



Traditional Owner Nature Based Economy Program

*Nature Based Economy
Technical Working Group*

Expression of Interest Guidelines

Issued Thursday, 13 November 2025

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation extends its deepest respect and recognition to all Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef as First Nations Peoples holding the hopes, dreams, traditions and cultures of the Reef.

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About the Great Barrier Reef Foundation

The Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) is the lead charity dedicated to protecting the Great Barrier Reef (Reef) by funding science, technology, engineering solutions, and on-ground action to ensure its long-term conservation.

The Reef Trust Partnership (RTP) between the Australian Government and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation represented a landmark investment to strengthen the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. Through this partnership, \$51.8 million was directed to deliver the world's largest Traditional Owner Reef Protection Program, significantly advancing engagement and leadership in Reef management. Building on this strong foundation, the focus now turns to sustaining this momentum, strengthening partnerships, deepening capacity, and aligning future investment with Traditional Owner priorities and enduring stewardship of Sea Country. The GBRF is set to expand support to Traditional Owners with a \$25 million investment across seven years to support a **Nature Based Economy** program which directly benefits Reef Traditional Owners and centres around Country, Community and Culture.

About this Expression of Interest (EOI)

Currently, the GBRF has 22 Traditional Governance member roles across their Traditional Owner Advisory Group and Technical Working Groups that informs the Traditional Owner Reef Protection Program that forms part of the RTP. Through co-design and co-delivery where possible, the GBRF Traditional Owner governance groups have assisted to ensure the success of the world's largest Traditional Owner Reef Protection Program.

The GBRF remains committed to having appropriate Traditional Owner governance structures that inform the Traditional Owner Program. In particular, the \$25 million Nature Based Economy Program will have a Traditional Owner Nature Based Economy Technical Working Group (NBE TWG) to provide advice that will help to inform nature-based economy support and opportunities to Reef Traditional Owners.

This expression of interest (EOI) is to call for suitably qualified Reef and Catchment Traditional Owners, through an open and transparent process, to provide expertise to the dedicated NBE TWG to assist in ensuring economic initiatives are grounded in Indigenous knowledges, priorities and decision-making, building the foundations for long-term leadership and self-determination in nature-based economies.

Potential applicants should read these Guidelines in their entirety before deciding whether to submit an EOI.

Key dates

Table 1. Key dates

Call for Expressions of Interest open	Thursday, 13 November 2025
Call for Expressions of Interest close	5:00pm AEST, Monday 1 December 2025
Applicants notified	Mid-December 2025
Successful applicants engaged	Until 30 June 2027 with possible extension
Induction & First NBE TWG Meeting	February 2026 – dates & location to be confirmed

About the NBE TWG

In undertaking work with Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef, the Foundation has committed to a new era of partnership that will genuinely strive to implement a culturally safe and appropriate process of co-design and co-delivery. To do this Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef have identified the need for expert roles to be made available to actively participate in the co-design and co-delivery of this work.

This will include providing:

- Specific, detailed input into the design and implementation of the program of works.
- Active participation and leadership in the regional workshops and working group meetings to ground-truth ideas and concepts with the broader base of Great Barrier Reef Traditional Owners to inform delivery.
- Specific technical advice and support to the GBRF Traditional Owner Partnerships team and broader GBRF Traditional Owner governance groups, including undertaking minor consultancy work.

We know your time is important. You must be able to demonstrate in your EOI that you are able to commit to at least 10 days per year to actively participate in the project co-design and co-delivery.

Technical knowledge and experience

- GBRF invites applications from Reef and Catchment Traditional Owners who can share their views on management activities that matter most to Traditional Owners, the key challenges they face and ideas for solutions. This input will help shape nature-based economy projects and opportunities.
- Participants will take part in meetings, workshops, and forums to share advice and ideas on issues important to Reef Traditional Owners.
- Applicants will be asked to provide expertise, technical and operational advice to the GBRF and its existing and/or future Traditional Owner Program governance groups, partners and staff.

Essential criteria

- Identify as a Great Barrier Reef or Catchment Traditional Owner.
- Demonstrate expertise, knowledge, experience and interest in nature-based economy support and opportunities.
- Availability to work a minimum of 10 days per year, between January 2026 to June 2027.
- Ability to travel to meetings and workshops plus the ability and equipment to attend online meetings.
- Ability to contribute to the development of discrete projects, including demonstrating a sound level of research, writing and computer skills.
- Strong on-ground relationships within your community and amongst other Reef Traditional Owners and their partners.

