



Office of the
Chief Scientist
& Engineer

Emerging Industry Infrastructure Fund (EIF)

Round 2 – Synthetic Biology and Biomanufacturing

Guidelines for Applicants

SEPTEMBER 2022

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- 1. Program Purpose**
- 1.1. The Emerging Industry Infrastructure Fund (**EIIF**) is a NSW Government competitive fund that targets new industries where NSW has, or could have, competitive advantage and where co-investment in joint infrastructure will both build existing industry and attract global companies and investment into NSW.
 - 1.2. The EIIF is administered by the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE), Investment NSW, in the NSW Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade (NSW DEIT).
 - 1.3. The EIIF is consistent with the recommendations of the [Turning Ideas into Jobs: Accelerating research and development in NSW Action Plan](#) (ARDAC Report). The ARDAC Report recommends supporting emerging infrastructure to:
 - Turbocharge precincts – systematically develop precincts to attract national and global technology industries and investment, and drive collaboration with universities, research organisations, start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs to commercialise R&D (Priority Action 3).
 - Target strategic support for NSW Universities – collaborate on research that will drive the state’s future strategic growth industries and research-led attraction of industry, and form partnerships to better leverage Commonwealth Government research funding (Priority Action 4).
 - 1.4. The EIIF priorities are informed by the [NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap](#) released in May 2022. The Roadmap identifies NSW’s current and future research and industry competitive advantages and will inform NSW’s R&D investment and activity over a 20-year timeframe.
 - 1.5. The first round of the EIIF provided \$4M to support the establishment of the Semiconductor Sector Service Bureau (S3B) to be based in Tech Central.
 - 1.6. The NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap identified biotechnology as a key technology theme, with the applications of synthetic biology, biomanufacturing (such as cell-based meats and other applications), and genetic engineering identified as competitive advantages.
 - 1.7. Round 2 of the EIIF will support Synthetic Biology and Biomanufacturing specific infrastructure, facilities, equipment, and platforms which could allow activities such as prototyping, scale-up and testing of products. The supporting staff could connect researchers, industry, start-ups, and supply chains. Programs could include incubation and acceleration support.
- 2. Support available**
- 2.1. EIIF funding will be awarded to applications based on merit-based assessment and will depend on the overall quality and quantity of applications received.
 - 2.2. Up to \$6 million is available to the successful applicant(s), to be delivered within 2-4 years.
 - 2.3. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate on proposals with university and/or industry partners where appropriate and can apply as a consortium of organisations.
 - 2.4. Throughout the application process, applicants may be encouraged by OCSE and/or the Expert Panel to collaborate or prepare a joint bid, such as if there are seen to be synergies or duplication between separate applications. In such cases, applicants will be given the opportunity to submit a revised application which will reflect the joint bid/collaboration.
- 3. Use of grant funds**
- 3.1. Funding will take the form of a cash contribution following the execution of a funding agreement between the applicant and NSW DEIT.
 - 3.2. Grant funding must only be used on activities undertaken within NSW, and on staff, students, or equipment to be located in NSW. Proposals that propose spending grant funding on partners, activities, or items outside of NSW will not be eligible (other than the purchase of equipment to bring to NSW).

3.3. Grant funds may be provided for any of the below which are directly targeted at driving translation, prototyping, testing and scale-up of synthetic biology and biomanufacturing products, and where it can be demonstrated that the activity will increase utilisation and industry outcomes:

- funding shared facilities, communal spaces, equipment, and research infrastructure that connects industry and research, and drives informal exchanges of ideas, networks, and partnerships
- develop pilot and demonstration-scale synthetic biology/biomanufacturing facilities
- laboratory facilities improvement to facilitate industry access
- major equipment upgrades or replacement, or equipment to increase the 'industry offering' of the facility
- highly skilled technical experts where it can be shown that this enhances end-user access or outcomes from the equipment
- researcher access to different types and scales of bioreactors, precision fermentation, etc., that allow necessary scale-up and testing
- business development managers or industry application scientists employed by a university, research infrastructure facility or consortium to assist SMEs and companies to navigate the research pathways and access infrastructure
- industry-focused collaborative programs (including incubation and acceleration support) driving access to infrastructure and commercialisation, which can be joint across facilities.
- programs supporting upskilling and professional development for students, graduates, and industry participants

