audit your project's final financial report and prepare a Factual Findings declaration/statement. These funds must not be spent by the grantee on anything else but the auditing of your project. It must be included in your Stage 2 budget.
2. While there are no requirements for matching funds, co-contributions by applicants and their project, partners will improve their chances of success. There are two types of co-contributions:
   a. **Financial** An actual cash contribution by the applicant or project partners towards the costs of delivering the project.
   b. **In-kind** A donation of goods or services, time or expertise, rather than cash. Includes goods; use of services and facilities; professional services or expertise in the form of staff time; provision of, or access to, equipment and/or special materials.

Project entitled Protecting the EEC's in the estuarine zone at Arrawarra Creek, Coffs Harbour. Photo: Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Grantee support and capacity building

The program seeks to provide opportunities for grantees to build the capacity of their organisation, staff and members, and to improve their ability to manage their project. Support mechanisms (e.g. capacity building and mentoring) will occur during the Stage 1 – Planning phase. These may include:

Capacity building

- Assessment of organisational capacity, training and/or support requirements.
- Development of a project capacity building training plan.
- Provision of specifically developed Project Management training and support, valued at $5000 per grantee.
- Face to face support at relevant regional locations to assist in developing the Project Implementation Plan.
- Access to online tools, resources and support for continued assistance over 12 months.

Trust support

- Assistance to prepare project plans (inclusive of the monitoring and evaluation items).
- Periodic project management support and advice over the life of the project.

What we want to achieve

The Protecting Our Places Program seeks to work with Aboriginal organisations to achieve the following:

1. Caring for Country

- Support Aboriginal communities to manage places of significance and intangible cultural values and resources on Country and water.
- Acknowledge the vital cultural and spiritual connection Aboriginal people have with their traditional lands and waters.
- Provide greater opportunities for Aboriginal communities to take part in projects on Country and water that involve the protection and restoration of native vegetation and fauna.

2. Partnerships developed and maintained

- Aboriginal organisations develop partnerships and strengthen collaborations with other Aboriginal and/or non-Aboriginal organisations, land managers, local and state governments and stakeholders.
- These partnerships and collaborations seek to protect and restore Aboriginal cultural values and develop a mutually beneficial working relationship.
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are developed, outlining the terms and details, including each parties' conditions and responsibilities.

3. Build capacity

- Enhance and support Aboriginal organisations and communities to conduct environmental activities that are ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate.
- Aboriginal communities develop skills and experience to engage and recruit members of their local and broader communities to participate in cultural land management activities on Country.
- Improve the position of Aboriginal community organisations/groups to resource the continued management of environmental projects on county.

4. Awareness raising

- Recognise, promote and raise awareness of cultural land and water management practices and the use of cultural knowledge resource.
- Community projects that practice contemporary and traditional land management styles that are carried out safely and in appropriate ways.
- Cultural connection pathways created between people, Country/water and their practices are documented and shared appropriately.

5. Increased participation

- Private and public land managers work with their Aboriginal people and their communities to improve cultural land management practices and protection of cultural values, resources and places of importance.
- Targeted communities (Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal) are involved in management actions supported by the POP program to care and connect with Country.

6. Use of Cultural knowledge

- Appropriate cultural practices are applied to ensure sustainable management of Country to address present and future issues.
- Aboriginal land and water is managed to enhance, protect and restore environmental and cultural values.
- Cultural knowledge holders are engaged and consulted on all aspects of the project, and transfer of knowledge is passed on appropriately to community members.

Who can apply?

Administrators

If your organisation is not incorporated, or does not have the capacity to manage the financial aspects of the project, you may nominate another organisation to administer the grant funds on your behalf. The administrator must be an incorporated or registered organisation (e.g. LALC, NGO, local council, etc.). Grant agreements are prepared in the name of the administrating body, which is then required to sign the Grant Agreement on behalf of the grantee.

Grant payments are made to the administrator, who is then responsible for making all payments relating to the project on the grantee's behalf, as well as preparing all financial reports as required under the Grant Agreement. It is expected that an agreement has been established between the grantee and the administrator in relation to project management and submission of progress/final reports.

Eligible applicants

The following NSW Aboriginal community organisations/groups can apply:

- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils
- NSW Aboriginal Corporations registered under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2006
- NSW Registered Native Title groups

Unincorporated Aboriginal organisations and groups can still apply but will need to be supported by a supporting organisation (see Administrators box left).

