

NSW Environmental Trust's 2018 Research Program

Guidelines for Completing your Expression of Interest



Closing date: 3pm Monday, 12 March 2018

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Image source

Wetlands Sunrise, Mid Murray River
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See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN 978 1 76039 985 6
OEH 2018/0020
January 2018

Find out more about your environment at:
www.environment.nsw.gov.au

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Before reading this guide

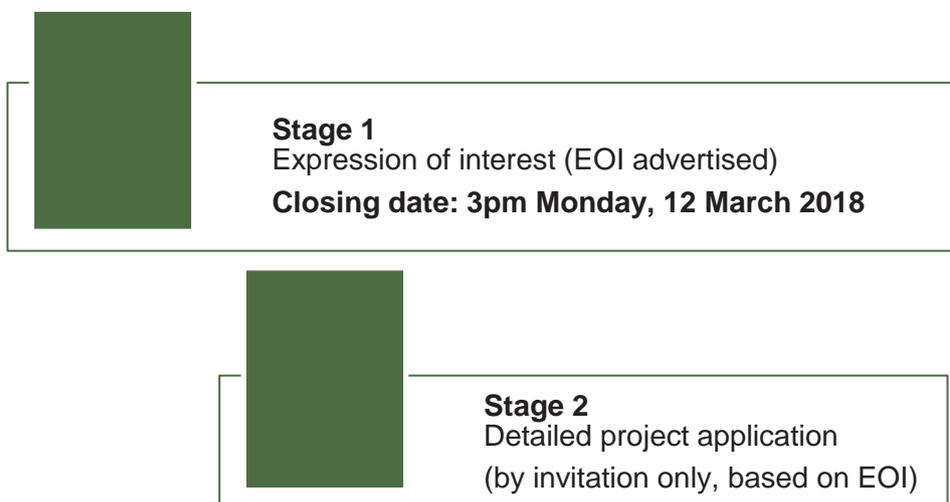
For further information about the Environmental Research Program, including eligibility criteria, please refer to the [Environmental Research Program Guidelines](#).

How to use this guide

This guide is designed to provide step by step guidance to help you complete and submit your application to the [Environmental Research grants program](#).

The expression of interest consists of a PDF Form, which is available to download from the [Trust's website](#).

The EOI form is the first stage in applying for an Environmental Research grant:



A maximum of three EOIs per organisation are permitted for each program priority, and a maximum of twelve EOIs in total (see page 2 of the [Program Guidelines](#)).

The EOI is a nine page document. The boxes provided for answers to questions are a set size and will not expand to accommodate additional text or allow you to type beyond the bottom of the text box. Please ensure your answers are fully contained within the limits of the text boxes.

Enquiries or questions

NSW Environmental Trust

Telephone: 02 8837 6093

Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Assessment criteria for EOIs

Each EOI will be assessed by the Environmental Research Technical Committee and peer reviewers. Your EOI will be assessed against the following criteria outlined below.

Each criterion reflects a section of the EOI form.

Criterion 1 Significance for the environment

- Is the research principally focussed upon one of the program priorities?
- Will this fill a strategically significant gap in knowledge that would otherwise be likely to impede environmental decision-making in NSW within the foreseeable future?

Criterion 2 Merit of the research

- Is the research well considered and will it employ sound methodology?

Criterion 3 Collaboration

- Have relevant collaborators been involved in scoping the proposal? Has meaningful collaboration with end users been established?

Criterion 4 Potential for success

- Based on assessment against the above criterion (1-3), estimated funding range and timeframe, what is the likelihood of success of the project?

Part A: Organisation details

A1 Lead organisation details

This question gives us important background information about the nature of your organisation and your organisation's ability to manage the project.

The lead organisation can be either the research body or an identified end-user of the research.

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

A2 Contact details for Principal Researcher

The Trust will include the Principal Researcher in correspondence to the primary contact.

Principal investigators do not have to be employed by the lead organisation; they may be employed by collaborators (see B14).

A3 Primary contact

The contact person should be an office holder or employee who is authorised to speak on behalf of the organisation and collaboration. Universities should provide a contact at their Research Office.

