

Guidelines

Backing research in the Northern Territory

In 2007 the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board, an advisory board of government, facilitated the development of *Backing Territory Research – Research Priorities for the Northern Territory 2008-2015* on behalf of the Northern Territory Government.

These priorities can be accessed at:

http://www.nt.gov.au/business/documents/grants/Research_Priorities_Executive_Summary_A4.pdf

The Northern Territory's research priorities seek to promote research and innovation that draws upon the Territory's strengths to build a prosperous and sustainable future.

The objectives for the development of research priorities guide government investment and decision making in research and innovation by:

- 1) ensuring a strategic basis for decisions in research investment based on areas of comparative advantage, emerging priorities, opportunities, and threats
- 2) driving the development of research and innovation critical mass and collaboration in Northern Territory and with other Australian jurisdictions and international neighbours
- 3) maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of research investment in driving economic growth, environmental sustainability and social welfare
- 4) leveraging co-investment from the Australian Government, industry and other sources of funding by aligning priorities where appropriate.

What is the Role of the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board?

The aim of the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board is to:

- leverage external research funding into the Northern Territory
- build and retain the Northern Territory's capacity for research and innovation
- develop the Northern Territory's comparative advantages in Tropical and Desert Knowledge
- lift the profile of Northern Territory researchers and innovators
- encourage and support research and innovation that meets the needs of the Northern Territory, including the needs of regional and Indigenous Territorians.

The Northern Territory Research and Innovation Grants program is facilitated by the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board. Board members assess all applications and make recommendations for the award of grants.

What types of activity will be supported by the Innovation Grant program?

It is anticipated that projects that are awarded funding from the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Funds Grants will be aligned to the Territory's research priorities.

Projects that further develop an innovative product or service to facilitate its application, implementation or commercialisation may be eligible for a Northern Territory Innovation Grant. The Board is particularly interested in encouraging persons working in or associated with small and medium size business enterprises who are seeking to develop innovative ideas, products, services and approaches to apply for an Innovation Grant.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines *innovation* as the process of introducing new or significantly improved goods or services and/or implementing new or significantly improved processes where new goods, services or processes may involve the development of new technology or an adaptation of existing technology to a new use (e.g. electronic commerce); or may be non-technological in nature (e.g. organisational and managerial change or changes in marketing).

Northern Territory Innovation Grants are expected to better position successful applicants to subsequently seek and obtain external funding from Australian Government or industry programs and/or through commercial investment.

Some examples of activities that might be supported by a Northern Territory Innovation Grant include:

- costs associated with seeking professional advice on Intellectual Property
- costs associated with developing a bid for external funding e.g. an AusIndustry application
- concept development and design costs
- costs associated with building a prototype or product and standards testing
- operational costs of a research project that has no other source of funding available or requires seed funding to commence the project prior to application for external funds
- the purchase of a particular piece of equipment or service to enable an innovative project to be undertaken.

It is expected that the applicant/s will at least match the amount of funding being sought from the Research and Innovation Fund with their own funding and/or in-kind contributions. The Board may consider funding exceptional projects where matching funds and/or an in-kind contribution cannot be provided.

Is there a maximum limit on the funding I can apply for?

There is no maximum funding level set for a Northern Territory Innovation Grant. As a guide, previous successful applicants have been awarded one-off grants of between \$2,000 to and \$15,000.

Applicants must justify the amount of funding they are seeking and demonstrate clearly how the funding is intended to be used.

What are my chances of getting an Innovation Grant?

The Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board has awarded Innovation Grants to up to 40 percent of applicants who have applied for a grant in any given year.

Unsuccessful applicants may wish to seek feedback from the Board, via the Executive Officer, before reapplying in a subsequent grant round.

What criteria will my application be assessed against?

The Board will assess applications in relation to how well they meet the following criteria:

- 1) Level of innovation and/or creativity associated with the project
- 2) Evidence of a clear path for the progression of the innovation towards application, including identification of opportunities for external funding programs to be tendered in the future
- 3) Level of benefit to the Northern Territory
- 4) Demonstrated potential for commercialisation or practical application of the innovation/research outcomes
- 5) Transferability of the outcomes of the project i.e. application across regions, the nation or internationally;
- 6) Level to which the applicant has demonstrated that they have the necessary experience, expertise and resources (or access to these) to successfully complete the project
- 7) Level to which the project's progression is reliant on the grant and whether alternative sources of funding or undertaking the project have been considered.

How do I apply for a Grant?

To apply for a grant you will need to complete an Innovation Grant application form. Copies of the application form can be found at <http://www.nt.gov.au/innovation> or obtained from the Executive Officer, Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board.

Applications close on 31 July 2009

Please note that late applications will not be accepted.

Applications will be assessed by the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board and a list of recommendations put to the Minister for Business and Employment for approval. You will be contacted when the assessment process has been completed.

The Board reserves the right to request additional information from grant applicants.

Electronic applications should be emailed to:

**Mr Ken Harkin
Executive Officer
Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board
innovation.dbe@nt.gov.au**

If you require advice on how to complete this form please, contact the Executive Officer either by email or by phone (08) 8999 5312 or Chris Duncan by email innovation.dbe@nt.gov.au or phone (08) 8999 5004.

NB: The Executive Officer can provide some assistance and advice in the preparation of your application if required. Such assistance, however, does not guarantee that your project will be funded. The applicant is ultimately responsible for the quality and completeness of the application. Please note, the Executive Officer and staff at the Department of Business and Employment who may provide the advice or assistance have no role in the assessment and evaluation of applications.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Upon securing financial assistance, grant recipients will be required to sign a Funding Agreement detailing rights and obligations.

What are my obligations once I receive notification of support for my project?

Grant recipients will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement which outlines obligations for the award of grants including reporting schedules. Progress reports at six monthly intervals with full reporting and acquittal at the conclusion of the project will be required.

Funding of a project may cease where it becomes clear that stated objectives can not, or are not likely to be met.

Grant recipients may also be called upon to provide presentations to the Board during or at the conclusion of their project. This is an opportunity to provide feedback on the program and to showcase the outcomes of your efforts.

Do I need to be a resident of the Territory?

Applicants who will reside and conduct their work in the Northern Territory will be given preference in the selection process.

Timeframe

The Board will consider funding of projects for up to three years.

GST

Grants provided from the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Fund will be GST inclusive. It is recommended that applicants factor this into their budgets.

Indexation

The total grant will be agreed to prior to commencement of the project. Payments will not be indexed to adjust to any CPI movement during the course of the project. Payment schedules will be outlined in the Funding Agreement.

Intellectual property

Where an application seeks a net grant of less than \$100,000 all intellectual property will be retained by the applicant, or as per any prior arrangement made between the applicant and the Board. Where the applicant seeks a grant in excess of \$100,000 the grantor retains the right to negotiate intellectual property rights with the applicant prior to a decision on making an award.

The allocation of intellectual property ownership needs to be settled prior to the Board's final decision on awarding a grant.

Commercial-in-confidence information

For projects involving commercial-in-confidence issues, sensitive information need not be included in the application if the information that *is* provided (e.g. less technical or less specific information) is considered adequate for the Board to judge the merit of the application and potential or likely benefit to be realised from the grant.

All applications submitted as part of the grant process will be treated sensitively and considered on a commercial-in-confidence basis. Applicants should seek professional advice if they are concerned about issues relating to disclosure.

Acknowledgment and promotion

Publication of progress reports, results and other promotional reports should acknowledge support from the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board and Fund and the Northern Territory Government.

The Board and the Northern Territory Government retain the right to report on the achievements and other non-confidential matters associated with supported proposals to promote the value of the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Grants program.