

2018–19 PUBLIC RESERVES MANAGEMENT FUND PROGRAM

# Information guide

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NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water

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# Overview

The Public Reserves Management Fund Program (PRMFP) provides financial support for the development, maintenance and protection of public reserves. PRMFP funds are allocated each financial year to reserve managers through a robust assessment process.

More than \$150 million has been allocated by the NSW Government through the PRMFP over the last 10 years. This funding has supported important initiatives such as the maintenance of showgrounds and community halls, the improvement of local parks and reserves, eradication of pests and weeds and the development of Crown caravan parks.

The PRMFP funding process is very competitive. In the 2017–18 PRMFP round, more than 777 applications were received, with a total value of over 475% of the available funds. Priority is, therefore, given to those applications that best address the prescribed assessment criteria and meets all eligibility criteria. The *Assessment and Eligibility Criteria Checklist* is available on the department's website to assist applicants meet these requirements

Reserve managers of any NSW Crown reserve may be eligible to apply to the PRMFP. If you are not the authorised reserve manager you will be required to provide signed written approval to apply from the manager—if applying for multiple reserves, every reserve manager must give approval.

The round will be open to all project types as follows:

- General projects—showgrounds (including freehold), caravan parks, state parks, commons, schools of arts (with the exception of freehold\*), and local parks and reserves
- Pests projects—works on Crown reserves only
- Weeds projects—works on Crown reserves only.

*\* Freehold schools of arts will be ineligible for funding under the new legislation.*

## Objectives of the program

The objectives of the PRMFP are to:

- maintain and develop recreational and tourism facilities on public reserves for community use and enjoyment
- facilitate improved management of community facilities on public reserves, including community halls, showgrounds and parks
- manage and renovate infrastructure and other assets on public reserves to optimise value to the community and comply with regulatory obligations, in particular to ensure public safety and work health and safety is maintained on Crown reserves
- enhance environmental assets by supporting conservation initiatives, bushfire management and weed and pest control on public reserves
- support business opportunities that realise the potential of the Crown land estate, support regional economies and promote greater financial sustainability
- support the important role that volunteers play in the ongoing management of the Crown reserve system
- ensure the PRMFP is self-sustaining and managed in a contemporary and efficient manner, with appropriate planning and administrative processes.

The PRMFP application, assessment, payments and reporting processes are described in detail on the following page.

## The application process

There will be only one round for the 2018–19 PRMFP:

- Applications will be accepted from 9 am on Monday 5 February 2018.
- Applications will close at 5 pm on Friday 9 March 2018 (there are no extensions).

Instructions for accessing the online application form are available on the department's website: [www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown\\_land/crown\\_reserves/funding/PRMFP](http://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown_land/crown_reserves/funding/PRMFP)

Applicants should:

- allow adequate time to submit applications by the closing date—no extensions will be given
- provide comprehensive and accurate information in the form, answering all relevant questions
- attach all relevant documentation. Applications without the specified number of quotes or authority to apply will be ineligible for funding
- ensure final project reports for previous PRMFP projects (completed by anyone in the reserve manager's organisation) are up to date. Applicant organisations with outstanding reports will be ineligible for funding
- include, where appropriate, photographs to support your application
- note that application preparation costs are not claimable through the PRMFP. This includes the engagement and payment of third-party grant writing organisations or consultants. The use of professional grant writers will not necessarily increase the likelihood of obtaining PRMFP funding. It is recommended that trusts complete applications for the reserves they manage. If you require assistance or guidance on any aspect of the application, contact your local NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water office or the PRMFP team.

PRMFP funds project-based activities. In general, annual operating costs are given a lesser priority through the assessment process.

## The assessment process

Each application received before the closing date will be assessed as follows:

1. All applications will be reviewed by the PRMFP team to ensure they are complete and eligible for consideration.
2. The applications will be provided to the relevant local NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water office (for general projects) or specialist area (for pests and weeds projects) for initial assessment.
3. The regional offices will liaise with their local offices to assess and rank the applications for general projects from their respective areas.
4. Applications will be subject to specialist assessment as required:
  - Pests and weeds projects will be reviewed and ranked by multi-agency expert panels.
  - All loan applications will be further assessed to ensure the applicant has the ability to service the loan.
  - All applications totalling more than \$500,000 will be further assessed in relation to the project methodology, technical feasibility, risks and the value for money of the proposed solution.
5. The regional and specialist area assessments will be combined for a final, corporate review and ranking by the PRMFP Assessment Committee (PAC).
6. The recommendations of the PAC will be considered by the minister in the form of a budget and expenditure submission.