Ineligible applicants

The Trust will not fund the following organisations:

- Non-Aboriginal groups or organisations
- Individuals, industry joint ventures, and profit-distributing corporations (limited by shares)
- If you are unsure whether your organisation is eligible to apply, please contact the Trust on 02 8837 6093 or info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

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.

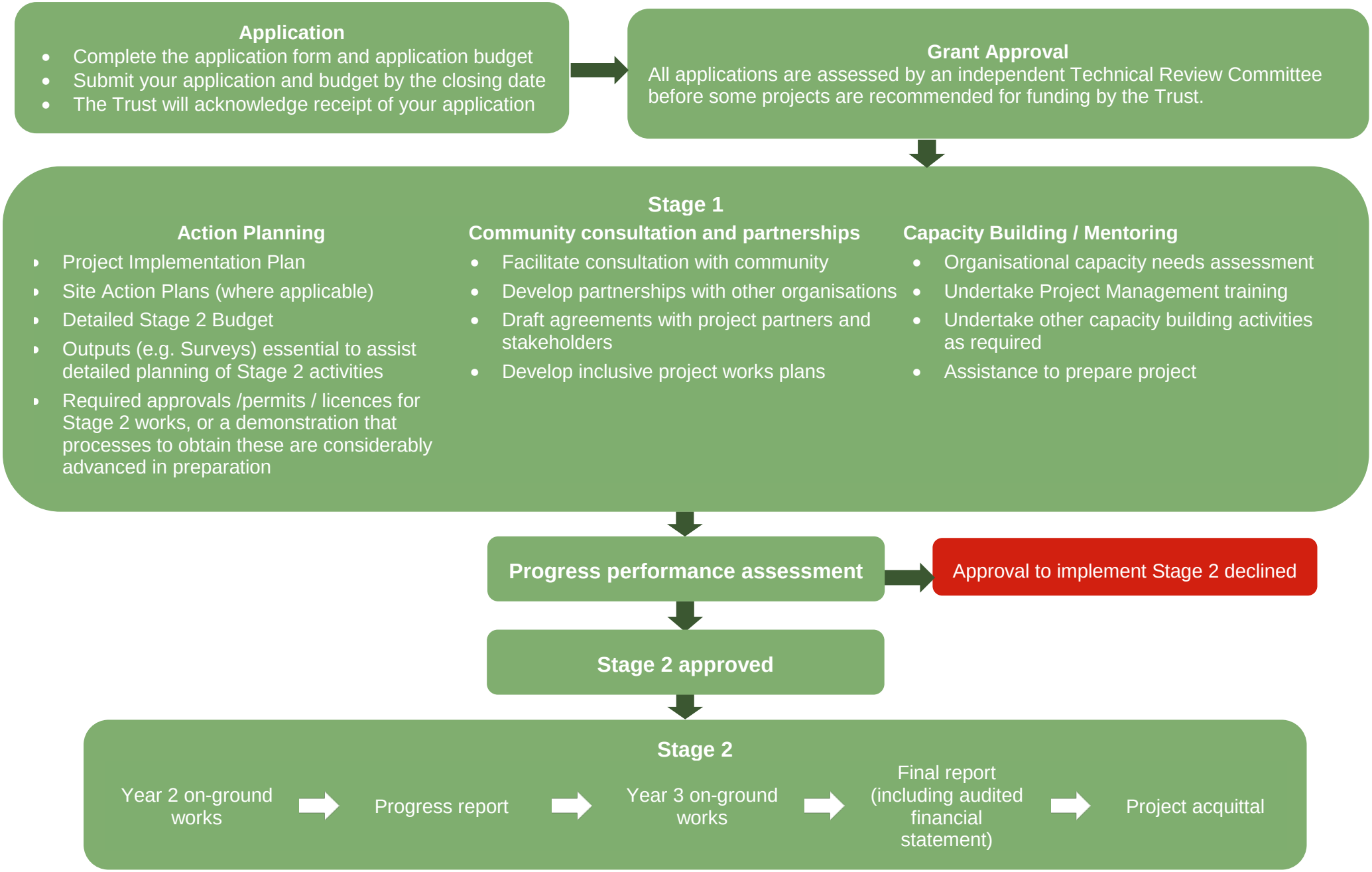
If it is considered that past negative performance presents a substantial risk to the timely and effective performance of the project, an applicant will be asked to respond to the negative determination and this response will be taken into consideration alongside the overall merits of the application.

