

Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative

Product Improvement Program: Round 2

Guide for Applicants: Stream 2 (Research and development)

Applications close 4pm Friday 26 July 2019



www.epa.nsw.gov.au

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Contents

Background	1
About the NSW Environment Protection Authority	1
Development of this program	1
About the Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative	1
About PIP Stream 2 (Research and Development)	2
Research and development that is eligible for grants	2
Stream 2 (Research and Development) objectives	3
The application process	4
Timeline	4
Assessment criteria	5
Eligibility	7
Eligible organisations	7
Conditions of eligibility	7
Partnership projects	8
Who must nominate an administrator?	8
Multiple applications	9
Submission must be made by the applicant organisation	9
Compliance with NSW environment protection laws	9
Matched funding	9
Applicant co-contribution	9
Research integrity	10
What will not be funded	10
Funding from multiple sources	10
Documentation	11
Part B: Application Budget	11
Cash and in-kind contributions	11
Letters of support	12
Attachments	12
Application submission	12
Submission process	12
Document naming	13
Probity	13
Procurement	13
Third-party assistance	13
Assessment and notification	14
Acknowledgement of receipt of applications	14

Assessment and approval process	14
Notification of grant decisions	14
Obligations of successful applicants	14
Funding Deed of Agreement	14
False or misleading information	15
Confidentiality	16
Intellectual property	16
Tax	16
Program changes	16
Conflict of interest	16

Applications are now invited for the Product Improvement Program: Stream 2 (Research and Development).

Applicants should read this guide before preparing an application.

Background

About the NSW Environment Protection Authority

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is an independent statutory authority and the principal environmental regulator in NSW. It leads the state's response to managing a diverse range of activities that can impact on the health of the NSW environment and its people, using a mix of tools, including education; partnerships; licensing and approvals; and audit, enforcement and financial mechanisms. The EPA is empowered under the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* (POEA Act).

Development of this program

This round of the Product Improvement Program (PIP) has been developed following a review and subsequent changes to three EPA grant programs that have funded waste and recycling innovation and infrastructure projects: the Recycling Innovation Fund (RIF), the PIP and the Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement Program (RRFEE).

An independent evaluation of the EPA's RIF in 2018 recommended changes to the program, including the development of an innovation focus on research and development projects and the incorporation of the infrastructure innovation stream into the existing Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Fund programs (PIP and RRFEE). At the same time, an internal review of the PIP and RRFEE found there was significant overlap between the two programs. As a result, the EPA has now combined the RIF, PIP and RRFEE into a single program (this round of the PIP) to avoid unnecessary duplication and increase the program efficiency by pooling the remaining funds.

This round of the PIP has been developed with a total budget of \$6.3 million and offers funding in two streams:

- **Stream 1 (Infrastructure).** Applicants interested in applying for an infrastructure grant (excluding those under the Major Resource Recovery Infrastructure Program) should apply under Stream 1, which has a separate Guide for Applicants and Application Form.
- **Stream 2 (Research and Development).** Applicants with a research and development project proposal should apply under Stream 2.

About the Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative

In February 2013, the NSW Government announced the five-year \$465.7 million Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative (WLRM) following an independent review of the waste levy. In September 2016, the NSW Government announced WLRM would be extended to 2021, with additional funding of \$337 million.

The EPA is responsible for the delivery of programs under this initiative. A key focus of this initiative is to assist communities, business and industry across the NSW economy to reduce waste, increase recycling and meet NSW Government waste and recycling targets.

The WLRM extension is made up of the:

- \$70 million Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Program
- \$65 million Illegal Dumping Prevention and Enforcement Fund
- \$30 million Litter Prevention and Enforcement Fund
- \$35.5 million Organics Infrastructure Fund and Program
- \$48 million Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Fund
- \$57 million Systems for Household Problem Waste Program
- \$22.5 million Business Recycling Program
- \$5 million Recycling Innovation Fund
- \$4 million Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities program.

About PIP Stream 2 (Research and Development)

The aim of Stream 2 of the new PIP is to fund innovative research and development projects that will help to develop new, or expand existing, recycled material (product) markets. This includes projects that introduce new, or improve existing, approaches and technologies to increase the efficiency of recycling facilities that manage or are impacted by problem wastes.

This program stream is particularly seeking solutions for problem wastes that are not targeted by other WLRM grant programs.

Research and development that is eligible for grants

Funding under Stream 2 is primarily intended to support research and development activities that promote innovative and cost-effective ways to improve the management of problem wastes. These wastes include but are not limited to:

- mattresses
- plastic film and other plastics
- copper chrome arsenic (CCA) timber and other treated timbers
- tyres and rubber
- nappies and incontinence pads
- electronic waste (e-waste).

Strong and compelling proposals for other waste types will be welcomed.

