

# Nature-based Tourism Co-investment Fund

Guidelines 2020-2022

Updated August 2020



[parks.sa.gov.au/coinvest](https://parks.sa.gov.au/coinvest)



### **First Nations acknowledgement**

The Department for Environment and Water acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and the waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal people have to their Country.







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# 1. About the Nature-based Tourism Co-investment Fund



## The objectives of the NBT Co-investment Fund are:



**Partnerships:** Engage with partners that have the capacity and capability to develop and deliver sustainable tourism experiences and products in SA's national parks, reserves, botanic gardens and Crown Land.



**Conservation:** Deliver positive benefits for the conservation of SA's nature, parks and places.



**Community:** Deliver sustainable tourism services that benefit and are supported by local community and visitors.



**Economy:** Deliver a clear economic benefit for SA by creating new, sustainable jobs and measurable economic growth.

Valuable projects will include those committed to employing and sourcing products and services from Aboriginal and local suppliers and fostering collaboration.



## Private businesses and organisations interested in delivering sustainable nature-based tourism experiences in South Australia's nature, parks and places are now invited to apply for funding as part of the Nature-based Tourism (NBT) Co-investment Fund.

The fund is a key initiative of the South Australia Government's recently launched Parks 2025 plan, which aims to help build the capacity of parks and places across the state to conserve natural landscapes and wildlife, activate and build resilience for nature and heritage-based tourism, and fast-track the recovery of vital regional economies.

Now, more than ever before, the government is actively exploring new partnerships to grow our range of tourism offerings as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and a summer of devastating bushfires.

The fund is looking to create tourism destinations and experiences in our parks, gardens, reservoirs, forests, state government owned heritage buildings and Crown lands.

This pilot grant program dedicates \$5 million over two years to support businesses and organisations to activate sustainable and ecologically sensitive tourism experiences in SA, which will, in turn, support jobs, growth and conservation outcomes.

Our tourism industry partners, conservation and heritage sectors and our Friends of Parks groups expect us to deliver exemplar tourism outcomes for the benefit of all South Australians and the government is committed to balancing economic development alongside social sustainability and environmental outcomes.

The \$5 million fund is now open and will be available until June 2022 (or until the fund is exhausted). Applicants can seek grants from \$20,000 to \$1 million and are expected to contribute at least half of the total financial costs of their project.

## 1.1. Keeping conservation front-and-centre

Conservation is front of mind for the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and the SA Government when it comes to extending the potential of our natural and heritage spaces to sensitively cater for tourism experiences.

Our nature, parks and places support conservation and scientific endeavours, nature-based tourism, co-operative management with Aboriginal Nations, and community health and wellbeing.

Nature-based tourism is about offering visitors special experiences in these natural places that nurture and broaden their environmental and cultural understanding and appreciation for conservation.

It aims to preserve and enhance the local environment and heritage while encouraging people to look after the natural and cultural values that attract them to a region.

A thriving tourism sector in SA helps to create more exciting and liveable cities and towns. It sustains community life as it creates jobs, provides recreation opportunities, improves health and connection, and fosters a sense of purpose, pride and much more.

A flourishing nature and heritage tourism sector can create advocacy for conservation and provides a setting where Aboriginal people can showcase their vibrant cultures, heritage and Country. It provides opportunities for built heritage to be used and enjoyed in daily life, and for nature to be deeply experienced and cared for.

New nature-based tourism experiences will create opportunities for visitors to develop a sense of personal connection that will see them become life-long supporters and advocates of nature and heritage conservation.

As part of the development of new experiences in nature, operators will contribute to conservation programs such as restoring habitats, revegetation and rewilding projects. Through such partnerships, the use and enjoyment of SA's nature, parks and places will be increased, and the revenue generated reinvested into critical local conservation programs.

## 2. Eligibility



## 2.1. Who is eligible to apply?

To apply for a NBT Co-investment Fund grant, applicants must fit into one of these categories:

- a private sector business
- a business cluster\*
- a local government body
- an Aboriginal corporation
- an incorporated association\*\*.

Applicants must be financially viable, registered for GST and have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

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\* Business clusters are a group of two or more organisations that are willing to share financial and management commitment to a project. They may be a joint venture, consortia, partnership or other model – collaborating for the purpose of this project. It is up to the applicant to determine the right clustering model for their project. If no formal arrangements have been made to bring the non-associated organisations together, a lead partner must be identified that will accept responsibility for contractual obligations.

\*\* Applications from non-incorporated groups (i.e. community, 'Friends of Parks' groups and volunteer groups) will need to be sponsored by an organisation that fits into one of the above entity types. The sponsoring entity should be prepared to be the lead partner and accept responsibility for contractual obligations.

## 2.2. Where can proposed projects be located?

Proposals will be considered on the following land:

- South Australian national parks and reserves\*
- Crown land areas under the care and control of the Minister for Environment and Water
- Crown land areas under the care and control of local councils when supported by relevant councils
- South Australian Botanic Gardens\*
- national, state and local Heritage-listed places under the *Heritage Places Act 1993 (SA)* under the care and control of the Minister for Environment and Water
- historic shipwrecks within South Australian state waters\*
- Aboriginal owned or controlled lands and where First Nations peoples have shared access rights under Native Title\*\*
- forest reserves proclaimed under the *Forestry Act 1950*
- Reservoir Reserves owned or occupied by the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water).

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\*The definition of 'parks and reserves' includes: parks proclaimed under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (national parks, conservation parks, recreation parks, state game reserves and regional reserves), wilderness protection areas and marine parks and sanctuaries.

\* The definition of 'South Australian Botanic Gardens' means botanic gardens and botanic reserves under the *Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium Act 1978*.