Timeframes

Important timeframes for 2018

- Applications open 8 August 2018.
- Applications close at **3pm** on **8 October 2018**
- Assessment of applications will occur in October/November 2018, with successful projects announced in February 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.
- Projects should aim to commence between 1 March 2019 and 1 May 2019.

The flow chart below illustrates the relationship between Stage 1: Planning activities, the progress performance assessment and implementation of approved Stage 2 project activities.



Eligible activities

Tip

The Trust will only fund applications that focus and align with the program's ultimate goal and address the program objectives. Please refer to the Program Logic on page 21 of this document.

Eligible activities

- The Trust will only fund proposals that provide tangible benefits to the natural environment of NSW.
- Cultural based projects may be proposed; however, they must be directly linked towards achieving clear environmental outcomes.
- The Trust assumes that before preparing your application you will have sufficient understanding of the prevailing issues/problems, species, sites etc. as part of your project planning process.

Stage 1: Planning

The focus of this stage is to create a strong foundation for the project through activities that assist grantees plan and prepare for the implementation of on-ground activities in Stage 2. Principal Stage 1 outcomes include:

- Project Implementation Plan.
- Site Action Plans (where applicable).
- Detailed Stage 2 budget.
- Outputs (e.g. surveys) important to the planning of Stage 2 activities.
- Draft agreements with partners.
- Approvals for permits/licences/approvals and/or a demonstration that processes to obtain these for Stage 2 are considerably advanced in preparation.
- Organisational capacity building training has been undertaken, and the grantee has the skills to implement the project as proposed.

Tip

If you are unsure or need more clarification about any Stage 1: activity please call the Trust.

The following activities are eligible for funding under Stage 1: Planning:

Activity	Description
Photo monitoring points Baseline (Before Works)	Trust Administration requests that you start establishing your project's baseline/benchmark data so that you can clearly demonstrate the outcomes you are achieving e.g. identify you baseline photo monitoring points and take the first images prior to on-ground works starting. A technical guide on how to prepare your photo point monitoring stations may be found on the Environmental Trust web site.
Project planning	Development of a broader overarching project plan. This includes identifying the key activities; the resources required, both human and capital, as well as any training requirements. It does not include the development of property plans (however, site management plans intended to be implemented as part of the project are eligible). If a broader overarching project/property plan does exist, linkages to this

	document would need to be shown. Examples of final outputs include*: Project Implementation Plan, Site Action Plans etc.*
Site Mapping	Development of a mapping resource (e.g. GIS, google maps, other) of the site that assists in project planning, management and monitoring activities. The Trust has prepared a guide outlining how to prepare a map to define and monitor your project.
Surveys	Survey actions (e.g. archaeological investigations/study, ecological etc.) may be eligible if they are essential in providing a more detailed understanding of the specifics of the issues/problem needing to be addressed. Also, these activities must show direct linkages to the development of site action plans and delivery of on-ground project outcomes.
Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIMS) Assessment	The AHIMS Aboriginal Site Recording database is used for reporting and recording Aboriginal objects and features that are likely to be of significance to Aboriginal people. Grantees are encouraged to record known Aboriginal sites on AHIMS that are relevant to their project during this planning phase. It is also mandatory to undertake an AHIMS search prior to the commencement of on-ground works and activities to ensure that no accidental damage is done to identified Aboriginal sites. Please see the OEH website for site recording forms and other information regarding the AHIMS database or Aboriginal sites.
Research/documentation of knowledge	Research activities must have a specific and direct link to delivering on-ground outcomes for the project. Examples of final outputs include*: cultural knowledge on land management practices documented so that it may be applied in Stage 2*, *collecting oral knowledge from community, etc.*
Activity Preparation	Essential planning processes that need to be followed to ensure compliance with legislation should be undertaken. These include, *cultural burn plans, relevant licencing, permits and approvals e.g. scientific licences, Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permits (AHIPs), Development Applications etc.* Identification of these activities, processes, contacts and preparation of official documentation etc. must be undertaken as part of Stage 1.
Capacity building	Training and up-skilling and/or educating volunteers, community members and landowners in natural resource and cultural management techniques to improve the tangible environmental outcomes of a project. Examples of final outputs include: *finalisation of a training plan, contracting training provider, delivery of training courses.*
Partnership negotiation	Activities that facilitate consultation with community, project partners and stakeholders to develop cooperation agreements, develop inclusive project work plans etc. Examples of final outputs include: *number of meetings held, Draft Memorandum of Agreement completed, site access agreements, etc.*
Project coordination	Costs associated with coordinating or facilitating projects (see application budget guidelines). This **could include** funding to implement project-monitoring activities. **Note:** While this may be budgeted for, prioritisation will be given to projects that maximise on-ground activities.