Potential research and development projects could focus on, for example:

- problem wastes that lack established recycled material markets in NSW
- packaging that is not currently 100% recyclable, compostable or reusable
- residual wastes generated from recycling processes
- problem wastes that if removed could increase the recovery of a waste stream
- high toxicity, low volume waste streams that pose significant risk of harm to the environment and human health.

These wastes are especially problematic because they are difficult to recycle and reuse. This can be due to various push and pull factors, such as limited technological solutions, poor product stewardship or a lack of commercially attractive reuse markets. They may also be problematic because they are a contaminant in existing recycling processes.

Research and development proposals must be consistent with the objectives in the [NSW waste hierarchy](#), which is outlined in the recycling and reuse section of the EPA website.

Competitive proposals will be those that:

- help to achieve the higher order objectives of the waste hierarchy and the NSW Government's waste and resource recovery targets for 2014–21
- demonstrate that the relevant material can be accepted by the market and will lead to commercially viable responses that improve resource recovery for problem waste.

Stream 2 (Research and Development) objectives

The PIP Research and Development Stream supports innovative research and development because the EPA recognises that innovation can be a risky exercise with a moderate rate of failure and it is usually a collective and cumulative process. The EPA is willing to stimulate ideas by playing an early role in the research and development process in partnership with project proponents.

The objective of this stream is to support research and development that pursues innovation that can promote a holistic market response and will lead to increased recovery of problem wastes in NSW. Investment in research and development is critical for generating the new knowledge required to create or improve products, services and processes.

What is innovation?

For the purpose of this program, 'innovation' can be defined as a process of trying things in new and different ways, often through the application of new technology and improved connections and collaboration, to derive value by meeting community, industry and consumer needs.

Innovation in its broadest sense can include the following:

- changing products or processes where you end up doing things differently and/or doing different things
- developing a new technology or service, which facilitates a completely new way of doing things
- creatively mixing existing ideas or implementing them in a new setting or in a new way, such as through new, collaborative efforts and partnerships.

Funding for research and development under Stream 2 is intended to support research and development for the following **three** types of innovation.

Incremental innovation

Incremental innovation is change that occurs slowly, bit by bit. It involves minimal risk because the change is not dramatic. It is change that a market can easily accept. This kind of innovation could include making small changes to an existing product, refining an existing practice to improve a customer experience, or implementing process changes that reduce the cost of a service or product.

In relation to problem wastes it might include research and development to improve waste separation and collection practices, or the refinement of processing practices to improve recycling or other initiatives that existing markets could easily implement.

Revolutionary innovation

Revolutionary innovation is change that can be radical. It can include significantly changing a service or product in existing markets. This means it involves higher risk because markets may not readily accept it.

With respect to problem wastes it might include research and development to change the way a product is managed through the supply chain. For example, revolutionary innovation may involve creating the commercial incentives for product manufacturers, sellers and users to collectively work towards increasing the recycling and reuse of that product. This may not be easy for markets to adopt, but innovation that is revolutionary could break down the barriers.