\* 'State waters' means waters within Spencer Gulf (north of a line between Cape Catastrophe and Cape Spencer), Gulf St Vincent (north of a line between Troubridge Point and Cape Jervis), declared historic bays (Anxious, Encounter, Lacepede and Rivoli Bays), all internal lakes and rivers, and land and water above the low tide mark everywhere else.

\*\*When supported by a relevant Registered Native Title Body Corporation or Aboriginal Landholding Authority.

## 2.3. What type of projects are eligible?

These experiences and infrastructure projects are eligible for funding:

Experiences	Infrastructure
New or improved tourism experiences	New or improved tourism infrastructure, facilities or capital works
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>designing and delivering new commercial tour experiences in nature, parks and places</li> <li>developing interpretative, educational or interactive materials, like signage</li> <li>developing new cultural tours or experiences</li> <li>delivering events that will trigger visitation</li> <li>designing and delivering new visitor services in nature, parks and places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishing and/or upgrading ecologically sensitive accommodation</li> <li>refitting and/or repurposing existing infrastructure or buildings</li> <li>establishing or upgrading walking trails, or upgrading reception or assembly areas</li> <li>improving minor tourism infrastructure.</li> </ul>

Proposals will not be considered where the project:

- has been completed or project works have commenced prior to the application being approved by the Minister for Environment and Water.
- requires ongoing or recurring SA Government funding to be sustainable
- is undertaken on behalf of third parties
- has already received assistance from the SA Government or other relevant grant funds to achieve the same project outcomes
- relates to non-tourism activities
- is not compliant with relevant legislation
- is not appropriate for the setting
- proposes to take over activities that are required by the relevant authority for its operation.

## 2.4. What expenditure is eligible for funding?

To ensure the greatest value to the people of SA, not all expenditure on a project may be eligible for grant funding. Eligible and ineligible expenditure includes:

Eligible expenditure	Ineligible expenditure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be incurred by the applicant within the project period (between the project start and end date)</li> <li>must be a direct cost of the project</li> <li>must be incurred by the applicant to undertake required project activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational expenditure, including wages, insurance, utilities, repairs, training, communications, accommodation, office computing facilities, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees, and bank charges</li> <li>routine operational expenses that is not an integral part of the funded project</li> <li>costs associated with the preparation of the application</li> <li>non-cash contributions (contributions that have no impact on cash flow and are not recorded in financial statements)</li> <li>plans, including feasibility studies, business cases, reports and development plans</li> <li>fees paid to Commonwealth, state, territory or local governments to obtain development, environmental or other regulatory approvals</li> <li>purchase of land or a business</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Applicants must ensure they have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.</p>



DEW makes the final decision on what is considered eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure, if required.

Costs may be ineligible if it is determined they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or where they are contrary to the objective of the program. Applicants must not commence a project until they execute a grant agreement with DEW.

Applicants are encouraged to consider whether grant funding or private commercial finance is the best option for the project. Applicants are also encouraged to leverage funding from other sources, including Commonwealth Government grant funding, however care should be taken to demonstrate what outcomes would be delivered by the NBT Co-investment funding compared with the outcomes to be delivered from other funding sources.

In-kind contributions **cannot be included** in calculating the applicant's financial contribution to the project. An in-kind contribution is any support, other than money, provided by the applicant towards the project, and includes voluntary hours or donated goods and services.

Grants will be paid on a reimbursement basis, therefore, the applicant should demonstrate their capacity to manage the costs of the project until key milestones are met.

## Verification of eligible expenditure

If a grant application is successful, DEW will ask applicants to verify the project budget that was provided in the application when the grant agreement was negotiated.

Applicants may need to provide evidence, such as quotes for major costs if they were not included in the application. The grant agreement will include details of the evidence applicants may need to provide when achieving certain milestones in the project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure, which will need to be provided along with progress reports.

Applicants must also keep payment records of all eligible expenditure and be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities.

At any time, DEW may ask applicants to provide records of their expenditure. If applicants do not provide records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

At the end of the project, applicants may be required to provide an independent financial audit of all eligible expenditure from the project.





# 3. Applying for funding

## 3.1. How does the process work?

The process for applying for a NBT Co-investment Fund grant through to delivering the project is:





## 3.2. Before applying

Before applying, it is recommended that applicants read and understand these Guidelines and access the resources available to support them on the **NBT Co-investment Fund** website including the Frequently Asked Questions.

Any and all costs incurred by applicants in lodging an application are their sole responsibility. No applicant has any recourse against DEW if their application is not deemed a successful proposal.

## 3.3. How to apply

To apply, applicants must:

- complete the online application form on the **NBT Co-investment Fund website**
- provide all information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria (see Section 4 of these Guidelines)
- include all necessary attachments, including:
  - a **business case**. This should include all items detailed on Page 15 of these Guidelines.
  - a **detailed project plan**, including a project outline scope, key milestones, deliverables, budget and timeframes. This may include photos, graphs, and extracts from plans, tables or other supporting documentation.
  - **consult with the land owner** about the suitability of the proposed site location (please contact the support service for landholder details).
  - **support letters** from relevant community members or group, such as the Registered Native Title Body Corporate/Aboriginal Landholding Authority, 'Friends of Parks' group or volunteer groups or other stakeholders. DEW can assist applicants in engaging with Native Title Body Corporates and Aboriginal Landholding Authorities, Friends groups and other relevant community groups.
  - **proof of any accreditation** from your organisation or staff that may be relevant for this project (if applicable)
  - **formal documentation confirming cash contribution** from any other sources (if applicable)
  - any other **supporting documentation** relating to the assessment of the criteria, ensuring the applicant clearly references the criteria that it supports.

In addition to the above, for applications seeking \$100,000 (excl. GST) or more, applicants must also provide:

- a detailed business case. This should include all items detailed on Page 15 of these Guidelines and the financial information specified in Appendix 1.
- a corporate structure and strategic plan, as detailed in Appendix 1.
- prior year financial statements, as per Appendix 1.

