

South East Queensland Innovation Economy Fund

Round 2

Frequently Asked Questions

Version 1.1

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Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

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The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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These Frequently Asked Questions have been developed to inform potential applicants and project partners of the SEQ Innovation Economy Fund round 2. This document should be read alongside the [SEQ Innovation Economy Fund Program Guidelines](#).

What are “knowledge-intensive industries”?

For the purpose of this program, a knowledge intensive industry can be defined as those industries which are based on their intensive use of technology and/or human capital. While most industries are in some way dependant on knowledge as inputs, knowledge industries are particularly dependent on knowledge and technology to generate revenue.

Guidance may also be sought from two reports prepared by CSIRO’s Data 61 for the Queensland Government:

- *A New Chapter: opportunities to seed new industries over the coming decade (2021); and*
- *New Smarts: supporting Queensland’s knowledge-intensive industries through science, research and innovation (2019).*

What is “innovation in the Indigenous context”?

The Program Guidelines describe innovation in the Indigenous context as those activities identified by the applicant as innovative activities that build a community’s economic opportunities and increases its participation in the innovation economy.

An applicant would need to show how a project would enable those economic and participatory outcomes for an Indigenous community.

For further context, Queensland’s [Deadly Innovation Strategy](#), co-designed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business and Innovation Reference Group (BIRG) and key stakeholders, sits under the broader Advance Queensland initiative and includes the Deadly Innovation Fund.

The Deadly Innovation Strategy identifies ways to create pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and innovators towards turning their ideas into reality, so they can build wealth and create jobs.

Is there a list of existing innovation precincts?

Whilst there is no definitive list of existing innovation precincts in SEQ, applicants should be guided by the definition provided under *Eligibility > Innovation Precincts* in the Program Guidelines.

Does the project infrastructure need to support one of the listed priority industries or innovation growth sectors?

No, the list of Innovation Priority Investment Areas in the Program Guidelines is not an exhaustive list and includes:

- Innovation in any other area or industry that can demonstrate a track record of contributing to the innovation economy and meets the program’s intent of delivering more high value, knowledge-intensive employment opportunities.

- This should be read alongside the objectives of the IEF and the assessment criteria. For example - Criteria 1: significance of the funding opportunity to support the innovation economy, requires applicants to demonstrate, amongst other things:
- How the new or improved infrastructure will deliver more high value, knowledge-intensive employment opportunities in SEQ; and
- How the new or improved infrastructure will increase the innovation precinct's capacity and capability to grow the innovation economy resulting in greater economic, environmental and/or social outcomes for the region.

Are new or emerging precincts eligible?

No. For the purposes of this program, the project must relate to an existing innovation precinct.

The intent of the IEF is to accelerate the delivery of future jobs through investing in capital projects in existing innovation precincts, that promote and grow SEQ's innovation economy.

Can the proposed project timeframe go beyond June 2028?

No. All proposed projects must be planned to be completed by 30 June 2028.

Assessment criteria 3 relates to the value and viability of the project. In particular, the application must demonstrate:

- the capital project is well planned and achievable and can be delivered within the nominated timeframe, and is able to be delivered within the project budget and is financially sound
- the application demonstrates that all required approvals are achievable within the timeframes and that any outstanding planning issues can be resolved
- the applicant and/or project partner/s have adequate staffing and risk management strategies to ensure successful delivery of the capital project by 30 June 2028.

Does the applicant need to own the land on which the capital project will be delivered?

No. If the applicant is not the landowner, they will need to show written evidence of an in-principal agreement with the entity that owns the project site demonstrating the applicant and/or project partner have the right to access the project site to complete the project.

Applicants and/or project partners will also be required to provide forward planning outlining the planned operation and maintenance of the infrastructure for a minimum of 10 years following the Project End Date for real property, or a minimum of 5 years for plant and equipment only. This forms part of the mandatory supporting materials required to be lodged with the application.

Can an applicant make multiple applications?

No. An applicant and their related corporate entities / subsidiaries are limited to one application.

An applicant could, however, be included as a project partner in multiple applications.