Stage 2: Implementation

The focus of this stage is to implement the actions contained within the overarching Project Implementation Plan and any relevant Site Action Plans. Eligible activities include a wide range of on-ground land and cultural management practices, bush regeneration, restoration and conservation type activities.

The following activities are eligible for funding under **Stage 2: Implementation:**

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.
Bush Regeneration supervision	Employment of suitably qualified bush regenerators who also possess experience in the supervision and training/mentoring of bush regenerators, trainees or volunteers.
Weed management	Control, containment or eradication of environmental weeds (agricultural weeds will not be funded) through physical intervention (mechanical, chemical or biological) to facilitate the recovery of a native plant species or community or preserve/protect cultural objects and resources, places of importance and lands of significance to Aboriginal people. Invasive native species control may also be considered. Due to the recent reform to Biosecurity legislation (and the repeal of the Noxious Weeds Act), there will be a new process for considering support for weed control activities. Projects will be reviewed as they relate to their respective Regional Weed Plan, and the control requirements outlined within those plans. Since this is a new process, it should be assumed that it will be based on the principle of landholder responsibility (as per the Noxious Weeds Act). In other words, the Trust will not fund the control of weeds that are the legislative responsibility of the landowner. For more information on classification of weeds, please see the Department of Primary Industry WeedWise webpage.
Revegetation	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.
Pest animal management	Strategic long-term control of feral pest animal species through physical intervention to facilitate the recovery of habitat, native animal and plant species, and protect sites from further degradation.
Preservation/ protection of cultural assets	Activities that apply specialised methods and employ skilled professionals to conduct on-ground preservation and protection of cultural assets i.e. places, objects and features. For example, rock art preservation, archaeological excavations and burial sites. **Note:** these types of actions should be implemented as part of the broader context of the project that must be undertaken to achieve the principal environmental outcome e.g. protection of a cultural asset while undertaking weed control activities.
Fencing	Installation of wildlife friendly fencing to restrict access to restoration areas (including temporary protection of revegetation plots), cultural objects and resources, places of importance and lands of significance to Aboriginal people.
Erosion control	Works to prevent local water quality degradation to adjacent waterways and protect soil stability.
Habitat creation	Installation of natural and/or artificial structural habitat.

Formalisation of tracks	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.*
Fire	Strategic burning of an area to control weeds and stimulate growth of fire dependent species or for cultural burns. Engagement with relevant fire authority (i.e. OEH, Rural Fire Service and/or National Parks and Wildlife Service) is typically required if burning is proposed.
Capacity building	Training and up-skilling and/or educating volunteers, community members and landowners in natural resource and cultural management techniques to improve the tangible environmental outcomes of a project. Activities under Stage (Year) 2 / 3 focus upon supporting on-ground delivery of project outcomes.
Signage and educational resources	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.
Project coordination	Costs associated with coordinating or facilitating projects (see application budget guidelines). This could include funding to implement project-monitoring activities. **Note:** While this may be budgeted for, prioritisation will be given to projects that maximise on-ground activities.
Management agreements	Engagement of project collaborators, landholders, etc. to enter into a variety of agreements that aim preserve and protect natural resources and cultural assets. For example, agreements on land management, biodiversity conservation, site access, and site co-management.
Threatened species	On-ground works that provide direct benefits for threatened species, such as planting of feed/shelter trees, or the mitigation of known threats. **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.
Sustainable management of Country	Implementation of business plans that seek to encourage sustainable use of natural resources through activities that place an economic value upon effective management of the natural resources available at the project location.
Waste management	Some waste management activities may be eligible for funding, but should not be the only objective of your project. The clean-up of waste on Country should be a part of a broader project delivering strong environmental and cultural outcomes.