Applicants must address all assessment criteria and provide evidence to support each response, while remaining within the word limit provided.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence provided in an application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Applicants are responsible for making sure their application is complete and accurate. If DEW finds an error or if there is information missing, DEW may ask the applicant for clarification or additional information.

**Note:** Applicants are advised to retain a copy of their application for their own records. Applicants will receive confirmation that their application has been submitted.

## 3.4. What support is available during the application process?

Applicants are encouraged to refer to the support tools available on the **NBT Co-investment fund website**

Tools include:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- A series of information sessions and webinars to support the development of applications
- Friends of Parks Engagement Charter to guide community consultation initiatives
- Information on parks visitor markets and users.

### For further assistance, contact DEW by:

**T:** (08) 8124 4066

(between 9am and 5pm on weekdays).

**E:** DEWNewBusiness@sa.gov.au

Register your contact details to get notified of any updates to our support tools.



## 4. The assessment process



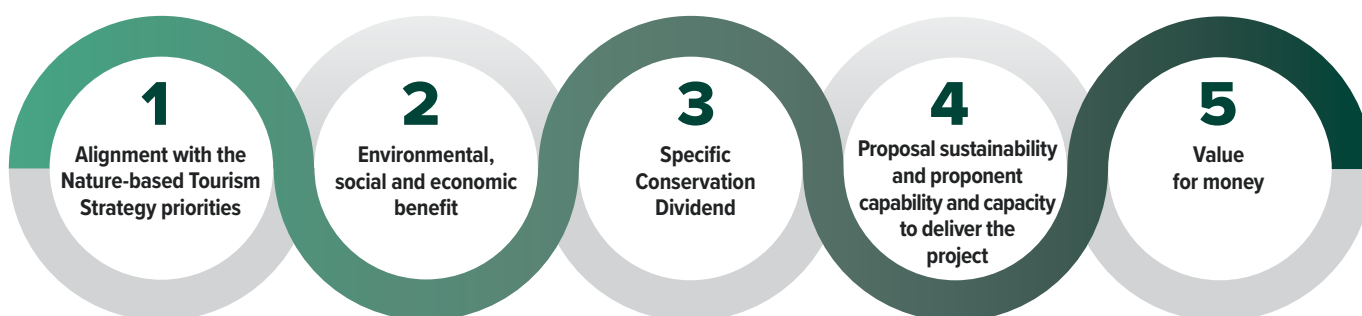


## 4.1. What are the assessment criteria?

South Australia's nature, parks and places are irreplaceable. They are highly protected and carefully managed for long-term conservation goals.

Conducting a business in these special places is a privilege, that's why all proposals to conduct business activities need to be carefully assessed to make sure they are suitable for the setting.

Applications for the NBT Co-investment Fund are assessed against five criteria:



### Criterion 1: Alignment with the Nature-based Tourism Strategy priorities (20%)

Applicants need to demonstrate how the proposed project will align with DEW's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 'Nature like Nowhere Else' and how it will contribute to building the quality of SA's tourism product offering. Specifically:

Criterion element	Supporting information/evidence may include:
How will the proposed project deliver on one or more of the funding priorities*?	Applicants should consider providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• details on the priority* that this project is supporting.</li><li>• details about whether the project aligns with more than one priority*.</li></ul>
How does the project align with DEW's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 'Nature like Nowhere Else'?	
How will the project contribute to driving tourism to the state?	Applicants should consider providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• details about projected increased visitation, length of stay and spend in SA</li><li>• details about the creation of sustainable jobs and increased contribution to Gross State Product.</li></ul>

\*Funding priorities summary table (see page 12)



## Funding priorities summary

Funding priority	Type of project
Projects that diversify and support tourism offerings related to Parks 2025 projects, including supporting tourism recovery in bushfire-affected areas	<p>Projects within or relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kangaroo Island parks</li> <li>• Southern Flinders Ranges National Park</li> <li>• Ediacara Fossil Experience</li> <li>• Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park</li> <li>• Cleland Wildlife Park</li> <li>• Wild South Coast Way, on the Heysen Trail</li> <li>• Glenithorne National Park</li> </ul> <p>Projects that diversify and support tourism offerings in fire-affected communities.</p>
Stand-out walking journeys	Projects that support the development of new or improve existing stand-out walking journeys.
Wildlife experiences (including marine wildlife experiences)	Projects that support the development of unique wildlife experiences, including, but not limited to, new or improved existing marine wildlife experiences.
Aboriginal and cultural tourism	Projects that support the development of Aboriginal and cultural tourism experiences.
Activating heritage in national parks and Botanic gardens	Projects that support the activation of heritage tourism and heritage accommodation in national parks and Botanic gardens.





## Criterion 2: Environmental, social and economic benefit (20%)

Applicants need to demonstrate how the proposed project will have environmental, social and economic benefits. Specifically:

Criterion element	Supporting information/evidence may include:
How will the proposed project deliver positive benefits for the conservation of our nature, parks and places?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is this the best location for the proposed project? What alternatives have been considered?</li> <li>• How will the project have a positive impact on conservation values of SA nature, parks and places?</li> <li>• Have any conservation/environmental risks been identified and what are the details of necessary mitigation strategies that would be put in place?</li> <li>• How will the project demonstrate a commitment to sustainable development through addressing the 5 Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle?</li> </ul>
How will the project deliver positive benefits for the local community and visitors?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the project deliver experiences, products, infrastructure or facilities that directly benefit the community and/or visitors?</li> <li>• How does the project increase awareness in the benefits of tourism activation on public lands?</li> </ul>
What are the expected broad economic benefits to SA (both direct and indirect)?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the project create sustainable jobs and an increased contribution to SA's Gross State Product?</li> <li>• What are the total employment numbers expected to be created during and following the project?</li> <li>• Will there be any direct or indirect opportunities created through the project, like an increase in the number or value of jobs, new businesses or the production of goods and services in the region?</li> <li>• How does the project provide opportunities for growth in existing sectors (e.g. tourism, agriculture, manufacturing)?</li> <li>• How does the project use local suppliers and goods?</li> </ul>
How will the project deliver positive benefits for Aboriginal peoples?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it be a joint project developed with relevant Registered Native Title Body Corporate or Aboriginal Landholding Authority?</li> <li>• Will Aboriginal people be offered employment, contracting and/or business development opportunities?</li> <li>• Are agreements in place between the applicant and Aboriginal owners in relation to promoting Aboriginal culture and heritage, focusing on the direct participation of Aboriginal people?</li> <li>• Can it be demonstrated that the enterprise is complementary to the Aboriginal owners' cultural values of the place(s) and respectful of the rights and interests of Aboriginal people in relation to the land and waters?</li> </ul>
<p>How is the project supported by the local community and stakeholders?</p> <p>What completed community engagement or consultation initiatives have you undertaken to secure community and stakeholder support for the project?</p>	<p>Applicants should consider providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of community engagement or other activities, research or initiatives undertaken. See Appendix 4 for our Friends of Parks Engagement Charter to help in your engagement.</li> <li>• support letters from relevant community members or groups such as Friends of Park groups or volunteer groups or other stakeholders.</li> </ul>



### Criterion 3: Specific Conservation Dividend (20%)

Applicants need to demonstrate how the proposed project will provide an ongoing conservation dividend. Specifically:

Criterion element	Supporting information/evidence may include:
Demonstrate how the project will provide an ongoing conservation dividend enhancing the conservation values that it is leveraging for tourism?  How is the project doing this?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the project provide an ongoing contribution to the conservation and environmental values of SA's nature, parks and places? This may include:</li> <li>• a financial contribution into ongoing conservation management, conservation monitoring or conservation research through DEW or conservation partners (i.e. community, 'Friends of Parks' groups or volunteers groups, etc.)</li> <li>• giving additional land to the nature conservation estate in SA</li> <li>• providing ongoing habitat enhancements for key local biodiversity</li> <li>• volunteering/in-kind contribution from visitors or staff</li> <li>• educational and behavioral components</li> <li>• public good contribution through heritage activation.</li> </ul>
If the project is within a national park, reserve or botanic garden, is the conservation dividend going directly into that park, reserve or botanic garden?	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the project link with and enhance relevant management plans, conservation legislation or recovery plans for threatened species presented in the project area or other relevant conservation or environmental plans relevant to the area?</li> </ul>
How will this be measured on an ongoing basis and what transparent reporting will be provided?	<p>Applicants should consider providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of any relevant monitoring, research or reporting associated with the project.</li> </ul>

**Note:** See Appendix 2 for case studies highlighting successful nature-based tourism businesses that have provided an ongoing conservation dividend.





## Criterion 4: Proposal sustainability and proponent capability and capacity to deliver the project (20%)

Applicants need to demonstrate they have the capability and capacity to deliver the proposed project and that the proposal will be sustainable after the grant funding has been used.

In determining the financial feasibility of the project, the assessment panel will take into account the proportion of the project that the applicant is seeking to be funded by the co-investment fund grant.

Grants will be paid on a reimbursement basis, so applicants need to demonstrate their capacity to manage the costs of the project until key milestones are met.

Preference will be given to projects that can be commenced within three to six months of funding approval.

Criterion element	Supporting information/evidence may include:
<p>Demonstrate that the proposal is sustainable.</p> <p>How does the project meet visitor demand that is currently not serviced?</p> <p>How is the project financially sustainable in the short, medium and long-term?</p>	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the project fill a demonstrated gap in the market?</li> <li>• Can evidence be provided of the long-term financial viability of the project and the extent to which the project will be financially sustainable after the grant funding has been used?</li> </ul>
<p>Does the applicant have the capability and capacity to deliver the project?</p> <p>Applicants are asked to provide financial and business information to support their application to ensure they can demonstrate financial capacity to complete the project, including reliance on any other contributions.</p>	<p>Applicants should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a detailed project plan, including a project outline scope, key milestones, deliverables, budget and timeframes. This may include photos, graphs, and extracts from plans, tables or other supporting documentation.</li> <li>• a business case, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• profit and loss, cash flow and balance sheet projections for the construction and operation phase for at least three years (where relevant), which must demonstrate the ongoing viability beyond the grant phase</li> <li>• key assumptions underpinning cash flow projections and sustainability of the project</li> <li>• quotes, where available, from suitably qualified contractors or design consultants</li> <li>• details of project financing, including the availability of secured borrowings or internal financing as well as other sources of financing, including other government grants or private contributions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• previous experience or performance in delivering or operating a similar project</li> <li>• proof of any accreditation that may be relevant for the project, which could include Ecotourism Accreditation, International Standards (ISO) certifications, etc.</li> <li>• audited financial statements for the previous two years (where possible), including a profit and loss statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement</li> <li>• evidence of the technical competencies to successfully deliver the project and how the proposal will meet applicable commercial and industry standards</li> <li>• evidence of any reliance on third parties and any additional investment committed to the project.</li> </ul>
<p>Have the risks in delivering the project (i.e the project not proceeding or failing) been well addressed?</p>	<p>Applicants should consider providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence that a risk assessment has been undertaken.</li> <li>• evidence that contingencies have been identified to withstand unexpected external changes.</li> </ul>



## Criterion 5: Value for money (20%)

Applicants need to detail how the project provides value for money, including why it needs funding (i.e. the project will not proceed without the grant or would not proceed to the same standard or in the proposed timeframe) and any additional investment committed to the project.

