



Community and Sustainability Technical Review Committee

Information for applicants
NSW Environmental Trust

Department of Planning and Environment



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Purpose

This document aims to outline the context and expectations to inform applicants' Expressions of Interest for membership in the following NSW Environmental Trust Technical Review Committee:

- Community and Sustainability

Applications are now open, closing **5 pm Friday 31 March 2023**.

NSW Environmental Trust

The NSW Environmental Trust (the Trust) is an independent statutory body that supports projects that enhance the environment of New South Wales. The Trust's main function is to award grants and supervise the expenditure of money granted. The Trust was established under the *Environmental Trust Act 1998* and administers grants across a diverse range of programs, including contestable grants, major projects, and various NSW Government initiatives.

The Trust is chaired by the NSW Minister for Environment and Heritage, and its members include representatives from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE); local government; the Nature Conservation Council; and NSW Treasury.

The Trust's grant programs are administered by the Grants Branch of the Department of Planning and Environment.

Further information about the Trust and its grant programs can be found on our website.

About the program

Major projects

Projects funded under the Trust's major projects funding stream are designed to tackle large-scale and/or complex issues. The Trust identifies and designs these projects through consultation with key stakeholders. The goal is to maximise environmental outcomes in New South Wales by investing in projects that are high priority, cost effective, collaborative, and designed by experts.

The program objectives are to:

- strategically invest in addressing large-scale, highly complex environmental issues facing New South Wales that are evidence-based and stakeholder informed
- fund projects that reflect the Trust Objects, strategic priorities and funding principles
- fund projects that have robust planning and design, and measurable environmental outcomes
- ensure best practice grants management.

There are 3 major projects funding streams as below:

Ongoing major projects

These projects are ones that the Trust has historically funded on an 'ongoing' basis for an extended period. They generally address priority environmental issues identified by the Trust as being worthy of continuous funding as they remain an unfunded priority issue or relate directly to the Trust's statutory objects. The need for ongoing funding for these projects is reviewed on a regular basis and is subject to Trust requirements to provide new business plans for approval.

Strategic major projects

These projects represent the Trust's 'proactive' projects. Under this category, the Trust funds multi-year projects, based on its agreed priorities. Funding is guided by a biennial major projects prospectus.

New government priorities

From time to time, the Trust has been asked to fund new priorities of government. These are generally high priority issues that address point-in-time environmental issues or complement new policy or legislative frameworks.

Role of the Technical Review Committee

Technical Review Committees (TRC) are established under section 9 of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998* (the Act). The TRCs' main role is to provide advice and recommendations to the Trust on the practicability and worthiness of grant applications for each program. Responsibilities may also include monitoring and reviewing the progress of funded projects, where relevant, and providing process improvement feedback to the Trust.

Technical Review Committees do not have a role in either awarding grants or approving grants expenditure. The Trust or its delegates award grants and approve expenditure during the life of the grant.

Responsibilities of Technical Review Committee Chair and members

The Chair is responsible for leading the TRC, managing any conflicts of interest, and ensuring that the members work together as a cohesive team.

Members of the TRC (including the Chair):

- actively contribute to the effective governance and oversight of the TRC and its role as an advisory body to the Trust in assessing funding applications and progress of grant projects
- must ensure efficient and responsible expenditure of public funds in accordance with relevant legislation and government policy and guidelines.

Where required, individual experts may provide reports and/or be invited to TRC meetings to provide advice on technical issues.

TRC members will undertake an induction process administered by Trust staff to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities.

Benefits of Technical Review Committee membership

Technical Review Committee membership brings a range of professional benefits, including the opportunity for you to:

- play a significant role in helping the NSW Government address priority environmental problems
- enhance your governance and advisory credentials by offering expert advice and recommendations on the allocation of grant funds and project implementation
- build your professional network through interactions with other environmental research experts and the major environmental grant funding body in New South Wales
- contribute to the effective delivery of environmental outcomes in New South Wales through involvement in the Trust's program improvement initiatives.

Term of appointment

Technical Review Committee members are appointed for an initial period of 4 years, including a one-year probationary period.

Members may be reappointed for an additional 3 years by agreement between the Trust and the member. The maximum term is 7 years.

The Trust may cease a member's appointment if the member does not meet performance expectations, or the standards of conduct outlined below. A TRC member may resign from the TRC by providing suitable notice to Trust staff (approximately 6 weeks).

Availability of members

The TRC is likely to meet approximately 2 to 4 times per year to review applications and/or the progress of existing grant projects. Meetings may last between one hour and a half-day in length. Project documentation is provided ahead of the meeting for pre-reading. Occasionally items may require out-of-session feedback and recommendations.

Meetings will usually be by teleconference, but face-to-face meetings at the Trust's Parramatta office may be required from time to time. TRC members are expected to attend all meetings. The Trust will cover costs associated with attending face-to-face meetings.

