

Environmental Education Program Program Guidelines 2015



Closing Dates

Expression of Interest:	5.00 pm Friday 10 April 2015
Applications by invitation only	5.00 pm Friday 10 July 2015

Front cover photo: Powerful Owl project – Birdlife Australia

Published by:

NSW Environmental Trust
PO Box 644, Parramatta 2124

Phone (02) 8837 6093

Fax: (02) 9895 6548

Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents

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

See also www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN: 978 1 74359 578 7

OEH 2014/0269

March 2014

How to use this guide

This guide will give you an overview of the Environmental Trust's Education grants program, including information on organisations that are eligible to apply and the types of environmental education projects that we will fund. They also outline how applications are assessed and what to expect if you are awarded a grant.

If you decide to apply for an Education grant, you should also refer to the [Guidelines for completing your Expression of Interest](#)

Contact Us

If you would like more information about this program or require assistance, please contact the NSW Environmental Trust on

(02) 8837 6093 or info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Part 1: About this program

The [NSW Environmental Trust's](#) (the Trust's) [Environmental Education Program](#) is a contestable grants program seeking to support education projects that help address environmental problems in NSW.

The Trust is an independent statutory body established by the NSW Government to fund a broad range of organisations to undertake projects that enhance the state's environment. The Trust's main responsibility is to make and supervise the expenditure of grants.

Program objectives

The aim of the Environmental Education program is to support educational projects or programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge of, skills in, and participation in protecting the environment and undertaking sustainable behaviour(s), by funding projects that meet the following objectives.

Objective 1	Facilitate changes in behaviour of individuals and groups that will affect specific environmental problems.
Objective 2	Develop and promote education projects that improve the environment.

Funding available

There are two streams of funding available (Community and Government). Eligible applicants can submit a **maximum of three Expressions of Interest (EOI)** to either stream.

Our grants can cover the full costs of projects. However, joint funding will add value to your project, may make it more competitive or may be necessary to meet the objectives of your project.

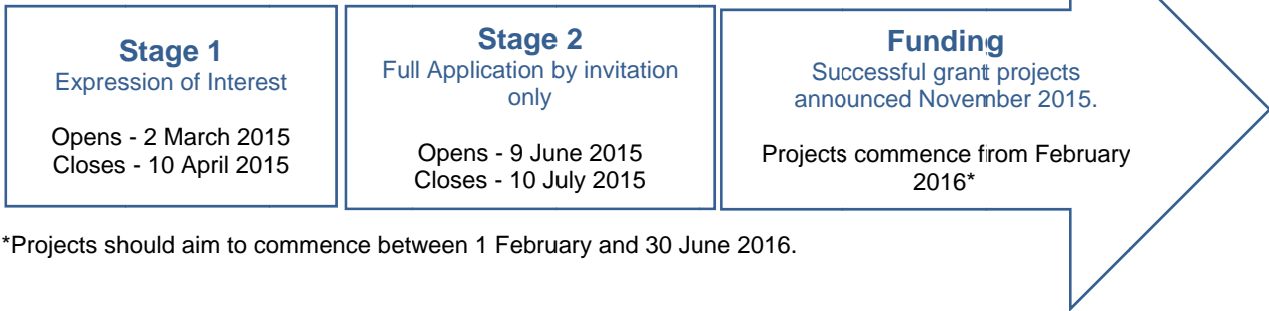
	Target program funds	Minimum grant funding	Maximum grant funding	Duration of funding
1 Community	\$500,000	\$5,000	\$100,000	Up to 3 years
2 Government	\$500,000	\$5,000	\$100,000	Up to 3 years

Competition for funds is normally high. In the last grants round (2014), the Trust received 181 EOIs requesting an upper value of \$11.8 million, which resulted in 37 invited applications. A total of 18 applications totalling \$1,048,218 were successful. See the [Trust website](#) for information on successful projects.

What's new for 2015?

- Greater focus on collaboration (partnerships). From 2015 the Trust will require applicants to demonstrate meaningful engagement with collaborators from project scoping to implementation and dissemination of results (see page 3).
- Further guidance on what we expect from education projects (see page 4 – what can be funded?)
- [Guidelines completing your Expression of Interest](#), designed to provide step by step guidance to assist you with each question in the EOI form.

