

Department of Planning  
and Environment


# Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants



Grant guidelines

March 2022





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## How to use these guidelines

This guide provides an overview of the Department of Planning and Environment's Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants (the grants), including organisations that are eligible to apply and the types of projects that will be funded. It also outlines how your Expression of Interest (EOI) and if invited, your full application, will be assessed and what to expect if you are awarded a grant.

The department may publish frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the grants on [our website](#) as they arise. The FAQs should be read in conjunction with these guidelines.

## Enquiries or questions

For enquiries or questions related to these guidelines, the grants, or the [Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program](#), please contact the department at: [netzeroindustry@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:netzeroindustry@environment.nsw.gov.au).

## Glossary

**Accelerator** - A program targeted at early-stage companies that typically already have a minimum viable product (MVP). These programs generally run for a fixed period of time providing a cohort of innovative start-ups with education, resources, mentorship and connections to investors and potential business partners as a way to help them rapidly scale up.

**Angel network** – a formalised group of angel investors that collaborate, provide mutual support and collectively evaluate and invest in entrepreneurial ventures.

**Applicant** – includes the lead organisation and all organisations in any collaboration and/or consortium applying for the grant. All questions and information relating to the applicant in the EOI or full application refers to all members of consortiums or groups.

**Application** – either an EOI or full application to the grant, via the relevant form.

**Clean technology** – technologies that substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including low emission technologies. 'Technologies' refers to processes, products and services including hardware, software and business model innovations.

**Clean technology ecosystem** – the individuals, organisations and infrastructure involved in delivering or supporting research, development, commercialisation and/or deployment of clean technology innovations.

**Department** – the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

**Grant** – the Clean Technology Ecosystem Grant.

**Incubator** – An organisation that supports innovative start-up businesses. It may provide a variety of services including co-location, mentoring, professional services, access to networks or seed funding.

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**Lead applicant** – the applicant organisation submitting the EOI, on behalf of themselves or a consortium or group. The department will only enter into a funding agreement with the lead applicant.

**Pre-accelerator** – A program targeted at entrepreneurs who have a technology-based idea for a start-up, want to establish a business and develop a MVP. These programs generally run for a fixed period of time, and participants ‘graduate’ from the program having followed a set methodology. A pre-accelerator program can often provide a pathway to an accelerator program.

**Project** – the incubator, pre-accelerator and/or accelerator project applying for grant funding.

# 1. About these grants

## The Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program

The NSW Government's *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030* (Net Zero Plan) sets out the state's ambitious agenda to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.<sup>1</sup>

The *Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program* forms part of the Net Zero Plan and focuses on major opportunities to partner with industry to reduce emissions and help NSW businesses prosper in a low carbon future.<sup>2</sup> The program has 3 areas of focus:

- **Clean Technology Innovation** – supporting the development and continued innovation of emerging clean technologies
- **New Low Carbon Industry Foundations** – laying the foundations for low emissions industries by building enabling infrastructure and increasing the capability of our supply chains
- **High Emitting Industries** – deploying low emissions technologies and infrastructure to reduce the emissions associated with existing, high emitting industrial facilities.

Together, these three focus areas and their delivery streams cover the technology development lifecycle from research through to deployment.

## Clean Technology Innovation

As global demand for low emissions technologies and modernised industrial processes grows, NSW has an opportunity to position itself as a world leader in the manufacture and export of low emissions products and services.

Focusing on clean technology innovation will create an environment where innovation is supported so new technologies are domestically developed, tested and used in the market. NSW is ideally positioned to create an ecosystem where clean technologies are rapidly developed, repeatedly innovated and scaled-up to meet our emissions targets. This will enable knowledge sharing, capacity building and collaboration between researchers, industry and government.

The Clean Technology Innovation focus area will provide support for new technologies at different stages of development, from research through to commercialisation and distribution, via 5 streams:

1. Establishment of a NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub (\$15 million)
2. Research, Development and Commercialisation Infrastructure Funding (\$45 million)
3. Research and Development Grants (\$40 million)
4. **Grants for Commercialisation and Pilots (\$75 million)** – includes these grants

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Government, March 2020, [Net Zero Plan 1: 2020 – 2030](#)

<sup>2</sup> NSW Government, November 2021, [Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program](#)

5. Low Emissions Specifications and Unlocking Sustainable Finance (up to \$20 million).

## Grants for Commercialisation and Pilots

The NSW Government has committed to supporting the development and continued innovation of emerging clean technologies in NSW. As part of this commitment, the government will invest up to \$75 million to help bring proven low emission technologies and services to market in Australia and internationally.

