



Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Cooperative Research Centres Program Round 26

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| Date guidelines released: | 7 March 2025 |
| Opening date: | 7 March 2025 |
| Closing date and time: | 5:00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time on 29 April 2025 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application. |
| Commonwealth policy entity: | Department of Industry, Science and Resources |
| Administering entity: | Department of Industry, Science and Resources |
| Enquiries: | If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46. |
| Type of grant opportunity: | Open competitive |

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1. Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program: Round 26 processes

The CRC Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program, which contributes to the Department of Industry, Science and Resources' Outcome 1: Support economic growth, productivity and job creation for all Australians by investing in science and technology, growing innovative and competitive businesses, industries and regions, and supporting a strong resources sector. The department works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#).



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).



Stage 1 application

You complete and submit a Stage 1 application

You complete the application form, addressing all of the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



We assess all Stage 1 applications

We review the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. The CRC Advisory Committee assess eligible Stage 1 applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and compare it to other eligible applications. We provide advice to the decision maker on which applications are suitable for progression to Stage 2.



Progression decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications will progress to Stage 2.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you whether your Stage 1 application is progressing to Stage 2 or not.



Stage 2 application

You are invited to complete and submit a Stage 2 application

If you are shortlisted at Stage 1, we will invite you to both submit a Stage 2 application addressing feedback and to attend an interview.



We assess Stage 2 applications

We assess Stage 2 applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and in comparison to other applications. You will also attend an interview with the CRC Advisory Committee, where they will ask you questions about your responses to the assessment criteria in order to clarify and shape the overall advice to the decision maker.



Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the CRC Program

We evaluate your specific grant activity and the CRC Program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the CRC Program Round 26 grants. Round 26 is open to applications for medium to long term industry-led collaborative research in all industry sectors, with a focus on Government priorities including the National Science and Research Priorities¹ and National Reconstruction Fund² priority areas.

The National Science and Research Priorities help the Australian Government align its effort and investments in the science, research, technology, innovation and commercialisation system. The Priorities place science at the forefront of industrial transformation and provide focal points to help shape investment and guide government, university and industry efforts and collaboration.

The priorities are:

- transitioning to a net zero future
- supporting healthy and thriving communities
- elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders knowledge systems
- protecting and restoring Australia's environment
- building a secure and resilient nation.

See Appendix A for more detail on Government priorities.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR/we/us).

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at Section 14.

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

2. About the grant program

The CRC Program (the program) supports industry-led collaborations between industry, researchers and the community. The program is a proven model for linking researchers with industry to focus on research and development towards use and commercialisation.

The objectives of the program are:

- improve the competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of Australian industries, especially where Australia has a competitive strength, and in line with Government priorities
- foster high quality research to solve industry-identified problems through industry-led and outcome-focused collaborative research partnerships between industry entities and research organisations

¹ <https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/national-science-and-research-priorities-2024>

² <https://www.nrf.gov.au/what-we-do/our-priority-areas>

- encourage and facilitate small and medium enterprise (SME) participation in collaborative research.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- establishing industry-research sector collaborations
- SME participation in collaborative research
- collaborative research results
- research results relevant to Government priorities
- increased research skills in industry and increased industry capability in research
- improved competitiveness and productivity for industry participating in CRCs and Cooperative Research Centres – Projects (CRC-Ps) Grants
- industry, research and other users valuing the program.

The program consists of two elements:

- CRC Grants support medium to long term, industry-led collaborations; and
- CRC-Ps support short term, industry-led collaborative research.

This CRC grant opportunity is delivered through a two-stage competitive selection process. Refer to Section 7 - How to apply.

There will be other grant opportunities as part of this program and we will publish the opening and closing dates and any other relevant information on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

DISR administers the program according to the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles](#) (CGRPs)³.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

The Australian Government committed a total of \$838 million over four years for the CRC Program from 2024-25 to 2027-28. CRCs and CRC-Ps are funded by the same appropriation. There is no specific amount allocated to each of the two funding elements. The number of CRC grants funded in each round will depend on the number of quality applications received, the relative merits of applications, the amount of available funding and the need to ensure sufficient funding is available for future rounds.

The grant amount will be up to 50 per cent of eligible grant project costs (grant percentage) which includes the eligible expenditure (Appendix C) plus allowable in-kind contributions (Appendix D).

Your total project value may also include eligible special purpose expenditure (Appendix E), however these costs are not included in the calculation of your grant percentage.

Subject to the rules of Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government grants, you may use these as contributions.

There is no minimum and maximum grant amount. The average CRC grant in recent rounds is \$45 million. The amount you request should be proportional to the scope and complexity of your project.

3.2. Project period

The minimum project period is three years.

The maximum project period is ten years.

We may approve an extension of time to complete your project in exceptional circumstances.

³ <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-principles-2024>

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria. We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances. The Program Delegate (who is a General Manager within DISR with responsibility for administering the program) makes the final decision about whether an application meets the eligibility criteria and decisions will not be reviewed.

4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

CRC grants are open to all industry sectors and research disciplines. You must apply as a group of applicants who have agreed to collaborate, using your planned CRC name as the applicant entity.

Each CRC must include and maintain amongst its project partners at least:

- three Australian industry entities
- two Australian research organisations.

Partners from existing or former CRCs or CRC-Ps can be partners in other CRCs or CRC-Ps.

Partners do not need to commit for the entire project period.

All partners must contribute resources to the CRC. We treat partners' proposed cash and in-kind contributions equally for the purposes of calculating the maximum grant amount.

If your application is successful:

- you must establish your CRC as an incorporated company, limited by guarantee
- your identified project partners will have certain obligations as outlined in Section 10.3 and 10.4 of these guidelines.

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications:

- where you provide a declaration from each partner on the template provided on business.gov.au
- where you can demonstrate the ability to at least match (in cash and/or in-kind) the grant funds requested.
- where you provide the attachments outlined in Section 7.2 - Attachments to the application.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be a medium to long term industry-led collaborative research project aimed at solving industry-identified problems and improving the competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of Australian industries

- include an industry-focused education and training program. This must include, but is not limited to, a PhD program which complements the research program and increases engagement, technology development, skilled employees and R&D capacity within industry entities
- implement strategies which build the R&D capacity within SMEs
- deploy research outputs and encourage take-up by industry.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and may include:

- new research
- proof of concept activities
- pre-commercialisation of research outcomes
- industry-focused education and training activities, such as internships and secondments between industry entities and research organisations
- conferences, workshops, symposia related to the joint research
- related information sharing and communication initiatives related to the joint research
- collaboration with international organisations and/or with companies with global supply chains and access to international markets, to provide national benefits to Australia.