Can there be multiple applicants for the same application?

Only one eligible applicant can submit the application and will be the project lead. Multiple entities may collaborate to deliver an eligible project as project partners.

A joint venture corporate vehicle would be considered a single entity.

If the project is approved for funding, the eligible applicant will be the party responsible for entering into a Project Funding Agreement with the State and managing the delivery of the project.

Can there be multiple applications related to the same innovation precinct?

There is no restriction on the number of applications that can relate to an individual innovation precinct. However, an applicant can only make one application and each application needs to show how the project meets the assessment criteria.

How can other entities participate in the project if not as the applicant?

Although an entity may be ineligible to be an applicant, the entity may participate as a project partner to an application. There are no eligibility requirements for project partners.

Project partners may contribute to a project in many ways, including providing expertise, land, equipment, resourcing, funding or in-kind support.

Refer to *Eligibility > Partnering Arrangements* of the Program Guidelines for further information on project partners.

Do all applicants require project partner/s?

No. Project partners are not a requirement for the program.

Must the applicant or project partner/s be located in the innovation precinct?

There isn't a specific requirement that the applicant or project partner/s be located in the innovation precinct where the proposed project will be located, but section 5.3 of the Program Guidelines requires the project infrastructure to be:

- constructed and/or established on a project site which is owned by the applicant or for which there is written evidence of an in-principle agreement with the entity that owns the project site demonstrating the applicant and/or project partner has the right to access the project site in order to construct or refurbish existing buildings and/or install plant and equipment.

Applicants and/or project partners will be required to provide forward planning outlining the planned operation, maintenance and activation of the infrastructure for a minimum of 10 years following the Project End Date for real property, or a minimum of 5 years for plant and equipment only as part of the mandatory supporting material.

What type of relationship must the applicant have with the project partner/s?

If an eligible applicant has project partners, a formal written arrangement/signed letters of support and commitment from the project partner's board, Chief Executive Officer or equivalent must be in place between all parties before an application is submitted (Section 5.2 of the Program Guidelines).

There are no eligibility requirements for project partners however refer to the Program Guidelines regarding the requirements for co-contributions.

Can project partners support multiple applicants/projects?

Yes, project partners are eligible to support more than one project including providing cash co-contributions.

Does a local government need to be an applicant or project partner?

There are no requirements for the mix of parties involved in a project. Organisations should consider the eligibility criteria carefully.

Note that the Supporting Documents (non-mandatory) section of the Program Guidelines provides suggestions of documentation that may assist in meeting the assessment criteria. The list includes:

- For applications where a local government is not the applicant or a project partner, a letter of support from the relevant local government where the Project Infrastructure will be located.

Does the cash co-contribution need to come from a single source?

No, the cash co-contribution could come from a combination of the applicant and/or project partners.

The cash co-contribution can be sourced internally from the applicant and/or from project partners but cannot include any other Australian or Queensland Government grant funding.

Details of the cash co-contribution sources will be required as part of the mandatory documentation required to be lodged as part of the application.

Can projects utilise funding from other Australian Government or Queensland government sources?

Yes, the total project cost may include funding from the Australian or Queensland Government. However, Australian and Queensland Government grant funding cannot be included in the calculation of the cash co-contribution.

For example, where delivery of the capital project is contingent on a cash contribution from a Queensland Government department, that contribution can be included in the project budget but cannot be included in the calculation of the applicant/project partners required 50% cash co-contribution.

Can a cash co-contribution be provided by local government, university, government statutory body or government owned corporations?

Yes. Provided that the cash co-contribution is not coming from Australian or Queensland Government grant funding, a local government body, university, government statutory body and government owned corporation would all be able to provide a cash co-contribution as the applicant or project partner.

Note that in-kind and non-cash contributions are not eligible to be included in the calculation of the cash co-contribution.

Do construction jobs count towards the program employment objective to accelerate the delivery of high value, knowledge-intensive employment opportunities?

For the purposes of meeting assessment criteria 1, the application form contains questions seeking details of the estimated high-value, knowledge-intensive jobs which will be created at the innovation precinct after the proposed project has been completed. This would not include construction jobs.

