



Business Research and Innovation Initiative (BRII) Pilot

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – ROUND 2

1. What is the objective of BRII?

The objective of the Business Research and Innovation Initiative (BRII) pilot program is to drive innovation within small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and the government by encouraging the development of innovative solutions by SMEs to public policy and service delivery challenges.

2. Why is it called a pilot program round 2?

The Government is testing this program as a pilot over two rounds, with five challenges in each round. This will provide an opportunity to see if the program can deliver on its objectives and/or whether changes should be made to the program design should the Government decide to extend it beyond the pilot phase.

3. How does BRII work?

The pilot program covers challenges for which SMEs can develop solutions. These challenges were proposed by Australian Government agencies and successful challenges were recommended by Innovation Australia and approved by the Minister. More detail on each of the challenges is available on business.gov.au/BRII.

SMEs can apply for a competitive grant to undertake a feasibility study on their proposed solution to a challenge. Grantees who have successfully completed a feasibility study can apply for a further competitive grant for the development of a proof of concept.

Feasibility study projects must demonstrate the scientific, technical and commercial feasibility of the proposed solution to the challenge. Grants for feasibility studies are up to \$100,000.

Proof of concept projects involve undertaking activities to produce a working prototype or demonstration of the proposed solution. Grants for proof of concept projects are up to \$1 million.

4. What is a 'challenge'?

A challenge is a problem that an Australian Government agency has in relation to its policy or service delivery responsibilities for which the agency cannot find a suitable solution in the current market.

Details of the pilot round challenges can be found at business.gov.au/BRII.

5. Are BRII grants competitive?

Yes, applications for both feasibility study and proof of concept grants are assessed against the BRII merit criteria. The merit criteria are listed in the [BRII grant opportunity guidelines](#).

6. Who assesses BRII feasibility study and proof of concept grant applications?

AusIndustry will assess whether the application meets the BRII eligibility criteria. Eligible applications are assessed against the BRII merit criteria by the Australian Government agency who proposed the challenge, and then by Innovation and Science Australia.

Innovation and Science Australia will make a recommendation to the Program Delegate as to which projects to fund.

7. What grant amounts are available?

Feasibility study grants are up to a maximum of \$100,000.

Proof of concept grants are up to a maximum of \$1,000,000.

8. When are the grant funds paid?

We will pay the entire feasibility study grant on execution of the grant agreement.

For proof of concept grants, we will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

9. Is my business eligible?

To be eligible to apply for a feasibility grant you must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following entities:

- a company, incorporated in Australia
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an individual or partnership, provided you agree to form a company incorporated in Australia to enter into a grant agreement

and:

- have a turnover of less than \$20 million for each of the three years. This includes the turnover of any related bodies corporate. If an Australian university or public sector research organisation controls your company, your turnover must be less than \$20 million for each of the last three years. Newly established companies are welcome to apply.

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an income tax exempt corporation
- an individual or partnership (however, an individual or partnership may apply if they agree to form an eligible corporation before signing a grant agreement)
- a trust (however, a corporation that is a corporate trustee may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a Commonwealth, state or local government agency or body (including government business enterprises).

Joint applications are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply.

You can find more information on the guidelines at business.gov.au/BRIL.

10. I am a start-up company, can I apply?

Yes, start-up companies are welcome to apply.

11. I am an individual or partnership, can I apply?

Yes, as long as you agree to form an incorporated non-tax exempt company before signing a grant agreement, see the [BRIL grant opportunity guidelines](#) for more information.

12. Can I submit applications for more than one challenge or more than one proposal for a single challenge?

No, you can only apply and receive grant funding for one challenge in this round.

13. Can I apply in collaboration with others (i.e. universities, overseas organisations)?

Yes, you can apply in collaboration with others. A collaborative project involves a lead applicant and at least one other applicant. Only the lead applicant must be an eligible applicant. The grant is paid to the lead applicant.

14. How long are the feasibility and proof of concept stages?

The maximum time allowed is three months for feasibility studies and 18 months for proofs of concept. There is no minimum time.

15. What happens if there are any changes during the project?

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a project variation, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum three month period for feasibility studies and 18 month period for proofs of concept

Note – the program does not allow for an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the project end date.

We will not consider changes after the project end date.

If a delay in the project results in milestone achievement and payment dates moving to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough funding in the relevant year to accommodate the revised payment schedule.

16. Who owns the IP at the completion of the challenge?

Grantees will retain intellectual property rights

and the right to sell in domestic and global markets.