We may also approve other activities, any additional activities must be in line with objectives and outcomes in Section 2. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is considered an eligible activity and may give additional guidance on eligible activities if required. Your project activities will be described in your grant agreement as outcomes, activities and milestones.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

- For guidance on eligible expenditure, see Appendix C.
- For guidance on in-kind contributions, see Appendix D.
- For guidance on eligible special purpose expenditure, see Appendix E.
- For guidance on ineligible expenditure, see Appendix F.

We may update the guidelines on eligible and ineligible expenditure and in-kind contributions from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred:
 - between the project start and end dates, unless stated otherwise; or
 - for CRC entity establishment costs before the project start date; or
 - to undertake required project audit activities after the project end date.
- be a direct cost of the project
- not be included under 'eligible special purpose expenditure' in Appendix E; and

- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

You may elect to incur CRC entity establishment costs from the date your letter of offer has been received. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each indicator under each assessment criterion.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays character limits for each response.

We will only award funding to applications that score highly against the assessment criteria, as these represent best value for money.

We score applications out of 100 points.

6.1. Assessment criterion 1

Project alignment with the program objectives (total 25 points)

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- a. how your project will address an industry-identified problem, improve the competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of Australian industries; and the extent of alignment with Government priorities with a focus on addressing one or more of the critical research areas identified in the National Science and Research Priorities. Refer to Appendix A. (10 points)
- a. how your project will foster high quality research through industry-led and outcome-focused collaborative industry-research partnerships (10 points)
- b. what additional benefit the project will deliver compared to existing industry and research approaches to solving the problem. (5 points)

6.2. Assessment criterion 2

The quality of your research project (total 25 points)

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- a. the research you will do to address the industry-identified problem and the methodologies you will use, including describing the role of your partners in the research (10 points)
- b. how research outputs will be deployed, including pathways for adoption by industry and other end-users (8 points)
- c. the education and training opportunities your project will provide, including a PhD program, to build capability and capacity in the industry and research sectors. (7 points)

6.3. Assessment criterion 3

Capacity, capability and resources to deliver your project (total 25 points):

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- d. how you will manage and monitor your project and your partners, explaining the governance and planning arrangements (8 points)
- e. how you will advance equality for First Nations peoples, address diversity considerations, manage risks, including but not limited to security (in particular any associated national security issues), involvement of international partners and intellectual property protection (7 points)
- f. your access to required resources including personnel with the right skills (project/business/commercialisation management, governance etc.) and experience (names/qualifications and achievements), funding, security, infrastructure, technology and intellectual property (8 points)
- g. why your collaboration is the most appropriate to solve the identified problem, referencing previous or existing collaborations between project partners. (2 points)

6.4. Assessment criterion 4

Impact of the grant funding on your project (total 25 points)

You should demonstrate this by describing:

- h. how the grant will impact the project in terms of scale and timing. This should include justification for the funding amount requested and whether the project could proceed without Australian Government funding (5 points)
- i. the total investment the grant will leverage and why the Australian Government should invest in your project, including how the benefits will be substantially retained in Australia (10 points)
- a. the commercial potential of your project including the expected commercial outputs such as new products, processes or services, any expected spill over benefits and plans at the end of the project. (10 points)

7. How to apply

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample application form and the sample grant agreement published on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

7.1. Application process

There is a two-stage application process.

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Stage 1 | You submit a Stage 1 application, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• providing detail about your industry problem, research program and key personnel• responding to the eligibility and assessment criteria• attaching information telling us about your partners' involvement and contributions using the prescribed template• attaching partner declarations. |
| Stage 2 | If successful, we invite you to submit a Stage 2 application. You complete and submit a Stage 2 application, providing more detailed information, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advising of any changes to your proposal• responding to CRC Advisory Committee Stage 1 feedback |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attaching detailed financials (contributions and expenditure), proposed activities and milestones using the prescribed template • attaching information about your anticipated impacts using the prescribed template • attaching any additional information requested. <p>You attend an interview with the CRC Advisory Committee.</p> |
|--|--|

You will need to set up an account to access our online [portal](#). The portal allows you to apply for and manage a grant or service in a secure online environment.

You can only submit an application during a funding round.

To apply, you must:

- complete and submit your application through the online [portal](#)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995](#). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

After submitting your application (either at Stage 1 or Stage 2), we can contact you for clarification if we find an error or any missing information, including evidence that supports your eligibility/merit. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission of your application is at the discretion of the Program Delegate. Additional information should not materially change your application at the time it was submitted and therefore may be refused if deemed to be purely supplementary.

You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal for your own records. You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

7.2. Attachments to the application

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided in the portal. You must only attach requested documents. Each individual attachment must not exceed 2MB, and the total of all attachments cannot exceed 20MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

We may also request additional information at Stage 1 and Stage 2 to support your application.

7.2.1. Stage 1 attachments

You must provide the following documents with your Stage 1 application:

- a completed partner details template, including information on your partners' involvement and type of contributions (a template is provided on business.gov.au)
- a signed declaration from each project partner matching the specified contributions at Stage 1 (a template is provided on business.gov.au).

7.2.2. Stage 2 attachments

You must provide the following documents with your Stage 2 application:

- a completed impact tool template, showing the pathway from the CRC's inputs to its impacts (a template is provided on business.gov.au)
- a completed CRC budget and milestones spreadsheet, showing a detailed breakdown of project milestones, partners, partner contributions and eligible expenditure over the life of the project (a template is provided on business.gov.au)
- a signed declaration from each new project partner from Stage 1, and each project partner with changed contributions from Stage 1 (a template is provided on business.gov.au).

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](https://business.gov.au) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

7.3. Joint (consortia) applications

Applications must be submitted with your planned CRC name as the applicant entity. The CRC name must include the terms 'Cooperative Research Centre' or 'CRC'. The application must identify all proposed CRC partners and include a Partner Declaration from each of the project partners in the prescribed form using the template available on business.gov.au. Each Partner Declaration must include:

- a summary of the contributions the project partner will make to the CRC if your application is successful
- details of the project partner
- a statement the project is supported and the partner agrees to enter into a partners' agreement if the application is successful
- signature and details of a nominated management level contact officer.

If successful, partners in your CRC are required to enter into a partners' agreement and have certain obligations. See Section 10.3 and 10.4 of these guidelines.