Disruptive innovation

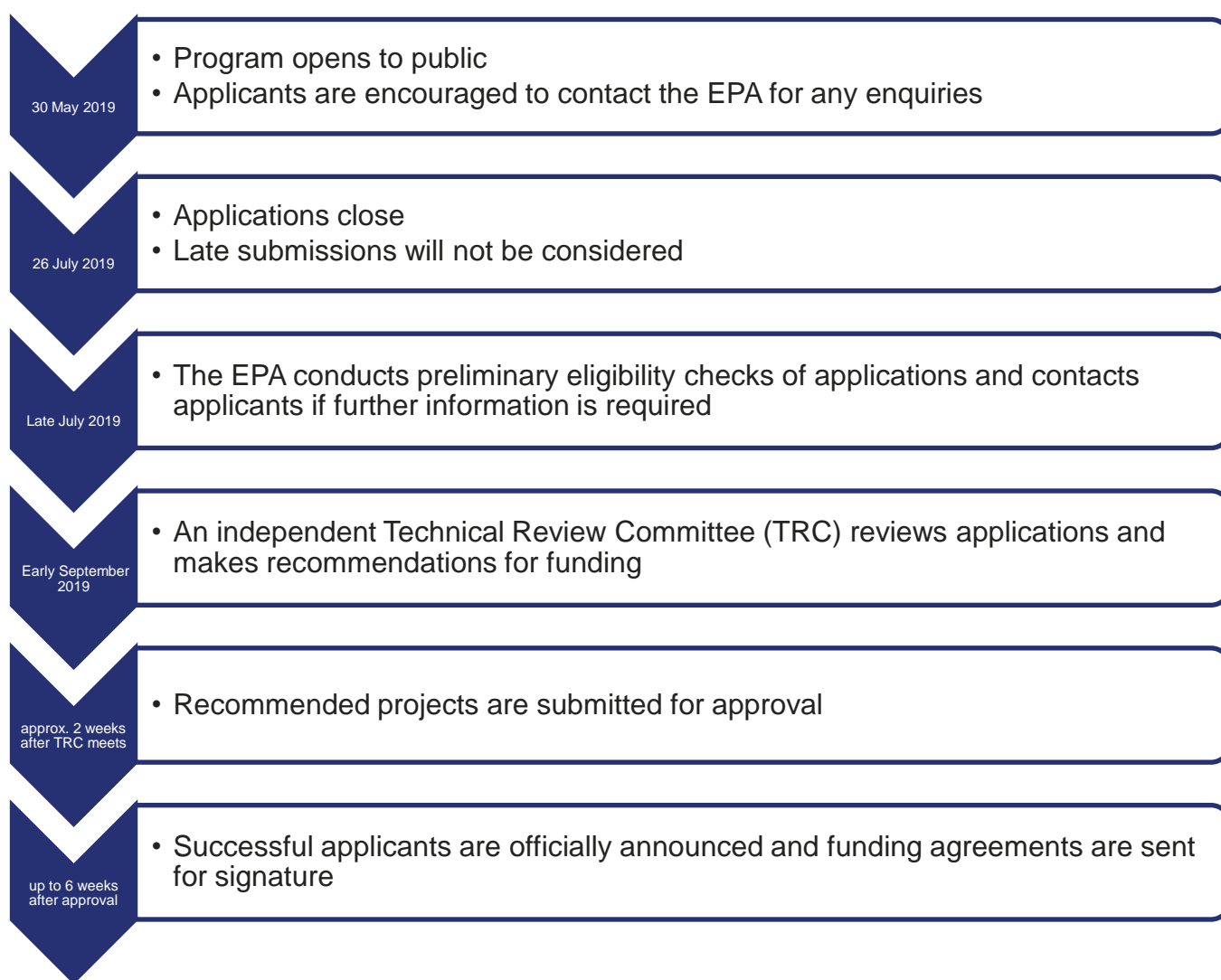
Disruptive innovation also involves radical change, but it is generally ‘blue ocean’ in nature. This means it is creating a technology, service, product or market that is completely new. Thus, disruptive innovation is extremely high risk because markets and consumers have never seen it before.

In relation to problem wastes it might include research and development to create a market for a product that eliminates that product from the waste stream or the implementation of technology that removes toxicity and permits it to enter the waste stream for re-use.

The application process

Timeline

The application process timeline for Stream 2 (Research and development) is shown in the figure below.



Note: All grant projects must be completed by 30 June 2021.

Assessment criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed by an independent Technical Review Committee (TRC) against the assessment criteria, set out in the following table. Your application should be prepared with these criteria in mind. All questions in the application form should be answered fully.

Criterion 1. The applicant has a track record of delivering Innovative research and development

Weighting: 15%

See Questions 7–8

- The number of projects previously undertaken and completed and whether any of those projects have been recognised with peer or industry awards or in published research journals
- The number of projects previously undertaken in relation to waste management issues and the failure or success of those projects
- The number and outcome of previously undertaken projects that can be described (using the definitions supplied earlier in this guide) in one or more of the following ways:
 - incremental innovation where the project refined an existing service, product, practice or technology to improve efficiency, competitiveness, customisation or other purpose
 - revolutionary innovation where the project significantly changed a service, product, practice or technology in existing markets and where that change was accepted by markets
 - disruptive innovation where the project created a completely new service, product, practice or technology that was accepted by markets and/or or created a completely new market
- The number of projects previously undertaken that succeeded in achieving one or more of the following:
 - the conversion of the idea into a commercially viable activity able to be accepted and applied in markets
 - the development of a holistic approach to solving a problem that included all relevant market participants and encouraged ownership of benefits and costs throughout a supply chain
 - the laying of the foundation for additional research in a defined pathway towards future commercial application of an idea
- The performance of the proponent under any previously awarded government grants, including those received from the NSW Environmental Trust and under the WLRM programs

Criterion 2. The applicant has demonstrated robust planning and an ability to deliver the project on time and to a high standard

Weighting: 25%

See Questions 9–10

- The extent to which the project is focused on problem wastes
- The extent to which the project aligns with the NSW Waste Hierarchy, NSW Government Resource Recovery targets 2014–21 and any other applicable sustainability and environment policy objectives, including fostering the shift towards a circular economy
- The extent to which the project includes the following:
 - defined inputs, outputs and outcomes that are measurable via quantitative and qualitative means
 - a robust methodology for gathering and evaluating evidence about the success or failure of the proposal, including an assessment of any future activities enabled by the funded research that are consistent with the cumulative and collective nature of innovation
- The nature and quality of the project’s risk management plan
- The extent to which the project demonstrates the following:
 - a robust plan to share knowledge with the EPA to improve the EPA’s corporate knowledge and assist the EPA in communicating and applying research lessons for policy and regulatory purposes
 - a sustainable plan to continue reporting to the EPA for two years after the project completion on any future activities stimulated by the funding provided under Stream 2
- The extent to which the project is integral to or can stimulate a holistic market response to problem wastes, including innovative approaches to product stewardship
- The extent to which the success of the project depends on partnerships between businesses, industry, tertiary institutions and other relevant market participants and the project plan to secure these partnerships

