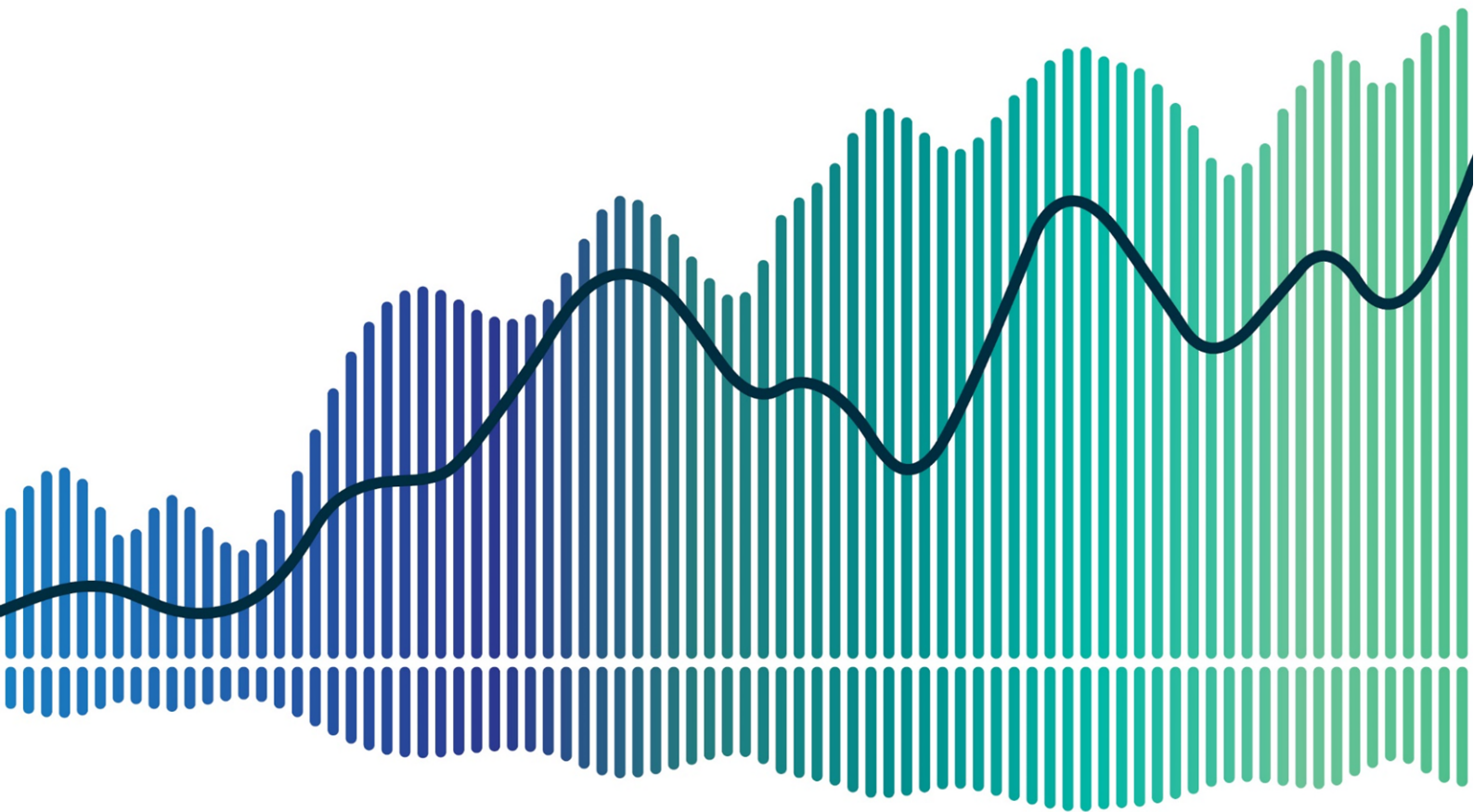




Australian Government
Department of Education



**Australia's Economic Accelerator
Seed Grants
2023 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES**

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Introduction

These grant guidelines establish the rules which govern the administration of Australia's Economic Accelerator (AEA) Seed Grant Program (AEA Seed) including the application, eligibility, and selection processes to be followed and the selection criteria that will be used to recommend grantees.

These guidelines contain information for AEA Seed grant applicants.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the objectives of AEA Seed
- the eligibility requirements and selection criteria
- how grant proposals are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grant will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

Program guidelines reflect the Other Grant Guidelines (Research) 2017 (OGG) made under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA). Program guidelines as articulated in this document may be updated to ensure consistency with the OGG. Amendments to, or clarification of, these guidelines may be made by the Department of Education (the Department) at any time.

1 About the AEA grants program

The Australian Government recognises the important role our universities undertake in Australia's research and development (R&D) ecosystem and supporting the skills needs of our future workforce.

The AEA will accelerate reform in the higher education sector to promote research translation and commercialisation capacity through the establishment of a new funding program to invest in priority-driven objectives aligned with the National Reconstruction Fund. The AEA will initially run over ten years from 2023 to 2032, supported with funding from the \$1.6b investment by the Australian Government in university research commercialisation. The program is part of the Australian Government's [University Research Commercialisation Action Plan](#), and forms part of its efforts to supercharge commercialisation of Australia's world leading university-led research.