The nominated contact person should be contactable by phone during normal business hours. A work and mobile number, and email address should be provided.

A4 Lead organisation legal status

Please select one of the options provided. Refer to page 4 of the [Program Guidelines](#) for the eligibility of your lead organisation to apply for a grant.

Part B: Project details

B1 Project title

Your project title will be used to identify your project in all reports, media and promotion.

B2 Project summary

Your project summary should provide a brief, plain English overview of the need, objectives, activities and the proposed practical outcomes of your project.

The project summary will be used to promote your project in reports and media, should you be successful in receiving a grant.

B3 Program priorities

Please select the program priority that your proposal addresses. Refer to page 6 of the [Program Guidelines](#) for more detail on program priorities.

If you consider your proposal relevant to more than one priority, please select the priority that is most relevant only (do not select more than one priority).

The Trust also recognises that there may be research proposals tackling emerging issues not covered in the program priorities. In these instances, applicants may check the fifth box.

EOIs received that do not meet a program priority should provide strong justification, particularly in question B7, of why this emerging issue is important, how the proposal is addressing the issue and how the proposal promotes innovation.

B4 Research type

Research types, as defined for this Program, include biophysical, social and economic. If you consider your proposal relevant to more than one research type, please select the research type that is most relevant only (do not select more than one research type).

For definitions of each research type refer to page 7 of the [Program Guidelines](#).

B5 Funding range

Indicate the funding range you are seeking from the NSW Environmental Trust. The funding ranges provided are for the total funding requested for the full duration of the project (up to three years).

If you are invited to submit a full application, you will be required to provide a detailed Application Budget. The Application Budget includes funding sought from the Environmental Trust, in-kind contributions and funding from external sources.

Make sure your budget is based on GST exclusive pricing (GST will be added to payments if the project is approved where applicable). However, if your organisation is not registered for GST, make sure that the budget is based on GST inclusive pricing.

B6 Timeframe

Here you need to approximate the commencement and completion dates of your proposal. Note that:

- projects must start between 1 January 2019 and 1 March 2019
- projects must be completed within three years of the commencement date.

Criterion 1: Significance for the environment

B7 Problem/issue to be addressed and relevance

This question is two-fold; to answer it effectively you should:

1. Identify the environmental problem/issue you are addressing i.e. summarise the challenges currently being faced. Your issue should be clearly aligned to the program priority you are addressing.
2. Explain why addressing this problem/issue is significant for the NSW environment. What are the knowledge gaps and how will your project contribute to filling those gaps? Is it crucial for management and conservation? Is it significant for environmental policy choices? Why?

B8 Project objectives

You should have a maximum of **three** objectives. Many proposals may only have two targeted objectives.

Ensure that your objectives are achievable. To determine this, consider what 'successfully' meeting each objective will look like and how you will know if you've been successful.

Your proposed objectives should guide application over reasonable and practical timeframes. Generally speaking, that means that application of the research within the duration of grant funding (up to three years).

Tip

Make sure that you apply the SMART principle to your objective writing.

S - specific, **M** - measurable, **A** - attainable, **R** – realistic, and **T** - time bound.

If your EOI is successful, you will be required to develop a project plan as part of your invited application. The project plan outlines the method you will apply to meet each of your objectives, and requires you to demonstrate how progress and success will be evaluated.

B9 Expected environmental outcomes

Your expected *environmental* outcomes should be as specific as possible. They should also be clearly aligned with the objectives you have outlined in question B8.

Ensure that you explain how your proposed outcomes would lead to tangible environmental benefit. For example, your research findings may facilitate informed decision making of your collaborators, or enhance the capability of the community to manage an issue. How do you then anticipate these outcomes will lead to environmental benefit(s), such as enhanced biodiversity, or reduced pollution?

Criterion 2: Merit of the research

B10 Research method

Detail your research methods for this proposal. Ensure that your method clearly aligns with your project objectives listed in question B8.

B11 Previous research

This question relates to the previous research of the Principal Researcher and Research Team. Outline the research you deem most relevant to this proposal i.e. the research that best demonstrates the requisite capabilities of the researchers to deliver this proposal with scientific rigour.