Criterion 3. The applicant has clearly demonstrated the project's feasibility and innovation readiness

Weighting: 30%

See Questions 11–12

3.1 Project feasibility

- Demonstrated evidence that the project is feasible in the following ways:
 - It is based on market demand, including from the producers, suppliers and managers of problem waste and potential consumers of services or products created from recovered problem wastes
 - The project proponent's research team has the skills and experience to undertake research that can lead to commercially viable market-based solutions
 - The products, services, technologies or other results delivered by the research comply with applicable specifications and quality standards and the EPA's resource recovery exemption framework

3.2 Innovation readiness

- Demonstrated evidence that the project is innovation ready in the following ways:
 - The extent to which the research team and project partners are already working together to achieve the results for which funding is sought
 - The extent to which the project is already developed and underway, including established operational settings for testing and validating results for commercial and market application
 - The extent to which the project has already obtained the certifications, licenses and approvals required to test the innovation in an operational setting, and provided details on approvals it still needs to obtain

Criterion 4. The project represents value for money to the EPA.

Weighting: 30%

See Questions 13, 14 and 18

4.1 Investment costs

- The overall investment from Stream 2 required by the project to achieve its goals and the reasons why this investment is required if there is market demand for the innovative research in a commercial setting
- The overall investment being made by the proponent, including financial and non-financial contributions and the reasons why this contribution is not sufficient to achieve the project goals without Stream 2 funding

4.2 Investment benefits

- The proposed innovation demonstrates the following:
 - It has unique features and benefits that are sufficient to refine (incremental innovation) or radically change (revolutionary innovation) products, services, processes or technologies in existing markets; or radically create new (disruptive innovation) products, services, processes, technologies and/or markets
 - It can increase the resource recovery rates for problem wastes in line with the higher order objectives in the NSW Waste Hierarchy
 - It can lead to resource recovery outcomes for problem wastes that are immediately commercially viable or able to be commercialised under a defined future research and development pathway
 - It can promote a holistic market response to problem wastes, including innovative approaches to product stewardship that are acceptable to all relevant participants in a supply chain
 - It represents a solid foundation for future well defined research and development activities

If you need further help, contact the EPA. For all enquiries about this program please contact the EPA Program Manager using the details below.

Phone: (02) 9995 6920

Email: infrastructure.grants@epa.nsw.gov.au

Eligibility

Eligible organisations

To be eligible for this funding, the applicant must be a legally constituted entity and be an organisation not an individual or sole trader. In addition, the organisation must be one of the following types:

- a not-for-profit /non-government organisation (must comply with the ATO's definition) with an established legal status, or those without a legal status that are able to have grant funds administered by another organisation with legal status
- a NSW local council (as defined in the *NSW Local Government Act 1993*)
- another local government-controlled organisation (or one deemed to have the same local government function)
- a company or partnership as defined under the Commonwealth *Corporations Act 2001*.
- a regional organisation of councils where it applies and/or coordinates projects on behalf of one or several NSW councils within its regional group, provided each council nominates a contact person for the project.
- a research institution can be a tertiary education institution, a government agency established for the purpose of research, a Cooperative Research Centre, an Institute or Centre of Research or a privately owned and accredited research facility. Consultancies are not considered to be research institutes for the purpose of this grant program. Note that privately owned research facilities must provide evidence of accreditation (eg. National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia, or similar).

Conditions of eligibility

Eligible applicants must meet the following mandatory conditions to qualify for funding.

- Complete the EPA's forms and documents:
 - Part A: Application Form
 - Part B: Application Budget
 - Part C: Project Plan.
- Include in the application the names of two senior officers in the organisation (e.g. General Manager, CEO, Chief Financial Officer, Group Manager or Secretary) who can attest to the accuracy of the information within the application.
- Ensure the application is received by the closing date. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Demonstrate in the application that the project is aligned with the program aims and objectives, provides value for money and delivers public benefits.
- Submit projects that will be completed by 30 June 2021.
- Demonstrate in the application that the intended outcomes are measurable and at the very least a foundation for future research. Proposals must include a robust process for gathering and evaluating evidence about the success or failure of the project. This should include the assessment of any future activities enabled by the funded research that are consistent with the cumulative nature of innovation.
- Demonstrate in the application the applicant's plan to share research findings and lessons with the EPA to improve the EPA's corporate knowledge and the wider application and communication of research results.
- Note in the application that the applicant is willing and able to provide ongoing reporting to the EPA on future activities stimulated by funding for at least five years after project completion.