The AEA consists of AEA Seed, which will act as a pilot for the stage one grants known as AEA Ignite, and stage two known as AEA Innovate (subject to passage of amendments to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*), with opportunity for further funding through the CSIRO Innovation Fund [Main Sequence Ventures](#), or other investment vehicles. The AEA is designed to build a pipeline from discovery research through to commercialisation, ensuring Australia reaps the benefits of investment in research within the university sector.

Under the AEA, projects can exit after completing an AEA Seed project, with no obligation to proceed through the other stages. Additionally, projects can apply to AEA Innovate, without having undertaken either AEA Seed or AEA Ignite. AEA Seed will run over five months in the first half of 2023, supported by a \$10million investment by the Australian Government.

Day-to-day administration of AEA Seed will be provided by the Department.

1.1 Program Objectives

The objectives of AEA Seed are to:

- a. Support higher education providers bridge the divide between basic research activities and commercialisation outcomes, through closer engagement with industry partners
- b. support research activities aligned to national priority areas, undertaken by higher education providers
- c. boost the research capability of higher education providers to conduct research with high commercialisation potential
- d. foster a culture of collaboration between universities and industry; and
- e. encourage industry engagement and investment in university research, boosting research capability in areas with the greatest potential for economic impact.

1.2 About the AEA Seed grant opportunity

AEA Seed grants are available to support proof-of-concept projects (Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3 to 5).

Projects must be aligned with the priorities of the National Reconstruction Fund outlined on the Department's website. Priority consideration will be given to projects addressing the **four** priority areas of:

- renewables and low emissions technologies
- medical science
- value-add in resources, and
- value-add in agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

Projects funded under the AEA Seed will be selected through a competitive grants process. The Program Delegate will award grants based on the recommendations of the AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors.

Funding awarded under this program is eligible for inclusion as research income in the Higher Education Research Data Collection.

1.3 Important Dates

The final commencement and proposal assessment dates for AEA Seed grants will be available on the Department [website](#).

You must submit a proposal between the published opening and closing dates. Tranche One submissions will close for assessment, and it is intended that Tranche Two proposals will open one week later. We cannot accept late submissions.

Applicants that have commenced but not submitted a proposal during either Tranche of the AEA Seed need to begin their proposal again when the AEA Ignite grant opportunity opens.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project upon approval of, and conditions being imposed on, the Grant through a Conditions of Grant document.

Table 1: Indicative timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Dates
AEA Seed Tranche One	
Submission of proposals open	6 February 2023
Submission of proposals close	17 March 2023
Assessment of proposals & approval of outcomes	20 March – 12 May 2023

Activity	Dates
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	At the time of grant decisions
AEA Seed Tranche Two	
Submission of proposals open	27 March 2023
Submission of proposals close	5 May 2023
Assessment of proposals & approval of outcomes	15 May – 30 June
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	At the time of grant decisions
Project delivery	
Earliest start date of project	From date of execution of grant agreement
End date of grant activity	Within 12 months of approval of, and conditions being imposed on, the Grant

2 Australia's Economic Accelerator: AEA Seed grants processes

Australia's Economic Accelerator is designed to achieve the Australian Government objectives for commercialisation of university research

The AEA Seed grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to the Department of Education's Outcome 2.6 to increase Research Capacity. The Department works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program.

The full AEA grant opportunity will be available in two stages, AEA Ignite and AEA Innovate grants (subject to passage of amendments to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*) and will commence after an initial AEA Seed has concluded. The AEA Seed is expected to test feasibility and implementation procedures prior to roll-out of the full AEA.

Grants awarded under AEA Seed are solely for the purpose of translating research activity into commercial outcomes, including to demonstrate proof-of-concept, validate research in a laboratory or real-world environment, proof-of scale, and develop and test prototypes.

Two grant rounds will be open for six weeks and assessments of proposals will be made between rounds.



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on our [website](#).



You (the Lead Organisation) complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form and address all the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant. Proposals are submitted online through the Department's RMS grants management system.



We manage the assessment of all grant applications

We assess the proposals against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. The AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors then assess your eligible application against the selection criteria, including an overall consideration of value with money.



We make grant recommendations

The AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors will make recommendations on the merits of each proposal (including the level and duration of funding for each project) to the Program Delegate, who is the final decision maker.



Grant decisions are made

The Program Delegate decides which proposals are successful, and the level of funding and duration of funding for each approved project, taking into account public governance and accountability requirements.



We notify you of the outcome

You will receive notification of the outcome of your proposal through the RMS grants management system. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until Conditions of Grant have been finalised with successful applicants.



Announcements

We will list successful grants on the Department's website and an announcement may be made by the responsible Minister, for the purposes of the AEA this is the Minister for Education.



We impose conditions on the grant

We will impose conditions on the grant that reflect the nature of the project and will be proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

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



Evaluation of the Seed Program

We evaluate your specific grant activity on the effectiveness of AEA Seed and commercialisation in national priority areas. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

3 Grant amount and grant period

Authority to provide AEA grants funding is provided under Part 2-3 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA). A total of \$10 million in funding has been allocated for the AEA Seed grants.

