Queensland Independent Schools BGA Block Grant Authority

Sustainability
Special Purpose Funding Round

Planning & Eligibility Notes

About the Sustainability Grant

The Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round is available to support schools work toward their environmentally sustainable goals, using a structured and outcome-focused approach. These notes are intended to support schools through the process of preparing an application, and are presented across the following sections:

- Intent of Funding
- Timeline
- Available Funding & School Eligibility
- The Pathway to an Eligible Project
- Example Project Flow Charts

These notes should be read in conjunction with the following supplementary resources developed to support this program, all available on the QIS BGA website:

- Sustainability Model Code
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Application Help Notes

Intent of Funding

The Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round focuses on projects delivering Energy & Carbon and Total Water Cycle initiatives. An eligible project can be an **Energy and Carbon**, **Total Water Cycle**, or a **Combined Energy and Water** project.

The intent of funding directed towards **Energy & Carbon** projects is to:

- Lower the need for electrical energy from the electricity grid.
- Lower the need for electricity consumption on the school site.
- Reduce carbon produced by the School.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to, LED lighting, solar systems, building management systems, and battery storage on-site. Charging stations for electric vehicles, for example, would be ineligible because they do not meet the intent of the funding criteria outlined above.

The intent of funding directed towards **Total Water Cycle** projects is to:

- Lower the need to source water from an external water provider.
- Increase capacity to harvest onsite water.
- Efficiently move water harvested on-site to locations of need (i.e. toilets, ovals, etc.).
- Recycle grey water for reuse.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to, efficient water fittings, water tanks, water recycling plants, filtration systems and piping networks to link stored water to locations where supply is needed.

Timeline

The anticipated timeline for the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round will see applications open in early July 2025, with a minimum of eight weeks to finalise & submit via their Client Portal in the Enquire grant management system. Refer to the QIS BGA website for further details regarding application dates.

Ministerial approval is expected to occur by late November 2025. Successful projects will be required to enter into a contract to complete the work within 12 months.

Available Funding & School Eligibility

Schools intending to apply under this round must be prepared to meet project eligibility requirements before submitting an application. For a School to be eligible to apply for a grant under the Sustainability Special Purpose Round, they must:

- Be in receipt of Australian Government recurrent funds for education on the site where the proposed project would be delivered.
- Have entered into a QIS BGA Participation Agreement (or in the process of doing so).
- Exist on a site that is owned or leased for more than 20 years from the date the project would be completed.
- Have appropriate insurance in place.
- Be proposing an eligible sustainability project. Refer to 'The Pathway to an Eligible Project' section for further information on requirements for an eligible project.

The following table outlines the level of funding available to Schools based on their capacity to contribute (CTC). Schools with a CTC above 110 are not eligible for this Special Purpose Funding Round.

Sustainability Project Type	Minimum Project Cost (ex GST)	Level of Funding	
		CTC < 97	CTC 97-110
Energy & Carbon	$50,000	75% of project cost, capped to $300,000 per School	50% of project cost, capped to $200,000 per School
Total Water Cycle	$50,000		
Combined Energy & Water	$50,000		

Each project must relate to one contract of work only, and meet the minimum project cost outlined in the table above. Where schools would like to deliver more than one sustainability initiative via multiple contracts, they can either:

- Engage a managing contractor to deliver a single, combined project.
- Submit each project/contract of work as a separate application (separate projects), with each application required to meet the minimum project cost to be eligible.

IMPORTANT: An application in this round must be for a single 'project' that will result in **one contract of work only**. Refer to Phase 3 of "The Pathway to an Eligible Project" for further information.

The funding cap represents the highest amount of funding a school can receive in this round, regardless of the number of projects submitted. Where a School submits multiple applications, the cap applies across all projects, as if the combined elements are a single project.

For Schools seeking to undertake work across multiple sites:

- Where the sites are within an immediate vicinity or the same region, one funding cap applies across all sites collectively.
- Where sites are not within an immediate vicinity or are in different regions, the funding cap will apply to each site individually.