Important dates and milestones



*Projects should aim to commence between 1 February and 30 June 2016.

Part 2: Eligibility

To be eligible, proposals must have a lead applicant and collaboration in place. The eligibility for lead applicants and your collaboration are outlined in this section.

Lead applicant

Each proposal requires a lead applicant.

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

The following organisations are eligible to apply as the lead applicant:

1. **Community** stream:

- Community organisations
- Community groups
- Incorporated associations
- Incorporated non- profit organisations
- Non-commercial Cooperatives

Community groups or organisations that are **not incorporated** are only eligible to apply if they arrange for the grant to be administered by an incorporated or government organisation.

(See **Nominating an administrator** on page 6)

2. **Government** stream:

- State government agencies and/or statutory committees
- Councils
- Local Land Services
- regional organisations of councils
- other local government controlled organisations
- Universities

A maximum of 3 EOIs can be submitted per lead organisation.

Collaborators

To ensure the long term success of your project (sustained community behaviour change) it is vital that you engage other relevant stakeholders in your project planning and implementation. Therefore, to be eligible, proposals (EOIs and invited applications) must demonstrate a collaborative approach. Collaborators, or project partners, can help leverage time, expertise, material, resources, as well as reduce duplication. Your collaborators must:

- ✓ Have been actively involved in scoping your project.
- ✓ Demonstrate the requisite capabilities and responsibility to undertake the project.

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

Nominating an administrator

Community groups/organisations may nominate another organisation to administer grant funds on their behalf.

The administrator must be a legal entity and Grant Agreements are prepared in the name of the administering body. Grant payments are made payable to the administrator who is responsible for dispersing funds on the grantee's behalf and the preparation of financial reports. An agreement should be reached between the grantee and the administrator in relation to project management. It is expected that the project will be led by the applicant and not the administrator.

Ineligible applicants

The Trust **will not** fund:

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

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. If it is considered that negative past performance presents a substantial risk to the timely and effective performance of the project, an applicant will be asked to respond to the negative determination and this response will be taken into consideration alongside the overall merits of the EOI. Special conditions may be included in the funding agreement to address any issues of concern.

Part 3: What can be funded?

Guiding principles for environmental education projects

EOIs and applications should incorporate the following principles for effective and impactful environmental education projects. These principles are also reflected in the assessment criteria (see page 9).



We are seeking projects where there are opportunities or challenges in getting audiences to understand, care and act differently with regard to their environment, and in particular, projects applying innovative approaches to educate and engage their audiences.

Target audiences can be based on a range of characteristics, including geographical location, socio-economic group, specific needs, drivers, or interests.

We recognise that there are specific audiences or groups identified as hard to reach, and we particularly encourage projects that target these audiences (see below).

1. Individuals - sustainability action at home

There have been a range of sustainability programs successful in educating individuals on implementing sustainability measures to save energy, water or reduce waste at home.

However, knowledge gaps still exist for many actions individuals can apply to their domestic lifestyle to protect the environment.

Examples

- Randwick City Council's [Join the Energy Revolution](#)
- [Sustainable Living Armidale's I can do it!](#) - living sustainably in our homes
- Queanbeyan City Council's [Engaging Gooongong in sustainable housing](#)

2. Youth

There is a sense that opportunities for youth involvement in the environment diminish beyond primary school age. There is also the concern that teenagers are leading increasingly sedentary existences, with greatly decreased time spent outdoors. Amongst other implications, this is documented as having a negative effect on young people's attitudes towards the environment.

Identified areas for youth education and engagement:

- Getting young people into nature to instil an early passion for the environment.
- Enabling high schools students and youth groups to access meaningful environmental volunteering/involvement opportunities.
- Connecting youth and environment organisations across NSW.
- Participation in environmental activities specifically amongst boys and youths with CALD backgrounds.

Examples:

- Australian Youth Climate Coalition's [Start the Switch](#)
- North East Waste Forum's [Northern Rivers eco-friendly youth project](#)

3. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities

The level of involvement of CALD organisations and communities in sustainability and environmental projects has been limited.