3.1 Grant amounts

- The minimum grant amount is \$50,000 per project.
- The maximum grant amount is \$500,000 per project.
- Multiple grants may be awarded per project up to a maximum amount of \$500,000 per project.

It is anticipated that most grants will be between \$100,000 - \$300,000, depending on the scope of the grant activity and its complexity.

Proposals seeking more than \$200,000 must identify and cost at least two phases of work that break the project into distinct steps.

For the avoidance of doubt, AEA Seed funding will count towards the \$500,000 project cap on AEA Ignite grants.

3.2 Grant period

Projects must be completed between three to 12 months from the project's commencement.

The maximum grant period is one year. After this period, you will be expected to report on the outcomes of the grant and may be required to provide ongoing reports for a further two years.

4 Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applications must:

- include one Lead Organisation. You may also include additional Collaborating Organisations and Partner Organisations
- nominate one Lead Entrepreneur (LE) that commits a minimum of 0.5 FTE to the project over its term
- nominate any Collaborating Entrepreneurs and/or Partner Entrepreneurs
- make in-kind contributions towards the grant activities

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all the eligibility criteria.

We cannot provide a grant if you receive funding from another government source for the same stages of development as in your Seed Program proposal.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

Only Table A and Table B institutions listed in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) are eligible to apply for grants under AEA Seed. Researchers must be affiliated with one of these institutions to apply for AEA Seed funding on behalf of one of these institutions.

4.2 Lead Organisations and Collaborating Organisations

The organisation that submits the application will be the 'Lead Organisation' and the delegate will approve grants to, and impose conditions on the grant to, the Lead Organisation. All other Table A and Table B organisations named on the application will be a 'Collaborating Organisation'.

4.3 Partner Organisations

An organisation cannot be a Partner Organisation if it is:

- a Lead or Collaborating Organisation
- a controlled entity of any Lead or Collaborating Organisations
- 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' (www.nationalredress.gov.au)
- named as an organisation that has not complied with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Cth); or
- named as an organisation on the list of persons and entities designated as terrorists. The list and more information on the anti-terrorism requirements are available at www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/security/sanctions/consolidated-list.

Partner Organisations must:

- participate in the project for the grant period
- provide evidence of new or on-going collaboration directly with the Lead Organisation and/or Collaborating Organisations, where appropriate; and
- include a letter of support in the proposal that provides:
 - details of the Partner Organisation
 - an overview of how the Partner Organisation will work with the Lead Organisation and any other organisations in the group to successfully complete the project
 - an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the Partner Organisation will bring to the group
 - the roles/responsibilities of the Partner Organisation and the resources they will contribute (as applicable)
 - details of a nominated management level contact officer.

Partner Organisation cash contributions cannot:

- be sourced from funds awarded or appropriated by the Commonwealth or an Australian State or Territory Government for the purposes of research, nor from funds previously used to leverage government research or research infrastructure funding.

4.4 Who is eligible to be a named participant?

Named participants are those individual researchers nominated for the particular roles identified in the AEA Seed.

These are:

- Lead Entrepreneurs (LE)
- Collaborating Entrepreneurs (CE); and
- Partner Entrepreneurs.

All named participants in a proposal must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform and take responsibility for the authorship and intellectual content of the application.

Lead Entrepreneurs must:

- take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and implementation of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results
- ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of project personnel
- be an employee or PhD student of, or hold an honorary or equivalent position with, the Lead Organisation at the commencement date of the grant and for its duration; and

- make a minimum commitment of 0.5 FTE to the project over its term, which can be funded from AEA Seed grant funds.

Collaborating Entrepreneurs must:

- take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results
- ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of project personnel; and
- be an employee or PhD student of, or hold an honorary or equivalent position with, a Lead or Collaborating Organisation at the commencement date of the grant and for its duration.

Partner Entrepreneurs must:

- take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results; and
- not meet the eligibility criteria to be a Lead Entrepreneur or Collaborating Entrepreneur.

4.5 Technology Readiness Level

Proposals for AEA Seed grants must demonstrate alignment to [TRL 3, 4 or 5](#).

4.6 Alignment with National Reconstruction Fund Priorities

Projects must be aligned the priorities of the [National Reconstruction Fund](#) outlined on the Department of Industry, Science and Resources website. Priority consideration will be given to projects addressing the **four** priority areas of renewables and low emissions technologies; medical science; value-add in resources, or; value-add in agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

4.7 Intellectual Property

You must warrant your ownership of and access to, or the beneficial use of, any intellectual property necessary to carry out the project.

We do not claim ownership of any intellectual property in a proposal or in any research arising from a project.

Successful projects will be encouraged to utilise the [Higher Education Research Commercialisation Intellectual Property Framework](#) (HERC IP). Lead Organisations will be required to enact innovative IP frameworks and practices to provide certainty and transparency for IP ownership and IP rights associated with the project.

Further information on the Innovative IP arrangements is available in the Conditions of Grant template provided on the AEA website and should be considered when drafting a proposal to any AEA grant opportunity (AEA Seed, AEA Ignite or AEA Innovate).

5 What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

The purpose of AEA Seed grants is to foster research translation activities from concept to commercial outcome.