7.4. Timing of grant opportunity processes

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project on 1 July 2026. However, you may elect to incur CRC entity establishment costs from the date your letter of offer has been received. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

| Activity | Timeframe |
|---|--|
| Assessment of Stage 1 applications | May 2025 |
| Notification of Stage 1 process outcomes | July 2025 |
| Stage 2 applications open | August to September 2025 |
| Assessment of Stage 2 applications and interviews | October to December 2025 |
| Announcement of outcomes of Stage 2 process and notification to unsuccessful applicants | January 2026 |
| Negotiations and award of grant agreements | Up to 6 months |
| Start date of project | 1 July 2026 |
| End date of grant commitment | Maximum of ten years from the project start date |

7.5. Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. Assessment of grant applications

8.1.1. Stage 1 applications

We first review your Stage 1 application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we refer your application to the CRC Advisory Committee. The CRC Advisory Committee will assess your Stage 1 application against the assessment criteria and compare it to other eligible applications in a funding round before providing advice to the Minister on which applicants to invite to submit a Stage 2 application. The Minister will invite the most meritorious Stage 1 applicants to submit a Stage 2 application and attend an interview with the CRC Advisory Committee.

The CRC Advisory Committee will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.⁴

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money, the CRC Advisory Committee will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought.

The CRC Advisory Committee also consider any financial, legal/regulatory, governance, national interest, national security or other issue or risk that they identify regarding you, project partners, related body

⁴ See Glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

corporates, related entities and associated entities (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001) and related personnel.

If the CRC Advisory Committee identify risks which would affect their assessment, they may ask you to comment on these, subject to security considerations. If the CRC Advisory Committee identify risks that cannot be adequately mitigated, they may exclude your application from further consideration.

We may seek additional information about you, project partners, related bodies corporate, related entities and associated entities (as defined in the Corporations Act) and related personnel from third party sources, including other Commonwealth agencies, for due diligence purposes. We may do so even if you do not nominate the sources as referees. We may also consider information that is discovered through the normal course of business.

Due diligence checks may occur at eligibility, merit or decision-making stages. We use this information to verify the information you provide in the application and to identify issues and risks. See Section 13.2 for information on how we use the information you provide to us.

Where possible⁵, we will provide you with an opportunity to comment on any material risks identified during this due diligence process, prior to our determining the extent (if any) to which those issues or risks affect our assessment of the application and, if so, whether they are sufficient to warrant the exclusion of your application from the assessment process.

8.1.2. Stage 2 applications

To be eligible in Stage 2, you must have been shortlisted by the Minister at Stage 1 and invited to submit a Stage 2 application. We first review your Stage 2 application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we refer your application to the CRC Advisory Committee. The CRC Advisory Committee will assess all Stage 2 applications against the assessment criteria and conduct interviews with applicants to clarify any outstanding concerns before providing advice to the Minister regarding which projects to fund.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

8.2. Who will assess applications?

We refer your application to the CRC Advisory Committee, an independent committee of experts reporting to Industry Innovation and Science Australia, an independent statutory board. You can find details on the current composition of Industry Innovation and Science Australia and its committees including the CRC Advisory Committee on industry.gov.au. The CRC Advisory Committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts, including relevant Commonwealth departments and agencies. Any expert or advisor, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

The CRC Advisory Committee may seek additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if you do not nominate the sources as referees. The CRC Advisory Committee may also consider information about you or your application that is available as a result of the due diligence process or through the normal course of business.

8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Minister decides which grants to approve taking into account the advice of the CRC Advisory Committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Minister's decision is final in all matters, including:

⁵ Subject to national security considerations.

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Minister will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful at Stage 1 or Stage 2, we will notify you in writing, providing feedback from the CRC Advisory Committee. You can submit a new application for the same (or similar) project in any future funding rounds. You should include information to address the feedback. If a new application is substantially the same as a previous unsuccessful application, we may refuse to consider it.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1. The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

We will manage the grant agreement through the online portal. This includes issuing and executing the grant agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have accepted the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur and cannot make any payments until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Minister. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

10.2. Standard grant agreement

We will use a Commonwealth standard grant agreement for all projects.

You will have up to six months from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Minister.

10.3. Partners' agreement

If you are successful, your project partners are required to enter into a partners' agreement with certain obligations. The partners' agreement must cover all matters as required by the grant agreement. A template partners' agreement is available at business.gov.au, which you may customise for your CRC requirements. Use of this template is not mandatory. However, in the event of any inconsistency between the partners' agreement and the grant agreement, the grant agreement takes precedence.

You must provide the Commonwealth with copies of all Partners' agreements no later than 10 business days after these are executed.

10.4. Intellectual Property

Applicants must provide details of intellectual property (IP) arrangements in their applications. This includes both the use of IP in the project and the proposed ownership rights to IP generated by the project as well as strategies for protecting Australia's interests.

You and your project partners must negotiate arrangements and procedures for using and handling all IP created through the CRC, in a manner that maximises the benefits to Australia and the partners. These arrangements may include the allocation of IP rights, or of the income from IP, between you and your partners. You or your partners may wish to consult the IP Toolkit for Collaboration, which is available at business.gov.au. Additional information on IP rights is outlined in Section 13.6.4.

10.5. Project governance

Each CRC must have a sound governance model with suitable arrangements to deliver the proposed results.

The good governance principles identified by the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) Corporate Governance Council may assist you in developing a sound governance model. More detail on the principles is available from the ASX website.

All CRCs must be established and governed as an incorporated company, limited by guarantee (the CRC entity).

CRC Boards must include a Chairperson who is independent of the project partners with the necessary skills and experience required to lead an organisation with diverse partner needs and outcomes.

The CRC Board should include senior figures with general industry experience (not necessarily from the specific industry of the CRC) and reflect skills, experience and expertise relevant to managing the CRC. The majority of Board members must be independent.

To effectively manage a diverse collaboration, the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a CRC must be a full-time equivalent position, unless otherwise agreed by the department. The CEO role must have experience in project management, business management, commercialisation management (including Intellectual Property management), and relevant sector and technology experience.

You are required to address diversity in the establishment and ongoing measurement of your CRC. You must aim for a minimum 40 per cent representation of both women and men across board, management and research/industry lead positions over the CRC's term.

10.6. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and Australian Government sanctions in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children/vulnerable people
- all relevant ethics codes and guidelines adopted by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, and all other relevant regulatory agencies operating in Australia and in any place in which the research is being conducted

- the [NHMRC/ARC/UA Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (2018 or subsequent updates), co-authored by the NHMRC, Australian Research Council (ARC) and Universities Australia (UA) and, if applicable, the [NHMRC/ARC/UA National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) (updated in 2018 or subsequent updates).