Projects working with CALD communities should ensure that they are relevant and tailored to culturally diverse audiences, for example, by responding to language and cultural needs.

Examples:

- Canterbury City Council's [Sustainability in the CALD business community](#)
- Auburn Community Development Network's [Multilingual multimedia community education program](#)

4. Professional associations

Professional associations or industry peak bodies are uniquely positioned to influence and facilitate changes in behaviour of the groups/organisations they represent, to reduce their impact on the environment.

Examples:

- Australian Hairdressing Council's [Sustainable salons](#)
- Skillset (Central West Group Apprentices) - [Natural landscape function for small rural farmers](#)

Regional and rural communities

The Trust uses a merit-based assessment process for all applications, so does not allocate specific funding for specific areas or regions of the state. However, in recognition of the historically low allocation of Education program grants to regional areas, we strongly encourage applications from regional and rural communities, or projects that incorporate regional collaborations or partnerships.

Ineligible activities

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

- ✘ Projects that, in the normal course of events, are clearly the core business of local or state government authorities or educational institutions.
- ✘ Continuing administration/operational costs of organisations.
- ✘ Capital equipment purchases, unless it is more cost effective to purchase than to lease capital equipment for the life of the project. Costs for capital items should generally not exceed 20 per cent of the total project budget.
- ✘ One-off information activities and events (projects that will not lead [or contribute to] sustained change in behaviour and skills).
- ✘ Projects that fund devolved grants (i.e. projects offering grants to other organisations).
- ✘ Ongoing maintenance of projects to which organisations have committed as part of a previous grant or their core business operations.
- ✘ Reimbursement of salaries of existing state or local government staff who will be supervising or working on the project as part of their **usual** duties.
- ✘ Retrospective funding. That is, activities that have commenced before the grant is offered and accepted. You should plan to begin your proposed activity after **1 February 2016**.

'Core business' can be difficult to define as it varies for different organisations. As a general guideline, core business is essential business or legal responsibility of an organisation. The Trust will consider funding works that are related to core business but additional to the organisations usual work or responsibilities.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their project is not core business.