The assessment panel will look at the extent to which the funding being sought will result in outcomes that are additional to those that are likely to occur regardless of whether the application is successful.

Applicants will need to outline the level of co-investment they will be contributing to the proposed project, how it will be funded and how it meets funding guidelines.

In-kind contributions **cannot be included** in calculating the applicant's financial contribution to the project. An in-kind contribution is any support, other than money, provided by the applicant towards the project, and includes voluntary hours or donated goods and services.

Applicants are expected to contribute **at least half** of the total financial costs of the project. Applicants must therefore identify other sources of funding. This may include:

- the applicants' organisation's own financial contributions
- funding from project partners
- commercial borrowings
- alternative sources of grant funding from other government programs, foundations, non-government organisations etc.

Where applicants have applied for or secured a cash contribution from another source (e.g. Commonwealth Government), a formal document confirming the status of that cash contribution should be attach to the application.

Criterion element	Supporting information/evidence may include:
What level of co-investment will be applied to the proposed project?	Applicants should consider providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• evidence of the need for funding (i.e. the project will not proceed without the grant, or would not proceed to the same standard or in the proposed timeframe)</li><li>• evidence of how it will be funded and how it meets funding guidelines.</li></ul>
How does the project provide value for money?	Applicants should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the proposal priced relative to comparable projects?</li><li>• How does the proposal share the costs and risks between the applicant and the SA Government?</li><li>• What are the benefits of the proposal to South Australians?</li></ul>





## 4.2. Providing evidence

Applicants must provide evidence that best demonstrates that they have done all the planning required to provide confidence that the project will be delivered on time, on budget and to an appropriate standard to deliver the benefits described in their application.

The level of detail required to make a sound, solid and viable case for funding is relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Applicants should include evidence of:

- **Project management.** Applicants must address the implementation of the project from commencement to completion. They should define how, when and by who the project activities will be completed to demonstrate that the project will be delivered on time, on budget and to the required standards. Applicants should include:
  - confirmation that the required development, environmental and any other regulatory approvals are in place or are being sought
  - details of how goods and services will be procured
  - details of how they will ensure that the project is delivered on time, on budget and to the required standard (e.g. who will manage the project and what governance arrangements are in place).
- **Project risk.** Applicants must provide details on the key risks to their project and the mitigation or management strategies in place across the life of the project. Applicants must provide at least three risks.
- **Maintaining project benefits.** Applicants should outline the operational needs of the project into the future, a strategy to manage the project and how they will maintain the ongoing viability of the completed project.

## 4.3. How are applications assessed?

Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel on a merit basis against the fund's selection criteria (see Section 4.1). The assessment panel will consider all eligible applications and submit a recommendation.

Applications will undergo a comprehensive due diligence process to determine the applicant's financial capability and assess the project's commercial feasibility and sustainability. Assessments will also consider any additional leveraged funding sources.

Viability and impact of proposed conservation dividend activities must demonstrate consultation with relevant community members, conservation and heritage sector representatives and any identified parties that will be in receipt of benefits.

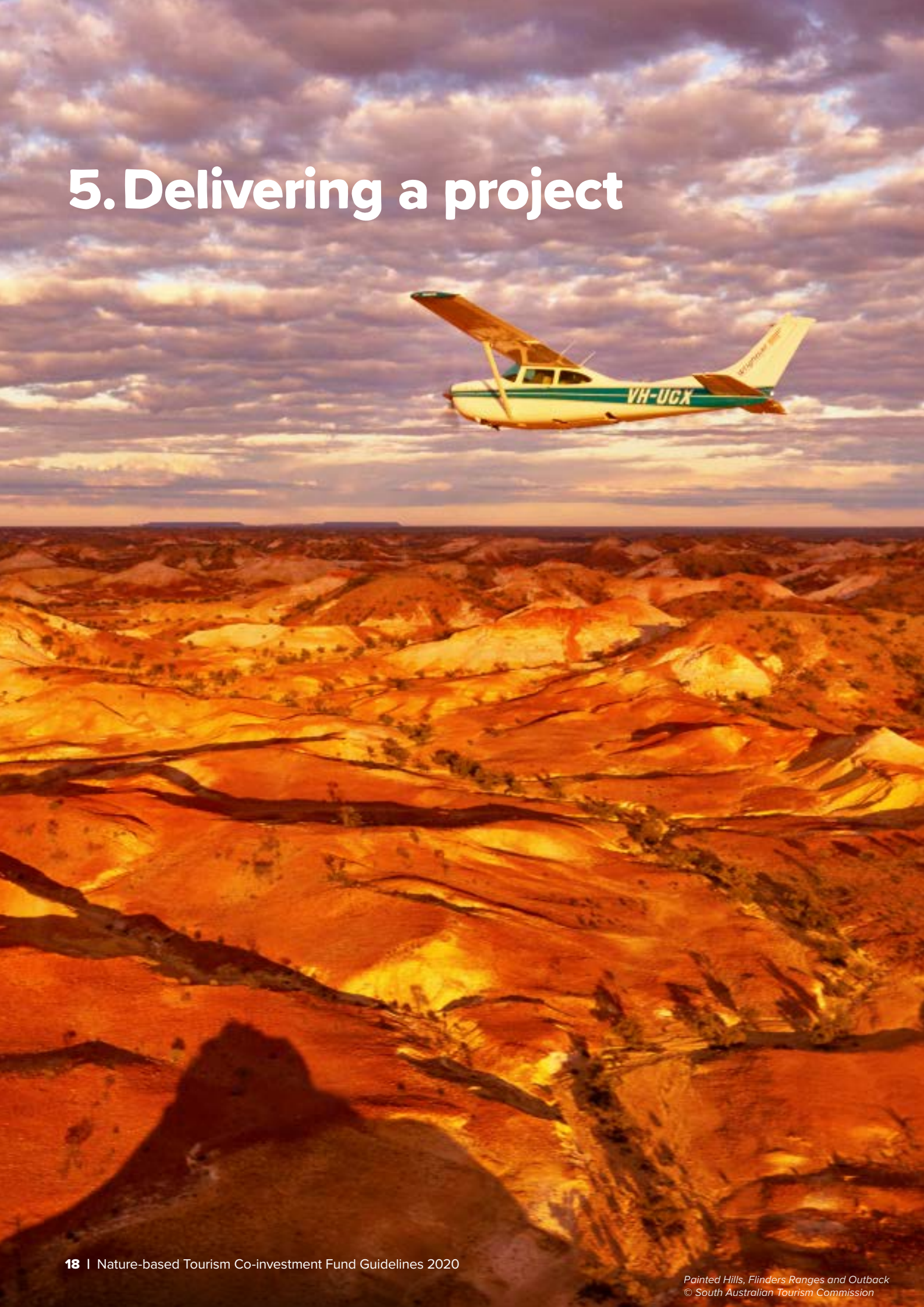
Consideration will also be given to the extent to which projects demonstrate a commitment to local employment, local investment and local supplier inputs.