4. Eligibility criteria

4.1. To be eligible for EIIIF support, the organisation/s applying for EIIIF must:

- Be a university or publicly funded research organisation (PFRO), or their collaborative entities OR
- Be a NSW-located National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) facility or other openly accessible research facility OR
- Be a private firm/s that operate openly accessible R&D and innovation infrastructure OR
- Be a consortium-based application, that includes industry organisation or firms, universities and PFROs, public sector organisations or other organisations.
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- All single-entity applicants must be headquartered in NSW and/or have a major research/innovation presence located in NSW. If a proposal is consortium-based, the proposal lead must be headquartered in NSW. For the purpose of this Program, the following definitions for headquarters and major presence apply:
 - Headquarters - the main administrative office of the applicant or facility and the location of the CEO. Headquarters must remain in NSW for the period of the Agreement
 - Major presence - entities with a major research or innovation presence in NSW are those that retain 40% (or more) of their researchers, developers, or other innovation staff (total staff and PhDs, incl. part-time) in NSW for the period of the agreement.

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- Be financially viable and able to demonstrate they are likely to remain so over the duration of the project.
- Have the demonstrated skills and capacity to deliver the project
- Ineligible applicants include consortia or partnerships with businesses that are insolvent
- Ensure all grant monies are used on activities undertaken within NSW, and on staff, students or equipment to be located in NSW.

Proposals that propose spending grant funding on partners, activities or items outside of NSW will not be eligible (other than the purchase of equipment to bring to NSW).

- Align to the industry, technology and innovation needs of the state for the applications synthetic biology, biomanufacturing (such as cell-based meats and other applications) and genetic engineering identified in the NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap

4.2. It is desirable, that projects be undertaken within, near/or in association with a NSW Innovation Precinct.

The Innovation and Productivity Council defined an innovation precinct as *“Geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators, and accelerators. They are also physically compact, transit-accessible, and technically-wired and offer mixed use housing, office, and retail.”*

4.3. NSW DEIT at its sole discretion, can take other factors into account that may cause a business to be ineligible for support, such as any personnel or business activities that could cause reputational damage or other risk to the NSW Government.

4.4. NSW DEIT reserves the right to assess the applicant's management, its Directors, Officers and entities or individuals that exercise control over an applicant against a fit and proper persons eligibility criterion.

4.5. Where an application is identified as not meeting the above eligibility criteria, the application may be set aside from further consideration at the absolute discretion of NSW DEIT.

4.6. NSW DEIT may seek clarification from any applicant in relation to its application, including seeking further information on the eligibility or selection criteria.

5. Selection criteria

5.1. The application must outline answers to the questions related to the selection criteria to enable the application to be assessed. Failure to provide this information may result in the application being set aside from further consideration at DEIT's absolute discretion.

5.2. As this is a competitive grants process, the assessment will be a comparative assessment of the application against all other eligible applications.

5.3. The EIIIF application form seeks responses to criteria listed in Table 1

Table 1: Selection Criteria

Criteria	Description
Applications will be assessed according to the criteria outlined below:	
Project impact in driving research, development, innovation, commercialisation and industry outcomes for synthetic biology and/or biomanufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How the funding/project will support synthetic biology and biomanufacturing through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• specific infrastructure and platforms which could allow activities such as prototyping, scale-up and testing of products, AND/OR

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect researchers, industry, startups and supply chains, AND/OR • incubation and acceleration support. • Approach for ensuring open access to the infrastructure for researchers, startups and industry
Broader impact across the innovation ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap and ARDAC Report Actions • Alignment with the innovation precinct industry and research strengths • NSW industry, Government agency and end-user linkages • Impact on NSW skills, advanced education and training • Collaboration across the ecosystem
Track record of relevant delivery, experience or expertise to lead a public infrastructure project and/or support program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise or industry knowledge that makes your organisation/s uniquely qualified to deliver this public infrastructure investment and/or program • Track record of current facilities, projects or similar work/collaborations or for industry delivered proposals
Project delivery plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery plan and risk management • Capacity for the total funding sought and provided through the grant, partners, participants, and other funding sources to fully fund the project. Applications can include co-funding proposals and potential leveraging opportunities • Vision for this infrastructure investment beyond the funding timeframe

5.4. The responses to these criteria will be used by NSW DEIT to determine whether to recommend funding to the applicant, and how much funding to recommend.