AEA Seed grants will progress a project's TRL 3 to 5, along a commercialisation pathway. In this range of TRL levels, the objectives are to show proof of concept for a new technology and to work towards developing and testing a prototype of the technology/product in an operational environment, which may include integrating components to develop a working system and trying that out in a simulated context that represents the intended commercial use of the technology.

Eligible activities do not include:

- basic research or research activity that is not conducted for the purpose of showing/validating a function of the technology that will be important for the commercial outcome.

5.2 Eligible locations

The majority of activities and funding expenditure must occur in Australia. Components of a project may be undertaken overseas if the activity cannot be undertaken in Australia and is critical to the successful completion of the project. Eligible overseas activities expenditure is limited to ten per cent of total eligible expenditure unless prior written approval is given by the Program Delegate.

5.3 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure you have incurred on agreed project activities. Budgets should be realistic and feasible in relation to the nature of the project.

Eligible expenditure items are:

- Personnel**, which may include:
 - Salary support for named and unnamed participants, including up to 30% on-costs
 - Expert services of a third party if services are directly related to and essential for the project. For example:
 - business development and knowledge transfer costs
 - design costs associated with constructing, assembling, installing and/or commissioning plant or prototypes
 - advice required to obtain relevant regulatory approvals
 - expert assistance for the use of specialist equipment
- Travel** costs essential to the project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel and accommodation, for example to access specialise expertise and/or expertise.
- Verifiable **Plant** and **Equipment** costs, proportional to the time used for the project:
 - depreciation costs of constructed, new or pre-existing plant
 - running costs for new or pre-existing plant
 - hire, rental, or leasing costs
- Use of manufacturing facilities for the purpose of manufacture of prototype materials**
- Other** costs directly relevant to the project, which may include:
 - staff development and training that supports the achievement of project outcomes
 - IP protection expenditure, such as those associated with patenting
 - acquisition of new and leading-edge technology where adaptation to that technology will contribute directly to the success of the project
 - participation of lead or named participants in business or research Accelerator or Incubator programs available in Australia

You must incur the expenditure on your grant activities between the start and end dates of your grant period for it to be eligible.

5.4 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- a. Activities unaligned to a priority of the National Reconstruction Fund.
- b. Basic facilities that should normally be provided by a Lead Organisation, Collaborating Organisation, or Partner Organisation.
- c. Costs associated with research undertaken at TRLs 1 and 2.
- d. Capital works and general infrastructure costs.
- e. Attendance at conferences.
- f. Costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to visas, relocation costs, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges), and other indirect costs.

Grants cannot be used to cover retrospective costs.

6 The selection criteria

A strong proposal will meet the objectives of the AEA Seed Program and will demonstrate that applicants have the capacity, capability, track record and support of their organisation to deliver the project effectively and efficiently. Successful applicants will present projects with clearly articulated research translation pathways that address progression through technology readiness levels.

Proposals will be assessed based on the selection criteria and the indicated weighting. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your proposal should be relative to the scale, complexity and grant amount requested.

Whilst there is no specific value of co-contribution required, proposals with established investment partners will be prioritised. Successful applicants are responsible for securing any additional co-investment from industry to supplement any remaining project expenditure.

Proposals for AEA Seed Program funding will be assessed against the following weighted criteria:

1. Project Impact (40 per cent)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- 1.1 Alignment with a National Reconstruction Fund priority*
- 1.2 Expected outcomes and benefits that could arise from the proposal*
- 1.3 Extent to which the proposal builds on and supports other initiatives, if applicable*

2. Capacity, capability, and resources to deliver project (30 per cent)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- 2.1 Sound budget*
- 2.2 Time dedicated to project by researchers*
- 2.3 Background of researchers*
- 2.4 Resources required/available*

3. Commercial opportunity (10 per cent)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- 3.1 Size and value of potential market*
- 3.2 What issue will this alleviate? How big is this problem?*

4. Research Feasibility (10 percent)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- 4.1 *Sound basis for research*
- 4.2 *Likelihood of successful outcome*
- 4.3 *Potential problems which may arise with the project*
- 4.4 *Ability for research to be completed within the grant period (1 year)*
- 4.5 *Risks and appropriate risk management*

5. Engagement with industry and/or commercial partners (10 per cent)

You should demonstrate this through identifying:

- 5.1 *Strength of engagement*
- 5.2 *Resources/support which partner will provide*
- 5.3 *IP and other agreements*
- 5.4 *Team participation in commercialisation accelerator programs*

7 How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, the sample proposal and the sample Conditions of Grant.

These documents may be found on the Department's website.

To apply you must:

- complete an online AEA Seed proposal on the Research Management System (<https://education.researchgrants.gov.au/>)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria and selection criteria
- include all necessary attachments
- submit your proposal/s by the closing date and time outlined on the Department's website.

You are responsible for ensuring that your proposal is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code 1995](#) and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your proposal from further consideration.

If you find an error in your proposal after submitting it, you should contact us immediately via accelerator@education.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your proposal after the closing time.

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 proposal. You may be invited to interview with the Expert Advisors regarding your project. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the closing date.

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

We will acknowledge that we have received your proposal through a system-generated email.

Applicants may choose to submit more than one AEA Seed proposal, provided project activities in submitted proposals are not substantively the same or have been further developed.