## Assessment methodology

A set of criteria (refer below) will be used throughout the assessment process to assist in determining:

- whether the application is eligible for consideration in the process
- the ability of the applicant to deliver the proposed activity and to meet the associated governance obligations
- the merits of the proposed activity
- the relative priority (ranking) of those applications deemed to have sufficient merit.

An application's final ranking will determine whether or not it can be supported from the available funds.

## Criteria summary

Eligibility criteria are evaluated on a 'yes/no' basis. Failing to meet any of the criteria means the application is ineligible for funding consideration.

Assessable criteria are evaluated on a weighted score basis. The *Assessment and Eligibility Criteria Checklist* document can be used as a guide to ensure you have adequately addressed all criteria. The checklist can be found at: [www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown\\_land/crown\\_reserves/funding/PRMFP](http://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown_land/crown_reserves/funding/PRMFP)

## Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria are listed below.

**Note**—if you fail to meet any of the eligibility criteria, your application will not be eligible for funding.

- The application is authorised by the official manager of a public reserve. Only those persons listed in the table below can be considered official managers of a public reserve.

Reserve trust manager type	Authorised persons
Trust board	Chair, secretary or treasurer
Council-managed trust	General manager or director
Corporate-managed trust	CEO, CFO or general manager
Freehold showground or school of arts	President, secretary or treasurer
Other	Appointed administrator, Crown lands director or area manager

If you are submitting an application and are not one of the persons listed, you must provide a signed written authorisation from the official reserve manager and include this with your application. Failure to do so will result in your application being ineligible for funding. A template that can be used to gain authorisation can be found at ANNEX A of this document.

- The reserve manager has no outstanding PRMFP final project reports. An overdue final project report for one reserve will make all reserves managed by that reserve manager ineligible.
- The reserve manager has the ability to meet all the terms of the loan (if relevant). This includes the capacity of the trust to adequately service loan repayments. Whilst interest rates are subject to change, it is anticipated that an interest rate of 3.5% p.a. will be offered for non-income generating projects, with 5% p.a. offered for income-generating projects.

- Appropriate financial information must be included in the application. All applicants are required to provide basic information on their financial position, while those seeking a loan are required to submit the following financial statements with their application:
  - profit and loss statement
  - balance sheet.
- Requirements for quotes/cost estimates are dependent on the value of each activity element. Quote requirements are detailed in the table below. Quotes must provide a breakdown of the GST component.

Activity element amount (GST inclusive)	Quote requirements per activity element
\$0–\$30,000	At least one written quote
\$30,001–\$150,000	At least three written quotes*
\$150,001 or more	Acceptable cost estimate and a commitment (that is, a strategy) for procurement via a competitive public tender.

- \* Reserve managers in remote locations may be granted an exemption in respect to the need for three quotes (at least one will be required). See ANNEX B for information that will need to be provided in order to be considered for an exemption. Please provide this information to the PRMFP team urgently if you wish to request this exemption.
- For cost estimates to be acceptable for activity elements greater than \$150,000, they must provide a comprehensive breakdown of costs inclusive of GST.
- Cost estimates will also be accepted from councils for activity elements of \$150,000 or less where they are the reserve manager and will be undertaking the work themselves. The document provided must clearly identify the reserve manager and provide a comprehensive breakdown of costs (hours, materials etc.)
- Appropriately detailed cost estimates or budget breakdowns may be accepted from other reserve managers in certain exceptional cases for activity elements of \$150,000 or less. Arrangements need to be made prior to application submission. See ANNEX C for information that will need to be provided in order to be considered. Please contact the PRMFP team urgently if you wish to discuss.
- The activity is consistent with the *Public Reserves Management Fund Act 1987*. Specifically, that it is for the cost of the:
  - purchase or acquisition of land required for public reserves
  - maintenance, improvement or development of public reserves, or the
  - remuneration (including travelling expenses) of an administrator appointed under Division 7 of Part 5 of the NSW *Department of Industry – Lands Act 1989*.
- The activity is consistent with the *Public Reserves Management Fund Act 1987*. Specifically, that it is for the cost of the:
  - purchase or acquisition of land required for public reserves
  - maintenance, improvement or development of public reserves, or the
  - remuneration (including travelling expenses) of an administrator appointed under Division 7 of Part 5 of the NSW *Department of Industry – Lands Act 1989*.

An additional eligibility criteria for both pests and weeds applications is:

- the activity will occur on Crown land.