10.6.1. Child safety requirements

You must comply with all relevant legislation relating to the employment or engagement of anyone working on the project that may interact with children, including all necessary working with children checks.

You must implement the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)⁶ endorsed by the Commonwealth.

You will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse, and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You must update this risk assessment at least annually.

You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure personnel are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements, relevant legislation including mandatory reporting requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

You will be required to provide an annual statement of compliance with these requirements in relation to working with children.

10.7. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible grant project value expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- partners' in-kind contributions
- partners' cash contributions.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you (and your partners) must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

We will make an initial payment on execution of the grant agreement if we are satisfied you have made significant progress in finalising the partners' agreement.

10.8. Grant Payments and GST

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities⁷.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide tax advice..

⁶ <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

⁷ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at ato.gov.au

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of execution.

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles](#), Section 5.3. We may also publish this information on business.gov.au. This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- grant term
- your partners and their contributions to the project
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your industry sector.

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

You must also inform us of any material changes in the circumstances of project partners and personnel including but not limited to:

- changes to organisation ownership or governance structure
- changes in financial and in-kind support contributions
- affiliations with foreign governments, including foreign militaries, intelligence organisations, police forces and government-owned or sponsored organisations (see Section 13.6).

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds
- contributions of partners directly related to the project.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total project value to date, including a breakdown of:
 - the total eligible expenditure incurred
 - the total eligible special purpose expenditure incurred
 - in-kind contributions to the project
- include evidence of expenditure if requested
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities)
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

12.2.2. Annual reports

Annual reports must:

- provide a brief overview of the achievements of the CRC for the annual reporting period and outline major achievements in relation to:
 - research and collaboration (including SME engagement)
 - commercialisation and utilisation
 - education and training.
- provide at least one case study showcasing the achievements and highlights of the CRC
- provide a snapshot summary of the CRC for the annual reporting period
- include an independent audit report in the format provided in the grant agreement
- be submitted by the report due date
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

12.2.3. Management Data Questionnaire (MDQ) report

MDQ data is a key input in monitoring and evaluating the CRC Program. CRCs are required to complete and submit an MDQ to the department as part of their annual reporting obligations.

MDQ reports must:

- include responses to questions related to:

- Research
- Intellectual Property
- Education
- Other.
- include a list of all collaborators (domestic and international)
- be submitted by the report due date
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

12.2.4. Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on governance matters, or progress including outputs or outcomes, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project, or about any post project plans. We may also ask you to undertake performance audits of your grant activities.

12.2.5. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total project value for the project, including a breakdown of:
 - the total eligible expenditure incurred
 - the total partner cash and in-kind contributions to the project
 - the total eligible special purpose expenditure incurred.
- include a declaration the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date
- be in the format provided in the grant agreement.

12.3. Audited financial acquittal report

We will ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is available on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

12.4. Grant agreement variations

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

- project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project (in exceptional circumstances)
- project partners
- project activities.

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.

You can submit a variation request via our online portal.

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move 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 program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

12.5. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. For large or complex projects, we may visit you after you finish your project. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.6. Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

12.7. Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to five years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.8. Acknowledgement

You must not make any public announcement, including by social media, in connection with the awarding of your grant until the Minister has publicly announced the outcome of the round or as otherwise instructed by us.

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication or by social media, at a minimum, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

'This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRPs.

These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by DISR. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#).

13.1. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division
Business Grants Hub
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)⁸ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

13.2. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity and/or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if any individual or entity⁹ involved in assessing, funding, administering or undertaking the project :

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party which is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with, or interest in, a party which could prevent the activity from being carried out fairly and independently or otherwise compromise the integrity of the activity or its participants
- has a relationship with, or interest in, a party from which they could receive personal gain because the party receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)¹⁰ on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

⁸ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

⁹ Including: any of our staff able to influence the project, any member of a committee or advisor, you, your project partners, and any personnel involved in the project.

¹⁰ <https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/conflict-interest-policy>

13.3. Privacy

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 13.4, or
- personal information as per below,

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

We must treat your personal information according to the [Australian Privacy Principles \(APPs\)](#) and the [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- identify and manage any financial, legal/regulatory, governance, national interest, or national security risks.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)¹¹ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

13.4. Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

¹¹ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the Committee and our Commonwealth employees, contractors and service providers, Industry Innovation and Science Australia, the CRC Advisory Committee to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament
- to other Commonwealth agencies for risk management purposes.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

13.5. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Cth\)](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

13.6. National security

Eligible activities under this grant may have national security implications. It is your responsibility to consider any such implications of the proposed CRC and identify and manage any risks, particularly relating to export controls, intellectual property protection, espionage and foreign interference and unwanted transfer of technology, data or other knowledge before submitting your application, and to comply with any applicable requirements if it is successful.

You must inform the department if you identify any material risks relating to national security.

Collaboration with foreign entities must be transparent, undertaken with full knowledge and consent and in a manner that avoids harm to Australia's interest.

To assist with managing security risks, you are strongly encouraged to review the:

- *Guidelines on Security in the CRC Program* available at business.gov.au, and the department's:

- [Guide to undertaking international collaboration](#)¹²,
- [Australian Government Information Security Manual](#)¹³
- [Guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector](#)¹⁴ developed by the University Foreign Interference Taskforce (UFIT).

Although focused on the university sector, many objectives and best practice considerations in the UFIT guidelines are applicable to other research institutions and businesses that may be Australian partners in CRCs funded by this program.

Know Your Partner

You should ensure that you know who you are collaborating with by undertaking appropriate due diligence, proportionate to the risk and subject to available information, on all partners and personnel participating in the project. This should take into account any potential security, ethical, legal and reputational risks, and, where necessary, you should be prepared to demonstrate how you will manage and mitigate any identified risks.

13.6.1. Export Controls

Australia's export control regime limits the overseas transfer of goods and technologies listed on the [Defence and Strategic Goods List](#) (DSGL). The regime may apply to the export of products, and to any situation involving the overseas transfer, sharing, publication or brokering of controlled goods, technology, software or related knowledge.

As this program may involve research collaboration with foreign entities, some provisions of Australia's export controls regime may apply to your project. It is your responsibility to consider whether the export control regime applies to your activity. If you are unsure whether your activity may require an export license, you should review the [self-assessment guide for 'controlled items'](#) and/or contact [Defence Export Controls](#) (DEC).

13.6.2. Foreign Affiliations

Eligible activities under this grant may involve partners or personnel with foreign affiliations. You must inform us of any relationships between project partners and foreign parties that could influence or benefit from the proposed activity. Such relationships may include foreign ownership or sponsorship, connections to foreign governments, militaries, political parties, or other organisations, and membership of foreign talent programs. You must also inform us of the establishment of any such relationships throughout the life of the grant.