7.1 Questions during the application process

If you need further guidance around the application process or if you are unable to submit a proposal, online contact us at accelerator@education.gov.au or by calling (02) 6287 6789.

8 The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant proposals

We will review your proposal against the eligibility criteria. Proposals that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not progress to the assessment stage.

If eligible, the AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors will then assess your proposal against the selection criteria and against other proposals. Your proposal will be considered on its merits, based on:

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

We may ask external Expert Advisors to inform the assessment process. Any Expert Advisor, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the HESA and Administrative Guidelines.

When assessing the extent to which the proposal represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- the relative value of the grant sought
- the extent to which the evidence in the proposal demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the program objectives.

The AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors will make recommendations to the Program Delegate regarding which proposals to approve for a grant.

8.2 Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate has delegated authority from the Minister for Education to approve AEA Seed grants. The Program Delegate decides which grants to approve, considering recommendations of the AEA Executive Director and Expert Advisors, and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

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

- the approval of the grant
- the grant amount to be awarded
- the conditions imposed on the grant.

9 Notification of proposal outcomes

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

If you are unsuccessful, feedback will be provided on proposals meeting the eligibility criteria through RMS. We will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome and seek feedback on your proposal.

You can submit a new proposal for the same grant (or a similar grant) in any future grant opportunities under the program. You should include new or more information to address any feedback that may have prevented your previous proposal from being successful.

10 Successful grant proposals

The Program Delegate will approve a grant and will impose conditions on that grant which will be provided to the recipient in writing.

The Department may decide to fund some aspect of the project only and the applicant can decide to apply again for further funding if their project progresses through the TRL.

10.1 Project Management Plan

Prior to imposition of any conditions on the Grant, the Lead Organisation must provide a project management plan, which details:

- A clear implementation timetable and tangible milestones
- A comprehensive budget and financial management strategy, including additional cash and in-kind contributions
- A clear approach to tracking, assessing, and reporting on progress; and
- A risk plan identifying any risks and mitigation strategies.

10.2 Conditions of Grant

The Conditions of Grant will include key performance indicators and milestones appropriate to each project. The details of the Conditions of Grant, including the payment schedule and milestones, will be informed by the grant proposal and project management plan.

The Conditions of Grant will include:

- the Lead Organisation
- total funding for the grant activity, including if payments are to be made upfront or by agreed milestones
- commitment of cash and/or in-kind contributions from organisations in the proposal
- a description of activities to be undertaken and milestones met
- agreed performance indicators and outcomes for the project
- the mechanism for unspent funds to be returned to the Commonwealth; and
- reporting requirements, including the frequency of, and information required in, reports.

Subject to the operation of Part 2-5 of HESA, the Department may elect to terminate funding should the project fail to meet key milestones or deliver key objectives as specified in the Conditions of Grant.

Lead Organisations may transfer program funding to one or more Collaborating or Partner Organisations. The funding arrangements for AEA Seed grants must be reflected in a legally binding partnership agreement with participating organisations.

Please note that the acceptance of AEA Seed Conditions of Grants will be time limited. This means AEA Seed Conditions of Grant will need to be accepted or declined within ten (10) working days of receipt of the offer.

For the purposes of AEA Seed, Conditions of Grant will not be negotiable.

10.3 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst you are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations, you may be requested to demonstrate compliance with the following legislation and policies:

- [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)
- [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#)
- [Commonwealth Modern Slavery Act 2018](#) and the [National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2025](#)

To be eligible for a grant, you must declare in your proposal that you comply with these requirements. You will need to declare you can meet these requirements as required in your Conditions of Grant.

10.4 Grants Payments and GST

All amounts referred to in these guidelines are exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), unless expressly stated otherwise.

You are responsible for any and all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

11 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the Department's website.

Approved grants may be announced by the Minister for Education. Information that is likely to be in the public release includes:

- Named participants and professional title
- Lead Organisation and the State or Territory of that organisation
- Collaborating and Partner Organisation(s)
- Funding awarded
- Project ID
- Summary of the project
- Project duration

You should ensure that information contained in the project title and summary descriptions will not compromise your obligations related to confidentiality (and protection of intellectual property).

The Lead Organisation will be notified in writing prior to any announcement.

12 How we monitor your grant activity

12.1 Keeping us informed

You must 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 grant, carry on business and pay debts due.

If you become aware of a breach of the Conditions of Grant, you must contact us immediately.

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

12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports consistent with the Conditions of Grant. We will provide sample templates for these reports as appendices in the Conditions of Grant. You will also be able to download them from the Department's website.

At a minimum, the Lead Organisation will be required to submit a final report on:

- the total eligible expenditure incurred.
- contributions of participants directly related to the project.
- progress towards achievement of milestones and project outcomes as specified in Conditions of Grant.
- any significant obstacles or challenges.
- lessons learned in undertaking the project.

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

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

Progress reporting

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your grant. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project within the agreed grant timeframes.

12.3 Financial declaration

You will be required to provide a financial acquittal report that provides a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the Conditions of Grant and to report on any underspends of the grant money.

12.4 Conditions of Grant variations

The Condition of Grant will require that the Lead Organisation must not make any substantial changes to the activities, timeline, or budget of the project without the prior written approval of the Program Delegate.