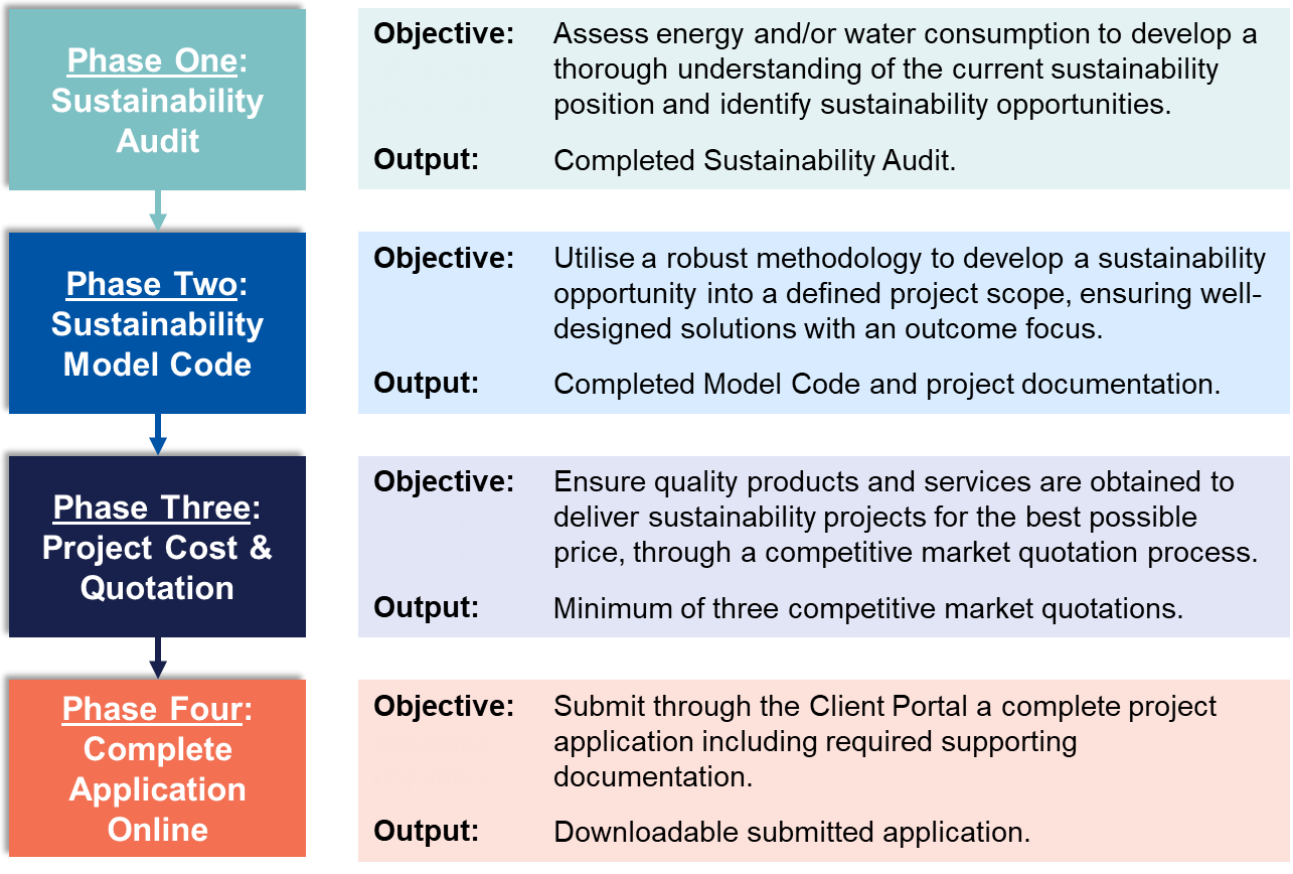
Regardless of whether a funding cap applies collectively or individually, where project work is proposed to be undertaken on separately registered sites (i.e. separate NSSAB/AGE IDs), individual applications must be submitted for each site, with each application required to meet the minimum project cost.

This funding is for sustainability projects associated with existing facilities and site infrastructure only and it does not apply to current applications being made under the 2025 Capital Round.

Schools that participated in the first sustainability round **are eligible to apply again in this second round**, provided the new application is for a different project than what has already been applied for. Schools are encouraged to contact the program's dedicated project officer to discuss any queries in regard to eligibility.