Ineligible activities

The following activities are not eligible for funding in either Stage 1 or Stage 2.

Activity	Description
Administration	Existing day-to-day administration or operational costs of organisations. (See application budget guidelines).
Aesthetics, amenity, recreation and cultural projects unrelated to benefitting the environment	The focus of all projects must be on delivering benefits for the NSW environment. Projects primarily focussed on improving aesthetics, local amenity or recreational opportunities will not be funded. Cultural projects that include elements of these must show a clear benefit to 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. noxious weed control) 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.
Devolved grants	Offering funding to other organisations or individuals through a grant program.
Facilitating changes of land tenure	Expenses associated with any activity that result in the transfer of land, either private or public) between landholders will not be considered.
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. **Note** All applicants. If you seek Trust funds for someone currently employed by your organisation, you must explain why the Trust is being asked to fund an already-existing employee.
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.
Weed management	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. 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.
Audits and surveys	Projects that require audits and / or surveys are ineligible unless it can be shown that they are necessary and may be specifically linked to delivering on-ground outcomes for the project.
Research	Projects that focus on research and are not specifically linked to on-ground outcomes for the project.
Similar projects funded from other funding bodies	Projects funded by another funding body that seek to achieve the same or similar outcomes will not be funded.
Retrospective activities	Activities carried out or committed to prior to accepting and signing the grant management agreement.

Partnerships

Each project will require an Aboriginal organisation as the grantee. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply for a grant under a partnership project with other relevant stakeholders (i.e. Council, LLS, OEH, etc.), rather than as a single organisation. Careful consideration is advised when entering into any commercial relationships.

All project partners must have a demonstrated tangible role in the project delivery with roles and responsibilities identified and agreed to within a memorandum of understanding (or similar), developed as part of their Stage 1 – Planning foundation activities.

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. Third Party assistance providers involved in the development of the project application are ineligible to tender for contract activities for that project (due to unfair advantage) except under exceptional circumstances e.g. remote locations with limited available service providers. Where circumstances arise related to the latter, strong justification for the service provider's involvement needs to be provided.

Program governance (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.

Procurement

To conform to relevant governance and probity standards, the Trust requires all grantees to follow NSW Government procurement procedures (Code of Practice for Procurement (2005)). This relates to all major budget items, such as the purchase of materials, or the engagement of contractors or consultants.

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. For example, for any contract in excess of $30,000, you should secure a minimum of three written tenders/quotations. In addition, 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.

Exemptions may be allowed for specific contract services where three suppliers are not available / suitable (i.e. suppliers of specific cultural knowledge) or where the project is promoting specific Aboriginal community outcomes (i.e. Aboriginal Green Teams).

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 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.

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

Project Implementation Plan

The Trust uses a 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:

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

Completion of the PIP will occur at varying levels of detail depending on the stage of the application process or approved project. These include a preliminary PIP used to broadly define project outcomes and activities in your application, and if you are successful in securing a grant, you will then complete a detailed PIP (using a template prepared by the Trust) by the end of Stage 1 of your project. Refer to page 18 'Managing your grant' for more information.

Both the preliminary (application) 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

As discussed above, the detailed PIP is the central guiding document for your project and can be used to track whether the intended project outcomes and associated milestone achievements defined by grantees are being met.

Important outcomes of each PIP are the completion of monitoring and evaluation activities used to both effectively measure environmental improvements (monitoring) and to facilitate reviews of activity implementation (evaluation) resulting in adjustments to the project to improve management of the project and refinement of activities (adaptive management). Monitoring and evaluation activities are therefore considered separate from one another.

Methods for monitoring a project will vary depending on the nature of the work being carried out which will also determine their frequency. There are, however, minimum standards for monitoring expected by the Trust e.g. progressive photographic documentation across the life of the project of all project activities (e.g. planting, training, fencing, site protection, cultural burns etc.), periodic (annual, seasonal etc.) fixed point photographic (before and after) and plot monitoring for regeneration activities and Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments. Baseline studies could also be used to determine whether Aboriginal archaeological objects or cultural heritage values may be impacted, and provide an information base to monitor the activity's progress and effectiveness during implementation. A variety of monitoring activities may be suggested by grantees based upon what they feel is the best way to monitor other activities implemented within their projects.