Generally, such changes will require a variation to the Conditions of Grant. Requests to vary the Conditions of Grant must be made in writing and addressed to the Program Delegate specified in the Condition of Grant.

Approval of variations to the Conditions of Grant is at the discretion of the Program Delegate. The Program Delegate is not obliged to agree to any variation requested.

12.5 Evaluation

We will evaluate AEA Seed to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your proposal and reports for this purpose. The AEA Seed assessment and granting team may also request an interview or further information from applicants to facilitate the evaluation of AEA Seed.

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

13 Probity

The Australian Government 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 *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

The Department's [Complaints Factsheet](#) applies to complaints about this grant opportunity.

Questions or complaints concerning AEA Seed must be lodged in writing and directed to the AEA Seed Program Manager in the first instance at:

AEA Seed Program Manager
Department of Education
LOC: C50MA7
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Australia
Email: accelerator@education.gov.au.

If the question or complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the AEA Seed Program Manager, the matter can be taken to the:

First Assistant Secretary
Research Division
Department of Education
LOC: C50MA7
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Australia
Email: research@education.gov.au.

If you do not agree with the way the Department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually investigate a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Department.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 Conflicts of Interest

Our purpose is to support the highest quality research and development and, as such, our Conflict-of-Interest Policy is designed to ensure that all material personal interests are disclosed. Conflicts of interest must be identified and managed in a rigorous and transparent way to ensure the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality and fairness of our processes, and to maintain public confidence in our business processes.

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the Department's staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the proposal assessment selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or Expert Advisor
- has 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; or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the AEA Seed.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your proposal, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. Each individual or organisation named in a proposal must declare any conflict of interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the proposal or project to you at the date of submission.

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

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be 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.

13.3 Privacy

The Department is bound by the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) in the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act). The Department uses and discloses personal information only for the purposes in which it was provided, or for a secondary purpose if an exception applies.

The exceptions include where:

- the individual has consented to a secondary use or disclosure
- the individual would reasonably expect the Department to use or disclose their personal information for the secondary purpose, and that purpose is related to the primary purpose of collection, or, in the case of sensitive information, directly related to the primary purpose
- the secondary use or disclosure is required or authorised by law
- a permitted general situation exists in relation to the secondary use or disclosure, and
- it is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of public revenue.

In this situation, the Department is collecting any personal information for the purposes of the AEA Seed Program.

The Department takes all reasonable measures to ensure that personal information collected by us is accurate, up to date and complete. These measures include updating and maintaining personal information when we are advised by individuals that information has changed.

The Department also takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information it holds is protected against loss, unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure and other misuse.

Any individual may contact the Department to obtain information about how to request access to or changes to the information the Department holds about them.

Access may be given unless we consider that there is a sound reason under the Privacy Act, the FOI Act or other relevant law to withhold the information.

All requests for personal information should be made to the Privacy Officer: privacy@education.gov.au.

Or in writing to:

Privacy Officer
Legal Services
Department of Education
LOC: C50MA10
GPO Box 9880
Canberra ACT 2601

13.4 Confidential Information

Subject to this clause, information of a confidential nature provided by you as part of, or in connection with, any Proposal will be treated as commercial-in-confidence information by the Department.

We may disclose the information to:

- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth 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 and their office.
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.
- where authorised or required by law to be disclosed, to those parties.

The Conditions of Grant may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held.

13.5 Freedom of Information

The Department is subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act). The object of the FOI Act is to make available information about the operations of departments, to create a general right of access to information in the possession of Ministers, departments and public authorities and also to create a right for people to amend records containing personal information that is incomplete, incorrect or misleading.

Anyone can make a freedom of information (FOI) request. An applicant is not obligated to state a reason for their request, nor can the Department ask for a reason.

All documents held by the Department can be subject to a FOI request, however, in some cases exemptions from disclosure may apply.

A valid request is one which is in writing, states that it is a request for the purposes of the FOI Act, provides enough information about a requested document to enable its identification, give details on how notices under the FOI Act may be sent to the applicant (the return address may be a physical, postal or electronic address) and must be sent to the department either by post, email or fax or delivered in person.

All requests should be made directly to the FOI Coordinator: foi@education.gov.au.

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
AEA	Australia's Economic Accelerator program, the program under which funding is given
AEA Executive Director	Under AEA Seed a Priority Manager will be known as the AEA Executive Director and may hold responsibilities as the assessor, negotiator, and relationship manager
Collaborating Entrepreneur	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Collaborating Entrepreneur under these grant guidelines
Collaborating Organisation	Table A and Table B institutions listed in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) named on a proposal but is not the Lead Organisation
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity
Commonwealth	the Commonwealth of Australia, also referred to as the Australian Federal Government
completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed, and the grant funds spent by
Conditions of Grant	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant and any conditions attached
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant
Department's website	the website approved by the Department of Education as their official website, Department of Education - Australia's Economic Accelerator
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Selection criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria
Expert Advisor(s)	An adviser with research commercialisation expertise within a priority area that may provide input into suitable projects
grant	a payment made under the AEA Seed consistent with Part 2-3 of HESA
grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake
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.