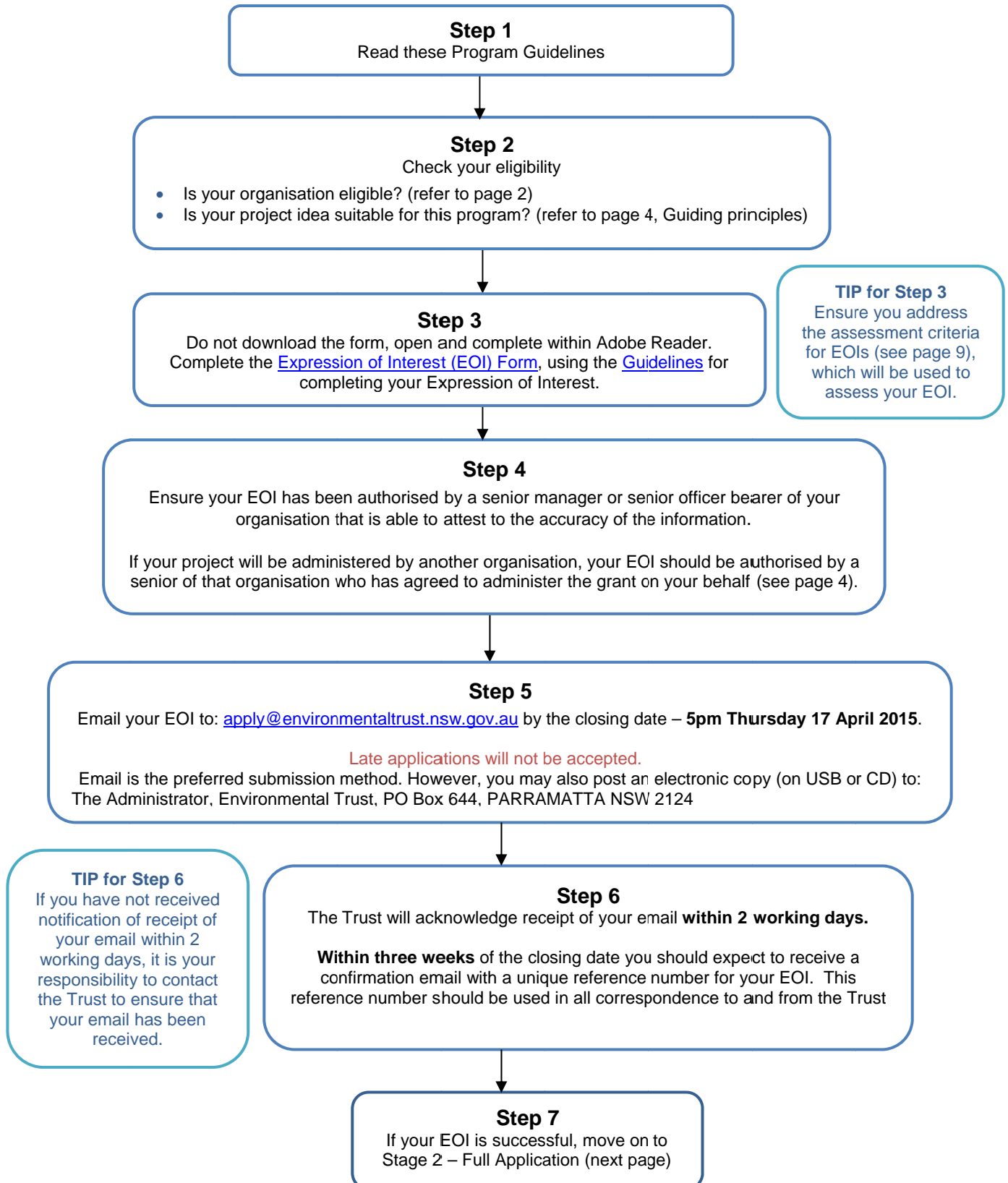
Examples of education projects funded in previous years are available on the [Trust's website](#)

Part 4: Application process

