



## Eco Schools Program 2012 Guidelines for applicants

Closing date: 5pm 18 May 2012

### Background

The Environmental Trust provides these guidelines for people wishing to apply for a grant under the Eco Schools Grant Program. The aim of the Trust's Eco Schools Grant Program is to give 60 schools each year the opportunity to involve their community and students in developing and implementing environmental management projects. These projects may be within the school and school grounds or be an area outside the school grounds of community concern in which the school can be involved. The projects can involve the community, students and staff or a cluster of schools.

It is intended that these guidelines will clarify the criteria by which the grants are assessed.

### Changes to the Eco School Program for 2012 and 2013

The Environmental Trust has responded to the growing demand for funding for food garden projects and has established a new program, Food Gardens in Schools. This program will be trialled for two funding rounds in 2012 and 2013. There is a separate application process for Food Gardens in Schools and the **Eco Schools Program will not fund food gardens during this trial period.**

### Program objectives

The overall objective of the Eco Schools Program is to support schools to develop best practice in environmental education and innovative solutions to environmental issues. The program will fund school environmental management projects aimed at meeting the following objectives.

#### Students:

- to promote the development of students' knowledge, values and behaviour that supports environmental sustainability
- to promote participation of some or all students in identifying, designing, implementing and monitoring solutions that improve the quality of the school and local environment.

#### Teachers:

- to assist teachers to integrate school environmental management projects into school programs and therefore maximise student learning
- to enable project related professional learning for teachers to gain practical and educational skills and knowledge about the environment.

#### School development and management:

- to encourage a whole of school approach to sustainable management of school operations
- to fund schools to utilise the natural and built environment to facilitate student learning
- to encourage schools to link with the local community (including other schools) to undertake activities which address local environmental issues.

#### Environment:

- to promote more efficient resource use and improve the quality of the local environment
- to enable schools to address community and government environmental concerns and priorities.

The ultimate goal of the Eco Schools Grant Program is the development of environmentally sustainable schools.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for an Eco Schools grant:

- The applicant must be a registered NSW school - **Preschools are not eligible to apply**
- The applicant's school must not have been funded in the previous year.
- The project must be a new project or a separate and additional stage of a previous project, not simply ongoing work.
- Your school must be registered on the Sustainable Schools NSW website [www.sustainableschools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.sustainableschools.nsw.edu.au)
- You must complete all relevant parts of the application form clearly and legibly.
- Your application must be received by the closing date. Late applications will not be accepted and will be returned.

Unless your application satisfies all of the above conditions the Technical Committee may consider it ineligible.

Schools are allowed to submit one application.

## Your project

### Definition

Your project must align with the program objectives. Define your project clearly. This includes what you will do, who you will involve with your project, how you will ensure learning opportunities for teachers, students and school community members, how your project fits into the school management plan and how you will promote project ownership by the school community.

### Feasibility

Consider the feasibility and breadth of your project. Be realistic about what you can achieve during the year with the funding available. Smaller defined projects often provide more immediate outcomes for the school community. You should also consider the level of community support required to ensure that the project becomes part of ongoing school life once the funding has finished.

Should your school be successful in receiving a grant in both the Eco Schools and Food Gardens in Schools Programs, you will be asked to outline how your school will be able to manage both projects concurrently.

### Sustainable use of resources

When planning your project, consider whether the use of the resources is sustainable. The Trust encourages the use of sustainable materials e.g. landscaping materials, energy and water efficient appliances or recycled materials.

### Examples of some initiatives eligible for Eco Schools funding

Environmental education in schools encompasses all key learning areas from Kindergarten to Year 12. In addition to a wide range of restoration and rehabilitation projects, Eco Schools initiatives may include:

- conservation of natural resources
- environmental monitoring programs
- energy management
- water use and stormwater management
- litter reduction
- waste avoidance and minimisation (e.g. recycling system)
- setting up environment clubs
- cluster activities between schools
- developing school grounds and other areas as resources for learning (other than food gardens)
- capital expenses that are integrated into the project for school buildings or grounds (providing it does not duplicate school funding on offer from other Commonwealth or State government programs e.g. rainwater tanks, tap fittings or solar panels).

### The Environmental Trust will not fund:

- Overall project coordination or projects that cover only professional learning.
- Projects that are eligible under the Food Gardens in Schools Program.

## Assessment criteria

The assessment process involves your application being considered first by the Trust's Technical Committee, then by the Trust. Eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria below. Applications will be judged on merit and also in relation to issues of equity and need.