17. If I successfully complete a proof of concept project, will the Australian Government purchase my solution?

The Australian Government agency that proposed the challenge has the option to negotiate the purchase of the solution, but is under no obligation to do so. Any purchase of the solution will be subject to negotiation between the agency and the solution provider in good faith.

18. How do I apply?

To apply, you must:

- complete the relevant online Business Research and Innovation Initiative [application form](#) on [business.gov.au](#)
- provide all the information that is needed for us to assess your application
- address all eligibility and merit criteria, ensuring each requirement has been considered
- ensure all mandatory attachments are included.

19. What documents do I have to supply as part of my application?

The following documents are required with your application:

- project plan
- budget plan
- letters of support if collaborating with other companies
- financial turnover declaration
- trust deed (where applicable).

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

20. How are individual projects monitored?

Each departmental challenge will have a Project manager. Project progress will be monitored by the Challenge Management Group and informed by submitted project progress reports and project support meetings.

We will only make proof of concept grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports. We will assess your report and conduct site visits if necessary.

21. Who makes up the Challenge Management Group?

The Challenge Management Group manages individual projects related to specific challenges. The group is made up of a representative from AusIndustry, the Australian Government agency who put forward the challenge and an authorised representative of the grant recipient.

22. Is a final report required at the completion of feasibility study and proof of concept projects?

At the completion of feasibility studies and proofs of concept, a final report is submitted.

Final reports must:

- include the agreed evidence
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- be submitted by the report due date

23. Is this program administered under legislation?

No, this program is not administered under separate legislation.

24. Is there a set application form?

Yes. The application form is available at [business.gov.au/BRII](#)

25. Will there be funding available for multiple projects across each challenge?

Yes, funding will be available for multiple projects. Approximately four projects per challenge will be funded at the feasibility stage and two projects at the proof of concept stage, depending on the cost of projects and the quality of the proposals.

26. Can you attach videos when submitting the application?

Supporting documents or diagrams/pictures can be submitted. There is no opportunity to submit video material.

27. If multiple solutions are received for a challenge that are effectively the same how will the final list of applications be funded for that challenge be determined?

Each application will be assessed against the merit criteria which are set out in the grant opportunity guidelines. The merit criteria consider a wide range of factors.

28. Do solutions need to be Information Security Registered Assessors Program (IRAP) approved?

Feasibility study and proof of concept projects do not need to be IRAP approved. Any solutions purchased by agencies will need to meet the security requirements specified by the purchasing agency.

29. Is it essential that all members of the team are based in Australia? Can an applicant apply with a state government partner?

No, only the lead applicant needs to meet the eligibility criteria. Collaboration partners do not need to meet the eligibility criteria.

30. If a (start-up) company hasn't been formed/commenced, can they apply as an individual or partnership and create a company incorporated in Australia after application lodgement, if their application is successful?

Yes, newly established businesses, individuals and partnerships can apply, should your application be selected for funding we would require you to become a non-tax exempt Incorporated company prior to receiving any grant funds.

31. Is any weight given to an application in relation to what costs the proponent is putting in?

No, applications are assessed purely against the merit criteria as set out in the grant opportunity guidelines.

32. Who is the delegate for the grant decision?

The Program Delegate is the General Manager, DIIS Grants Administration Branch, AusIndustry, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science will be the final decision maker as to which applications are funded.

33. After the closing date, what is the timeframe for decisions?

A decision on the awarding of feasibility study grants is expected in June 2019.

34. What is the nature/format of the industry panel deciding the applications?

The Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee is the committee which provides the final recommendations for funding to the Program Delegate. The committee's members are drawn from the private sector and have diverse backgrounds including venture capital, innovation, technology and business.

35. If competing proposals for a challenge were eligible against the merit criteria to go forward, but there was not enough grant funds available to fund both, would there be discussion with applicants to negotiate on the grant funding?

BRII is a competitive grants program with all applications assessed against the merit criteria and grants awarded up to the limit of available funding.

36. Is the funding pool applied by state or nationally?

The funding pool is national.

37. Can government agencies apply for funding from the grant pool?

No. It is up to agencies to bear their own costs.

38. Is there an opportunity to go through/discuss the application?

As this is a competitive grant program it is not appropriate for the department/agencies to comment on individual applications prior to lodgement.

39. Is there an appetite for government to undertake policy change if a preferred solution may require this?

A specific set of circumstances would need to be considered before it is possible to answer this question.

40. Will further rounds have different challenges?

Yes. Future rounds will have new challenges.

41. Need more information?

Visit business.gov.au/BRIL or call 13 28 46.