The Education Program has a two stage application process.

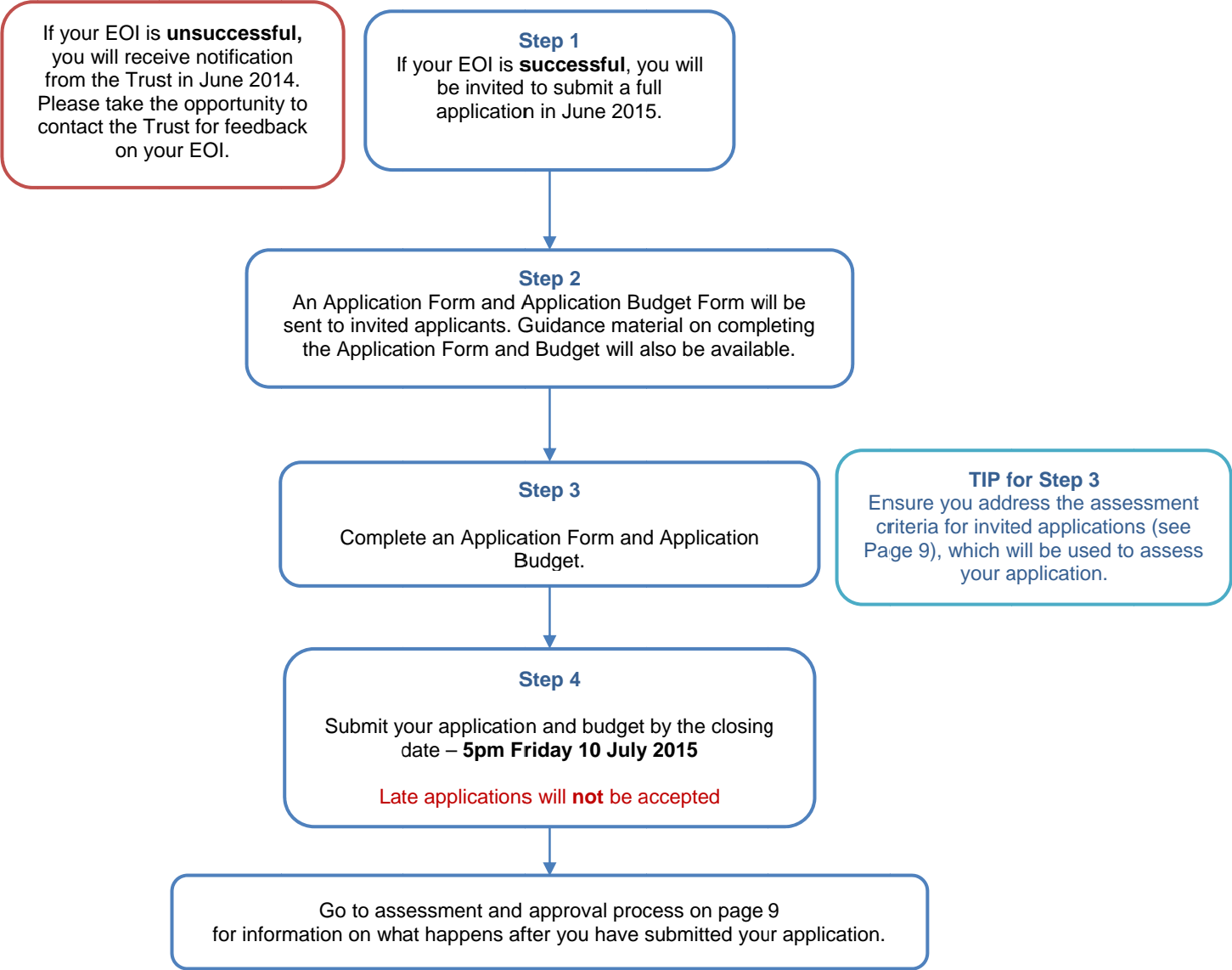
How to apply – Stage 1: Expression of Interest

