

Premier's Department

000

NSW Research Attraction and Acceleration Program: ITRP Co-Investment Research Program

Program Guidelines

February 2026



Grant Program Details	
Opening date and time	Monday 16 February 2026 2:00 PM
Closing date and time	Monday 9 March 2026 2:00 PM
Application outcome date	29/05/2026
Decision-maker	The Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology will consider recommendations from the Assessment Panel and make final decisions on whether to support the application.
NSW Government Agency	NSW Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer
Type of grant opportunity	Targeted, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	Successful applicants will be awarded funds from a maximum available pool of \$300,000 (excluding GST). Recommended funding levels will be at the discretion of the Assessment Panel. No single applicant is eligible to receive the full amount.
Enquiries	raap.grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

Contents

Overview of grant/grants program	1
1 Overview of grant program	2
1.1 Purpose and objectives.....	2
1.2 Grant value.....	3
Selection criteria	4
2 Selection criteria	5
2.1 Eligibility criteria	5
2.1.1 Who is eligible to apply for the grant?.....	5
2.1.2 Who is not eligible to apply for the grant?.....	5
2.1.3 Eligible locations.....	5
2.1.4 Eligible costs.....	5
2.1.5 Ineligible costs.....	6
2.2 Assessment criteria.....	6
Application process	7
3 Application process	8
3.1 How to apply	8
3.2 Key dates.....	8
3.3 Queries during the application process	9
Assessment process	10
4 Assessment process	11
4.1 Assessment of grant applications	11
4.2 Who will assess applications.....	11
4.3 Who will approve the grant?.....	12
4.4 Notification of application outcome	12
4.5 Publication of grants information	12
Successful grant applications	13
5 Successful grant applications	14
5.1 Grant agreement.....	14
5.2 Grant payment.....	14
5.3 Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements	14
5.4 Evaluation.....	14
5.5 Acknowledgement.....	15
Additional information and resources	16
6 Additional information and resources	17
6.1 Complaint handling.....	17

6.2	Access to information.....	17
6.3	Ethical conduct.....	17
6.3.1	Conflict of interest management	17
6.3.2	Confidentiality	17

1

Overview of grant/grants
program

1 Overview of grant program

The NSW Government established the annual Research Attraction and Acceleration Program (RAAP) in 2012 to support innovation and continued investment in NSW research and development. The RAAP is administered by the NSW Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer (OCSE) within the NSW Premier's Department ('the Department').

The Commonwealth's Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP), delivered by the Australian Research Council (ARC), provides funding for research projects focused on issues facing industry in priority areas for Australia. In this RAAP funding round the NSW Government will provide co-investment support for NSW applicants who were successful in the Commonwealth Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP) ARC 2025 ITRP Selection Round.

Co-investment grants allow the NSW Government to leverage nationally significant research and training programs headquartered in NSW by providing a modest grant to support their activities in NSW. Eligible NSW ITRPs are invited to apply for co-investment from the available pool of funding, which is then assessed by a panel of judges considering their impact and alignment to the RAAP objectives and NSW priorities.

The benefits of investment in emerging research capabilities and fostering research collaborations across the innovation ecosystem are highlighted in several NSW Government strategic documents such as the NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap, NSW Innovation Blueprint and NSW Industry Policy. These documents outline priority sectors, industries, technologies and applications of the NSW Government.

Funding is provided on a targeted competitive basis.

The ITRP Co-Investment Research Program (the Program) will be administered in accordance with the NSW Grants Administration Guide and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs).

1.1 Purpose and objectives

Research collaborations addressing critical challenges and opportunities for industry is key to developing a deep-tech, highly skilled and globally competitive economy in NSW. Fostering innovation between academia and industry underpins the state's innovation capacity and its ability to turn emerging research into new industries, technologies and services.

RAAP funding will be targeted at those ITRPs that contribute to economic, environmental, social or technological outcomes in NSW and demonstrate engagement and collaboration with NSW industry and research sector.