Evaluation activities also vary from project to project, however, should occur as part of your project's annual review and reporting process. This may involve people from your organisation with stakeholders/partners examining the implementation of your PIP during the previous year, assessing strengths and weaknesses then integrating improvements/changes to both activities and timing in the following year's work plan. Relevant information generated during these sessions should also be included in your annual report.

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 the How to complete your Application Form.

8 October 2018

- **Step 1**
  Your application is submitted and receipt is acknowledged by the Trust (by email) within three business days.
- **Step 2**
  Trust Administration staff check whether your application is eligible (see page 3).

October/November 2018

- **Step 3**
  An independent Technical Review Committee will assess your application using the assessment criteria outlined on page 16 and make recommendations to the Environmental Trust.

  .

  Trust Administration staff may also contact you or your nominated referees for further information.

  Information
  The Trust establishes an independent Technical Review Committee for each grant program.
- Committee members are people with knowledge and experience relevant to each grant program. They include at least one community and one industry representative.

December 2018

- **Step 4**
  The Trust approves projects for funding, after considering the Technical Review Committee's recommendations. Decisions by the Trust are final.

February 2019

- Successful applicants announced by the Minister for Environment.

  A summary of the project will be published on Environmental Trust's Protecting Our Places webpage.

  Successful applicants may not receive the full amount requested and may be subject to special conditions of funding.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the Trust and are encouraged to seek feedback.

Assessment criteria

Selection for Trust grants is a state wide, merit-based process. All projects will be assessed against specific program assessment criteria. This will be undertaken during both phases of project funding – Stage 1: Planning and Stage 2: Implementation.

Assessment criteria. Stage 1: Planning

An independent Technical Review Committee (TRC) will assess all applications against the assessment criteria set out below. Your application should be prepared with these criteria in mind. Refer to the How to complete your application for guidance on which parts of your application relate to each assessment criteria.

1. Tangible environmental outcome (Questions B5 – B10)
• 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 towards the Protecting Our Places Program objectives

2. Project activities and outcomes (Questions C1– C7)
• proposed activities are clearly targeted towards achieving the expected outcomes
• project displays sound project planning and method
• project demonstrates long-term benefits beyond the life of the grant

3. Capacity to deliver (Questions D1 – D6)
• clear identification of required capacity building/training
• commitment to undertake the project
• involvement of appropriate project partners
• degree of community involvement and how this will be achieved
• past performance

4. Value for money (E1- E2 and C6)
• how the budget supports the project outcomes and 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

Assessment criteria. Stage 2: Implementation

To progress from Stage 1: Planning to Stage 2: Implementation, each project will be individually assessed against the following assessment criteria to determine their suitability. Projects are **not guaranteed** to progress to Stage 2 (and receive additional funding) unless they satisfy the requirements below.

1. Tangible environmental outcome

- 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 towards the Protecting Our Places Program objectives

2. Project activities and outcomes

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

3. Planning and method

- completion of a detailed and comprehensive Project Implementation Plan
- how well the identified monitoring activities demonstrate the success of the project
- how well the proposal addresses risks that have the potential to jeopardise the success of the project
- time frame is realistic for achieving the proposed outcomes

4. Capacity to deliver

- involvement of appropriate project partners
- degree of community involvement and how this will be achieved
- demonstrated knowledge, skills and expertise of the applicant (through the completion of training)
- capacity of the applicant to complete the project
- capacity and commitment to continue to support the project's outcomes once the grant finishes

5. Value for money

- how the budget supports the project goal, outcomes and 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
  - voluntary expertise/labour

Part 3: Managing your grant

If you are successful in receiving a Protecting Our Places Program grant, you will be notified in December 2018.

Getting started

Once you are awarded a Protecting our Places 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.

- 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.
- A tax invoice for the Stage 1 Planning instalment for your grant is required, including GST if applicable.

Important note

You must not start Stage 1: Planning activities (as set out in your application PIP) until after Trust Administration has acknowledged receipt of both your signed Grant Agreement and Tax Invoice.