The following flow chart takes you through the steps of how to lodge an Expression of Interest in Stage 1 of the Education Program application process.



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

The following flow chart takes you through the general steps of Stage 2 of the Education Program application process (Full Applications).



Part 5: Assessment

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

There are separate assessment criteria for EOI (stage 1) and full application (stage 2). The full application assessment criteria, as you would expect, are more detailed.

Stage 1: Expression of Interest - Assessment Criteria

Criterion 1 Environmental benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven environmental and educational needs and tangible environmental benefits.
Criterion 2 Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness and understanding of the target audience and proposed engagement methods. • Ability to build capacity of the target audience.
Criterion 3 Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant collaboration established, and collaboration has been actively involved in project scoping. • Appropriate mechanisms to engage collaborators established.
Criterion 4 Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of objectives to address the stated environmental issues. • Likelihood of success against project objectives.

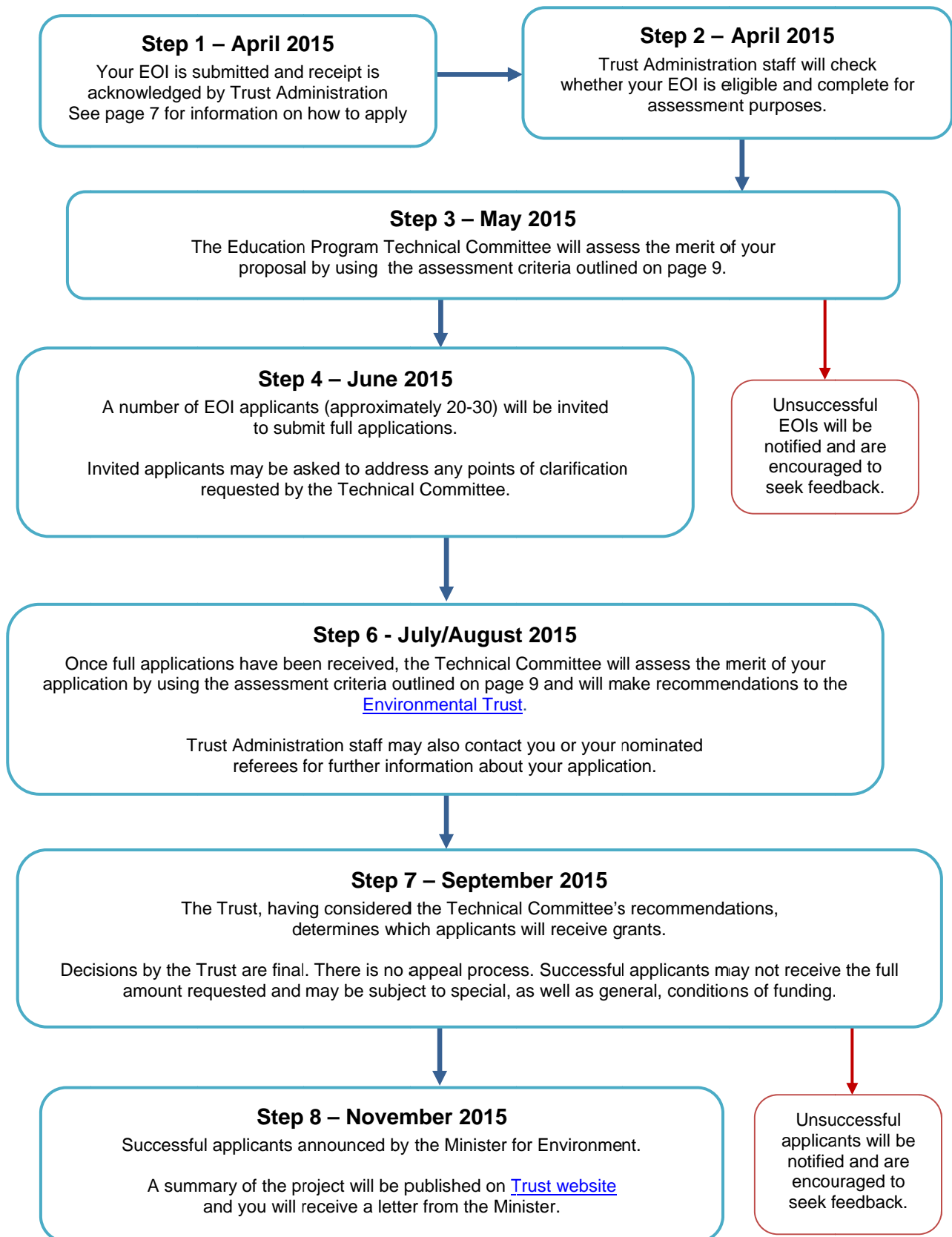
Please refer to [How to complete your Expression of Interest](#) to see how questions in the EOI Form relate to the assessment criteria.

Stage 2: Invited application - Assessment Criteria

Criterion 1 Tangible environmental benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear explanation of the environmental issue to be addressed i.e. is there a need? • likelihood the project will make a difference to this issue • demonstrated evidence that similar or existing programs/products are not duplicated • degree of originality or innovation of your approach (not essential)
Criterion 2 Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear specification and understanding of target audience • likely impact of target audience communication and engagement strategy • extent to which project activities build capacity of target audience
Criterion 3 Project team and collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strength and appropriateness of the collaboration • appropriateness of proposed engagement of collaborators • relevance of project team expertise • relevance of expertise of collaborators
Criterion 4 Project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of the project plan to show how the proposed activities will enable the objectives to be met (including project evaluation) • stated objectives and outcomes are measurable, either quantitatively and qualitatively • clear explanation of how outcomes will be evaluated and disseminated • how well the project plan incorporates measures to monitor and address identified risk factors • feasible time frame for achieving proposed objectives and outputs
Criterion 5 Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extent to which the budget supports the proposed outputs and whether it will ensure the viability of the project overall • the likely environmental impact of the proposal relative to the amount of program funds sought • appropriateness of the mix in the total budget for materials and other direct project costs and in-kind contributions to the project • demonstrated commitment of the applicant to continue to support and achieve the project's outcomes beyond the life of the grant. • transferability for dissemination of project outcomes

If you are invited to submit a full application, there will be guidance available on which parts of the application relate to each assessment criteria.