5.5. NSW DEIT will make recommendations regarding funding allocations to applicants.

5.6. NSW DEIT, through the CEO Investment NSW, in its discretion, may choose not to award or recommend funding under this program.

6. Application process

6.1. The EIIIF Round 2 – Synthetic Biology and Biomanufacturing must be submitted by Smarty Grants by 9:59 am on 20 October 2022

6.2. Requests for an extension may be considered at OCSE's absolute discretion.

6.3. Applicants should clearly identify in their application (including attachments) any information that the applicant requests be treated as confidential.

6.4. All questions in the application form must be answered. If they are not applicable, please indicate.

6.5. The application must be authorised by at least one of the core participants (i.e. by the head of the organisation or their authorised delegate).

7. Selection process

- 7.1. The role of the OCSE is to administer the EIIF, including:
- a. assessing the eligibility of EIIF applications;
 - b. making a recommendation on the successful applicants and the level of funding;
 - c. entering into funding deeds with successful applicants;
 - d. making grant payments; and
 - e. monitoring grant recipients' use of funds. Grant recipients will be required to provide the Department information on how the funding was utilised (*Further details of this are shown at 8.1 below and will be outlined in the EIIF Funding Deed*).
- 7.2. The EIIF Expert Panel will:
- a. assess and rank grant applications according to the EIIF's eligibility and selection criteria; and
 - b. engage with applicants, where appropriate to explore opportunities to collaborate between applicants;
 - c. make recommendations on which applicants, if any, should receive grants and the amount of those grants.
- 7.3. The EIIF Expert Panel will assess each application on a competitive basis relative to the criteria and other applications.
- 7.4. When making their recommendations, the Expert Panel will consider:
- The total funding available
 - The assessment criteria outlined in the EIIF Round 2 Guidelines for Applicants
 - The requested amount against the scope of the project i.e. could the applicant effectively deliver the proposed project with less funding
 - Whether the requested funding amount is too large compared to the project as a whole
 - Whether a reduction could pose significant risks to the success of a project. Advice will be sought from applicants to understand the potential impact if a decision was made to award less funding than was applied for.
 - Whether applicants have sufficient or additional resources or avenues available to raise additional capital other than the EIIF that could assist with the success of their project
 - Whether a decrease of funding will impact the acceleration of R&D and commercialisation.
- 7.5. The Expert Panel has discretion to recommend that an applicant receive a smaller amount of funding than they originally asked for.
- 7.6. The Expert Panel will provide advice on the most appropriate portion of the EIIF Round 2 funding to be allocated to best deliver the objectives of the program.
- 7.7. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the decision on their applications, whether or not they are successful.
- 7.8. NSW DEIT, at its discretion, may choose not to award or recommend funding under this program.
- 7.9. The timetable for the selection process is as follows:

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Tuesday 6 September 2022 EEIF applications open.

Thursday 20 October 2022 EEIF applications close.

December 2022 Applicants are informed of the outcome.

Please note that dates are subject to change.

8. Funding agreements & reporting requirements

- 8.1. All applicants who are successful under the EEIF and who accept the offer of a grant will be required to enter into a formal Funding Deed with NSW DEIT relating to the grant. The Deed 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 for the duration of the terms. Requests for variations or changes to the project will only be considered in limited circumstances. The Funding Deed must be signed by at least one core participant.
- 8.2. The NSW Government may choose to publicly announce funding for individual applications. It may also use information provided to create case studies
- 8.3. All recipients of NSW Government funding should acknowledge this financial support in accordance with the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Grants available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.

9. Probity Advice

- 9.1. The OCSE 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.
- 9.2. An independent probity advisor will be engaged as part of this Program to provide guidance to the OCSE on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness, and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

10. Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

- 10.1. 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 may 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.

- 11. Conflicts of interest** 11.1. Conflicts of interest for NSW DEIT will be handled as set out in the Investment NSW Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- 12. Privacy** 12.1. We treat your personal information according to the NSW DEIT Privacy Management Plan available at investment.nsw.gov.au/privacy and the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).
- This includes letting you know:
- what personal information we collect
 - why we collect your personal information
 - who we give your personal information to.
- 12.2. Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies.
- 13. Disclaimer** 13.1. NSW DEIT does not guarantee or warrant and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to, the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any material contained in this publication. Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.
- 13.2. NSW DEIT recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.
- 13.3. The guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of NSW DEIT.
- 14. Contact** 14.1. For any further questions regarding the EIIF Round 2, contact us through investment.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/