Grants for Commercialisation and Pilots will offer a blend of funding opportunities, including:

- **Clean Technology Commercialisation Grants (\$40 million):** to encourage and accelerate the commercialisation and scaling up of proven clean technology innovations for trade in Australian and international markets
- **Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants (\$10 million - these guidelines):** to support incubators, pre-accelerators, accelerators, and other similar initiatives to equip clean technology start-ups and researchers with the skills and resources they need to succeed
- **Other clean technology commercialisation initiatives (\$25 million):** the remaining funding will be used to support future NSW Government initiatives to accelerate commercialisation of clean technology innovations.

## Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants

The NSW Government has established the Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants (these grants) to support incubators, pre-accelerators, accelerators, and other similar initiatives to equip clean technology start-ups and researchers with the skills and resources they need to succeed.

The grants will be delivered through targeted funding rounds, with round 1 providing support for establishing new or scaling-up existing clean technology incubators, pre-accelerators and accelerators in NSW. Future funding rounds may target angel networks or pre-accelerator or accelerator programs for specific clean technology sub-sectors.

Funded by the Climate Change Fund (CCF), these competitive grants will help build a strong pipeline of clean technology start-ups in NSW and facilitate commercialisation of the next wave of low emissions technologies needed for the transition to net zero by 2050.

## Priority areas

The technology innovations supported through the Clean Technology Innovation focus area will be guided by the NSW Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer's [Decarbonisation Innovation Study](#).<sup>3</sup> The decarbonisation priority areas outlined in this study are:

- **electrification and energy systems** – accelerating renewable energy solutions and supporting the uptake of electrification in other sectors

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<sup>3</sup> The Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE), August 2020, [Opportunities for Prosperity in a Decarbonised and Resilient NSW: Decarbonisation Innovation Study](#)



- **land and primary industries** – coordinating and aligning efforts in the next wave of sustainable primary industry practices as the sector contributes a significant proportions of NSW emissions
- **power fuels including hydrogen** – growing an environmentally sustainable NSW power fuels industry and unlocking decarbonisation opportunities for many hard to abate sectors beyond 2030.

This grant program will prioritise investments in these 3 areas. The [Decarbonisation Innovation Study](#) will be updated on a biennial basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the [Decarbonisation Innovation Study](#) to ensure your project aligns with the identified decarbonisation priority areas.

## 2. Important information about the grants

### Grant objectives

These grants seek to facilitate the commercialisation of clean technologies by building a strong pipeline of start-ups and increasing the number of opportunities for those start-ups to access early-stage capital.

For the first funding round, the purpose of these grants is to support incubators, pre-accelerators and accelerators to equip clean technology start-ups and researchers with the skills and resources they need to succeed. The objectives of round 1 are to:

- increase the number of clean technology start-ups and researchers accessing incubator, pre-accelerator or accelerator programs in NSW
- enhance and scale-up the services and capabilities of clean technology incubators, pre-accelerators and accelerators
- facilitate clean technology start-ups and researchers to develop the skills they need to achieve commercial success in Australian and international markets
- increase the number of opportunities for clean technology start-ups to access early-stage capital.

### Funding availability

This is a \$10 million grants program. Table 1 provides the funding available for round 1 in 2022.

Total funding available this round	Minimum grant amount	Maximum grant amount	Maximum duration of projects
\$4 million	\$250,000	\$2 million	4 years

Table 1: Funding available in 2022

Grants will only be awarded to projects that can demonstrate co-contribution from other sources. The minimum co-contribution requirement is dependent on the project location:

- projects in the Greater Sydney Districts<sup>4</sup> must provide a minimum of 1:1 co-contribution
- projects outside the Greater Sydney Districts must provide a minimum of 2:1 co-contribution (ie. \$2 from Government to \$1 from applicant).

<sup>4</sup> Local government areas included in the Greater Sydney Districts boundary are listed here: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/A-Metropolis-of-Three-Cities/Greater-Sydney-Districts](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/A-Metropolis-of-Three-Cities/Greater-Sydney-Districts)

Co-contributions must include a cash component and can include in-kind contributions. Higher cash contributions will be viewed favourably during assessment.