13.6.3. Foreign Government Affiliations

Eligible activities under this grant may involve partners or personnel with connections to foreign governments. You must inform us if you, your project partners or any project personnel are receiving funding or benefits from, or otherwise affiliated with, a foreign government, including:

- a foreign state or local government
- a foreign military, intelligence organisation or police force

¹² <https://www.industry.gov.au/strategies-for-the-future/increasing-international-collaboration/a-guide-to-undertaking-international-collaboration>

¹³ <https://www.cyber.gov.au/resources-business-and-government/essential-cyber-security/ism/using-information-security-manual>

¹⁴ <https://www.education.gov.au/guidelines-counter-foreign-interference-australian-university-sector>

- an organisation owned or sponsored by a foreign government (such as a state-owned corporation or state-sponsored university)
- a foreign government talent program.

You must also inform us of the establishment of any such relationships throughout the life of the grant.

13.6.4. Intellectual property rights

Applicants must provide details of intellectual property (IP) arrangements in their applications. This includes both the use of IP in the project and the proposed ownership rights to IP generated by the project as well as strategies for protecting Australia's interests. Where IP is likely to be generated by the project, successful applicants are required to provide protocols for its management including arrangements in place between partners on management and ownership of IP. The agreements should be in accordance with laws and regulations in Australia and provide for:

- adequate and effective protection and equitable distribution of any benefits from IP rights created in or resulting directly from cooperative activities (foreground IP rights)
- ownership of foreground IP rights to be allocated on the basis of respective contribution and equitable interests
- terms and conditions for the commercialisation and other forms of dissemination of the foreground IP rights
- adequate and effective protection of IP rights provided by the organisations, enterprises and institutions prior to or in the course of such cooperative activities, for example, the licensing or utilisation of such IP rights on equitable terms (background IP rights)
- Australian participants should approach IP negotiations in line with the principles outlined on business.gov.au and may wish to refer to IP Australia's resources on commercialisation and collaboration.

13.7. Disclosure of Commonwealth, state or territory financial penalties

You must disclose whether any of your board members, management or persons of authority have been subject to any pecuniary penalty, whether civil, criminal or administrative, imposed by a Commonwealth, state, or territory court or a Commonwealth, state, or territory entity. If this is the case, you must provide advice to the department regarding the matter for consideration.

14. Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| Application form | The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program. |
| Australian industry entity | <p>An entity with an Australian Business Number, where the majority of its revenue is not derived from government sources and is capable of commercialising research, excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ research organisations; and ▪ entities whose primary function is administrative or to provide support services to a CRC. |
| Assessment criteria | The specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application ranking. |
| Capital item | An asset of durable nature with a purchase price greater than \$20,000. |
| Cash contributions | Money contributed by project partners, which is not a loan, provided for the project and immediately available for use on the project. |
| Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) | The collaboration between the partners and the CRC entity as described in the application. |
| Cooperative Research Centres Advisory Committee | A committee of Industry Innovation and Science Australia established under the <i>Industry Research and Development Act 1986</i> to consider and assess eligible applications and provide advice to the Minister for funding under the program. |
| CRC entity | The incorporated company governing and managing the CRC and which is the recipient of grant funding (Grantee) under the program. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| CRC entity establishment costs | <p>These costs relate to the establishment of the CRC entity following receipt of the letter of offer and may occur prior to the project start date. Costs must be relevant to the CRC entity only, not the project partners. Costs are limited to the following areas:</p> <p>Personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CRC Board ▪ Employees. <p>Company Formation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporation ▪ Registration ▪ Insurance ▪ Legal ▪ Head Office establishment. <p>The Program Delegate may determine other establishment costs eligible.</p> |
| <i>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs)</i> | Establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration. |
| Department | The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR/we/us). |
| Decision maker | The person who makes a decision to award a grant. |
| Eligible activities | The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1. |
| Eligible application | An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines. |
| Eligibility criteria | Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria. |
| Eligible expenditure | The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2. |
| Eligible expenditure guidance | The guidance that is provided at Appendix C. |
| Eligible project value | The guidance provided at Appendix B. |
| Government priorities | The National Science and Research Priorities , the National Reconstruction Fund priority areas , or any other science, research, industry and innovation priorities identified by the Australian Government. See Appendix A. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Grant | <p>For the purposes of the CGRPs, a ‘grant’ is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. under which relevant money¹⁵ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money¹⁶ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and a. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government’s policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives. |
| Grant activity/activities | Refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake. |
| Grant agreement | A legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding, and specifies the details of the grant. |
| Grant funding or grant funds | The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program. |
| Grant opportunity | Refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process. |
| Grant program | A ‘program’ carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving Government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single Portfolio Budget Statement Program. |
| GrantConnect | The Australian Government’s whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs. |
| Grantee | The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant. |
| Guidelines | Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time. |
| Industry Innovation and Science Australia | The statutory board established by the <i>Industry Research and Development Act 1986</i> (Cth) and named in that Act as Industry Innovation and Science Australia. |
| In-kind contributions | Non-cash resources contributed by a partner to conduct the CRC. They may be staff or non-staff resources. |

¹⁵ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See Section 8, Dictionary.

¹⁶ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See Section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

| Term | Definition |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Intellectual property (IP) | Includes all copyright, patents, registered and unregistered trademarks (including service marks), registered designs, and other rights resulting from intellectual activity (other than moral rights under the <i>Copyright Act 1968</i> (Cth)). |
| Minister | The Commonwealth Minister for Industry and Science. |
| Partner | A person or body providing support (including cash contributions or in-kind contributions) integral to the success of the CRC. |
| Partner declaration | A declaration from each partner on the template provided on business.gov.au. It is a declaration of intent to participate in the proposed CRC should the application be successful. It does not create any binding legal obligation on the partner, nor does it create a binding legal relationship between the signatory and the other partners or the Commonwealth. In signing the declaration, the partner organisation affirms the truth and accuracy of the information provided and acknowledges the obligations on partners in the CRC. |
| Partners' agreement | The agreement between the partners and the CRC entity. |
| Partner contributions | The cash and in-kind contributions from project partners to the project. |
| Personal information | Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not. |
| Program Delegate | A General Manager within DISR with responsibility for administering the program. |
| Program funding or Program funds | The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program. |
| Project | The CRC described in an application for grant funding under the program. |
| Research organisation | All higher education providers listed at Table A and Table B of the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (Cth); corporate Commonwealth entities, and Australian State and Australian Territory business enterprises which undertake publicly funded research. |
| Security | Measures taken to protect something, including governance, physical, information and personnel arrangements (e.g. vetting, access and planning). These may sometimes extend to protecting something of national security interest and/or that are key to our global competitiveness in cutting-edge industries, such as advanced, critical or dual-use technologies. |