Eligible organisations also need to demonstrate in their application at least two of the following desirable conditions to qualify for funding:

- the proposal can increase the resource recovery rates for problem wastes.
- the research and development activities will lead to resource recovery outcomes that are immediately commercially viable or able to be commercialised under a defined future pathway (please specify timeframe)
- the proposal will promote a holistic market response to problem wastes, including innovative approaches to product stewardship.

If the proposal involves energy from waste technology, the applicant must also demonstrate that the proposal will comply with the NSW EPA's Energy from Waste Policy Statement, which can be accessed from the EPA's website. This includes providing details of investigations that have been performed and information on how the proposal will meet the resource recovery criteria and all other requirements of the policy.

Applications that do not satisfy at least two of the above desirable conditions will be deemed ineligible and will not be assessed.

Your organisation will be ineligible for funding if:

- it is not compliant with NSW environment protection laws
- it (or a project partner or related organisation) transports or arranges the transport of waste generated in NSW for disposal outside of NSW, at any time during the life of any grant awarded. Should your organisation be found to be involved in transporting waste outside of NSW, any grant awarded will be terminated immediately and all grant funding will have to be repaid to the EPA. (Note: Organisations that have operations near the border of any other State or Territory may apply for an exemption from this requirement.)

Partnership projects

Preference will be given to projects that can demonstrate enduring partnerships between businesses, investors, industry and tertiary/research organisations as well as investments aimed at achieving commercially viable outcomes.

Partnership projects can improve the implementation and reach of projects. An organisation must be appointed to act as the grant applicant and administrator of the project, including signing the Deed of Agreement and submitting milestone reports. It is expected that before applying for funds an agreement will have been reached between all partners in relation to project management, roles, responsibilities and funding contributions. This agreement should be demonstrated in the grant application and can be provided in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by each partner or a letter from each partner detailing their roles, responsibilities and commitments.

A project partner is any organisation or individual, other than the applicant and its employees/contractors, involved in carrying out the project, including:

- investors
- research collaborators
- anyone involved in joint delivery of the project.

It does not include an organisation or individual that *only* leases or provides land to the applicant or project partners, and has no other role in the project. All project partners must be listed in the application and, at minimum, an intent for an MOU must be submitted with the grant application. If the application is awarded funding, a signed MOU will be required prior to the Deed of Agreement being signed.

Who must nominate an administrator?

Unincorporated organisations must nominate an administrator. Non-government organisations may nominate another organisation to administer grant funds on their behalf. If your organisation is not incorporated, it is essential to have an administrator that is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation or government entity to be eligible to apply.

Multiple applications

Applicants are permitted to submit multiple applications. For example, an organisation could submit an individual project for two different sites or submit applications under both streams 1 and 2 of the PIP. If undertaking or proposing several projects, applicants must provide evidence of sufficient resources to undertake all projects, including capacity to manage multiple projects funded in previous rounds. Any in-kind funding or other resources must be trackable against individual grant funded projects. It should be noted that projects supported by WLRM grants will be expected to be completed on time and requests for variations to project scope, budgets and timelines will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

Submission must be made by the applicant organisation

Third party submissions will not be accepted. The application must be submitted by an employee of the organisation applying for the grant and this person must be the primary contact whose details are shown in the application. The primary contact must be available to respond to questions and requests for information from the EPA during the application assessment process and, if the application is successful, for the duration of the project.

Compliance with NSW environment protection laws

The EPA will consider the compliance history of applicants under NSW environment protection laws, including penalty notices, clean-up notices, prevention notices, licence suspensions, licence revocations, convictions or prosecutions under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, *Protection of the Environment Operations (POEO) Act 1997*, *Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014 (POEO Waste Regulation)* and *Native Vegetation Act 2003*.

In addition, applicants are not eligible for the grant if they, or any directors or managers of the applicant organisation (whether as directors or managers of the applicant or otherwise in their personal capacity, including where they have been directors or managers of other companies), have contravened any provision of the POEO Act or POEO Waste Regulation with the result of avoiding, minimising or undermining the requirement to pay any waste contributions required under section 88 of the POEO Act.

For the purposes of this matter, the relevant provisions of the POEO Act are sections 48, 64, 88, 115, 120, 142A, 143, 144, 144AA, 144AB and 211 of the POEO Act or Part 2 of the POEO Waste Regulation in relation to any waste activities where a consequence of the contravention has the result of the avoidance, minimisation or undermining of the waste contribution. This also includes a contravention of any clause of a resource recovery exemption.

These matters can be considered whether or not any regulatory action has taken place in relation to those contraventions, including whether or not court proceedings have been commenced or an offence has been proven in court proceedings.

Matched funding

Applicant co-contribution

Grants of between \$20,000 and \$150,000 are available, covering up to 50% of costs relating to research and development projects.

A co-contribution from the applicant is required. The applicant's co-contribution must be cash-based, which can be attributed to payment of specific invoices covering at least 50% of the eligible costs and at least equal to the grant amount.