The Pathway to an Eligible Project

The following diagram outlines the minimum procedural steps Schools must take to satisfy criteria and eligibility considerations for the QIS BGA Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round.



Each phase will result in specific outputs forming the basis of eligibility and assessment for applications submitted under this round. The following sections provide a detailed discussion of each phase and include a recommended checklist of key activities to support Schools in submitting an application.

PHASE ONE: Sustainability Audit

The objective of Phase One is to assess energy and/or water consumption to develop a thorough understanding of the current sustainability position and to identify sustainability opportunities. This objective is satisfied through the completion of a Sustainability Audit.

A Sustainability Audit will result in two specific outcomes for schools. Firstly, the audit will assist in identifying sustainability opportunities to aid discussion and decision-making regarding particular initiatives that should be considered in Phase Two. Secondly, the audit will form part of the supporting documentation to be submitted for a project application under this special purpose funding round and is a critical component for project eligibility.

If a School intends to pursue sustainability initiatives in only one of the energy or water categories, the audit can be limited to energy or water as appropriate. However, if the initiative combines energy and water, both areas must be included in the audit.

While a comprehensive approach to completing an audit is encouraged, this program only requires schools to meet the prescribed "Acceptable Solution" as specified in Section 2 of the Sustainability Model Code to support an eligible application. For Example:

- A **Solar** project needs to satisfy the requirements of line item 6.1, being an "Understanding of renewable energy on-site." via "Plans and description of solar panels on-site (if applicable), and establishment of baseline consumption e.g. **"Monitoring example"** worksheet in audit tool."
- A **Battery** project needs to satisfy the requirements of line item 6.5, being an "Understanding energy storage on-site" through "Plans and description of size and type of batteries on-site (if applicable), and establishment of baseline consumption e.g. **"Monitoring example"** worksheet in audit tool."
- A **Rainwater Storage and Reuse** project needs to satisfy the requirements of line item 10.1, being "Understand rainwater system" by "Documenting any rainwater use, including collection locations, storage capacity, treatment and end use."

Refer to the Sample Project Flowcharts for further guidance on audit requirements.

IMPORTANT: Refer to Section 2, "Audit Requirements" and "Acceptable Solutions" of the Sustainability Model Code for the level of audit required to satisfy eligibility for your sustainability project.

The Sustainability Audit can be completed by either a school staff member, students or an external consultant. In partnership with industry specialists, QIS BGA has developed an audit tool to assist schools and their consultants in completing the audit. Using the audit tool is mandatory when audits are being undertaken in-house.

IMPORTANT: Examples of completed audits are now available on the Special Purpose Funding Page of the QIS BGA website.

While not essential to completing Phase One, Schools should consider engaging their External Project Supervisor early, as they will play a key role in Phase Two. The external project supervisor will be responsible for professional oversight and endorsement of your Sustainability Model Code, and their sign-off of this document is essential for a project to be eligible. The external project supervisor must be either:

- A qualified architect who is registered with the Board of Architects of Queensland; or
- A qualified professional engineer (RPEQ); or
- A project manager / project management firm which holds a licence issued by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission.

They must also be independent of the school and not affiliated with any of the Contractor organisation's providing market quotations.

If unsure, applicant schools should discuss the declaration in section 6 of the Code with their proposed external project supervisor to confirm they will be able to complete the endorsement.

Key Activities Checklist for **PHASE ONE**:

- Engage your external project supervisor.
- Undertake sustainability audit.
- Plan ahead for any Board approvals (budget, consent to apply etc.)
- Prepare to engage specialist consultants required to deliver proposed projects.

PHASE TWO: Sustainability Model Code

The objective of Phase Two is to utilise a robust methodology to develop a sustainability opportunity into a defined project scope, ensuring well-designed solutions with an outcome focus. This is achieved by following the procedure outlined in the Sustainability Model Code.