Ensure that the research is discoverable and that journal references are included.

B12 Current research on this topic

Please list the current research that you have actively used to inform your proposal.

Include the names of databases you have searched to obtain this information. For example, Web of Science, Science Direct, Google scholar or SCOPUS.

B13 Consultation on relevance and design

State the stakeholders you have consulted with to develop your proposal to date. Determine if and how consultation has led to a better understanding of:

- the need for this project
- the usefulness of, and practical application of, the outcomes proposed.

The stakeholders you have consulted with may also be listed as collaborators if you intend them to be involved in the delivery of the project (see question B14).

Criterion 3: Collaboration

B14a Collaborators

Collaborators are your project partners. Your collaboration should demonstrate partnerships that will improve the delivery of your research and the application of research outcomes. It is therefore essential that you identify at least one collaborator.

Provide a list of your collaborators, and a brief outline of the roles they will play in the project. For more information on collaboration, see 8 of the Program Guidelines.

- Evidence of support for the project and intended involvement from collaborators will be required if you are invited to submit a full application.

EOIs that do not show a collaborative approach will not be assessed.

B14b End Users

Your end users may be any number of organisations or groups, such as: state government agencies, councils, non-government organisations, community groups, landholders, environment groups or industry groups. It will not be sufficient to state that potential end users have been consulted in developing the proposal. They must be involved with and agree to practical application of the research outcomes.

Provide a list of your end-users, and a brief outline of the roles they will play, in the project and in the practical application of the research outcomes. For more information on end users, see page 8 of the Program Guidelines.

- Evidence of support for the project and intended involvement from end-users will be required if you are invited to submit a full application.

EOIs that do not show a collaborative approach will not be assessed.

B15 Communication

In question B14 you have demonstrated engagement with your collaborators and end-users in the initial scoping phases of your project.

For this question (B15), outline how you plan to engage your collaborators and other stakeholders throughout your research, and to effectively implement and disseminate your research findings. For example, steering committees, workshops, face to face consultation, forums, briefings, and social media.

It may be that one or more of your collaborators would be responsible for all or some aspects of engagement, rather than the lead applicant.

Engagement should include both information sharing and capacity building activities. For more information on communication, see page 8 of the Program Guidelines.

- Invited applicants will be required to outline a communications strategy as part of their full application.
- Grant recipients may be required to publish and submit their data to a data repository that is supported by the Trust.

Criterion 4: Potential for success

B16 Amount and timeframe is appropriate

The Environmental Research program funds research that will result in the practical application of the research outcomes through the engagement and collaboration with end users.

In the previous questions you have shown that your research is a priority, is needed, and has appropriate engagement and collaboration. In this question you will need to show that the amount requested and the timeframe allowed will realistically result in the outputs and outcomes of your research being appropriate for practical application. In other words, not just journal articles and conference presentations about research methodologies and results, but actual tangible on-ground application of the project outcomes.

Part C: Authorisation

Include the details of your Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer, Head of Research or a senior officer who can attest to the accuracy of the information contained in this Expression of Interest. No signature is required.

Part D: EOI Evaluation

The Trust is always looking at ways to improve its services and user experience. To assist with this, there is a short survey at the end of the EOI.

Part E: Submitting your EOI

- Submit your EOI by email.
- Applicants must adhere to the naming instructions for submitting their application documents.
- Before submitting your application, please refer to the submission process set-out in the application form.
- Individual researchers from Universities and state-wide organisations should not submit their EOI directly to the Trust.
- The Trust will only accept applications from Universities if they are submitted via their Research Grants Office to ensure that limits are not exceeded (3 EOIs per program priority).
- This also applies to state wide organisations, who should submit their applications via their Head Office/Chief Executive Officer.
- Do not submit any attachments with the EOI form, as they will not be accepted.
- If you have not received notification of receipt of your email within 2 working days, it is your responsibility to contact the Trust to ensure that your email has been received.

Submit your EOI by the closing date: 3pm Monday, 12 March 2018.
Any application that is late, incomplete or ineligible will not be considered.