The Assessment Panel will also consider the ability of the ITRP to leverage RAAP funding with its awarded Commonwealth grant into meaningful outcomes for NSW. Competitive applications will be able to articulate how the RAAP grant will enhance, extend, deepen or otherwise positively impact NSW above and beyond the Commonwealth funding. Applicants will demonstrate their knowledge of how their hub or centre will align and address NSW priorities and strategies and deliver impact for NSW. The Assessment Panel will seek to understand the impact of the hub or centre as a whole, including how Commonwealth and partner investment will drive impact and benefit in NSW and how the proposed RAAP funding will specifically enhance or deliver new impact opportunities for NSW.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- leverage Commonwealth funding in research and training excellence
- enhance the impact of NSW ITRP hubs and centres
- grow and deepen NSW research, innovation and the talent ecosystem in line with NSW priorities

The intended outcomes of the Program are:

- increased research and training excellence in NSW
- attraction of research and training talent and investment into NSW
- increase translation of IP and development of future workforce needs

1.2 Grant value

Funding will take the form of a cash contribution following the establishment of the ITRP Hub or Training Centre following the execution of a Funding Agreement between the applicant and the Department.

The grant must only be used on activities undertaken within NSW, and on staff, students or equipment located in NSW.

Successful applicants will be awarded funds from a maximum available pool of \$300,000 (excluding GST) with the final amount decided at the Department's discretion. The funding pool is open for eligible applicants however the amount recommended to the Department is at the discretion of the Assessment Panel. The quantum of funding awarded to successful applicants will depend on the overall quantity and quality of applications received. Note that no single application will receive the maximum allotted funding.

2

Selection criteria

2 Selection criteria

2.1 Eligibility criteria

The OCSE cannot consider your application if it does not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

2.1.1 Who is eligible to apply for the grant?

To be eligible for the Program applicants must:

- be a NSW led bid awarded funding from the Commonwealth's 2025 Industrial Transformation Research Program (Research Hub or Training Centre streams)
- be headquartered in NSW. For the purposes of this grant, headquarters is defined as the main administrative office of the Hub or Centre, and location of the CEO. Headquarters must remain in NSW for the period of the RAAP Agreement
- have at least 40 per cent of operations spent in NSW to be eligible for co-investment

2.1.2 Who is not eligible to apply for the grant?

You are not eligible to apply for the Program if you are:

- an unsuccessful applicant under the Commonwealth Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP) ARCs 2025 ITRP Selection Round

The Department, at its sole discretion, may decide that an application is ineligible for funding. This may include any person or business activity that could cause reputational and/or other risks to the NSW Government.

2.1.3 Eligible locations

The Headquarters of the ITRP must be in NSW with at least 40 per cent of operational spend in NSW to be eligible for co-investment.

2.1.4 Eligible costs

The grant must only be used on activities undertaken within NSW, and on staff, students or equipment located in NSW. For example, grant funds might be used to:

- fund employment of technical and targeted engagement staff at the NSW nodes, technical staff referring to those roles with a specialised technical capability or targeted industry, business or application engagement/specialist roles in NSW
- support scholarships or fellowships of students or post-doctoral researchers to be located within NSW
- support ITRP Research Hub or Training Centre travel or exchanges of researchers who are based in NSW, or to support visits or exchanges of people to NSW for centre-related activities
- cover expenses related to rent or fit out of offices and laboratories located in NSW
- purchase or lease instrumentation or plant equipment located in NSW.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project cost and request evidence of costs such as supplier contracts, quotes, and invoices. We may request financial reports and credit checks from independent third-party service providers.

You must demonstrate value for money by ensuring project costs are reasonable and reflective of market rates. We may use industry cost benchmarks to assess whether costs are reasonable.

Your costs outlined in your co-investment application will be considered competitively against other applications as well as the impact for NSW. Outlining the value and impact of your proposed grant spend for NSW and how it relates to the program objectives and outcomes is critical for a competitive application. Your grant spend should seek to amplify and leverage your Commonwealth funding to further grow the NSW innovation ecosystem and address NSW priorities.

The Department will make the final decision on whether a claimed cost is eligible or reasonable (and only pay the reasonable amount).

All eligible costs will be paid inclusive of GST.

2.1.5 Ineligible costs

The grant cannot be used for the following activities:

- publication fees
- on staff, equipment or services based outside of NSW with the exception of procuring equipment or staff to then be located within NSW
- administrative and management staffing and costs required through the set up and running of the ITRP– which would reasonably be covered by the Commonwealth grant.