The assessment will consider more favourably those applications that include a co-contribution greater than the minimum 50% required.

Applicants are encouraged to list any 'in-kind' contributions. Examples of in-kind contributions include volunteer labour (e.g. calculated at \$25/hour), project management, and use of equipment (provided at no cost). These **do not** form part of your co-contribution, but are part of your overall financial commitment to the project.

Research integrity

The EPA is committed to fostering the highest ethical standards in research. Projects approved for funding by the EPA may not begin without appropriate ethical clearances from the relevant committees and/or authorities. Applicants will be required to outline any ethics clearances required and how they will be obtained prior to project commencement.

What will not be funded

This program **will not** fund:

- advertising and education
- projects not located in and servicing NSW
- any plant or equipment that has been owned by any associated entity
- feasibility/planning studies or consultant fees
- land acquisition
- ongoing maintenance of projects to which organisations have committed as part of a previous grant
- operational costs, including insurances, rent, electricity, and salaries of existing staff working their usual hours
- project management costs or grant administration costs
- projects that seek retrospective funding for work undertaken (although a new stage of a project will be eligible)
- projects that fund devolved grants (i.e. projects offering grants to other organisations)
- works already completed at the time the grant was awarded (including but not limited to contracts to construct infrastructure or buy/lease equipment or where construction/installation has already commenced)
- projects that do not focus specifically on the problem wastes and other waste types eligible for funding under Stream 2
- projects already funded under other WLRM programs
- projects unable to demonstrate compliance with the NSW Energy from Waste Policy Statement.

Funding from multiple sources

You must advise the EPA if you:

- have secured funding from another government agency for the same or related activities to those you are seeking funds for from the EPA
- have current applications lodged with other government agencies
- receive other funding from other government agencies while your project is underway.

The EPA encourages applicants to develop projects that include partnerships, collaboration, other funding sources and in-kind contributions. These all tend to improve the outcomes of projects and will make your application more competitive. Collaborative applications will require a lead applicant that will be accountable for implementation of the funding agreement.

Documentation

The application documentation consists of three parts, as shown in the following table.

All three documents can be downloaded from the [EPA's website](#).

For further information on the Part B document please refer to the details below and instructions within the Excel document.

Part	Forms	Format	Note
A	Application Form	Word document	
B	Application Budget	Excel spreadsheet	The Application Budget form is locked. Do not cut and paste into the spreadsheet.
C	Project Plan	Word document	The Project Plan form will expand to accommodate your answers.

Part B: Application Budget

The Application Budget form is an Excel document, separate from the main application form. Download the form from the EPA [website](#). When you populate the budget spreadsheet, the figures you enter will be totalled automatically. You must not cut and paste data into the document as it can alter the formatting and cause errors, which may result in your budget submission being deemed ineligible and your application not being considered.

Enter the data manually and submit the completed form as an Excel document. **DO NOT PDF.**

An incorrect or incomplete Application Budget form may render the application ineligible or reduce the Technical Review Committee's confidence in the applicant's capacity to deliver the project and manage the finances. If you are unclear about what is eligible and ineligible or how to complete the Budget spreadsheet, contact the EPA for advice.

All costings in your budget need to be detailed, reasonable and justifiable, especially where individual items comprise a large proportion of the overall budget. Detailed costing ensures that your budget is well planned and linked to the objectives and activities of your project. Ensure each line item can be matched against invoices when reporting. Be specific and give unit values where possible. There is a risk that if you do not provide sufficient detail and justification, your application may not be considered competitive. If your organisation is registered for GST, **DO NOT** include GST in the Application Budget values.

Cash and in-kind contributions

In-kind is an activity other than financial support that is contributed towards a project. Examples of in-kind contributions include staff time to manage project implementation and installation costs that utilise existing internal resources.

The EPA values the ability to secure additional cash and in-kind contributions as doing so reflects support for your project and added value for money. The Funding section of this guide details what is eligible and ineligible for funding. Please separate eligible and ineligible items in your budget on the appropriate tabs, that is:

- show all **eligible** costs for the project in Parts 1 and 2 of the budget to a maximum of \$150,000 requested from the EPA
- show all **ineligible** costs provided as cash or in-kind contributions to the project in Part 4 of the budget.

The grant will **not** cover the cost of ineligible items, but details of ineligible costs should still be populated if they are relevant to the project to provide an overall total project value.

Letters of support

If letters of support are submitted with your application, they must be signed by a senior manager or senior officer bearer of the organisation providing them and be directly related to the project.

Attachments

Additional material submitted with the application must be kept to a minimum. Limit the number and size of attachments, as large attachments will not be forwarded to the Technical Review Committee for consideration.

In the application, use extracts, as appropriate, with reference to the relevant documents (i.e. name and page number). Provide a concise answer in the space provided and in reference to additional information. Do not merely state 'see attachment' as this will not be considered as an answer.