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Selection criteria | Comprises of eligibility criteria and assessment criteria. |
| Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) | Firms or industry which employ up to 200 staff. |
| Third party organisations | Third party organisations are not required to supply a Partner Declaration. They may be parties involved for short periods, or be unable to provide a partner declaration. Any third party contributions will not be used for eligibility purposes to ensure matching funding to the grant request. |
| Value with money | <p>Value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the quality of the project proposal and activities; ▪ fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to Government objectives; ▪ that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and Government’s outcomes being achieved; and ▪ the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history. |
| Volunteers | The definition of a volunteer is to freely work without being paid. Their time/effort is not be considered part of total eligible project expenditure and is not counted as an in-kind contribution. |

Appendix A. Government Priorities

This section provides details on Government priorities.

Government priorities are the National Science and Research Priorities, the National Reconstruction Fund priority areas, or any other science, research, industry and innovation priorities identified by the Australian Government. The extent to which a project aligns with Government priorities should be demonstrated in assessment criterion 1(a). An application which strongly aligns with Government priorities will score higher in this part of the assessment criteria than an application which does not.

National Science and Research Priorities

The Australian Government's National Science and Research Priorities guide Australian science and research efforts and help the Australian Government align investments in the science, research, technology, innovation and commercialisation system.

The five priorities focus on areas where research and innovation can help solve Australia's greatest challenges:

A.1 Priority 1: Transitioning to a net zero future

Critical research areas related to this priority are:

- new and innovative renewable energy, grid infrastructure, grid integration and storage systems
- mitigating the environmental impacts of efforts to decarbonise industries and infrastructure
- perceptions, beliefs, barriers and incentives regarding adopting and applying new technologies
- approaches to partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to share the economic benefits of emissions reduction projects that occur on Country
- technological solutions for sustainably reducing, reprocessing and recycling Australia's waste at scale
- new and innovative ways of extracting, refining and processing critical minerals while minimising environmental impact
- solutions for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere at scale and for hard-to-abate processes and activities such as agriculture
- advancing critical technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum and robotics to allow us to transition to net zero in environmentally responsible ways
- information, skills training and skills uptake of workers who support the transition to a net zero economy.

A.2 Priority 2: Supporting healthy and thriving communities

Critical research areas related to this priority are:

- social, cultural, developmental and environmental drivers of individual and community health, particularly in infancy and childhood, and approaches to improve them at scale
- anticipating and responding to future pandemics and infectious disease outbreaks
- healthcare literacy and motivators for behavioural change
- technological and social solutions to providing services and diagnostics for aged care, people with disability and people living in regional and remote communities
- technologies and techniques that support an affordable, inclusive, culturally appropriate, and integrated preventive health system in Australia
- therapies that use precision medicine to treat diseases

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led, place-based and culturally appropriate approaches to build community capacity and achieve equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in health, wellbeing and life expectancy
- likely impacts of climate change on communities' physical and mental health.

A.3 Priority 3: Elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems

Critical research areas related to this priority are:

- incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge into the development and application of critical and emerging technologies, particularly digital and data technologies
- approaches for protecting and managing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property
- approaches to preserving language and promoting bilingual education
- approaches to climate change adaptation to support regional and remote communities.

A.4 Priority 4: Protecting and restoring Australia's environment

Critical research areas related to this priority are:

- past and likely future climate conditions in Australia, our coasts, neighbouring regions and Antarctica. These include tipping points, shifting weather patterns, extreme events and sea level rise
- predicting ecosystem and biodiversity changes caused by climate change and human actions
- new and innovative approaches to discovering, protecting and restoring biodiversity
- effective partnerships and benefits sharing when using Caring for Country and Sea Country in environmental management regimes
- tools and techniques to collect and analyse environmental data
- cumulative impacts of extractive and non-extractive uses of freshwater and marine resources
- transitioning to a more circular economy
- carbon sources and sinks in soils, vegetation, coasts and oceans in Australia and neighbouring regions. These include practical ways to manage carbon drawdown through natural processes and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practices.

A.5 Priority 5: building a secure and resilient nation.

Critical research areas related to this priority are:

- secure and resilient technologies, including dual-use technology
- secure and resilient supply chains that underpin Australia's prosperity
- technologies that support Australian resilience to natural and human-induced challenges
- technology design frameworks (including for artificial intelligence) that increase democratic resilience and reduce risks to social cohesion, economic prosperity and national security
- cognitive and social causes of engaging with misinformation and disinformation, and best practices for reducing their impact
- technologies for managing water and producing food under likely future Australian climate conditions
- predicting, detecting and responding to biosecurity threats and natural disasters
- planning, design, materials and engineering of infrastructure and built environments for Australia and our region that account for likely future climate conditions.

Further details are available www.industry.gov.au.

A.6 National Reconstruction Fund Priority Areas

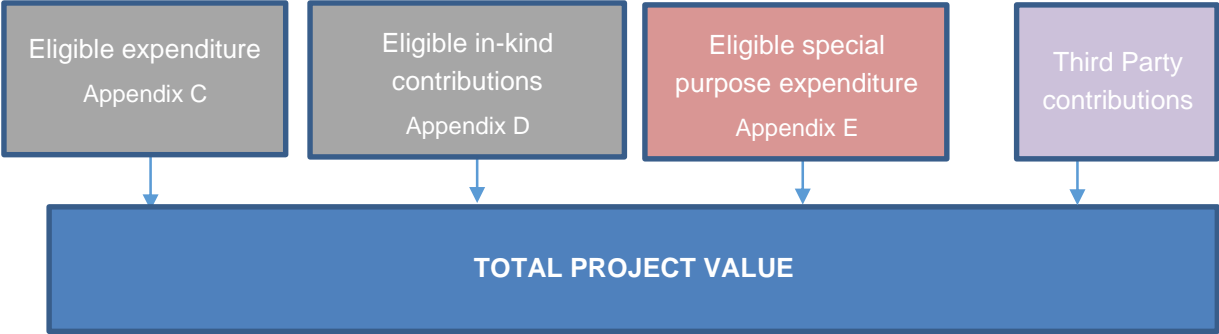
The Australian Government's National Reconstruction Fund identifies 7 priority areas focusing on opportunities to add value to primary products and leverage Australia's natural and competitive strengths. These include:

- value-add in resources
- value-add in agriculture, forestry and fisheries
- transport
- medical science
- renewables and low emission technologies
- defence capability
- enabling capabilities.