The Model Code is required to be completed and submitted as supporting documentation for your application, and must also be endorsed by the external project supervisor via their declaration in Section 6. The Model Code consists of two main parts:

- Section 2: Audit Requirements and Acceptable Solutions

This outlines the pathway to identifying sustainability opportunities and the audit mechanisms that must be satisfied (if they haven't already been achieved in Phase One). **Only line items specifically relating to your proposed project need to be completed in this section, you do not need to populate every line of Section 2.**

- Section 3: Identified Sustainability Opportunities and Proposed Solutions

To complete the 'Identified Sustainability Opportunities and Proposed Solutions' section, schools may need to collaborate with specialist consultants or industry professionals relevant to the particular initiatives being pursued. The consultants and the external project supervisor will be responsible for ensuring a well-designed and value-for-money solution/s.

TIP: Haven't yet identified a project that might be suitable for your School? It might help to consider some recent capital projects and sustainability initiatives that were discussed during their planning phase but may not have made it into the final project for budgetary reasons.

Key Activities Checklist for **PHASE TWO**:

- Engage specialist consultants required for the proposed project/s.
- Define proposed solutions (project scope).
- Develop project documentation for market quotation.
- Complete the Sustainability Model Code.

PHASE THREE: Project Cost and Quotation

Following completion of a Sustainability Audit and Model Code, Schools should have a well-defined solution (proposed project) that will address a genuine sustainability opportunity. Phase Three aims to build-up a cost for your project, while ensuring quality products and services for the best possible price. This is achieved through a competitive market quotation process.

The total project cost must be determined from actual values either from fee proposals (for consultants) or competitive market quotations (for project/contract work), and should capture all direct costs required to deliver the project. For example, eligible costs could include but are not limited to:

- Project construction costs (e.g. competitive market quotation)
- Professional/consultant fees (e.g. your external project supervisor)
- Local authority charges

Examples of ineligible costs include but are not limited to:

- Contingency or any other type of provision for unforeseen costs.
- Fees and/or charges for work not directly associated with the proposed project/contract of work.
- Costs for work undertaken by the school or a third party (e.g. landscaping) that is not included in the competitive market quotation.

The process for obtaining competitive market quotations must reflect sound building industry best practices, support the value-for-money principle, and be open and transparent, aligning with ethical tendering practices. Schools must obtain at least three market quotations for this Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round. Quotation pricing must be submitted to support an application, along with a copy of the preferred project contractor's submission. Refer to the Application Help Notes for further information on what details will need to be submitted in your application.

Where only two quotes can be obtained, QIS BGA requires a further representation of market value at the time of application. In this case, a Quantity Surveyor or relevant consultant's opinion of cost can be provided to support the application.

Once ministerial approval of the grant is provided and a Recipient School Agreement is executed and in place, Schools will be able to enter into agreements immediately with their preferred project contractor.

IMPORTANT: Schools should consider the anticipated program timeline during discussions with market contractors, specifically regarding the validity period. Where possible, Schools should endeavour to obtain quotations that will remain valid until at least the end of November 2025, when Ministerial approval is anticipated.

A Project Plan is required and for this Special Purpose Funding Round can be considered more of a 'mud map' in regard to the level of detail required. The Project Plan can be prepared in-house and can be as simple as a mark-up of the school's campus map. It is not required to be to scale, but as a minimum, it should include the following:

- A title and date.
- Be specific to the project being applied for.
- Include the full campus extent for context. (Avoid plans that show an extract of the campus that is small.)
- Legibly indicate locations where work will be undertaken, with clear descriptions.

Also, in Phase Three, Schools should consider their project timeline, including any authority approvals or pre-construction activities (enabling work, off-site fabrication, etc). The timeline should incorporate feedback from the quoting contractors regarding their anticipated start date and duration on site, assuming a contract date following ministerial approval and execution of the Recipient School Agreement. A project timeline will be required when submitting an application online and as a minimum will need to include construction start and end dates. An example project timeline is provided in the Application Help Notes.

Key Activities Checklist for **PHASE THREE**:

- Obtain a minimum of three competitive market quotations.
- Compile the total project cost for the application.
- External project supervisor to endorse (signs-off) Model Code.
- Prepare project plan/s.
- Prepare project timeline, including any authority approvals or pre-construction activities.