The assessment panel will also consider whether a project, or elements of a project, are more appropriately considered for funding by other state, Commonwealth and/or local government or industry sources.





# 5. Delivering a project



## 5.1. Funding agreements and receiving funds

If an application is successful, applicants will be required to enter into a standard funding agreement with the SA Government in order to receive assistance.

The funding agreement will outline all the conditions of the provision of funding and will be subject to the **government's contract disclosure policy**.

Grant payments are generally made to applicants on a reimbursement basis upon presentation of paid invoices for eligible project expenditure. Final payments are made on receipt of a final report showing that the project has been completed to the satisfaction of the Minister for Environment and Water.

The following conditions will be expected from any financial assistance recipients:

- completion of the project as stated in the application
- all key milestones and obligations are met, as defined in the funding agreement
- prior consideration and approval must be sought from the Minister for Environment and Water through DEW before making any changes to the project
- the contribution of the SA Government must be acknowledged on any promotional material and opportunities must be provided for DEW or a representative to take part in any formal project milestones and launches.

Grants may be subject to GST and income tax. Successful applicants should seek advice on these matters and other tax implications from their tax advisers or the Australian Taxation Office.

## 5.2. Project approvals

Securing funding through the NBT Co-investment Fund does not constitute automatic authority to undertake activities in South Australia's nature, parks and places. It is important to be aware that proposals that have funding approved may be subject to other development, environmental and regulatory approvals.

Proposals that are approved for funding may require other permissions and approvals, including for:

- a commercial tour for which you are not already licenced
- occupancy of a government asset
- construction of a new building or infrastructure
- redevelopment of existing government-owned assets
- activities that cannot currently be undertaken by a member of the public, or contravene management plans
- leases (generally exclusive) and licenses (generally non-exclusive) to operate on public land.

Each assessment and approval process is different depending on the nature and location of the proposal. In support of the assessment, DEW or another relevant authority may ask you to provide additional information and address specific components of your proposal. DEW can help applicants understand the assessment and approval process for their proposal.



## 6. Appendix





## Appendix 1: Financial information required

For grant funding requests of more than \$100,000 (excl. GST), the minimum financial information that is required is tabled below. If any information is unable to be provided, applicants

must detail why that is the case. Additional relevant supporting information is welcome.

Topic	Details to be provided	Format of Information Requested
<b>Project business case</b>	<p>Project overview/rationale</p> <p>State government funding request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proposed security.</li> </ul> <p>Overall project funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• funding sources and existing commitments</li> <li>• project capital expenditure</li> <li>• project milestones and timeline.</li> </ul> <p>Competitive environment/SWOT analysis (or alternative analysis)</p> <p>Project's competitive advantage</p> <p>Regulatory environment (i.e. approvals, authorisations, patents, licences etc)</p> <p>Economic benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• target market</li> <li>• existing commitments for project products/services</li> <li>• project phases and impacts</li> <li>• direct employment</li> <li>• indirect employment – if known</li> <li>• export capacity – if relevant</li> <li>• sales growth</li> <li>• project risks.</li> </ul>	Commentary (word/pdf).
	<p>Project forecasts for 3 years (financial forecasts are to be for the whole entity – not just project specific) including supporting assumptions. It is preferred the forecasts consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 years (minimum) cashflow (month by month)</li> <li>• 3 years (minimum) profit and loss (annual)</li> <li>• 3 years (minimum) balance sheet forecasts (annual).</li> </ul>	Project forecasts in Excel (with formulas intact).
<b>Corporate structure and strategic plan</b>	<p>Overview of the ownership and governance structure. This is to include, but is not limited to, the structure and nature of operations of each entity</p>	<p>Structure diagram/corporate tree.</p> <p>Overview (word/pdf).</p>
	<p>Details of key management personnel, including experience</p>	<p>Key personnel bios (word/pdf).</p>
	<p>Overview of key sales and supplier contracts currently held, and any recent material changes in these</p>	<p>Overview (word/pdf).</p>
<b>Prior year financial statements</b>	<p>The group's annual financial statements for the last 3-5 financial years (cashflow statement, profit and lost, balance sheet).</p>	<p>Preferably audited financials with notes, or alternatively independently prepared financial statements and notes.</p>
	<p>Provide the group's most recent management accounts for the current financial year.</p>	



## Appendix 2: Conservation dividend case studies

### Case study 1 – Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, Queensland



Skyrail Rainforest Cableway showcases the oldest tropical rainforest on earth nestled within the Barron Gorge National Park, part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage protected area in North Queensland.