## How to apply

The application and assessment process will occur in 2 stages:

**Stage 1:** Expression of Interest (EOI)

**Stage 2:** Full application

Successful EOIs will be invited to submit a full application.

The application and assessment process for Stages 1 and 2 is outlined in Figure 1. Up-to-date information, including key dates, is available on our [website](#).

For further information about the application and assessment processes, see the [application process](#).

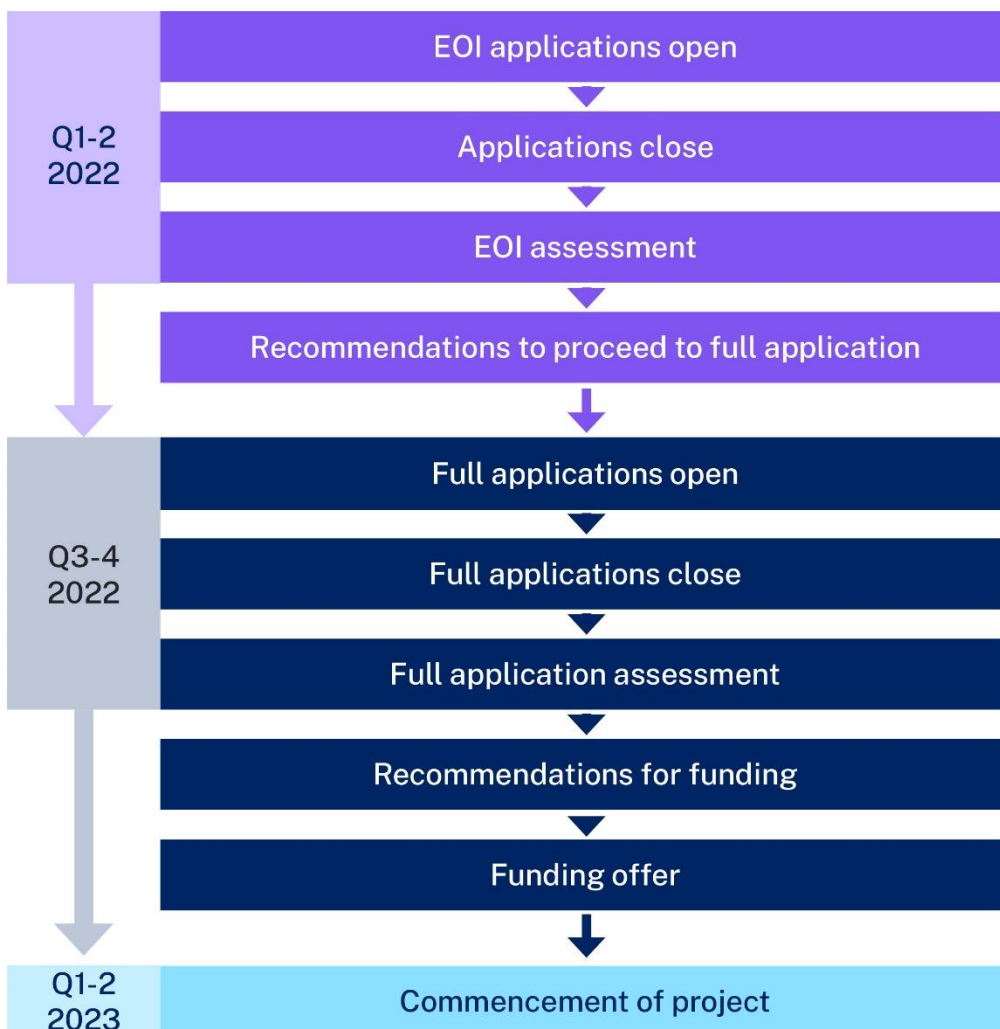


Figure 1: Application and assessment process timeframes

# 3. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for grant funding, an application must meet all eligibility criteria outlined below. Each application must have a lead applicant. The department will only enter into a funding agreement with the lead applicant assessed by the department at the time of application.

If, at the time of Stage 1 or 2 application, the funding recipient is expected to be a different legal entity to the applicant, the applicant must clearly specify this in its application and provide all necessary information requested to evidence this.

The department reserves the right to not fund an application if the applicant is unable to support these claims with sufficient evidence.