Application submission

It is recommended that you read all sections of this guide, particularly the sections covering the objectives of the program, eligibility and assessment criteria. Before submitting your application, please refer to the submission process set out below.

Submission process

- Answer all questions in Part A: Application Form.
- The Application Budget must be submitted as an Excel document. DO NOT PDF.
- The Project Plan form must be submitted as a Word document. DO NOT PDF.
- Attach all required supporting information. Additional information should be kept to a minimum. If the application refers to a large document, only include the relevant pages of that document (e.g. title page and executive summary). If submitting a PDF, do not lock the document as documents cannot be merged into the review package.
- Hard copies will not be accepted.
- Submit the entire application by ONE of the methods below (i.e. email or posted USB). DO NOT Email AND post.

Note: Email is the preferred option. Posted USB applications must be received on or before the closing date.

- Do not fax part of the application.
- Do not ZIP application documents. ZIP files cannot be accepted by the EPA.
- Email subject line format must show: Organisation Name – PIP Application.
- Submit one application per email. If there is more than one application being submitted, number accordingly (e.g. XYZ Company – PIP Application 1).
- If the application or any of the files within it exceeds 20MB, submit the application in a series of emails, e.g. submit the Application Form in one email, and attachments in another email. Please use the following subject line for email: Organisation Name – PIP Application – Email 1 of 2, and Organisation Name – PIP Application – Email 2 of 2.

The Application Form and relevant documents must be submitted and received by the EPA by the **closing date: 4pm Friday 26 July 2019.**

Email: infrastructure.grants@epa.nsw.gov.au

Note: For files exceeding 20MB, submit as a series of emails.

Post USB to: NSW Environmental Protection Authority
PO Box 668
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Document naming

Applicants must adhere to the naming instructions for submitting their application documents.

- Application Form 01 Grant Application
- Application Budget 02 Grant Application Budget
- Project Plan 03 Project Plan

Probity

The EPA 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 EPA.

Procurement

To conform to relevant governance and probity standards, the EPA requires all grantees to follow the NSW Government [Procurement Policy Framework](#). 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. This may be subject to audit by the EPA, and so all procurement documentation must be retained by the grantee.

As an example, for any contract in excess of \$30,000, you must secure a minimum of three written tenders/quotations. Also, 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 the life of the funded project.

Projects that involve related-party transactions

Applicants that are purchasing goods or services from related entities will not be eligible for funding unless they can prove to the satisfaction of the EPA that any financial benefit is given on terms that would be reasonable in circumstances where the parties are dealing at arm's length or on terms that are less favourable to the related party. While these types of transactions are legal and ethical, the special relationship inherent between the involved parties creates potential conflicts of interest and the EPA would prefer not to have to manage these potential conflicts. **If in doubt**, contact EPA Administration before submitting your application.

Third-party assistance

While applicants are encouraged to seek collaboration from other project partners, and it is acknowledged that they may seek the services of contractors or consultants, careful consideration is required around any commercial relationships. Applicants are welcome to seek third-party assistance to develop their project and complete their application. However, any costs associated with this service will not be reimbursed using EPA funding and applicants will need to provide details of the financial and contractual arrangements it has with third parties. The EPA is aware of many examples where a third party's rates or charges have been significantly above market rate or they have insisted on successful grantees using preferred suppliers. The EPA requires applicants to be transparent about their arrangements with consultants so that it can be certain grantees are not being taken advantage of,

that projects are as cost effective as possible and that the possibility of actual or perceived fraud or corruption is minimised.

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Assessment and notification

Acknowledgement of receipt of applications

The EPA will acknowledge receipt of an applicant's email within two working days. If notification is not received within this time, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact the EPA to check whether the application has been received.

The applicant should expect acknowledgement of its Application Form within one week of the closing date. Confirmation will include one unique reference number, which should be used in all correspondence to and from the EPA. If acknowledgement is not received within one week, please contact the EPA on either (02) 9995 6920 or infrastructure.grants@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Assessment and approval process

After the closing date, EPA staff will check whether your application is complete for assessment purposes.

The EPA establishes an independent Technical Review Committee (TRC) for each grants program. Each TRC is comprised of people with knowledge and experience relevant to each grant program and includes at least one representative of community groups and at least one representative of industry. TRC members agree to undertake their duties within the principles of ethical conduct: integrity, objectivity and independence. They are also required to keep all matters concerning applications confidential and to declare any potential conflicts of interest.

The TRC will assess the merit of each proposal by applying the assessment criteria outlined earlier and will make recommendations to the EPA. The EPA, having considered the recommendations of the TRC, will endorse or amend the decision and decide whether to approve proposals accordingly.

It is possible that successful applicants may not receive the full amount requested and may be subject to special, as well as general, conditions of funding.

Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback on their applications by contacting the EPA.

Decisions by the EPA are final. There is no appeal process.