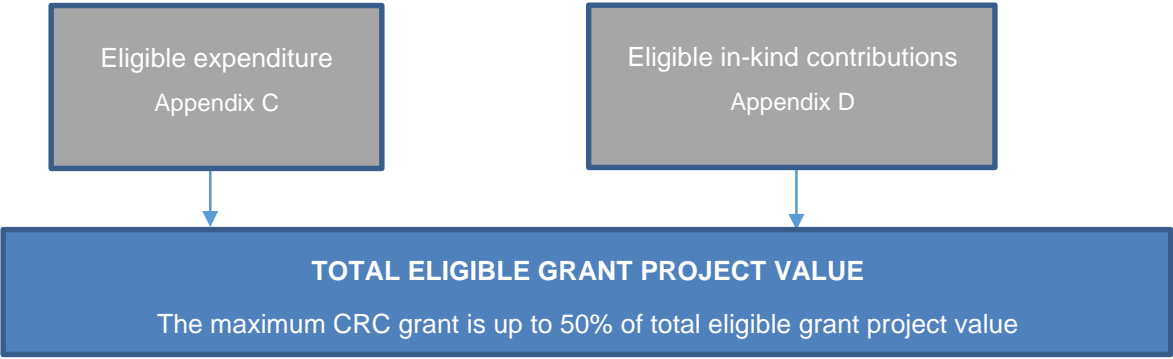
Further details are available www.nrf.gov.au.

Appendix B. Diagrams of project value, eligible grant project value and applicant contributions

B.1 How we calculate your total project value



B.2 How we calculate your total eligible grant project value



B.3 Applicant contributions

We treat cash and in-kind contributions equally for determining your matching minimum 50 per cent share of eligible grant project value. You should leverage significant funds from industry as well as government and other organisations.

You may have contributions from third party organisations, noting these contributions will not count towards the total eligible grant project value for the purposes of matching contributions to grant funds at the application stage.

Rural Research and Development Cooperation (RDC) direct cash contributions from their discretionary funds (which includes levies and Commonwealth funds) are eligible in full as cash contributions to a CRC. Where RDCs have issued funds to other parties for a specific purpose and the resulting projects will be incorporated into the activities of a CRC, only the value of the industry levy component of the funding can be counted as an in-kind contribution to the CRC.

Appendix C. Eligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on the eligibility of expenditure. We may update this guidance from time to time; check you are referring to the most current version from the business.gov.au website before preparing your application.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred:
 - between the project start and end dates, unless stated otherwise; or
 - for CRC entity establishment costs before the project start date; or
 - to undertake required project audit activities after the project end date.
- be a direct cost of the project
- not be included under 'eligible special purpose expenditure' in Appendix E; and
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

C.1 How we verify eligible expenditure

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project budget that you provided in your application when we negotiate your grant agreement. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

The grant agreement will include details of the evidence you may need to provide when you achieve certain milestones in your project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure.

If requested, you will need to provide the agreed evidence along with your progress reports.

You must keep payment records of all eligible expenditure, and be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. At any time, we may ask you to provide records of the expenditure you have paid. If you do not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

You are required to provide annual independent financial audit reports for all years of your project covering eligible expenditure.

C.2 Eligible expenditure items

You can only use CRC grant funds or cash contributions for eligible expenditure directly related to eligible activities or CRC entity establishment costs. Eligible expenditure can include, but is not limited to:

- salaries and on-costs for personnel directly employed for the project activities (this should be calculated on a pro-rata basis relative to their time commitment using the formula detailed below)
- CRC board member remuneration
- contractor costs as detailed below
- capital items you purchase to undertake your project (can include the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers or photocopiers)
- costs of acquiring, licensing or registering intellectual property and technology
- student fellowships, stipends and scholarships
- costs related to the publication of research and the deployment and take-up of research outputs

- costs of developing and delivering workshops, conferences, professional development, networking events, forums and courses (including travel costs for key partners) for knowledge transfer and capability development directly related to the project
- costs related to recruiting or contracting specialist staff directly related to the project
- purchase of computing equipment and software directly related to the project
- marketing, communications, promotional costs and website design directly related to the project
- travel and overseas expenditure as detailed below
- staff training directly supporting the achievement of project outcomes. Some training costs may only be considered as part of eligible special purpose expenditure. See Appendix F.
- reasonable fit out expenditure directly related to the project
- insurance for the CRC entity
- leasing facilities including office space and fit for purpose facilities
- financial auditing of project expenditure as outlined below.

The Program Delegate may determine other expenditure items eligible.

Evidence you need to supply can include supplier contracts, purchase orders, invoices and supplier confirmation of payments.

C.3 Labour expenditure

Eligible labour expenditure for the grant covers the direct labour costs of employees you and your partners directly employ on the core elements of the project. We consider a person an employee when you or your partners pay them a regular salary or wage, out of which you make regular tax instalment deductions.

We consider costs for project management activities eligible labour expenditure. However, we limit these costs to 20 per cent of the total amount of eligible labour expenditure claimed.

We only consider labour expenditure for leadership or administrative staff as eligible expenditure where they are directly delivering eligible activities.

Eligible salary expenditure includes an employee's total remuneration package as stated on their Pay As You Go (PAYG) Annual Payment Summary submitted to the ATO. We consider salary-sacrificed superannuation contributions as part of an employee's salary package if the amount is more than what the Superannuation Guarantee requires.

For periods of the project that do not make a full financial year, you must reduce the maximum salary amount you claim proportionally.

You can only claim eligible salary costs when an employee is working directly on agreed project activities during the agreed project period.

C.4 Labour on-costs and administrative overhead

You may increase eligible salary costs by an additional 30 per cent allowance to cover on-costs such as employer paid superannuation, payroll tax, workers compensation insurance, and overheads such as office rent and the purchase or provision of computing equipment directly required or related to the delivery of the project.

You should calculate eligible salary costs using the formula below:

$$\text{Eligible salary costs} = \text{Annual salary package} \times \frac{\text{Weeks spent on project}}{52 \text{ weeks}} \times \text{percentage of time spent on project}$$

You

cannot calculate labour costs by estimating the employee's worth. If you have not exchanged money (either by cash or bank transactions) we will not consider the cost eligible.

Evidence you will need to provide can include:

- details of all personnel working on the project, including name, title, function, time spent on the project and salary
- ATO payment summaries, pay slips and employment contracts.