## Eligibility criterion 1: Eligible applicants

- To be eligible for funding in round 1, the lead applicant must:
- hold an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be an eligible organisation as outlined in [Appendix 1](#)
- hold all insurances required by law, including \$10 million public liability insurance and workers compensation
- materially comply with all:
  - obligations under employment contracts, industrial agreements and awards
  - codes of conduct and practice relevant to conditions of service and to the relations between the applicant and the employees employed by the applicant
  - applicable Workplace Health and Safety legislation.
- not be subject to any insolvency event, including the subject of an order or resolution for winding up or dissolution (other than for the purposes of reconstruction or amalgamation) or the appointment of a receiver, liquidator, administrator or similar
- not be listed on the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade sanctions list<sup>5</sup>
- disclose any legal proceedings or investigations, including litigation, arbitration, mediation or conciliation that are taking place, pending or (to the best of the applicant's knowledge, after having made proper enquiry) threatened against the applicant or a related body corporate (as defined in the Corporations Act)
- disclose all Australian Government and/or Australian state, territory grants applied for in relation to the project including history of grant funding (including both successful and unsuccessful applications).

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<sup>5</sup> Australia and sanctions, October 2021, [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

## Eligibility criterion 2: Eligible project

To be eligible for funding, the lead applicant must confirm the project involves at least one of the following:

- scaling-up an existing incubator, pre-accelerator or accelerator that supports clean technology start-ups
- establishing a new incubator, pre-accelerator or accelerator to support clean technology start-ups
- providing additional commercialisation training to researchers of clean technology at public research institutions.

The project must also:

- be based in NSW
- be applying for funding between \$250,000 - \$2,000,000
- be expected to be complete within 4 years of commencement
- primarily support NSW-based clean technology start-ups (minimum 50%)
- directly provide commercialisation training for clean technology researchers at public research institutions or benefit clean technology start-ups by providing or facilitating at least one of the following activities:
  - access to key partners, networks, investors, customers or mentors
  - access to resources or knowledge to facilitate commercialisation (including customer acquisition and/or business development methods)
  - access to Australian and international markets
  - workshops, conferences, networking events, commercial training or entrepreneurial courses
  - access to national and/or international experts.

## Eligibility criterion 3: Criticality of grant funding

To be eligible for funding, the lead applicant must confirm that the project:

- would not proceed without NSW Government funding (in the near term or at all) and outline why you are unable to access sufficient funding for the entire project from alternative sources<sup>6</sup>
- has co-contribution funding arrangements between grant funding (from this grant) and other sources (eg. applicant, collaborators, private or other public organisations) of 1:1 for projects in the Greater Sydney Districts and 2:1 for projects elsewhere (ie. \$2 from NSW Government to \$1 from applicant). Co-contributions must include a cash component and can include in-kind contributions. Higher cash contribution ratios will be viewed favourably during assessment.

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<sup>6</sup> Applicants have the option to provide evidence such as a signed letter with supporting documentation from a chief executive or financial officer or another relevant financial representative.

# 4. Merit criteria

This section sets out the merit criteria that applications will be scored against including the weighting of each criterion and how applicants will be expected to respond to them at each stage of the application process (ie. EOI and full application).

The information set out in [Part 5](#) will help applicants develop their responses to some of the merit criteria. Applicants are strongly advised to read that section prior to preparing their submission.

## Merit criterion 1: Value proposition

This criterion is worth 35% of the assessment score. The table below sets out the responses required at each stage of the application process.

### EOI stage

1. Describe the proposed services to be provided to support development of a strong pipeline of clean technology start-ups in NSW (such as seed funding, co-location, structured training programs, mentoring, professional services and/or networking events).
2. Briefly outline your proposed business model and how the incubator, pre-accelerator or accelerator will be sustainable beyond this grant.
3. Provide a brief outline of the distinct value proposition of your project in terms of the following outcomes:
  - a. improving the commercial prospects of innovative clean technology start-ups in Australian and/or international markets
  - b. developing the clean technology innovation ecosystem in NSW.