Grant Agreement	Tax Invoice
The Grant Agreement sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant. The Trust may also place additional conditions specific to your project. Your Grants Administrator will discuss these conditions with you. If you would like to read a copy of a standard Grant Agreement used by the Trust, please contact Trust Administration. **Note:** The grant agreement is a standard document for all grantees. The agreement will not be changed at the request of the grantee.	A tax invoice for each instalment of your grant is required, including GST if applicable. The first instalment will be made once the Trust has received a copy of your signed Grant Agreement (within 30 working days).

During your project

At the end of the Stage 1: Planning phase grantees are required to submit their completed Stage 1 outputs (examples of which are listed on page 9 above) and a brief written report outlining the status of pending activities such as MOUs, licences, DAs etc. Approval and acceptance by the Trust is required before you can progress to Stage 2: Implementation.

A written report (following a template provided by the Trust) will be used to report upon progress at the conclusion of Stage 2 Year 2. Preparation of a final report is required at the conclusion of the project i.e. end of Stage 2 Year 3. This report may be prepared using a combination of reporting formats including written, audio/visual, photographic etc.

Reporting and payment schedules will be outlined in the Grant Agreement.

Progress reports allow grantees to provide the Trust with updates on activities, achievements and expenditure, in line with approved Project Implementation Plan inclusive of Project Measures (for Stage 2: Implementation only).

Each report is reviewed by a representative of the Trust with technical expertise relevant to your project's objectives.

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

If it is considered that your 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.

TIP

Progress reports are required at the completion of each stage of the project. Reporting templates are available to download from the Trust's webpage

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.

TIP

More information on the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 is available online.

Appendix 1: Protecting our Places Grants Program Logic

Ultimate Goal: Contribute to the ongoing sustainable management of significant Aboriginal cultural landscapes 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.

Intermediate Outcomes

Partnerships developed	Aboriginal organisations develop partnerships and strengthen collaborations.
Capacity building	Cultural knowledge on land management practices is documented for field application.
	Knowledge is shared to support communities to protect and/or restore sites of cultural significance.
	The capacity of Aboriginal organisations and communities to conduct environmental activities, practices and projects is enhanced and supported.
	Aboriginal communities develop skills and experience to engage and recruit members of their local and broader communities to participate in cultural resource management activities on Country.
	Aboriginal organisations have improved capacity to sustainably fund the continued management of projects on Country.
Awareness raising	Awareness raised within communities of the value and importance of culturally significant land to Aboriginal communities.
	Traditional land management practices are more broadly understood, applied, and where appropriate, integrated with contemporary land management regimes.
Increased participation	A broad cross section of the community (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) is involved in management actions supported by the POP program in caring and connecting with Country.
	Private and public land managers with sites of Aboriginal significance are engaged in on-ground cultural and environmental management activities with Aboriginal communities.
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/benefited delivery of on-ground activities and environmental stewardship.

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.

Intermediate Outcomes

Land Management	Aboriginal land, cultural resources and land significant to Aboriginal people is managed, restored and/or rehabilitated by Aboriginal community organisations and other land managers in appropriate ways.
	Activities that incentivise appropriate and sustainable use of natural resources in-perpetuity are facilitated.
Application of cultural knowledge	Aboriginal people apply appropriate cultural practices to ensure sustainable natural resource management on Country to address present and future issues.
	Aboriginal land is managed in a way that both enhances and protects environmental and cultural values.
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 and monitored to measure sustainability of investment and benefit to the environment.

Foundational activities

Foundational activities	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 etc.
	Applications received and assessed by suitably qualified Technical Review Committee with recommendations going to Trust for approval.
	Skill gaps identified and training needs mapped and planned for successful applicants.

Program objective: Provide an appropriate, effective and sustainable mechanism to deliver Government policy, priorities and outcomes through the Environmental Rehabilitation Program.

Intermediate Outcomes

Policy	The program contributes to the delivery of government priorities for Aboriginal communities.
	The program is consistent with all relevant government policy and legislation.
Cultural Respect	The program design and delivery acknowledges and respects Aboriginal culture and traditions.
	Aboriginal communities are consulted on all aspects of the program.
Governance	Program delivery is consistent with all Trust legal and procedural requirements and standards.
	Projects are delivered in accordance with the approved project application/plan and stated objectives are met.
	All projects are acquitted and grant funds expended appropriately though grantees meeting their reporting and other obligations.