The application form also requests details of the Queensland-based jobs likely to be created by the applicant or project partner/s as a direct result of the proposed project during the funding agreement term. This would include construction jobs.

How many grants will be provided?

The amount of funding available this round is capped at \$5,212,840 (excluding GST) and the number of successful applicants will depend on the quality of the applications submitted and the amount of funding applied for by each applicant.

Is there a quota for spreading the funding across SEQ?

There are no quotas regarding funding amounts across SEQ.

Note that under the Program Guidelines, the Australian and Queensland Governments reserve the right to administer the program and conduct the assessment and approval processes as they see fit. This may include, at their discretion, considering current government priorities and the need to balance the investment to support a diversity of activities across South-East Queensland.

Will there be future rounds for this program?

No future rounds are anticipated.

When will applicants be notified of the application outcome?

We are unable to provide a date by which applications will be assessed and successful projects announced.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Project Funding Agreement which sets out the general and specific provisions associated with delivery of the project.

Can projects commence before receiving an application outcome?

Only eligible project costs incurred on or after the project commencement date (specified in the executed Project Funding Agreement) can be claimed by the successful applicant.

Any financial or other commitment in relation to a project made by an applicant prior to the execution of the Project Funding Agreement is at the sole risk of the applicant (or project partner, as relevant).

Are supporting document templates available?

There are no set templates for the required supporting documents for an application.

The Program Guidelines *Application and Assessment Process > Supporting Documentation* sets out what is required to be provided as mandatory documents and suggested non-mandatory supporting documents.

Can my application include capital projects at a location other than the nominated existing innovation precinct?

No. The proposed capital project must be at an existing innovation precinct.

The application form asks applicants to demonstrate how the proposed project will benefit the existing innovation precinct as part of their response to the assessment criteria.

Can NCRIS funding be used for the cash co-contribution?

For the purposes of the IEF:

- Funding provided to the applicant and/or project partners from the Australian Government's National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) program **cannot** be included in the calculation of the applicant and/or project partner's **cash co-contribution**.
- Funding provided to the applicant and/or project partners from the Australian Government's NCRIS program **may** be included as part of the **total project cost**.

Do previous/other grants impact on applicant or project eligibility?

Entities that were recipients of funding in Round 1 of the South East Queensland Innovation Economy Fund are **not** eligible to apply for funding under this round. For the purposes of this program, there are no requirements or exclusions for applicants or projects that have previously received grant funding under other funding streams, however.

Can my application propose a capital project which will expand the nominated existing innovation precinct?

Yes. The broad definition of innovation precinct in the Program Guidelines does not restrict an existing innovation precinct to its current footprint, current occupants, or current mix of uses.

Can we apply for funding if the project works are already underway?

The list of eligible project examples includes:

- "a new stage or independent component of an existing capital project that will result in the establishment of operational infrastructure delivering innovative activity and will contribute to accelerating high value, knowledge-intensive employment opportunities at the Project End Date and is not reliant on future un-funded stages of the development to achieve this."

However, proposals for capital projects cannot include costs incurred prior to the project start date, including any otherwise eligible project costs.

Who will be the decision maker for successful applications?

All eligible applications will be assessed in a competitive, merit-based approach by a panel of assessors against the assessment criteria. Following assessment, applications will be approved by the relevant authorised delegates of the Australian and Queensland Governments.

Is there a definition of “plant and equipment”?

For the purposes of this fund, no formal definition of “plant and equipment” has been provided. Applicants should be guided by the ordinary usage of the term, the eligibility criteria, and assessment criteria.

Can plant and equipment include digital infrastructure?

Yes, proposals for the acquisition and installation of plant and equipment may include digital infrastructure, where all other eligibility requirements are also met.

It is up to the applicant to demonstrate in their application that the proposed capital project will benefit the existing innovation precinct.

Added in Version 1.1:

Can plant and equipment be purchased from a related entity?

No. Plant and equipment cannot be purchased from a related entity with grant funding or as part of the cash co-contribution.

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