C.5 Contract expenditure

Eligible contract expenditure is the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract others to do. These can include contracting:

- another organisation
- an individual who is not an employee, but engaged under a separate contract.

All contractors must have a written contract prior to starting any project work—for example, a formal agreement, letter or purchase order which specifies:

- the nature of the work they perform
- the applicable fees, charges and other costs payable.

Invoices from contractors must contain:

- a detailed description of the nature of the work
- the hours and hourly rates involved
- any specific plant expenses paid.

Invoices must directly relate to the agreed project, and the work must qualify as an eligible expense. The costs must also be reasonable and appropriate for the activities performed.

We will require evidence of contractor expenditure that may include:

- an exchange of letters (including email) setting out the terms and conditions of the proposed contract work
- purchase orders
- supply agreements
- invoices and payment documents.

You must ensure all project contractors keep a record of the costs of their work on the project. We may require you to provide a contractor's records of their costs of doing project work. If you cannot provide these records, the relevant contract expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

C.6 Travel expenditure

Eligible travel expenditure may include:

- domestic travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct agreed project and collaboration activities in Australia
- overseas travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required in cases where the overseas travel is material to the conduct of the project in Australia.

Eligible air transportation is limited to the economy class fare for each sector travelled; where non-economy class air transport is used only the equivalent of an economy fare for the sector is eligible expenditure. Where non-economy class air transport is used, the grantee will require evidence showing what an economy airfare costs at the time of travel.

Overseas travel expenditure must be at an economy rate. You must demonstrate overseas travel is material to the conduct of your project in Australia.

Total travel expenditure (domestic and overseas) is generally limited to 10 per cent of total eligible expenditure.

C.7 Overseas expenditure

Overseas expenditure is eligible expenditure incurred outside of Australia (excluding travel) and must be directly related to eligible activities.

We will consider value with relevant money when determining whether the cost of overseas expenditure is eligible. This may depend on:

- the proportion of total grant funding you will spend on overseas expenditure
- the proportion of the service providers total fee spent on overseas expenditure
- how the overseas expenditure is likely to aid the project in meeting the program objectives.

Total overseas expenditure is generally limited to 10 per cent of total eligible expenditure.

C.8 Audit Costs

The cost of all annual independent audits of project expenditure up to a maximum of 1 per cent of total eligible project value.

Appendix D. In-kind contributions

We treat cash and in-kind contributions equally for determining your matching 50 per cent share of total eligible grant project value.

In-kind contributions are the non-cash contributions. These can include labour contributions and facilities, equipment and services provided by project partners to the project. In order for in-kind contributions to count towards your total eligible grant project value, they must directly relate to eligible activities or eligible special purpose expenditure items.

In-kind contributions may include:

- salaries and on-costs for personnel directly employed for the project activities. Australian Government funds awarded (or contracted) to researchers employed by partners, or to the partners themselves, for specific projects cannot be claimed as eligible expenditure. You must use the labour calculations and eligibility guidelines outlined in Appendix C.
- facilities, equipment and services provided by a partner to the project from its own resources. We do not prescribe a specific formula to determine the value of these contributions. You need to determine the value of these contributions. They must be realistic, justifiable and valued proportionally to their use on the project. For example, you should calculate the in-kind contribution of a capital item by the running costs and the depreciation of the item.

Examples of in-kind contributions include:

- if a resource has an annual depreciation value of \$100,000 and the project was using 10 per cent of the resource's capacity then the resource could be valued at \$10,000 per year
- if the fee for usage was \$500 per use and the project was receiving 100 usages per year at no cost, the value of the resource could be valued at \$50,000 per year
- if intellectual property is being provided as an in-kind contribution, then a reasonable estimated revenue of licensing the IP to the project could be used
- if your project receives office space as an in-kind contribution from a partner, you should value the contribution at the amount it would otherwise cost to rent equivalent office space.

Appendix E. Eligible special purpose expenditure

This section provides guidance on eligible special purpose expenditure.

Eligible special purpose expenditure contributes to your total project value but is not included in the calculation of your grant amount. You cannot spend grant funds on these activities.

We may update this guidance from time to time, so you should make sure you have the current version from business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#) before preparing your application.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible special purpose expenditure and may give additional guidance if required.

To be eligible, special purpose expenditure must:

- be incurred within the project period
- be a direct cost of the project
- not be included under eligible expenditure
- meet these eligible special purpose expenditure guidelines.

How we verify eligible special purpose expenditure

If your application is successful, we will ask you to verify the project budget you provided in your application when we negotiate your grant agreement. This may include evidence related to eligible special purpose expenditure.

At any time, we may ask you to provide records of the expenditure you have paid.

Eligible special purpose expenditure items

Eligible special purpose expenditure can include, but is not limited to:

- education and training activities which do not result in direct material support to identifiable students, for example, primary, secondary and tertiary programs, vocational education and training, industry exchange programs, internship programs, workshops for industry, community/public events (i.e., lecture series/art exhibition) and industry training modules
- engagement with SMEs to build their R&D capacity
- labour on-costs in excess of the 30% threshold. Costs in excess of the 30% labour on-cost cap will need to be covered by cash contributions from partners.

You may also contribute in-kind resources to the eligible special purpose expenditure items other than labour on-costs if applicable.

Appendix F. Ineligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on what we consider ineligible expenditure. We may update this guidance from time to time; check you are referring to the most current version from the [business.gov.au](https://www.business.gov.au) website before preparing your application.

The Program Delegate may impose limitations or exclude expenditure, or further include some ineligible expenditure listed in these guidelines in a grant agreement or otherwise by notice to you.

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources, including other Commonwealth sources
- costs incurred prior to the date of your letter of offer
- non-project-related staff training and development costs
- financial costs, including interest and debt financing including the use of grant funds for any form of security for the purpose of obtaining or complying with any form of loan, credit, payment or other interest
- the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories (unless directly related to the project and approved by the Program Delegate)
- purchase of land
- maintenance costs
- insurance costs other than those outlined in eligible expenditure (the partners must effect and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage for any liability arising as a result of its participation in funded activities)
- depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- opportunity costs relating to any production losses due to allocating resources to the agreed grant project
- costs related to preparing the grant application
- research not directly supporting eligible activities
- travel expenditure exceeding 10 per cent of total eligible project expenditure except where otherwise approved by the Program Delegate
- overseas expenditure that exceed 10 per cent of total eligible project expenditure except where otherwise approved by the Program Delegate.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure of the grant funds. Other costs may be ineligible where we decide that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.