2.2 Assessment criteria

The Assessment Panel (Panel) will make recommendations for funding against the assessment criteria in section in Table 1, and how the application meets the program objectives and outcomes, listed in section 1.1 of the Guidelines. The criteria outlined will give the Panel insights into the ITRP's overall 'mission', their purpose, as well as the specific value of the requested RAAP funding.

It is important to note that the Panel is not likely to have specific technical or industry expertise relevant to your ITRP and so using plain English is important in developing an application.

Panel members will individually assess all eligible applications against each criterion set out below:

Table 1: Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Description	Weighting
Engagement and Collaboration	Demonstrated collaborative partnerships and engagement in NSW and nationally. Articulation of meaningful collaborations that will contribute to the innovation ecosystem in NSW.	10%
Value-add of RAAP funding to the overall ITRP mission	Use and value-add of RAAP funding to the ITRP program and its clear expenditure and benefits to NSW	20%
Value of the ITRP's mission	Value of the ITRP's proposed research or training and the need/problem it will solve and/or market/industry it will impact.	20%
Impact of the ITRP to NSW innovation ecosystem and Government priorities	Articulation of how the ITRP will impact, expand, deepen the NSW research ecosystem with NSW Government priorities and innovation ecosystem	25%
Contribution to skills and/or commercial capacity	Demonstrate how the hub/centre will contribute to skills, advanced training and workforce development for NSW priority industries, technologies or focus precincts. AND/OR how the hub/centre will support commercialisation and translation of NSW R&D into commercial industries, products and services.	25%

3

Application process

3 Application process

3.1 How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these Program Guidelines.

Applications are due by **9 March 2026 14:00 AEST**.

To apply you must:

- complete the SmartyGrants online application
- provide all the information requested
- address all the eligibility criteria
- address all the assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your application by the timelines outlined in Section 3.2

You are responsible for ensuring your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Crimes Act 1900 No 40 (NSW)*. We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

Applicants must not lobby the NSW Government on an issue related or seen to be related to the Program that may be perceived to give an unfair advantage to the applicant. Applicants are required to comply with all applicable laws including the [NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct](#).

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at raap.grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing time. You cannot change your application after you have submitted your application.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

3.2 Key dates

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

Table 2: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Applications open	Monday 16 February 2026 14:00 AEST
Applications close	Monday 9 March 2026 14:00 AEST

3.3 Queries during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact us at raap.grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

The OCSE will endeavour to respond to questions within three working days.

4

Assessment process

4 Assessment process

4.1 Assessment of grant applications

The assessment of applications will be led by the Department. Your application will be considered based on a two-stage process, as outlined below. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage. We consider eligible applications through a targeted competitive grant process.

Applicants' suitability for RAAP co-investment funding will be based on the proposed research to be undertaken, the benefits to NSW, and proportion of expenditure/activities to occur in NSW, as reflected in their application form.

Stage 1: Eligibility Assessment

The OCSE Secretariat will conduct an initial eligibility screening for all applications according to the published eligibility criteria in these Program Guidelines that are set out Section 2.1: Eligibility Criteria.

Only applications which meet all eligibility criteria will progress to assessment against the assessment criteria.

Stage 2: Assessment by the Assessment Panel

The Panel will assess each application on its merits and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which applications are to be awarded a grant.

On behalf of the Panel, the Department may seek additional information about you or your application.

The Panel has the discretion to recommend that an applicant receive a smaller amount of funding than indicated in their application.

The Panel members are expected to assess all eligible applications unless they have a declared conflict of interest for a certain application(s).

Panel members will individually assess all eligible applications against each criterion set out in Tabel 1.

4.1.1 Alignment with NSW Government priorities and precincts

The Panel will consider the alignment of the application with the following NSW Government priorities and policies:

- [NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap](#)
- [NSW Innovation Blueprint](#)
- [NSW Industry Policy](#)

4.2 Who will assess applications?

An Assessment Panel formed by the Department will assess each application on its merits and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which applications should be awarded a grant. The membership of the Panel will be determined by the Department in its sole discretion and can include NSW Government representatives as well as external assessors. The Panel will be chaired by the Department.