### Full application stage

1. Provide a detailed outline of the proposed services including how they will support the development of a strong pipeline of clean technology start-ups in NSW. Where possible, include details on the number, length and size of start-up cohorts that will be supported over the project duration.
2. Provide a detailed outline of your proposed business model including fees for participants and equity acquired from participating start-ups (if any) and how the incubator, pre-accelerator or accelerator will be sustainable beyond this grant.
3. Provide a detailed outline of the distinct value proposition of your project in terms of the following outcomes:
  - a. improving the commercial prospects of innovative clean technology start-ups in Australian and/or international markets
  - b. developing the clean technology innovation ecosystem in NSW.
4. Outline any additional activities outside the project you will do (if any) to support the broader clean technology ecosystem.

## Merit criterion 2: Management capability

This criterion is worth 25% of the assessment score. The table below sets out the responses required at each stage of the application process.

### EOI stage

1. Outline your relevant prior experience supporting clean technology start-ups and researchers and demonstrated capability to deliver the project.
2. Provide high-level details of any partner organisations that will be collaborating on this project and the proposed governance arrangements. Attach a letter of support from each partner organisation.
3. List key personnel on the delivery team who will be involved in the design, delivery and ongoing management of the project. Attach a short CV for all key personnel outlining their relevant expertise and role in the project delivery.

### Full application stage

1. Provide a detailed overview of your prior experience and demonstrated capability to deliver the project and/or your access to appropriate personnel with the relevant business, commercialisation and technology expertise. Attach a short CV outlining the relevant expertise and role of all key personnel critical for project delivery. You may provide up to three reference letters from start-ups or researchers that have previously been supported or mentored by your organisation or key personnel (maximum 2 pages each).
  2. Provide details of your organisation's capacity to build and maintain relationships to deliver services and opportunities to clean technology start-ups and researchers. Include evidence of partnerships, collaboration, agreements and/or support from other participants in the innovation ecosystem, including research institutions, clean technology end-users and/or investors.
  3. Provide details of the project's governance arrangements in relation to the project (eg. project management and oversight or advisory boards).
-

## Merit criterion 3: Project delivery plan

This criterion is worth 25% of the assessment score. The table below sets out the responses required at each stage of the application process.

### EOI stage

1. Outline the high-level project plan including key objectives, milestones and approximate timeline of deliverables.
2. Provide a high-level outline of the funding required to deliver the project (from this grant and all other sources) including an initial estimate of the administrative and staffing components of the budget.
3. Briefly outline your proposed method for recruiting start-ups and researchers and provide an estimate of the proportion supported by this project that will be NSW-based.
4. List the main delivery risks including proposed mitigation measures.

### Full application stage

1. Provide a detailed project plan including key activities required to meet the objectives, measures of success, timelines and how the project will be evaluated. A template will be provided for your project plan.
  2. Provide a detailed budget including a proposed grant payment profile, justification for the proposed payment profile and details of co-contribution contributions. Applicants must also provide evidence to support the commitment of matched funds.
  3. Provide details of the proposed method and communication strategy to recruit start-ups aiming to commercialise innovative clean technologies including any established networks, databases or prospective participants. Include an estimate of the proportion of start-ups supported by this project you anticipate will be NSW-based.
  4. Provide a risk management plan and your proposed mitigation strategies.
  5. Provide details on how the incubator, pre-accelerator and/or accelerator will be delivered if stricter health restrictions are reintroduced due to COVID-19.
-



## Merit criterion 4: Alignment with NSW Government strategic objectives

This criterion is worth 15% of the assessment score. The table below sets out the responses required at each stage of the application process.

### EOI stage

1. Outline how the project aligns with the grant objectives and the priority areas identified in the [NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Study](#).
2. Outline the preliminary forecast social and economic benefits to the NSW economy. For example, job creation, regional development, improving national or international competitiveness and opportunities for collaboration.

### Full application stage

1. Provide details of the finalised social and economic case for the project. For example, potential investment attracted into NSW, job creation, regional development, improving national or international competitiveness and opportunities for collaboration.
  2. Explain how the potential and actual carbon emission reductions delivered by start-ups supported by the project will be monitored and reported on.
  3. Outline the extent to which valuable knowledge may be generated and shared as a result of the project.
-

# 5. Guidance on developing your application

All applicants should consider the following information when preparing an application.

## Collaborative applications (Merit criterion 2)

Collaboration between research institutes, industry and innovators is critical to accelerating the decarbonisation of high-emitting and hard to abate sectors in NSW. The NSW Government encourages collaborative applications that demonstrate multi-disciplinary expertise and financial co-contributions.