PHASE FOUR: Complete Application Online

After completing phases one, two, and three, schools will have all the required supporting documentation to apply online via the Enquire Client Portal, including:

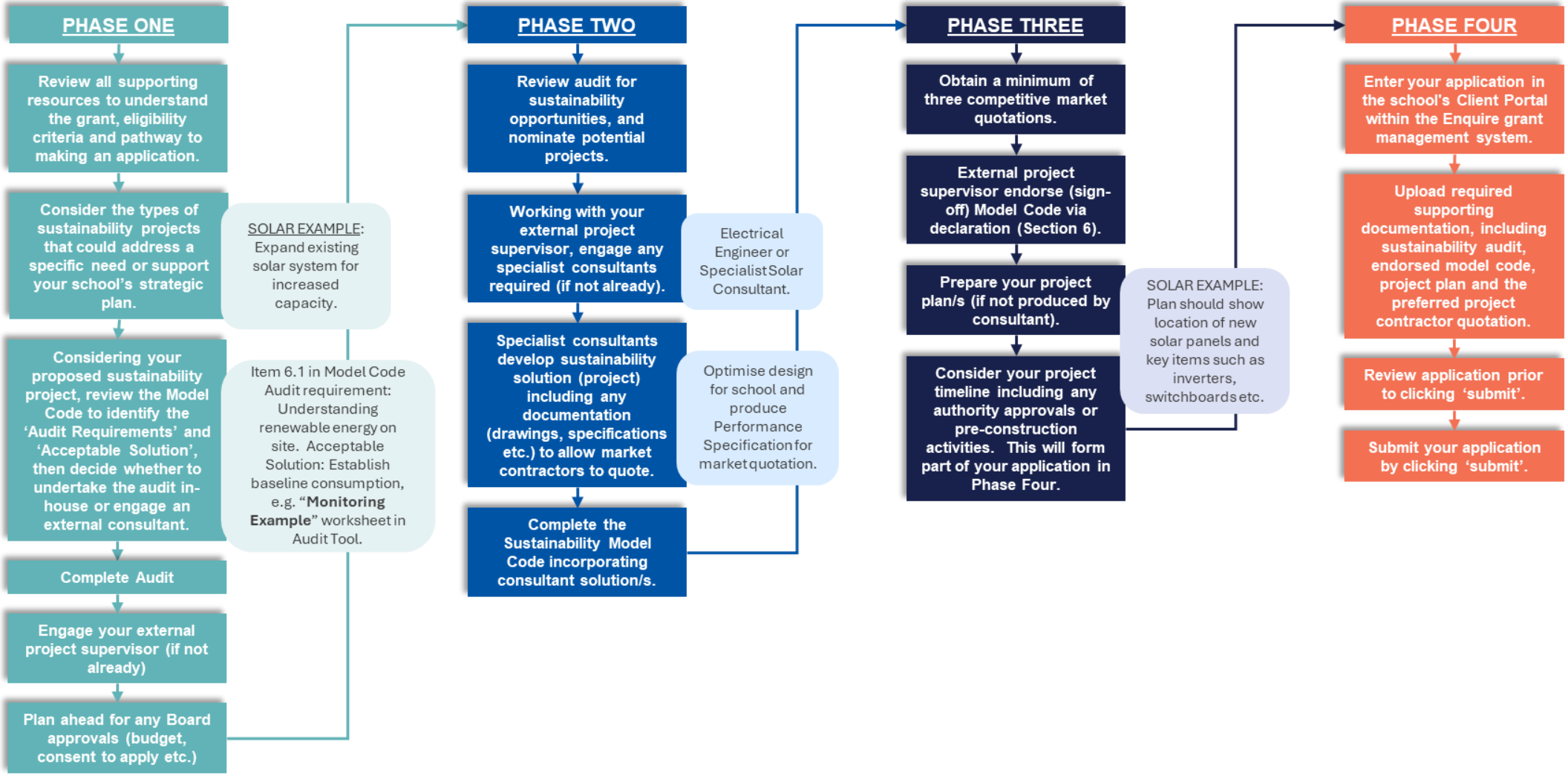
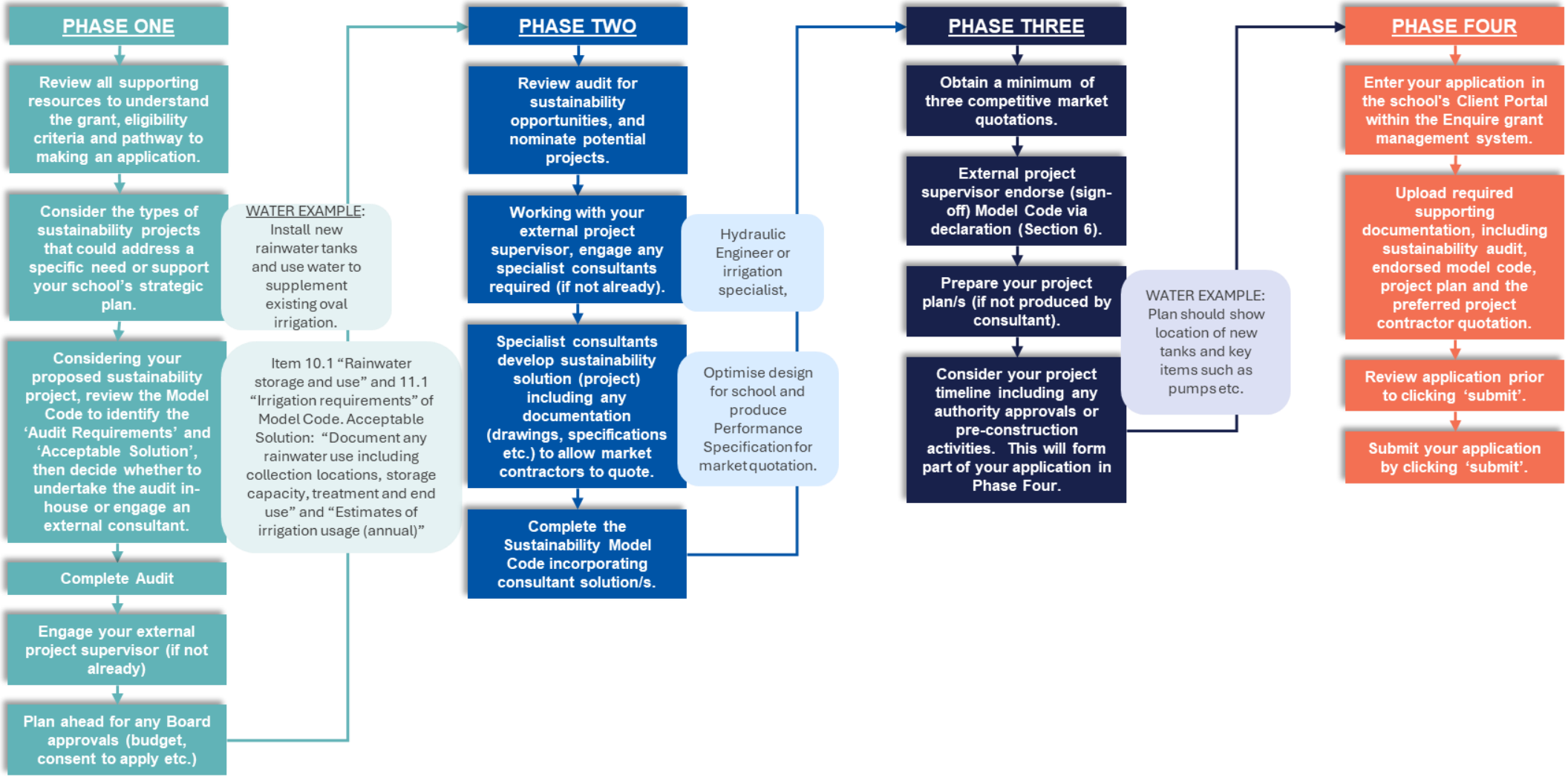
- Completed audit
- Complete and endorsed (signed-off) Model Code
- Project Plan/s
- Preferred Project Contractor Quotation

Further Help Notes specific to making an application online are available on the QIS BGA website.

Key Activities Checklist for **PHASE FOUR:**

- Fill out the application online.
- Upload required supporting documentation.
- Review the application and submit.

Sample Project Flow Chart – **SOLAR**



Sample Project Flow Chart – **WATER HARVESTING**