

## Sustainable Schools Program

### CONTRACTORS BRIEF Schools & their Communities

24 July 2003

draft 2

## 1 Introduction

### Purpose

Resource NSW (RNSW), in partnership with the NSW Department of Education & Training (DET), has recently commenced a state-wide Sustainable Schools Program (SSP) to assist schools to develop, implement and evaluate school environmental management plans (SEMP). Environment Australia (EA) has committed significant support to this NSW program as is keen to identify approaches that can be adapted or replicated elsewhere in Australia.

Attached is the framework document for the program. It provides more detailed information on the nature, structure and purpose of the SSP. One key element in this program is the focus on building and maintaining strong school-community relationships and partnerships to support the SEMP process.

A significant evaluation contract has recently been let on the SSP. In short, the evaluation brief (attached) requires the contractors to evaluate the program success factors and identify further areas of development. It includes, among several others, a requirement to measure the extent to which school-community relationships impact on the SEMP process.

With the assistance of additional funds from EA, RNSW and DET intend to engage another contractor to evaluate in greater depth the actual and potential relationships between a school and its community (understood as government and non-government organisations, individuals and groups) as they relate to developing and implementing environmental management plans. **The program partners are keen to better understand the real and potential benefits** for the EMP that relationships with community are able to achieve.

### Background

The NSW Department of Education & Training's *Environmental Education Policy for Schools* (2001) makes compulsory for government schools the development of School Environmental Management Plans (SEMPs). Each government school is required to prepare, implement and review a SEMP across three focus areas: management of resources, management of school grounds and curriculum integration. The SSP has been designed to assist schools with their SEMPs.

## 2 Task Outline

### Outcomes

The SSP is based, to a certain extent, on assumptions made about

- the educative value and social benefits of
- the capacity for programs to be maintained through strong connections between schools and their communities.

DET & RNSW want a picture of what's happening, what's known, what's been/being learnt about the role of school-community partnerships. We want to know what's working and why. And what else needs to be known.

The work described in this brief will test these assumptions as they pertain to the SEMP. It will yield the following outcomes:

- Increased understanding of how schools can engage with local community (individuals and organisations) in developing SEMPs.
- Models for how these relationships may be generated and maintained.
- Increased understanding about how environmental management planning processes that include community participation can influence community environmental practices.
- Extent to which a process such as the SEMP can build community relationship
- Information about the connections between community development and school development as they relate to sustainability.
- An understanding of how to assist schools to work with their communities to shift towards more sustainable practices and processes.

The results will inform further research in this area.

### Tasks

The contractor will be required to conduct the following tasks:

1. In the first instance, propose a methodology for gathering the required information and outcomes above. The methodology will need to acknowledge the variables within the schools and systems. For example:
  - metropolitan/regional
  - government/non-government
  - co-educational/single sex
  - size
  - primary/secondary/K-12/central
2. Develop a theoretical framework for understanding the role, value and impact of school-community relationships across a limited range of activities, including environmental initiatives. This will require a desktop review of previous/current activities and an analysis of the range of understandings about school and community as they are relevant to the aims of the SSP.
3. Investigate the nature of support a community may realistically provide to the SEMP process over the long term. The issue of maintenance of SEMP processes and focus is critical here.
4. Discuss the impact of school structures and administrative systems on this relationship; this may include community perception of these elements.
5. Provide case studies on key initiatives undertaken to engage and maintain community partnerships that may be relevant for the SEMP processes.
6. Provide advice to the SSP managers on future directions and emphases for the SSP as far as school-community relationships go.
7. Identify gaps in knowledge about how to facilitate/ensure school-community relationship to support effective SEMP processes.

All tasks are to be undertaken in close liaison with the program management team.

### **Deliverables**

To be determined.

### **Timing and Duration**

To be determined.

Would propose 6 months.

### **Progress Reporting**

The successful contractor will be required to provide Resource NSW and DET with regular, informal progress reports. The schedule of these will be negotiated at commencement.

Specific requirements to be determined.

## **3. Submissions**

Proposals are to address and be structured consistent with the following headings and format. These matters will form the basis for the selection criteria.

### **Appreciation of Required Outcomes**

Tenderers shall demonstrate a clear understanding of

- The required purpose and outcomes of the program and brief.
- Community and school development.
- Education as a tool for achieving change in people's attitudes and behaviour.

### **Detailed Methodology / Approach**

The tenderer is required to demonstrate an appropriate methodology and approach to successfully complete the program. Contractors should clearly nominate a detailed methodology and scope of work that demonstrates delivery of the required outcomes described in Section 2.

### **Fees**

A fee of 15,000 is available for this work. Details of payment schedules to be negotiated.

### **Company Profile & Relevant Experience in Program Evaluation**

The tenderer is required to provide details about the company profile together with demonstrated experience in relevant and comparable programs. If sub-consultants will be used on the program, information about their company profile and relevant experience must also be included along with a clear statement as to the role to be performed on the program.

Please provide the details of at least 2 referees.

### **Program Team**

The tenderer is required to nominate their program personnel. Individual responsibilities should also be described.

Where sub-contractors are to be used they should be clearly identified as "sub-contractor".

Tenderers should give a commitment that the personnel nominated in the proposal will be available and capable of undertaking the task. Any change in personnel for the program will require agreement from Resource NSW and the alternate/replacement shall have comparable skills and experience to ensure satisfactory progress with the program.

### **Individuals Skills, Qualifications and Specific Experience**

A brief account of key individuals' skills (including any sub-contractors), qualifications and specific experience is required to demonstrate their suitability for the program. This will include examples of previous relevant programs, details of experience within the school education system, quality

control/ quality assurance and evidence of ability to produce well-written and documented reports in clear and concise language.

### **Ability to Complete in Time**

As part of the proposal, a detailed program should be prepared to demonstrate an understanding of the program and key deliverables/milestones together with the consultant's nominated methodology and approach.

### **Communication**

The proposal should provide evidence of interpersonal, presentation and communication skills. It is expected that key team members will have access to e-mail for the duration of the program.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The proposal will indicate whether the organisation or the nominated personnel have any actual or potential conflict of interest of relevance to the program.

Where a potential conflict of interest exists or arises during the period of the engagement, the consultant should immediately notify the program manager and indicate the action proposed to address the conflict of interest.

### **Insurance Details**

Submissions must demonstrate appropriate levels of the following insurance:

- Workers Compensation
- Professional Indemnity
- Public Liability

Successful contractors will be required to provide copies of the above insurance certificates prior to formal engagement.

All school-related research must be guided by the Research Guidelines (June 2001) prepared by the Department of Education and Training (available on DET website). These include a security check under the Child Protection legislation.

### **Confidentiality & Ownership of Intellectual Property**

The appointed contractor will be required to keep all material sighted, handled, or produced in connection with this program confidential, including this brief.

Other than in the course of meeting the communication requirements of the Brief the contractor must not disclose any information without the prior written permission from Resource NSW and DET.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Program Manager, all products developed produced by the consultant in undertaking this assignment will remain the property of Resource NSW and DET.

### **Briefing Session**

To be determined.

### **Submission Details / Enquires**

To be determined.