Desirable criteria

- Governance and risk management experience and understanding.
- A passion and drive to be involved in the co-design of Traditional Owner led projects for the Reef.
- An ABN or willingness to obtain an ABN.

Who can apply

This program is a special measure identified to support Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef and Catchment. In your application, please advise which Traditional Owner group/s/Country/ies within the Great Barrier Reef and Catchment you represent.

- Other things to consider in your application: confirmation that all actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest relating to any relevant areas of the Nature Based Economy have been declared.

Rates

NBE TWG members will be paid for their time at the rate of \$750 per day for the Chair and \$650 per day for Members for contribution to meetings. Costs associated with travel, accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) will be covered for all meetings and workshops.

How the Expressions of Interest are assessed

This EOI is a technical expertise, knowledge and experience based, competitive process.

This EOI relates to the expertise, knowledge and experience of individuals and does not reflect the capabilities at a Traditional Owner group level or representative organisation level. If multiple individuals from the same Traditional Owner group submit an EOI, each individual will be assessed separately. EOIs will be assessed based on the following process:

Stage one – eligibility confirmation

Each EOI will be screened to check that the applicant is eligible to apply. Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not progress to stage two.

Stage two – assessment against criteria

Eligible applications, will be assessed by the GBRF Board based on:

- Demonstrated expertise, knowledge and experience in the essential or desired criteria described above.
- Demonstrated expertise, knowledge and experience in the design and delivery of Traditional Owner land and sea management and planning activities in the Great Barrier Reef and its Catchments
- Demonstrated ability to actively participate and deliver negotiated areas of the work program co-designed by Traditional Owners and the GBRF.

Stage three – engagement of experts

Suitable applicants will be invited to join the NBE TWG, or to provide other services (such as expert advisors) in support of the Traditional Owner Program. The scope of work and terms of any engagement will be agreed at the time of the engagement.

Notification of applicants

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing following the completion of Stage two – Assessment. We anticipate this will be completed in mid-December 2025.

Confidentiality of information

GBRF will keep confidential all confidential information provided by the applicant as part of the application process. However, GBRF may disclose confidential information to its personnel, contractors or advisors for the purposes of administering this process; or as required by law; or where GBRF is required to comply with any provision of funders in respect of confidential information.

Submitting an application

Applications open on Thursday, 13 November 2025 and close on at 5:00pm AEST Monday, 1 December 2025. All applications must address the 'essential' and where relevant the 'desirable' criteria and a confirmation of availability for the proposed meeting and workshop dates.

Where possible, please include any work history, educational and training qualifications, identification of Traditional Owner group and personal details such as address, email, phone and date of birth. In addition, please provide at least two names and contact details that can act as referees to your application. Applications must be submitted by email to applications@barrierreef.org

Unless requested by GBRF, no additional written or verbal explanation, or further documentation, will be accepted after the closing date. Applications that are incomplete; do not include the requested documentation; do not outline all conflicts of interest; or do not address the assessment criteria may be deemed ineligible.

Late applications, after the 5:00pm AEST on Monday, 1 December 2025 will not be accepted.

How to apply

Step 1

Review these Guidelines (with particular attention to both essential and desirable assessment criteria).

Step 2

Prepare an expression of interest (no more than two pages) outlining:

- How your expertise, knowledge, experience, skills and interests address the criteria,
- Your relevant attributes and capabilities that you will bring to the role,
- Clearly indicate your availability to commit to the NBE TWG meeting and workshop dates listed above,
- Clearly demonstrate your availability to commit to the minimum time requirements for the work of the NBE TWG, which is currently estimated at 10 essential days and possibly up to 20 days per year
- The Reef Traditional Owner group(s) that you identify with,

Step 3

Include a resume with two referees.

Step 4

Email your expression of interest to applications@barrierreef.org by 5:00pm AEST, Monday 1 December 2025.

Questions

Applicants may contact the GBRF for further question, please contact either:

Karin Gerhardt, Director Traditional Owner Program on telephone 0418 450 028 or email kgerhardt@barrierreef.org

Eleanor McCall, Engagement Manager Traditional Owner Partnerships, telephone 07 3252 7555 or email emccall@barrierreef.org

GBRF website: www.barrierreef.org