Notification of grant decisions

The Minister for the Environment or their delegate will publicly announce successful applicants. Applicants will also be notified in writing.

It is anticipated that the announcement of successful applications will occur in November 2019.

Obligations of successful applicants

Funding Deed of Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a performance-based Deed of Agreement, which stipulate all funding obligations and conditions. The EPA will monitor the progress of projects. Funding is normally provided in staged payments, and continuing payments are dependent on satisfactory milestone reports.

A milestone report is a regular progress report by the funding recipient against agreed performance measures, or milestones. It includes a summary of activities undertaken during the reporting period, evidence that any special conditions have been met, and a statement of expenditure.

Project start-up or establishment costs should be kept to reasonable amounts. All upfront costs must be substantiated by quotes for products and services and/or statements of expenses the project incurs.

Successful applicants will have up to 30 days from the date of formal notification of the offer of funding to sign a Deed of Agreement that sets out terms and conditions associated with the grant. If the Deed of Agreement is not signed within the specified period, the offer of funding may lapse.

Successful applicants will also be required to do the following:

- Deliver the project as outlined in their application.
- Provide written evidence from any partners who are contributing funds or resources to the project, such as a letter.
- Provide adequate monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- Collect and release data on the project, and participate in project evaluation conducted by the EPA for up to five years.
- Forward a tax invoice to the EPA for each instalment when they are due, plus GST if applicable.
- Have or can demonstrate that the time required for all necessary planning, regulatory or other approvals have been considered and the project is planned with this in mind.
- Confirm a final schedule of payment and reporting dates relative to project activities.
- Provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage. (It is a condition of the grant that the applicant has adequate insurance cover, including public liability insurance of \$10 million, workers compensation and volunteer insurance.)
- Seek prior approval for any variation to the proposed project plan, timeframe or budget and comply with all conditions contained in the Deed of Agreement.
- Provide milestone and final evaluation reports in accordance with the reporting requirements outlined in the Deed of Agreement, including an independently audited financial statement of expenditure with the final evaluation report.
- Participate in and contribute to promotional activities such as case studies that may be published or events that may celebrate the successful delivery of the funded project.
- Acknowledge the EPA's support in all promotional material or any public statement about your project. The applicant's acknowledgement must include the EPA logo in written material.
- Agree 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 EPA (except any material that might infringe Intellectual Property rights).
- Ensure that an invitation is issued to a NSW Government representative, through the Program Manager, to any launch or public event associated with this funding, and that where they can attend, they are acknowledged as official guests. Where practicable, representatives should be afforded the courtesy of publicly addressing the event.
- Demonstrate that any other WLRM grants received by either the EPA or the Environmental Trust were conducted or are progressing to the relevant organisation's satisfaction.

False or misleading information

Applicants must certify that all the information in the application is true and correct. Please note that if applicants supply information as part of the application that is false or misleading, the application will not be considered. If after the grant has been awarded it is discovered that information supplied was false or misleading, the grant will be revoked and funds, plus interest, must be repaid. An assessment regarding possible fraud will also be undertaken and appropriate legal action initiated if warranted.

Confidentiality

The EPA will assess the application using the information submitted. Information on approved projects may be used for promotional purposes.

The EPA will endeavour to treat sensitive personal and commercial information submitted in the application confidentially. Applicants should identify information that is to be treated as commercial in confidence. However, all documents held by the EPA are subject to the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Intellectual property

The applicant must own or be able to lawfully use any intellectual property required to carry out the project. The applicant will be required to grant the EPA (without cost) a non-exclusive irrevocable licence to use, reproduce, communicate to the public or adapt the intellectual property in the project.

Tax

Goods and Services Tax (GST) applies to payments made under Stream 2 (Research and development). However, some grants of financial assistance may be subject to income tax in the hands of certain recipients. It is therefore recommended that potential recipients seek independent legal and financial advice if uncertain of the taxation obligations. It should also be noted that the Australian Taxation Office has provided advice to the EPA that payments made to government-related entities will not be subject to GST.

Program changes

The EPA reserves the right, as its sole and absolute discretion and at any time, to change the eligibility and selection assessment criteria for Stream 2 (Research and development). Current eligibility and selection criteria for the fund are described by this guide.

Conflict of interest

Applicants are required to declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest (COI) that they may be aware of in relation to the awarding of a grant, particularly where:

- the project for which funds are being sought is to be undertaken on private land where that land is owned by office holders or employees (or relatives of office holders or employees) of the applicant organisation
- office holders or employees (or relatives of office holders or employees) of the applicant organisation are being paid with EPA funds
- members, or relatives, of the applicant organisation are being paid as contractors with EPA funds
- works carried out by the project could create current or future financial or other benefit for members of the applicant organisation, or their relatives.

Such circumstances **do not exclude** the project from being funded, however they do need to be acknowledged as a potential COI. The TRC will assess each situation on its merits and environmental need.