Code of conduct

At the time of appointment, members must sign a TRC Member Code of Conduct declaration and adhere to the code at all times.

Members must adhere to standards and principles of conduct applicable to the public sector to ensure that public confidence and trust is maintained in the work of the Trust and the TRC. All members need to clearly understand their public duty and legal responsibilities and must act for the proper purpose without exceeding their powers.

Members must disclose in advance any financial or other interests that may be in conflict with their role as a TRC member and must manage any conflicts in accordance with public sector standards. This includes registering the interest and abstaining from decisions that relate to the interest of the member. Members are required to sign a Committee Member Interest Disclosure form on appointment.

Meetings may be recorded to assist with the production of clear and accurate minutes and reports. All recordings will be destroyed after the minutes have been finalised. TRC members must keep confidential all matters concerning TRC business unless advised otherwise by the Chair or Trust staff.

Further information on the standards of conduct expected of NSW Government board and committee members can be found in the *NSW Government Boards and Committees Guidelines*, section 7.

Nominees of professional bodies or other organisations

Membership of the TRC may include representatives nominated by professional bodies and other organisations, such as academic institutions, not-for-profit environmental organisations, or industry bodies. The Trust Act specifies that each TRC must include at least one industry and one community representative.

Remuneration

Technical Review Committee members are paid in accordance with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, *NSW Government Boards and Committees Guidelines* (September 2015).

Table 1 **Sitting fees for TRC members established under the NSW Government Boards and Committees Guidelines**

	Chair	Member
Full day	\$350	\$220
Half day	\$175	\$110

Reimbursement of expenses (including out-of-pocket travelling expenses) is paid in line with NSW Government policy. Travelling time is not remunerated.

In accordance with Section 8.3 of the abovementioned guidelines, public sector employees who undertake work for the TRC during their normal work hours are not paid a sitting fee unless they obtain an exemption from the Public Service Commission.

Pre-reading time (including time for assessing applications) is remunerated at a rate of \$31.42 per hour, which is consistent with established sitting fees for a 7-hour full day. Trust staff will apply a formula that incorporates the number of applications and/or pages to determine the amount of time the Trust expects members to spend pre-reading.

Sitting and pre-reading fees are paid directly to the nominee unless otherwise arranged.

Submitting your application

Applicants are required to complete the online Expression of Interest form by **5 pm Friday 31 March 2023**. Applicants must upload:

- a brief cover letter (maximum 2 pages) or statement addressing each of the selection criteria
- an up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) (maximum 4 pages).

Applications that are incomplete or do not address the criteria will not be considered.

Selection criteria

Applications should include a cover letter (maximum 2 pages) that addresses each of the following selection criteria:

- high level of professional expertise in the natural resource management and/or environmental education sectors relating to one or more of the following: environmental science, social science, behaviour change, ecological restoration, sustainability, climate change, threatened species and community engagement
- demonstrated ability to actively participate as a member of an expert committee in providing strategic and balanced advice, including evidence of integrity, impartiality, good judgement, and environmental and social awareness
- demonstrated experience or capacity to work collaboratively, constructively and productively in a management or governance team
- evidence to support your nominated role in the TRC, e.g. community representative, industry representative, independent subject matter expert and/or independent chair
- knowledge of and commitment to good governance and probity
- capacity and flexibility to meet the workload and demands of the TRC.

Referees

Applicants must provide the details of 2 referees, including their current (or relevant previous) positions, organisation and contact details. Referees should be able to discuss the applicant's skills, qualifications and ability to discharge the responsibilities of a TRC member.

Selection process

Each application will be assessed on merit. The assessment will determine suitability for membership and rank each application against the selection criteria.

The skills mix, expertise needs and demographic balance of the TRC is also taken into account when recommending candidates for membership.

Authority to appoint TRC members is delegated by the Trust Board to the Executive Director of the Environment and Heritage Group of the Department of Planning and Environment.

At the end of the selection process, all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. Successful applicants will be sent a letter of offer. Successful applicants will be required to complete and return a response form and (if accepting the appointment) a code of conduct and disclosure of interest form.

Unsuccessful applicants can seek feedback on their application. Unless otherwise requested, the Trust will keep unsuccessful applicant information on file in case any similar opportunities arise in the future.

Protecting personal information and privacy

The Trust complies with NSW Government privacy legislation and policies.

If appointed to the TRC, the following information may be made available to the public on a NSW Government website, the Trust annual report, and may be included in media releases issued by the Minister for Environment and Heritage:

- first name and surname
- the term of appointment
- professional position
- the position held, for example, Member/Chair.

More information

- [Environmental Trust Act 1998](#)
- [NSW Environmental Trust](#)
- [NSW Government Boards and Committees Guidelines](#)