It is a privately owned business that was first opened in 1995 but has undergone several major upgrades and extensions. It involves 7.5 kilometres of cableway and 32 towers; it is powered by electric motor and incorporates solar power within the gondolas and at the stations and terminals. The cableway has 114 gondolas that can ferry up to 650 passengers per hour.

The Skyrail experience allows visitors to glide metres above the rainforest canopy with stopping points at two rainforest mid-stations to explore the forest floor below. The experience takes approximately 1.5 hours one way or 2.5 hours return and includes a Ranger Guided Tour.

When construction of the Skyrail was completed it was the world's longest gondola cableway at the time.

#### **Compatible with natural and cultural values**

The Skyrail project required application of world-first construction techniques and remains one of the most environmentally sensitive cableway projects in the world.

Skyrail has received numerous awards, including the 2010 Hall of Fame for Sustainable Tourism by the Queensland Tourism Awards. It is also accredited by EarthCheck (EC3 Global) as a Master, holds Advanced Ecotourism – Green Travel Leader and are a Climate Action Innovator (Ecotourism Australia).

Skyrail's tower sites were selected to coincide with existing canopy gaps, they were surveyed to ensure no threatened or endangered species would be affected by construction.

Before construction commenced on the tower sites, the operator received approval to collect and stockpile the leaf litter, top soil and plant seedlings for reintroduction when construction was complete. Plant seedlings were catalogued at each site, then removed to be housed in a rainforest nursery and propagated during construction. Upon completion of construction the seedlings were re-planted in their original locations and the saved top soil and leaf litter was replaced.



The two rainforest mid-stations were designed to blend in with the surrounding rainforest and minimise environmental impact and were built in pre-existing clearings.

#### **Sustainable design and operation of facilities**

The tower footings were built largely by hand, up to 5 metres deep in some cases, using picks and shovels. No roads were built during Skyrail's construction; workers walked to the remote tower sites each day, carrying their equipment.

Helicopters were used extensively to assist construction. The helicopters were used to carry equipment, materials and cement to tower sites and rainforest stations. The helicopters carried their loads on 100-metre long lines to avoid generation of wind turbulence that would affect the sensitive rainforest canopy.

The towers were flown in in sections and assembled on site. The cableway haul rope was then laid and tensioned across towers by the helicopters.

#### **Conservation dividend**

The Skyrail Rainforest Foundation was established by the company in 2005, with the primary objective of raising and distributing funds to support tropical rainforest research and education projects. The foundation hosts and participates in tree planting and eco-friendly activities for the community in conjunction with the local regional council.

The vision of the foundation is: 'The protection of tropical rainforests worldwide through sound management, understanding and appreciation through research and education'.

In order to directly contribute to enhancing ecological value, money raised by the foundation are paid into the Skyrail Rainforest Research Fund, which is administered for a number of environmental research purposes. Since inception, the foundation has provided more than \$467,032 to research projects.

Skyrail Rainforest Cableway are proud of what they do to protect and showcase the oldest tropical rainforest on Earth and welcome hundreds and thousands of visitors each year without impacting the environment.



## Case study 2 – Pennicott Wilderness Journeys



Pennicott Wilderness Journeys is an award-winning company that undertakes tours to Bruny Island, Hobart, Port Arthur, Coles Bay and Wilsons Promontory National Park. Their tours use custom-built boats designed for viewing the spectacular coastline and wildlife of Tasmania and Victoria.

Pennicott Wilderness Journeys is a family business which started in 1999 with a single journey to Bruny Island.

Today, they operate six tours in southern Tasmania and one in southern Victoria.

### Sustainable design and operation of facilities

As a business that showcases the natural environment, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys works hard to minimise its environmental footprint. All its tourism is 100 per cent carbon offset, and energy use, water consumption and waste output are measured through the internationally recognised EarthCheck system. Pennicott Wilderness Journeys consistently exceeds EarthCheck's global best-practice level across all indicators.

All of Pennicott Wilderness Journeys products have achieved Advanced Ecotourism certification. The certification program assures travellers that certified products are backed by a strong, well-managed commitment to sustainable practices. The accreditation recognises high-quality nature-based tourism experiences with strong interpretation values, commitment to nature conservation and helping local communities.

### Stakeholders and community benefits

Pennicott Wilderness Journeys purchase goods and services from local suppliers where possible and showcase and promote local cafes, providers and tourist attractions as part of its tours.

Every year Pennicott Wilderness Journeys assists with a considerable number of rescues. Over the years this has included rescuing individuals from overturned boats, towing vessels in distress, rescuing kayakers, medical evacuations and more.

### Education and advocacy

Pennicott Wilderness Journeys provides benefits for its local community, including below-cost rates for school groups and delivery of customised interpretative materials (matched to the age of the students), work experience placement, contribution to local 'Learn to Swim' programs and provision of a free boat to allow groups of 40 young Tasmanians to get a much-needed break from the daily stresses of cancer at the CanTeen Spring Program.

### Conservation Dividend

Rob Pennicott started the Tasmania Coast Conservation Fund in 2007/2008 under the umbrella of Wildcare. It was established to contribute towards the protection, conservation and management of marine and coastal reserves, marine mammals and seabirds.

The fund is ongoing and supports projects dealing with one or more of the following themes:

- coastal reserve and marine reserve management
- marine mammal and seabird conservation
- community awareness of and participation in coastal and marine conservation.

A key project supported under the Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund was eradicating cats from Tasman Island that were killing more than 50,000 seabirds annually.

In 2011, Rob Pennicott established the Pennicott Foundation as a flagship for important philanthropic activities including environmental, community and global initiatives. A portion of cruise ticket costs goes towards the foundation

As a significant conservation initiative, the Pennicott Foundation contributed \$60,000 in 2016 towards the successful restoration of Big Green Island, through the eradication of introduced black rats.

