

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 our 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 are the Objectives of the Northern Territory Innovation Grants?

Northern Territory Research Grants Program is primarily aimed at providing partner support for research projects seeking other sources of external funding, such as through Australian Government programs, thereby enabling applicants to leverage significant research funding to the Northern Territory.

The grants are also aimed at promoting collaborative partnerships between research institutions, government research groups and third parties such as small and medium size businesses (SMEs), Indigenous enterprises, community councils and NGOs, who are seeking solutions to specific problems through research.

While the Northern Territory Grants Program is primarily aimed at projects that leverage additional research funds to the Territory, the Board will consider applications for projects where leveraging of additional funding is not possible. Such projects will need to demonstrate the potential to produce significant benefits for the Territory.

Successful applications who are seeking external funding should note that the release of Northern Territory Research and Innovation Grant funding is subject to confirmation that external funding has been secured for the project.

All applications will be assessed against the selection criteria detailed below.

What types of research will be supported by the Research Grant program?

Any research project that can demonstrate that it has the potential to bring benefits to the Territory will be considered for funding under the Northern Territory Research Grant program.

Applicants for Research Grants must demonstrate that their project aligns with the Northern Territory's Research Priorities.

Project proposals for the further development of an innovative product or service to facilitate its application, implementation or commercialisation are welcomed by the Board. Applicants should consider whether such projects are more likely to be assessed by the Board as suitable for funding under the criteria which apply to the Northern Territory Innovation Grants program.

It is essential that proposals are of a high standard, with clearly explained objectives, methods and anticipated outcomes to be eligible for consideration for funding. Please refer to the checklist at the end of the Research Grant application form to ensure you have provided all the information required.

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

There is no maximum funding level set for Research Grants. As a guide, most research grants that are awarded are in the range \$5,000 to \$25,000 per year for up to three years.

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 a Research Grant?

In past grant rounds, 25 to 30 percent of applications for a Northern Territory Research Grant have been approved for funding. This success rate is similar to that of Australian Government Grant Programs administered by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). 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. Ability to foster collaborations among research providers and users (beneficiaries) in the Territory, especially if such partnerships involve SME's (including Indigenous enterprises), industry groups and community councils.
2. Ability to build and retain research/innovation capacity in the Territory.
3. Benefit to the Territory.
4. Alignment with Northern Territory Government research priorities as outlined in *Backing Territory Research: Research Priorities for the Northern Territory 2008 – 2015*.
5. Potential for commercialisation or practical application of research outcomes and innovations.
6. Transferability of research outcomes, i.e. application across a region, across the nation and/or overseas.
7. Ability to leverage external investment.

How do I apply for a Grant?

To apply for a grant you will need to complete a Research 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 are preferred. Please email to:

Mr Ken Harkin
Executive Officer
Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board
innovation.dbe@nt.gov.au
GPO Box 3200, DARWIN NT 0801

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 if I receive NT Research and Innovation Board Grant Funding and I am seeking to leverage external (including Australian Government) Funds?

In general, grants from the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Fund will be provided in accordance with guidelines and the Funding Agreement prescribed by the external funding body from which the applicant has been successful in securing funding. Payments from the Fund for these projects will be contingent on receipt of the external funding.

The Board will require a copy of all performance reporting made to external bodies for the purposes of annually reviewing its programs.

What are my obligations if I receive funding for a project that is not seeking external funding?

Recipients of a Research Grant that is not tied to external funding will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement. Obligations for the award of grants include a reporting schedule. 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 to the Board that stated objectives can not, or are not likely to be met.

Presentation of results

Grant recipients may also be called upon to provide presentations to the Board during or at the completion of their project. This is an opportunity to provide direct 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 research in the Northern Territory will be given preference in the selection process.

Applications from researchers who will reside and/or conduct their research outside the Territory may be considered if significant benefit to the Territory can be demonstrated.

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 and is awarded 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.

Acknowledgment and promotion

Publication of progress reports, results and other promotional reports must 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 as part of promotion of the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Grants program.