Term	Definition
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 Departmental Portfolio Budget Statement Program
Grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
GST	the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999
HERC IP	<p data-bbox="671 658 1369 725">Higher Education Research Commercialisation Intellectual Property Framework</p> <p data-bbox="671 748 1378 927">a framework to assist IP management and negotiation in university-led research commercialisation. HERC IP provides standardised IP licensing and contractual agreements as well as education and guidance materials to establish a common and clear starting point to negotiations</p>
HESA	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
in-kind contribution	<p data-bbox="671 1016 1362 1122">in-kind contributions are non-monetary resources used on the Activity where no cash has been transferred to the Recipient's account(s) for the Activity</p> <p data-bbox="671 1144 1382 1509">a contribution of goods, services, materials and/or time to the project from an individual, business or organisation. Values should be calculated based on the most likely actual cost, for example, current market, preferred provider, or internal provider rates/valuations/rentals/charges (that is in the financial year of the date of the proposal) of the costs of labour, workspaces, equipment and databases. The calculations covering time and costs should be documented by the Administering Organisation. We may require these calculations to be audited</p>
Intellectual Property	Intellectual Property (IP) refers to creations of the mind. It could include a brand, logo, invention, design or artistic work, or new plant variety
Lead Entrepreneur	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Lead Entrepreneur under these grant guidelines
Lead Organisation	Table A and Table B institution listed in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) and listed first on a proposal. A Lead Organisation submits a proposal for a grant and will be responsible for the administration of the grant if the proposal is approved for funding
Minister	the Minister responsible for the administration of the HESA, or the Minister's delegate

Term	Definition
Named participants	individual researchers nominated for particular roles in a proposal
National Reconstruction Fund	National Reconstruction Fund
National Reconstruction Fund Priorities	<p>National Reconstruction Fund Priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. value-add in resources 2. value-add in agriculture, forestry and fisheries 3. transport 4. medical science 5. renewables and low emission technologies 6. defence capability 7. enabling capabilities
On-costs	includes workers' compensation insurance, employer contributions to superannuation, recreation and sick leave, long service leave accrual and payroll tax
Participants	all named participants on a proposal (i.e. LEs, CEs, and PEs); and all unnamed researchers such as postdoctoral research associates and postgraduate researchers working on a project
Partner Entrepreneur	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a PE under these grant guidelines
Partner Organisation	an organisation that is providing cash or in-kind to the Lead Organisation with an interest in the research project or its commercial capabilities.
PhD student	a student with candidature in an AQF level 10 qualification at an approved university
PBS Program	described within the Department's Portfolio Budget Statement , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs. A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
Proposal	a request for funding submitted through RMS by an Administering Organisation seeking grant funding under the AEA Seed grant program. It includes the specifics of a proposed grant activity as well as the administrative information required to determine the eligibility of the proposal
Program Delegate	the person that has the delegated authority to make decisions for the program

Term	Definition
Program Manager	the person responsible for the day to day running of the program
Research	<p>for the purposes of these grant guidelines, the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative</p> <p>This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development comprising “creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge”</p> <p>OECD (2015), <i>Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development</i> (p.378)</p>
selection criteria	Selection criteria are the specified principles or standards, against which proposals 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 proposal rankings
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of proposals or the assessment of proposals against the eligibility criteria and/or the selection criteria
Technology Readiness Level	<p>The Technology Readiness Level (TRL) index is a globally accepted benchmarking tool for tracking progress and supporting development of a specific technology through the early stages of the innovation chain, from blue sky research (TRL 1) to actual system demonstration over the full range of expected conditions (TRL 9).</p> <p>There are various TRL rating scales that may be applicable to various technologies. For the purposes of this Program, the Department uses the Department of Defence TRL scale</p>

Term	Definition
value for money	<p>value for money in this document 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 objective • 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.

Appendix A. Technology Readiness Levels

[Department of Defence TRL explanation](#)

Technology Readiness Level Definition	
TRL 1	Basic Research: Initial scientific research has been conducted. Principles are qualitatively postulated and observed. Focus is on new discovery rather than applications.
TRL 2	Applied Research: Initial practical applications are identified. Potential of material or process to solve a problem, satisfy a need, or find application is confirmed.
TRL 3	Critical Function or Proof of Concept Established: Applied research advances and early-stage development begins. Studies and laboratory measurements validate analytical predictions of separate elements of the technology.
TRL 4	Lab Testing/Validation of Alpha Prototype Component /Process: Design, development and lab testing of components/processes. Results provide evidence that performance targets may be attainable based on projected or modelled systems.
TRL 5	Laboratory Testing of Integrated/Semi-Integrated System: System Component and/or process validation is achieved in a relevant environment.
TRL 6	Prototype System Verified: System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (beta prototype system level).
TRL 7	Integrated Pilot System Demonstrated: System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (integrated pilot system level).
TRL 8	System Incorporated in Commercial Design: Actual system/process completed and qualified through test and demonstration (pre-commercial demonstration).
TRL 9	System Proven and Ready for Full Commercial Deployment: Actual system proven through successful operations in operating environment, and ready for full commercial deployment.