## Appendix 3: NBT Co-investment Fund terms and conditions

DEW retains the right to vary or abandon the fund process at any time. DEW is not obliged to proceed with, or negotiate, in respect to any application.

The invitation for applications is not:

- a commitment of any kind and does not necessarily indicate an intention by DEW to enter into legal relations with any party; or
- to be interpreted as creating a binding contract (including a process contract) between DEW and the applicant or giving rise to any:
  - contractual, quasi-contractual, restitutionary or promissory estoppel rights; or
  - expectations as to the manner in which an applicant will be treated in the evaluation.
- No legal or other obligations will arise until parties execute formal documentation.

### Disclaimer

The information set out in this document or on DEW's website is not intended to be exhaustive and applicants should make their own enquiries.

Neither DEW or any agent of DEW provides any warranty or makes any representation, expressed or implied, as to the completeness or accuracy of the information either contained in or in connection with these guidelines or DEW's website or other documents (including Frequent Asked Questions).

Applicants must undertake their own enquiries and satisfy themselves in respect of all matters contained in any information provided to them.

### Acknowledgements

Applicants agree and acknowledge that:

- they have fully informed themselves of all conditions and matters relating to the fund process
- they have sought and examined all necessary information that is obtainable by making reasonable enquiries relevant to the risks, contingencies and other circumstances
- they do not rely on any expressed or implied statement, warranty, representation, whether oral, written or otherwise, made by or on behalf of DEW or any agent of DEW
- they have relied on their own investigations and enquiries in lodging an application
- DEW and any agent of DEW are not liable for any incorrect or misleading information or failure to disclose information, whether in connection with these guidelines or any document attached or related to it, including any information on DEW's website.

### Reservation of rights

DEW may:

- amend these guidelines at any time and will give notice of such amendment via the website

- ask applicants to clarify any ambiguity or provide additional information in support of the application
- make any enquiries of any person, company, organisation, or matter related to the application, including confirmation of any information provided by you
- elect not to consider an application submitted by an applicant that has a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest; or employs or engages a person who has a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest whether or not the potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is disclosed
- invite any person or company to lodge an application
- elect not to accept any application which does not meet with the criteria of this invitation
- take any other actions it considers appropriate.

### Application costs

Any and all costs incurred by the applicant in lodging an application as a result of this funding opportunity shall be the applicant's sole responsibility. No applicant shall have any recourse against DEW in relation to the SA Government's decision to not select the application as a short-listed or successful proposal.

### Publicity and confidentiality

Information supplied by or on behalf of DEW is confidential to DEW. Applicants are obliged to maintain confidentiality.

Although DEW understands the need to keep commercial matters confidential, DEW reserves the right to disclose some or all of the contents of any application:

- to its employees, advisers or third parties in order to assess an application
- as a consequence of a constitutional convention in order that the relevant Minister may answer questions raised in the South Australian Parliament, keep Parliament informed or otherwise discharge the Minister's duties and obligations to Parliament and to advise the Governor, Parliament and/or the Government of South Australia, or if required to do so by law. Any condition in an Expression of Interest that purports to prohibit or restrict the Minister's right to make such disclosures cannot be accepted.
- within the SA Government or other entities where this serves the legitimate interest of DEW
- where information is authorised or permitted by law to be disclosed
- where the information is already in the public domain.

### Copyright and intellectual property

By lodging an application, the applicant licenses DEW to reproduce (for the purpose of the fund process) the whole or any portion of the application, despite any copyright or other intellectual property right that may exist in the application.



## Appendix 4:

# Friends of Parks South Australia Engagement Charter

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*The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) recognises the valuable role that Friends of Parks (FoP) has with the Department in conserving and managing South Australia's national parks, and acknowledges that effective engagement is fundamental to achieving this.*

Our commitment is to foster a strong and ongoing partnership with FoP in their role of providing assistance with the on-ground management of national parks, wildlife, cultural sites and cultural heritage in South Australia. This will include engaging with FoP around new and significant initiatives.

## How we will engage

- We start together
- We communicate early
- We are flexible
- We are genuine and honest in our intent
- We listen to understand
- We keep you informed
- We provide appropriate opportunities to participate
- We recognise your contribution

Adapted from Better Together – South Australia's approach to engaging citizens

## DEW Engagement Approach

1. An engagement plan will be prepared. This will be prepared early, so that engagement can start early.
2. Friends – both the FoP Board and individual FoP groups, as appropriate – will be identified as primary stakeholders.
3. Engagement plans will detail how FoP will be engaged, and will specify timeframes, activities, roles and responsibilities.
4. Engagement activities will provide opportunities for meaningful engagement, for example, face to face meetings, field trips or other types of information sessions that reflect how FoP prefer to be engaged.
5. We'll be clear about the decision points and who will make the final decision.
6. We'll be clear about the points at which the process is commercial-in-confidence.
7. We'll be clear about FoP's level of influence in relation to each initiative, and how the views of all stakeholders will be taken into account.
8. We'll close the loop to make sure FoP know how their contribution influenced outcomes.
9. At the conclusion of each engagement project, we will ask FoP how well they felt they were engaged, and how the approach could be improved.
10. We will make sure that FoP are kept up to date with the progress of plans and proposals as they are implemented.



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Environment  
and Water



DEW acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and the waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal people have to their Country.

#### Disclaimer

DEW and its employees do not warrant or make any representation regarding the use, or results of the use, of the information contained herein as regards to its correctness, accuracy, reliability and currency or otherwise. DEW and its employees expressly disclaim all liability or responsibility to any person using the information or advice.



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[parks.sa.gov.au/coinvest](https://parks.sa.gov.au/coinvest)