At the EOI stage, applicants are required to provide details of any collaboration involved in the delivery of the project. A letter of support is required from each member of the group. The letters of support or agreements should include:

- details of the partner organisation
- an overview of how the partner organisation will work with the lead applicant and any other partner organisations in the group to successfully complete the project
- details of any funding contributions the partner organisation will provide
- an outline of the partner organisation's relevant experience and/or expertise
- the roles/responsibilities of the partner organisation and the funding and/or resources they will contribute
- details of key contacts for that organisation and any staff that will be involved in the project.

At the full application stage, the applicant must provide full details of the project's governance arrangements. Signed formal agreements between all parties involved in the project will be required prior to executing the grant funding agreement.

## Funding and budgets (Merit criterion 3)

Applicants are required to provide a preliminary budget in their EOI and, if invited, a detailed financial proposal and budget in their full application. When assessing applications, the department may engage external independent advisors to provide advice on whether the financial proposal and budget is deemed sufficient given the specific context of each application (see [application process](#)).

As part of the full application, invited applicants are required to outline a proposed grant payment profile that aligns with the needs of the project. The payment profile is flexible and subject to negotiation for successful applicants. However, applicants should be aware grant funding will not be provided in full upon executing the funding agreement. The department will make an initial payment on execution of the funding agreement. Subsequent payments will be

provided based on the project's forecast eligible expenditure. The timing of subsequent payments will be negotiated with successful applicants.

Successful applicants will have 30 days from the date of written offer to negotiate and execute the funding agreement with the department. The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the funding agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, the department may extend this period.

Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project and will be adjusted for unspent amounts from previous payments. Successful applicants will be required to provide financial reports detailing project expenditure prior to each payment (see [reporting requirements](#)).

The department will set aside 5% of the total grant funding for the final payment. This will be paid following submission of a satisfactory end of project report, demonstrating you have completed outstanding obligations for the project.

A 'value-for-money' assessment will be made as part of the assessment process for both EOI and full application. This assessment will be based on the proposed activities, expected outcomes, project feasibility and amount of funding requested.

## Co-contributions

Grants will only be awarded to projects that can demonstrate matched funding co-contribution from other sources. The minimum co-contribution requirement is dependent on the project locations:

- 1:1 for projects in the Greater Sydney Districts
- 2:1 for projects outside the Greater Sydney Districts (ie. \$2 from NSW Government to \$1 from applicant).

Co-contributions must include a cash component but can include in-kind contributions. Higher cash contributions will be viewed favourably during assessment.

Only projects that can confirm co-contribution funding at the time of submitting the full application will be considered<sup>7</sup> and applicants must ensure that any contractual milestones or obligations tied to those funds are aligned with their funding proposal.

## In-kind contributions

In-kind contributions are non-cash contributions towards the successful applicant's eligible project cost. For in-kind contributions to count toward the eligible project cost they must directly relate to the project and eligible activities. They may include:

- staff salaries
- access to facilities such as office accommodation
- access to services such as coaching, mentoring or business planning
- access to resources such as research, development and commercialisation infrastructure or ICT software.

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<sup>7</sup> This may include confirmation letters from funding bodies or private investors.

The department reserves the right to request successful applicants increase their cash contribution to the project if the reported value of in-kind contributions is not consistent with current market rates or is otherwise unreasonable.

## Eligible expenditure

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be expenditure directly related to undertaking the project
- be incurred by the applicant within the project duration, with the exception of audit costs
- be a direct cost of the project and not to be provided for the benefit or profit of related bodies
- meet the conditions set out in these guidelines and the funding agreement.

Eligible expenditure is calculated as the GST inclusive amount less any GST credits the recipient, or its representative member, is entitled to claim.

Where equipment and resources purchased to undertake the project are also used for activities unrelated to the project, the total cost of those resources considered eligible expenditure may be adjusted proportionally.

Successful applicants must keep payment records of all eligible expenditure and be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. The department may ask successful applicants to provide records of the expenditure they have paid. If a grant recipient does not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

## Employees and contractors

Grant funding can be used to employ project staff critical to the delivery of the project. Grant funds cannot be used to cover the labour costs of existing positions undertaking other work within the applicant's organisation. The department does not consider labour expenditure for leadership staff (eg. CEOs and CFOs) as eligible expenditure.