TRL 1 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]	TRL 1 Description
Basic Research. Initial scientific research begins. Examples include studies on basic material properties. Principles are qualitatively postulated and observed	Basic principles are observed. Focus is on fundamental understanding of a material or process.
TRL 2 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]	TRL 2 Description
Applied Research. Initial practical applications are identified. Potential of material or process to satisfy a technology need is confirmed.	Once basic principles are observed, practical applications can be identified. Applications are speculative, and there may be no proof or detailed analysis to support the assumptions. Examples are still limited to analytic studies. Supporting information includes publications or other references that outline the application being considered and that provide analysis to support the concept. The

	step up from TRL 1 to TRL 2 moves the ideas from basic to applied research. Most of the work is analytical or paper studies with the emphasis on understanding the science better. Experimental work is designed to corroborate the basic scientific observations made during TRL 1 work.
TRL 3 Definition	TRL 3 Description
Critical Function, i.e., Proof of Concept Established. Applied research continues and early-stage development begins. Includes studies and initial laboratory measurements to validate analytical predictions of separate elements of the technology. Examples include research on materials, components, or processes that are not yet integrated.	Analytical studies and laboratory-scale studies are designed to physically validate the predictions of separate elements of the technology. Supporting information includes results of laboratory tests performed to measure parameters of interest and comparison to analytical predictions for critical components. At TRL 3 experimental work is intended to verify that the concept works as expected. Components of the technology are validated, but there is no strong attempt to integrate the components into a complete system. Modelling and simulation may be used to complement physical experiments.
TRL 4 Definition	TRL 4 Description
Laboratory Testing/Validation of Alpha Prototype Component/Process. Design, development and lab testing of technological components are performed. Results provide evidence that applicable component/process performance targets may be attainable based on projected or modelled systems.	The basic technological components are integrated to establish that the pieces will work together. This is relatively "low fidelity" compared with the eventual system. Supporting information includes the results of the integrated experiments and estimates of how the experimental components and experimental test results differ from the expected system performance goals. TRL 4-6 represent the bridge from scientific research to engineering, from development to demonstration. TRL 4 is the first step in determining whether the individual components will work together as a system. The goal of TRL 4 should be the narrowing of possible options in the complete system.
TRL 5 Definition	TRL 5 Description
Laboratory Testing of Integrated/Semi-Integrated System. Component and/or process validation in relevant environment- (Beta prototype component level).	The basic technological components are integrated so that the system configuration is similar to (matches) the final application in almost all respects. Supporting information includes results from the laboratory scale testing, analysis of the differences between the laboratory and eventual operating system/environment, and analysis of what the experimental results mean for the eventual operating system/environment. The major difference between TRL 4 and 5 is the increase in the fidelity of the system and environment to the actual application. The system tested is almost prototypical. Scientific risk should be retired at the end of TRL 5. Results presented should be statistically relevant.
TRL 6 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]	TRL 6 Description

<p>Prototype System Verified. System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment- (Beta prototype system level).</p>	<p>Engineering-scale models or prototypes are tested in a relevant environment. This represents a major step up in a technology's demonstrated readiness. Examples include fabrication of the device on an engineering pilot line. Supporting information includes results from the engineering scale testing and analysis of the differences between the engineering scale, prototypical system/environment, and analysis of what the experimental results mean for the eventual operating system/environment. TRL 6 begins true engineering development of the technology as an operational system. The major difference between TRL 5 and 6 is the step up from laboratory scale to engineering scale and the determination of scaling factors that will enable design of the final system. The engineering pilot scale demonstration should be capable of performing all the functions that will be required of a full manufacturing system. The operating environment for the testing should closely represent the actual operating environment. Refinement of the cost model is expected at this stage based on new learning from the pilot line. The goal while in TRL 6 is to reduce engineering risk. Results presented should be statistically relevant.</p>
<p>TRL 7 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]</p>	<p>TRL 7 Description</p>
<p>Integrated Pilot System Demonstrated. System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment-(integrated pilot system level).</p>	<p>This represents a major step up from TRL 6, requiring demonstration of an actual system prototype in a relevant environment. Final design is virtually complete. The goal of this stage is to retire engineering and manufacturing risk. To credibly achieve this goal and exit TRL 7, scale is required as many significant engineering and manufacturing issues can surface during the transition between TRL 6 and 7.</p>
<p>TRL 8 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]</p>	<p>TRL 8 Description</p>
<p>System Incorporated in Commercial Design. Actual system/process completed and qualified through test and demonstration- (pre-commercial demonstration).</p>	<p>The technology has been proven to work in its final form and under expected conditions. In almost all cases, this TRL represents the end of true system development. Examples include full scale volume manufacturing of commercial end product. True manufacturing costs will be determined and deltas to models will need to be highlighted and plans developed to address them. Product performance delta to plan needs to be highlighted and plans to close the gap will need to be developed.</p>
<p>TRL 9 Definition [NOT ELIGIBLE]</p>	<p>TRL 9 Description</p>
<p>System Proven and Ready for Full Commercial Deployment. Actual system proven through successful operations in operating environment, and ready for full commercial deployment.</p>	<p>The technology is in its final form and operated under the full range of operating conditions. Examples include steady state 24/7 manufacturing meeting cost, yield, and output targets. Emphasis shifts toward statistical process control.</p>