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



See page 12 for information on what to expect if you are successful in receiving a grant.

Part 6: Managing your grant

If you are successful in receiving an Education Program grant, you will be notified in November 2015. Upon commencement and for the duration of your project you will work with Trust Administration to prepare reports and required documentation (outlined below).

The Trust's Grants Administration team are on hand to answer your questions and help you prepare and develop documentation required by the Trust.

Getting started

If you are awarded an Education grant, you will be required to submit the following documents **before** starting your project.

1. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan)

The [M&E Plan](#) provides a framework for monitoring progress and managing risk, and enables you to determine whether you achieved what you set out to do.

It is a more detailed version of the Project Planning section you will have completed as part of your invited application

If your grant is between \$5,000 and \$20,000 you will not be required to complete an M&E Plan.

2. Project Measures

The [Education Program Project Measures](#) spreadsheet is a standardised list of indicators or 'measures' that are used to 'estimate' the impact of your project.

You are required to report against your estimated measures throughout your project (see 'During your project' below).

The estimated measures completed as part of your invited application would be used to complete this spreadsheet.

3. Grant Agreement

The Grant Agreement sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant.

A copy of the standard [Grant Agreement](#) can be found on the Trust's Grants process web page. Note that the standard conditions of this agreement will not be changed.

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

4. Tax Invoice

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

Your first instalment will be made when we receive your signed Grant Agreement, M&E Plan and Project Measures.

During your project

Grantees are required to prepare and submit progress reports periodically throughout their projects. The timeframe for reporting and payments will be agreed with your Grants Administrator when the grant is awarded, and outlined in your Grant Agreement. Generally speaking, progress reports are required every 12-15 months.

The Trust recognises, however, that variations to your project are sometimes inevitable and these can be negotiated with your Grants Administrator at any time throughout your project.

A reporting template is available on the [Trust website](#).

Each report allows grantees to provide details on activities, achievements and expenditure. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on the implementation and application of the M&E Plan and Project Measures.

Each report is reviewed by a representative of the Trust with the relevant technical expertise. If your report demonstrates that your project is progressing well, the next instalment of your grant will be authorised by the Trust and your Grant Administrator will provide you with feedback from the reviewer.

Completing your project

When your project is complete, grantees are required to submit a final report reflecting on achievements against the project's objectives. A reporting template is available on the [Trust website](#).

Like progress reports, your final report will be reviewed by a representative of the Trust. Your project will also be reviewed by the Trust's [Dissemination Program](#) team, which collaborates with grantees to add value to successfully completed grant projects.

Your Grants Administrator will provide you will feedback on your project, and if the requirements of the grant agreement have been met, your grant will be formally acquitted.

General obligations

Signing the Grant Agreement commits you to fulfilling the following obligations. The standard conditions of this Agreement will not be changed at the request of grantees. If your organisation is not willing to sign the agreement then you should not submit an EOI. Some key commitments are outlined below:

- Comply with all conditions contained in the Grant Agreement.
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Start your project within two months of receiving funding.
- Ensure that all procurement (purchasing) and employment is undertaken in line with your organisation's internal policies and guidelines.
- Seek prior approval for budget changes greater than 10 per cent (while being aware that project administration costs should never be more than 10 per cent of the direct project costs).
- Seek prior approval from the Trust to alter proposed outputs, objectives or timeframes.
- Provide progress and final reports in accordance with the Trust's reporting guidelines. This should also include a report on project measures.
- Include the relevant financial reporting with all progress and/or final reports.
- Acknowledge the Trust's support in all promotional material or any public statements about your project. Your acknowledgement must include the Trust's logo in written material.
- Be prepared for all knowledge gained as part of the grant to be made publicly available whether that be publishing the final report or promoting the project via other avenues available to the Trust.

Privacy

- We use the information you supply to us for processing and assessing your application. While we do not publicly release your application as a matter of policy, we may be required to do so under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* or other lawful requirement.
- The Trust may also disclose information you supply to us for the purpose of evaluating and/or auditing its grant programs. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

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