## Assessable criteria (general, pest and weed applications)

The assessable criteria are the:

- extent to which the activity will address a work health and safety or other serious risk issue
- reserve manager could not readily fund the activity from the organisation's own cash reserves or from another, more appropriate, funding source (for grant applications)
- activity is being supported through contributions from the trust manager and/or other organisations (for example, user groups, the local community, council, sponsors, other funding programs). This includes in-kind contributions (for example, volunteer labour).
- activity will address one or more of the PRMFP objectives
- reserve manager has the ability to successfully deliver the project (for example, detailed quotes/cost estimates provided, demonstrated previous experience, planning approvals if applicable, detailed project management strategy etc.)
- social, cultural or environmental factors and/or benefits to the community of the project.

**NOTE:** The PRMFP Assessment Committee (PAC) agreed at its 2015 meeting that the ongoing funding of reserve trust's long-term operating costs (the net difference between income and expenditure) was neither sustainable nor equitable. Applicants are advised that new applications for operating costs will be considered low priority and will be extremely unlikely to be funded.

The additional assessable criteria for **pest** applications are the:

- severity of the pest/s and potential to spread and/or degrade agricultural land, natural vegetation, community land etc.
- activity addresses objectives of the NSW Invasive Species Plan 2015-2020
- activity is compatible with the NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy 2017-2022 and/or NSW National Parks Regional Pest Management Strategy
- activity demonstrates 'best practice' in pest management control as recommended by the department or local control authorities
- activity leads to long-term control of identified pest animals
- activity is collaborative and/or attracts funding from Local Land Services, agencies, trusts, community groups or other parties in kind or cash
- activity outlines process to monitor effectiveness and achievement of the control measures.

The additional assessable criteria for **weed** applications are the:

- severity of weed and potential to spread and/or degrade agricultural land, natural vegetation, community land etc.
- activity addresses objectives of the NSW Invasive Species Plan (NSWISP) 2015-2020
- activity is compatible with the Regional Weed Management Plan and NSW Weeds Action Program 2015–20
- activity demonstrates 'best practice' in weed management control as recommended by the department or local control authorities
- activity leads to long-term control of identified weeds
- activity is collaborative and/or attracts funding from Local Land Services, agencies, trusts, community groups or other parties in kind or cash
- activity outlines process to monitor effectiveness and achievement of the control measures.



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## Links to documents listed in additional pests and weeds criteria

- [Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan](https://lls.nsw.gov.au) available from the Local Land Services website ([lls.nsw.gov.au](https://lls.nsw.gov.au))
- [NSW Invasive Species Plan 2008–2015](https://pestsmart.org.au) available from the Pestsmart website ([pestsmart.org.au](https://pestsmart.org.au))
- [Draft NSW Invasive Species Plan 2015-22](https://invasives.org.au) available from the Invasive Species Council website ([invasives.org.au](https://invasives.org.au))
- [NSW National Parks Regional Pest Management Strategies](https://environment.nsw.gov.au) available from the Office of Environment & Heritage website ([environment.nsw.gov.au](https://environment.nsw.gov.au))

The following documents are available from the DPI website ([dpi.nsw.gov.au](https://dpi.nsw.gov.au))

- [NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy 2017–2021](#)
- [Best practice pest animal management](#)
- [NSW Weeds Action Program](#)
- [Best practice weed management guides](#)

## The payments and reporting process

Once assessment and approval of applications is completed, the following steps will occur:

- The minister will write to the successful applicants (reserve trusts) offering them a grant and/or loan.
- The department will write to the unsuccessful reserve trusts.
- Successful reserve trusts will have **two months** to accept the offer and the associated terms (see below), otherwise the offer will lapse.
- The department will deposit the agreed amount into the official account of the reserve trust upon receipt of an appropriately authorised offer acceptance.
- The reserve trust will need to complete the activity within **12 months** of the deposit of funds.
- The reserve trust will submit the prescribed post-activity final project report, including copies of all invoices, before-and-after photographs where applicable, and return any unspent grant funds to the department within two months of the activity's completion.
- If the reserve manager is a **local council** that is audited by the Auditor General NSW without any qualifications, a special purpose financial statement signed off by an appropriately qualified CA/CPA staff member certifying a 'true and fair' view in acquitting grant funds, to the satisfaction of NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water assessment staff, may be acceptable.

In some cases, this report can be used in lieu of producing invoices for every payment made, however, it may be appropriate to provide supporting system/ledger reports as reasonable evidence of appropriate use of funds and/or to support amounts reported in expenditure categories of the special purpose report.

The following is an example statement in certifying the report:

*'I certify that this special purpose report represents a true and fair view of how project grant funds were spent.'*

Signed and dated with full printed name, position and current professional membership details.

