

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been compiled to support schools making an application in the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round, and they are supplementary to the following resources that are available on the [QIS BGA website](#):

- Planning & Eligibility Notes
- Sustainability Model Code
- Sustainability Audit Tools

To assist in navigating this document, FAQs are collated into theme headings, with the following contents page that can help you browse either an entire category or scan the list for particular questions. There is also an example project flowchart included to provide additional guidance.

If you have a query not addressed in the resource documents or these FAQs, please get in touch with the Sustainability Round's dedicated Project Officer, Kristy-Lee Cristea, as soon as possible.

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The FAQs are being developed progressively in preparation for the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round and may be subject to revision when additional queries can added. Please check the [QIS BGA website](#) for the most up-to-date version.

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GENERALLY ABOUT THIS ROUND

What is a Sustainability Strategy, and do I need one to be eligible for this grant?

A Sustainability Strategy is a documented plan that Schools can use to assist them in communicating and working toward their sustainability ambitions. However, Schools are not required to have a formal Sustainability Strategy to be eligible for this special purpose funding round.

However, Schools applying for capital grants from 2026 onward must have one as a condition of seeking funding for sustainability elements within projects (e.g. solar panels).

QIS BGA is developing a sustainability toolkit and mini guide to assist Schools in developing a Sustainability Strategy. The toolkit and guide will be launched mid-March 2025.

Why do we need to have a design ready before applying?

The Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round targets lower-value projects that do not necessarily align with other available grants (e.g. capital).

The grant provides certainty of funding for projects that can be shovel-ready and able to hit the ground running from late 2025 to early 2026.

Will there be another Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round in the future?

While a similar Special Purpose Funding Round may be offered in the future, it is not certain at this time.

Schools that would like to make an application for eligible sustainability initiatives are strongly encouraged to do so as part of this round.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Can I apply for sustainability initiatives associated with a 2025 Capital Grant project?

No. This grant does not apply to sustainability initiatives that are part of projects in the 2025 capital round.

My 2025 capital application includes solar panels. Can these be funded in line with the Sustainability grant?

No. Sustainability initiatives included in a 2025 capital round application will be assessed and funded under the capital grant.

The level of funding available for initiatives under the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round applies to applications made under this grant only.

Can I apply for a sustainability initiative relating to a capital project currently under construction?

Yes. However, the sustainability project must be a separate portion of work (separate contract) completed in the timeframe associated with the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round, irrespective of the program or staging of the concurrent capital project.

Refer to the Timeline section in the Planning & Eligibility Notes.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Can a proposed project consist of two separate contracts? E.g. One with a plumber and another with a solar installer?

No. To assess eligibility, a 'project' is a portion of work pertaining wholly to one contract.

If a school wishes to undertake a combined energy and water project (for example), they will need to engage a managing contractor who can deliver both aspects of the project under a single contract.

Alternatively, Schools can submit multiple applications for each project, but each must meet the minimum value of \$100,000 ex. GST, and the funding cap per school applies across the total combined cost of projects in line with [Planning & Eligibility Notes](#).

I'm not sure we meet the eligibility criteria for this Special Purpose Funding Round. How do I raise an enquiry?

QIS BGA is happy to discuss eligibility queries with individual Schools. Due to the timeline of this funding round, Schools are encouraged to get in touch as early as possible.

Can electric vehicle (EV) charging stations be included in an application?

No. EV charging stations are not eligible for funding under this Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round as they do not meet the grant's intent. This includes work or site-based infrastructure (conduits, cable runs, etc.) provided solely for EV charging.

Schools wishing to pursue EV charging in parallel with a Sustainability project must undertake these works separately.

My school has two sites within an immediate vicinity. Can I submit a separate application for each site?

It depends.

If the same contractor will undertake the project work on each site, a single application should be made for a combined project under one contract.

If the project work proposed for each site is different, such that each site will have different contractors, then separate applications will need to be made. Each application is required to meet the minimum project value and the funding cap per school applies across all projects.

When considering work across multiple sites, Schools should refer to the 'Available Funding & School Eligibility' section of the [Planning & Eligibility Notes](#).

PROJECT COST

What types of expenses can be included in the total project cost?

The total project cost should include actual values (either from fee proposals or quotations) for all direct costs required to deliver the project. For example, costs could include but are not limited to:

- Project construction costs
- Professional/consultant fees (e.g. your external project supervisor)
- Local authority charges
- Other such as miscellaneous costs.

If you are unsure whether a particular cost can be included, please contact QIS BGA before submitting an application.

Please also refer to the following “*Can I include a contingency amount when submitting my total project cost?*”.

Can I include a contingency amount when submitting my total project cost?

While using a project contingency is a valuable tool for managing financial risk, for this Sustainability Special Purpose Round, contingency values are not included when submitting project costs in your application.

Project Costs should be entered as actual values, excluding GST.

What if the work cost increases before our grant is formalised with a Recipient School Agreement?

The level of funding offered under the Sustainability Special Purpose Funding Round is a % of project costs as submitted in the application, up to a capped value per School.

As the funding amount is based on the project cost included in the application, Schools are encouraged to consider the anticipated timeline during discussions with market contractors and negotiate for validity periods extending until Recipient School Agreements are likely executed.

Refer to the Timeline section in the [Planning & Eligibility Notes](#) for further information.

Can I nominate a preferred project contractor if they do not offer the lowest cost?

Where a School proposes to engage a contractor that is not the lowest cost, Schools are encouraged to contact QIS BGA before submitting their application.

Reasonable justification will be required, including evidence of due consideration and evaluation of non-price criteria.

SUSTAINABILITY TOOLS

Who can undertake the Sustainability Audit?

The sustainability audit can be carried out either:

- By an external consultant such as a building services engineer or
- 'In-house' (e.g. by a member of the Facilities Team)

Schools with students of suitable ages could also engage students in the audit process to provide a learning opportunity about the energy and water uses in the school. Please refer to the instruction page in the [Audit Tool](#) for further details.

I already have a sustainability audit. Can I use this existing one to support an application for this round?

Absolutely.

If your School recently undertook a sustainability audit that covers the area associated with the proposed project application, then there is no need to complete another audit.

Does the sustainability audit need to use the provided Audit Tool?

Not at all. The audit tools are supplied for optional use to assist schools and their consultants in preparing eligible applications under this round.

Where Schools are working with an external consultant who has an established audit template, an alternative format can be accepted as supporting documentation for your application.

APPLICATION & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

How detailed does the project timeline need to be?

Schools are requested to enter a project timeline as part of an application to demonstrate that realistic consideration has been made regarding the completion timeframe.

Only high-level activities are required in line with the following example categories:

- Engage contractor
- Authority approvals (if any)
- Other preparation or enabling activities (e.g. off-site fabrication)
- Construction/site installation
- Practical completion

Schools should discuss the timeline with their preferred project contractor and external project supervisor.

APPLICATION & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Do the 'Project Plans' need to be professionally produced by an architect or draftsman?

No, The Project Plan for this Special Purpose Funding Round can be considered more of a 'mud map'. It can be prepared in-house and even 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 a title and a 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.

Do I need to submit consultant drawings as part of an application?

Consultant drawings are not required to be submitted as part of this grant, but a project plan is necessary to provide context to your proposed project and to form a record of locations/buildings associated with the work.

Refer to 'Do the 'Project Plans' need to be professionally produced by an architect or draftsman?' discussion in the above FAQ.

Example Project Flowchart – Solar

The following flowchart outlines the detailed process for navigating each phase and the steps and considerations to be made along the way.