Grant funds may be used to engage contractors or consultants to manage the project or deliver specific components of the project. All contractors and consultants must be chosen on their merits and ability to effectively deliver the work.

For periods of the project that do not make a full financial year, the claimable salary amount must be adjusted proportionally.

The Australian Taxation Office has a useful tool to help you determine if your project is hiring an employee or a contractor.<sup>8</sup>

## Travel and overseas expenditure

Travel costs must be included in the project budget at the full application stage. If travel costs are not included in the project budget at the full application stage, the department may subsequently approve requests from successful applicants.

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<sup>8</sup> Australian Taxation Office, September 2021, <https://www.ato.gov.au/business/employee-or-contractor/>

Eligible travel and overseas expenditure include domestic and overseas travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to undertake and deliver the project, by project staff, contractors or subcontractors.

Accommodation costs refer to the room expenses only and does not include long-term rental accommodation. Associated costs such as meals, internet, entertainment and other incidentals are not eligible travel expenditure and cannot be claimed as travel expenditure.

Eligible air transport is limited to the economy class fare. Where non-economy class air transport is used only the equivalent of an economy fare is eligible expenditure and the successful applicant must provide evidence showing what an economy air fare costs at the time of travel.

Overseas travel must be at an economy rate, and you must demonstrate you cannot access the service, or an equivalent service, in Australia.

## Administration

Grant funds may be spent on administrative costs directly related to the project.

Administration costs may include office related overheads associated directly with the delivery of the project (eg. stationery, internet costs, accounting fees including independent certification of project finances) where those costs are not currently being supplied or funded by the applicant.

## Ineligible expenditure

Grant funding does not cover:

- debt financing or investment of money in exchange for equity into start-ups
- expenditure on the acquisition of land for a project
- expenditure that does not directly support the successful completion of the project
- items that can reasonably be considered as business-as-usual operational costs, including but not limited to:
  - rent, maintenance costs and utilities
  - marketing, communications, promotional costs and website design – except for new pre-accelerators, incubators and accelerators.
- salaries for positions that have already been accounted for in organisational budgets
- business-as-usual staff costs unrelated to the project such as redundancy or retirement benefits, workers compensation payments, professional fees or memberships
- activities carried out or committed to before a grant is offered and accepted
- legal costs associated with a consortium, disputes or funding arrangements not agreed to as part of the funding agreement
- infrastructure and equipment that can reasonably be assumed to be integral for the core business of successful applicants such as laptops.

## Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest can affect the performance of these grants and public confidence in the use of public money by the department. Applicants or their advisors may have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, if you or any of your board, management or staff:

- have a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application assessment process
- have a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under these grants.

You, including advisors and consultants engaged on this project, must declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or 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 the department in writing immediately.

# 6. Application process

The application and assessment process consists of 2 stages: an initial EOI, followed by full application. Shortlisted EOIs will be invited to submit a full application.

## Stage 1: Expression of Interest

The steps of the EOI process are outlined in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Expression of interest process

A maximum of one EOI may be submitted by each lead applicant.

Following completion of your EOI you will receive an automated email to confirm your submission has been received. If you do not receive an email within two working days, please contact the department by email or phone to confirm receipt.

EOIs will be assessed by an evaluation committee based on your responses to the merit criteria. EOIs will be assessed on a competitive basis. If your EOI is not successful, department staff can provide feedback on your EOI upon request. EOI outcomes cannot be appealed.

## Stage 2: Full application

If your EOI is successful, you will be invited to submit a full application.

The department will provide the necessary application form and templates to support applicants to prepare the requested information. Ensure you address all questions in the application form.

You will be given 8 weeks to complete the full application form. The department will advise you of the due date for your full application.

**Late submissions and incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

If you are a successful applicant, a funding agreement will be prepared based on the information provided in the full application. The department may publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on our website. This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its objectives
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number.

If you are unsuccessful, the department will advise you in writing and provide an opportunity to receive feedback on your application. Full application outcomes cannot be appealed.

## Timing of grants

Table 2 provides detail of the approximate timing allocated to each stage in the grant application and assessment process. The time allocated to each activity is subject to change.