- The reserve manager will:
  - acknowledge the grant and/or loan in its annual report and in its financial statements submitted to the Crown Reserve Reporting System (for Crown reserves).
  - comply with [Funding acknowledgement guidelines for recipients of NSW Government grants](#) as appropriate, depending on the amount of funding awarded.

Recipients of loans will commence their repayments one year after the date of the deposit of funds.

## Project audits

A representative sample of projects will be subject to audit each year. Reserve managers will receive prior notification if they are chosen.

Note that your project may be subject to an audit upon completion. This will involve a review of relevant documentation and an on-site visit in order to confirm the project:

- was delivered in accordance with the terms of the minister's offer
- was managed effectively and efficiently
- expended its budget appropriately, with any excess funds returned to the department
- delivered the benefits outlined in the original application.

# Standard terms of PRMFP grants and loans

Successful applicants will be required to comply with a number of specified terms. These terms typically cover the following matters:

- the time limit for the completion of the activity and the post-activity report (and return of unspent funds)
- the conditions attached to loans e.g. interest rate and repayment schedule
- general compliance with relevant legislation and policy.

## GST

Payment of funds is made GST inclusive. Grant recipients registered for GST must agree to the department issuing a Recipient Created Tax Invoice. As funds are paid inclusive of GST, please include this in your Business Activity Statement where applicable.

If you require specific GST advice please visit the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) website at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) or contact the ATO by phone on 13 72 26.

## Assistance

Instructions for accessing the online application form are available at the following webpage: [www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown\\_land/crown\\_reserves/funding/PRMFP](http://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/crown_land/crown_reserves/funding/PRMFP)

If you have read this document and still require assistance with the application process, please phone 1300 886 235 (option 7) or email ([cl.PRMFP@crownland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cl.PRMFP@crownland.nsw.gov.au)).

## ANNEX A

## TEMPLATE – AUTHORISATION TO APPLY

This letter serves as authorisation of [APPLICANT ORGANISATION], [APPLICANT NAME], to submit an application for funding in the 2018-19 PRMFP round on behalf of [TRUST MANAGER] for [RESERVE NAME].

I acknowledge that I am an authorised person for this trust as per the table below.

I understand that, if successful, the Trust will be responsible for the acceptance, delivery and reporting obligations associated with this project.

Name of Authorised Person:

Position:

Signature:

*Authorised Persons*

Reserve Trust Manager Type	Authorised Persons
Trust Board	Chair, Secretary or Treasurer
Council Managed Trust	General Manager or Director
Corporate Managed Trust	CEO, CFO or General Manager
Freehold Showground or School of Arts	President, Secretary or Treasurer
Other	Appointed Administrator, Crown Lands Director or Area Manager

## ANNEX B

## TEMPLATE – REQUEST FOR QUOTE EXEMPTION

In exceptional circumstances, an exemption from providing three (3) quotes with your PRFMP application may be given. In order to be considered for an exemption, please provide the following information to the PRMFP Team via email ([cl.PRMFP@crowland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cl.PRMFP@crowland.nsw.gov.au)). The Coordinator - Funding Programs will assess your request and you will receive an email notification of the outcome. NOTE: written approval from the PRMFP Team is required prior to submission of your application and you will still be required to submit your online application by **5pm on Friday 9 March 2018** (there are **no extensions**).

- Reserve name
- Reserve manager name (e.g. trust)
- Application number
- Project description
- Total project cost (GST Inclusive)
- Amount of PRMFP funding required (GST Inclusive)
- Reason/s for exemption from 3 quotes (including efforts to date to attain quotes)
- Cost evidence that will be provided with the application (quote or detailed cost estimate)
- Contact details (name, phone number & position)

## ANNEX C

**TEMPLATE – REQUEST FOR COST ESTIMATE IN LIEU OF QUOTES**

In exceptional circumstances, trusts may be granted permission to include a cost estimate in lieu of quotes for activity elements less than \$150,000. This is most relevant if the trust is completing the works themselves without engaging third party contractors/organisations. In order to be considered, please provide the following information to the PRMFP Team via email ([cl.PRMFP@crowland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cl.PRMFP@crowland.nsw.gov.au)). The Coordinator - Funding Programs will assess your request and you will receive an email notification of the outcome. NOTE: written approval from the PRMFP Team is required prior to submission of your application and you will still be required to submit your online application by **5pm on Friday 9 March 2018** (there are **no extensions**).

- Reserve name
- Reserve manager name (e.g. trust)
- Application number
- Project description
- Total project cost (GST Inclusive)
- Amount of PRMFP funding required (GST Inclusive)
- Reason/s for cost estimate request
- Cost evidence that will be provided with the application
- Contact details (name, phone number & position)