<b>Eco Schools Program assessment criteria</b>	
<p>Questions in the application form relate to each criterion as shown. Beneath each assessment criterion are points that the Technical Committee will consider in determining how well your application meets that criterion.</p>	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>There is a proven need and tangible benefits in relation to one or more of the Eco Schools Program objectives. See Questions C1, C2, C3 and C4 of the Application Form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear description of the need for the project and how the project will make a difference</li> <li>• the project has tangible, measurable outcomes</li> <li>• the project clearly aligns to Eco Schools program objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Project activities will ensure student learning through the curriculum. See Questions C3 and C6 of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students will be involved in learning opportunities about environmental sustainability</li> <li>• the project will help to deliver curriculum outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>The project implements an aspect of the school management plan. See Questions A1 and C7 of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence is provided that the school has a current school management plan</li> <li>• the project clearly links to the plan</li> <li>• the school is registered on the Sustainable Schools NSW website</li> </ul> <p>Note that if the relevant extract is not included with the application, it will make the project less competitive. No late attachments will be accepted.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>The project is feasible and its outcomes measurable and demonstrates how you will measure the outcomes. See Questions A3, C1, C2, C3, C5, C10 and Section E of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the scope of the project is clearly described</li> <li>• outcomes can be achieved in a realistic timeframe</li> <li>• there is a method for evaluating success</li> <li>• the project and its activities (including sites) are authorised by the Principal.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>School Staff have the necessary knowledge and skill to effectively implement the project. See Question C3 and C8 of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the applicant understands what knowledge and skills are needed to implement the project</li> <li>• professional learning associated with the project is identified and addressed.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>The project makes a contribution to a sustainable school community. See Questions B5, and C9 of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is an awareness of the project within the school community</li> <li>• appropriate use is made of community expertise and help</li> <li>• there is ownership of the project by the school community.</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Value for money. See Questions C11 and D1 of the application form.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget is appropriate for the proposed outcomes, particularly if funds are sought for capital expenses.</li> </ul>

## Funding

Sixty grants of \$2,500 totalling \$150,000.

## The application form

The form is divided into five sections:

Section A	Asks you for general information including location of your project. The Trust is collecting location information to map project locations. You can either identify the latitude and longitude of your project or office using a conventional map or visit <a href="http://www.environment.gov.au/erin/ert">www.environment.gov.au/erin/ert</a> to locate your project.
Section B	Asks you for specific information about your school.
Section C	Asks you for specific information about the project.
Section D	Seeks details of the expected project costs.
Section E	Seeks the authorisation of the school principal.

### You must:

- download your application from the Trust's web site (Do not submit a handwritten application).
- keep a hardcopy and an e-copy of your application.

Be sure to include all the information that is asked for in the form. Our staff will not chase up information that you have failed to include. Only the information you provide by the closing date will be submitted to the Trust and its Technical Committee.

Schools are allowed to submit one application.

## Attachments

We have designed the questions on the application form to avoid the need for you to attach additional information other than the relevant extract from your school management plan or equivalent, and if applicable, a letter from any other project partners.

**The technical committee will not review more than 2 additional pages.**

## Goods and services tax (GST)

It is assumed that all schools are registered for GST. Do not include any GST in your budget when you fill in your application. You must also provide an approved Tax Invoice for \$2,500 (plus GST if applicable) made out to the Environmental Trust before any payments can be made.

If your school is not registered for GST, please telephone the Trust for advice, on the number below.

**Refunds** - The GST also applies to refunds of grant monies from registered entities.

## Information for successful applicants

Schools receiving a grant will be required to sign a grant agreement and complete a final report on the template provided on the Trust's website: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/eco1.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/eco1.htm). It is recommended that you **read the reporting requirements prior to completing your application** as they detail your obligations at the conclusion of your project

Schools receiving a grant are also required to acknowledge the Trust's assistance which should include the use of the Trust logo on publicly available material associated with the project.

## Application checklist and submission details

You should use the following checklist to make sure that your application is complete and accurately represents your project.

### Grant application check list

<input type="checkbox"/>	Answer all of the questions on the application form.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Type only in the spaces provided. The boxes provided for answers to questions are a set size. Please ensure answers to questions are fully contained within the limits of the text boxes, as the boxes will not expand to accommodate additional text if you continue to type beyond the bottom of the text box. <b>Please keep your application to 8 pages.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide the name of the Principal or head teacher who can attest to the accuracy of your application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Where you have partnered with another school or a community group, provide letters from those organisations confirming the arrangements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attach a copy of the relevant section of your school management plan (or equivalent).
<input type="checkbox"/>	DO NOT fax any part of your application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is no requirement for the application form to be printed in colour if you are posting or hand delivering your application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit your application by <b>ONE</b> of the methods below (i.e. DO NOT email AND post).
<b>Email to: (Preferred method)</b>	<a href="mailto:info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au">info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If emailing your application, please email the <b>application form as a Word document (DO NOT PDF)</b>. Attachments can be email as Word, Excel or PDF documents.</li> </ul>
<b>Post to:</b>	The Administrator Environmental Trust PO Box 644 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not bind or staple your application or attachments.</li> </ul>
<b>Hand deliver to:</b>	Environmental Trust Level 2, 1 Fitzwilliam St PARRAMATTA NSW 2150 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not bind or staple your application or attachments.</li> </ul>

**Any application that is late, incomplete or not eligible will not be considered.**

## What happens next?

### Acknowledgement of receipt of applications

You should expect acknowledgement of your application within three weeks of the closing date. This confirmation will include a unique reference number, which should be used in all correspondence to and from the Trust. If you do not receive acknowledgement within three weeks, please contact the Environmental Trust on (02) 8837 6093.

**Note:** If you email your application, the Trust will acknowledge receipt of your email within two working days. If you have not received notification of receipt of your email within this time, it is your responsibility to contact the Trust to ensure that your email has been received.

### Notification of grant decisions

The Minister for the Environment, as Chairperson of the Trust, will publicly announce the successful applicants. This is expected to occur in October 2012. Applicants will also be notified in writing. **Successful projects could receive funding in December 2012 or early 2013.**

## Further information and enquiries

**For any inquiries please contact the Environmental Trust on (02) 8837 6093.**

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