Activity	Approximate timeframe
EOI submission period open	6 weeks
Assessment of EOI submissions and notification of outcomes	8 weeks
Invited applicants prepare and submit full applications	8 weeks
Assessment of full applications and notification of outcomes	9 weeks
Negotiations and execution of grant funding agreements	30 days

Table 2: Timeframes for the Clean Technology Ecosystem Grants

## Who will assess applications?

An evaluation committee will be established to assess applications at the EOI and full application stages. The department may ask external technical experts or advisors to help inform the assessment process. Any experts or advisors will be independent of the department and will be required to meet all governance requirements of the NSW Government and the application process.

The evaluation committee will make recommendations to the department on which applications best meet the required criteria and objectives of these grants. These recommendations will inform the decision to award funding.



# 7. Managing your grant

## General obligations

- Signing a funding agreement commits the applicant to fulfilling the obligations and requirements the agreement outlines. The standard conditions of a funding agreement will not be changed at the request of an applicant. Some key requirements relating to funding agreements are outlined below (this list is not exhaustive):
- comply with all terms and conditions contained in the funding agreement
- notify the department immediately if they become aware of a breach in the terms and conditions contained in the funding agreement
- provide evidence of appropriate insurance coverage
- commencement of your project within three months of receiving funding
- notify the department of any key changes to the organisation or governance arrangements that may impact their ability to deliver the project
- seek prior approval from the department to alter proposed outputs, objectives or timeframes
- provide progress and final reports in accordance with the department's reporting requirements
- include the relevant financial reporting with all progress and/or final reports
- acknowledge the department's support in all promotional material or any public statements about your project in accordance with the department's requirements.

## Reporting requirements

Successful applicants are required to prepare and submit milestone reports periodically throughout the project. The timeframe for reporting and payments will be agreed with department staff when the grant is awarded. These will be outlined in a funding agreement. Generally, milestone reports are required every 6 months, however this will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Each milestone report requires the successful applicant to provide details on any activities, achievements and expenditure. The amount of detail required in each milestone report will be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount. This report will be reviewed by a representative of the department with relevant technical expertise.

Depending on the nature and scale of the project, the department may require ongoing reporting from successful applicants beyond the duration of the project. Reporting arrangements will be agreed with applicants prior to executing the funding agreement.

## Site visits

The department may conduct site visits during the project and at project completion to review compliance with the grant agreement and verify information provided in the milestone reports. The department will provide successful applicants with reasonable notice of any site visits.

## Completing your project

When a project is complete, a final report is required to be submitted that outlines the funding provided, project outcomes and achievements. Final reports may need to have financial statements independently certified. Department staff will provide further information as part of the funding agreement.

A representative of the department will review the final report and provide feedback. The final grant payment will be paid following submission of a satisfactory final report demonstrating you have completed outstanding obligations for the project.

## Evaluation

The department will evaluate the grant program and measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. To guide evaluation the department may use information from the EOI and full application submissions, project milestone and final reports, site visits and interviews with successful applicants and other key stakeholders.

The department may contact successful applicants up to five years after project completion for more information to assist with this evaluation.

## Privacy

We use the information you supply to us for processing and assessing your application. While we do not publicly release your application as a matter of policy, we may be required to do so under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 or other lawful requirement.

The department may also disclose information you supply to us for the purpose of evaluating and/or auditing its grant programs. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

More information on the [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#) is available on the website.

# Appendix 1: Eligible organisations

As a part of the application, the lead applicant must demonstrate they are one of the following organisation types:

- an Australian entity duly incorporated under the [Corporations Act 2001 \(Cth\)](#) (Corporations Act) and hold and comply with all necessary authorisations that are material to the conduct of the business of the applicant(s)
- a public or private university duly established or recognised by or under the law of the Australian Government, an Australian state or territory government and/or registered with the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#)
- an Australian Government entity under section 10 of the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 \(Cth\)](#)
- an Australian state- or territory-owned body corporate, or a subsidiary of an Australian state- or territory-owned body corporate
- an Australian state, territory or local government or council.

Note: In some limited circumstances, a legal entity other than that listed above may be accepted as an eligible applicant. Any other entity that wants to apply for these grants should contact the department prior to the lodgement of applications.

# Net Zero Plan



## For more information

For more information about Net Zero Industry and Innovation and the Clean Technology Innovation grants [visit our website](#) or email us at [netzeroindustry@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:netzeroindustry@environment.nsw.gov.au).