On behalf of the Panel, the Department may seek additional information about you or your application.

The Panel may recommend part-funding of proposals if there is insufficient funding available for the whole proposal or where only a component of the proposal is considered suitable/eligible.

4.3 Who will approve the grant?

The Panel will provide recommendations to the Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology on the suitability of each proposal for funding.

The Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology will consider recommendations from the Assessment Panel and make final decisions on whether to offer funding to each applicant.

4.4 Notification of application outcome

Successful applicants will be notified via email. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant. This could include a request to keep the grant confidential for a specified period due to an announcement being made by the NSW Government in relation to this Program and your award.

The NSW Government will notify successful applicants in May 2026.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within 20 business days from the Assessment Panel meeting and will be offered feedback if requested.

4.5 Publication of grants information

The Grants Administration Guide (Guide) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide).

In accordance with these requirements, relevant information about the grants awarded will be made available on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as soon as possible after the grant funding is approved or declined

5

Successful grant applications

5 Successful grant applications

5.1 Grant agreement

All successful applicants under this RAAP co-investment support round, and who accept the offer of a grant will be required to enter into a formal Funding Agreement relating to the grant.

The Agreement will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for activities occurring in NSW, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant.

The Agreement must be signed by at least one core participant, or the CEO of the centre.

The NSW Government makes no binding funding or other commitment to the applicant unless and until both parties have signed a Funding Agreement. The Agreement will require the successful applicant to provide a copy of all relevant insurances and any other relevant supporting documentation as requested by the Department.

5.2 Grant payment

The grant will be paid and distributed directly in a single tranche to each successful applicant.

Invoices for grant payments will be submitted and paid within 2 months of agreement execution.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations. We do not provide advice on your particular taxation circumstances.

All payments are inclusive of GST.

5.3 Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

You must submit reports in line with the timeframes in the Funding Agreement.

The Agreement will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for activities occurring in NSW, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant.

We will expect you to report on a range of metrics which include:

- progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes via an annual report over the life of the ITRP
- reporting will cover both the ITRP's mission and the RAAP funded components and their impact to NSW wherever possible as they relate to the Program objectives and outcomes
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant
- expenditure of the grant

Reporting is used to help inform NSW Government policy and funding decision. The insights and impacts captured in reporting of ITRPs, and NSW co-investment is important for the future of the RAAP program and the broader NSW science and innovation agenda.

5.4 Evaluation

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

We may contact you up to three years after you after the closure of the ITRP for more information to assist with a long-term evaluation of the program.

The Department and the NSW Audit Office reserve the right to undertake an audit of Program funding and support within seven years. Tracking and reporting will be a requirement of the Funding Agreement.

5.5 Acknowledgement

All recipients of NSW Government funding should acknowledge this financial support in accordance with the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Rebates available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.

We expect to be informed of any significant public announcement, marketing, press announcements, or official launch in relation to the ITRP.

The NSW Government logo should be used on all materials related to grants provided. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the NSW Government.

6

Additional information and
resources

6 Additional information and resources

6.1 Complaint handling

If you do not agree with the way the Department has handled your enquiry or complaint, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman. The NSW Ombudsman will not consider a complaint unless the matter has been first raised directly with the Department.

The applicant must lodge a complaint with the Department in writing and submit it to raap.grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

6.2 Access to information

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available
 - encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
 - giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
 - restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure
-

6.3 Ethical conduct

The Department will administer the grant in accordance with the published Grant Guidelines and the principles and processes set out in the NSW Grants and Administration Guide.

The Department will implement measures and controls to enable a fair and transparent process and incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities, and other inappropriate conduct.

6.3.1 Conflict of interest management

Where a conflict of interest is identified, the Program Manager will be responsible for following the procedures set out in the Project probity, risk and assessment plan and implementing appropriate management actions.

6.3.2 Confidentiality

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, your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to non-disclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the funding agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the Assessment Panel and other NSW Government employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of the Department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other NSW Government departments or agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the NSW Parliament

The Funding Agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the funding agreement.