

Premier's Department

Deep Tech Commercialisation Training Program

Program Guidelines

March 2026

Grant Program Details	
Opening date and time	10:00 AM AEDT 30 March 2026
Closing date and time	10:00 AM AEST 23 April 2026
Application outcome date	May 2026
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applications)	July 2026 – June 2029
Decision-maker	Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology
NSW Government Agency	Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer, Premier's Department
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	\$900,000 (\$300,000 per annum for three years. Paid out in three tranches: June 2026, June 2027 and June 2028)
Enquiries	grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

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Overview of the program

1 Overview of program

The Deep Tech Commercialisation Training Program (DTCTP) supports entrepreneurship and commercialisation skills development in NSW by funding a NSW startup incubator or accelerator to provide a statewide deep tech commercialisation training pipeline for NSW-based entrepreneurs.

Administered by the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer (OCSE) within the Premier's Department, the DTCTP will provide funding to a NSW startup incubator or accelerator who in turn will provide promising entrepreneurs with innovative technologies with the commercialisation knowledge to refine their market strategy, identify customers, scale their business, and help them grow and attract additional public and private investment.

The DTCTP will be administered in accordance with the [NSW Grants Administration Guide](#).

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The DTCTP offers grant funding to a startup incubator or accelerator in NSW, helping them deliver commercialisation training programs for entrepreneurs based in NSW.

The DTCTP aims to make training more accessible for these NSW entrepreneurs, enhancing their skills, tools, and networks so they can commercialise their ideas and expand their businesses within NSW.

Key program objectives and requirements:

- **Scope:** Deliver a NSW-wide deep tech commercialisation pipeline that helps early-stage entrepreneurs move from idea/early validation to credible commercialisation momentum, reducing early failure risk and progressing toward follow-on funding (especially public/private capital).
- **Who the program is for:** Support NSW-based entrepreneurs (residing or employed in NSW), commercialising deep tech products or ideas in NSW.
- **Delivery model (flexible by design):** A delivery model that maximises outcomes, provides training across various maturity levels and does not duplicate other free services that are in the market. The training programs should be free to participating entrepreneurs. However, we may consider programs with course fees (in exceptional circumstances) where fees would substantially improve the benefits of the program and not present a barrier to participation.
- **Deep tech-relevant progression content:** Provide practical support that reflects deep tech realities (longer R&D cycles, prototyping, pilots/field tests, hardware/manufacturing pathways, research translation). Content may include market discovery, customer validation, IP strategy, commercial pathway design, capital raising, pilots and field tests, and sector-specific pathways relevant to deep tech.
- **Equity and tailored support:** Show that delivery will be equitable and inclusive, including appropriate tailoring for new, regional/remote NSW, women and Aboriginal entrepreneurs (including barriers to participation and how you will address them).
- **Mentors, networks and community:** Build structured connections to mentors, experts, peers and alumni, and clearly explain how those connections will translate into participant progression (e.g., validation, pilots, investor readiness, grant readiness).
- **Showcase/event(s):** Include at least one annual ecosystem-facing event (e.g., demo day/showcase/graduation) to connect participants with the broader ecosystem and celebrate progress.
- **Communications and pipeline-building:** Implement communications and outreach to sustain a pipeline of participants, drive uptake and completion, and reach the right target segments across NSW over the program term.

- **Measurement and reporting:** Propose a monitoring and evaluation approach in collaboration with OCSE, including KPIs and annual reporting (with a public-facing summary). Reporting should capture reach, participant experience and outcomes across short/medium/long term, acknowledging deep tech timeframes.
 - **Governance and continuous improvement:** Establish governance arrangements that support transparent decision-making, conflict-of-interest management, and iteration of the program based on feedback and sector trends.
-

1.2 Grant value

The DTCTP has total grant funding value of up to \$900,000 (\$300,000 per annum for up to three years).

The grant will be paid across three tranches – in June 2026, June 2027 and June 2028 subject to the grantee meeting reporting and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

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Selection criteria

2 Selection criteria

The DTCTP seeks proposals that maximise outcomes for NSW entrepreneurs. The DTCTP is intended to grow the entrepreneurial skills base in NSW that will create a pipeline for high-potential deep tech ideas and early-stage startups to build commercialisation momentum, reduce early failure risk, and progress towards follow-on funding (including government grants) and/or private capital.

The Department is seeking the proposals from eligible organisations and does not prescribe a single delivery model. Applicants should propose the program design they believe will best achieve DTCTP objectives (Section 1.1), including training, coaching/mentoring, community-building, equity of access and pathways to follow-on capital or grants, while demonstrating prudent and transparent use of public funds.

The selected organisation must design, deliver, manage, promote, monitor, evaluate, and report on the delivery of the DTCTP.

To be considered for funding, applications must first satisfy all eligibility requirements set out in **Eligibility criteria (Section 2.1)**. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed further.

Eligible applications will then be assessed against the criteria set out in **Assessment criteria (Section 2.2)**.

During the eligibility and assessment process, the OCSE may request additional information from applicants or advice from other NSW Government agencies or external experts.

The Department, at its sole discretion, may deem an application ineligible for the program based on publicly available or confidential information.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

Applications are open to organisations that can design, deliver and manage a statewide deep tech commercialisation training program.

To be considered for funding, applications must first satisfy all eligibility requirements set out in this section. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed further.

2.1.1 Eligible applicants

- Be a legal entity with the capacity to enter into a funding agreement.
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST.
- Be based in NSW.
- Be commercially viable and financially sustainable.
- Hold, or be able to obtain prior to execution of a funding agreement:
 - Public Liability Insurance of not less than \$10 million per occurrence; and
 - Professional Indemnity Insurance of not less than \$10 million per occurrence.

2.1.3 Eligible expenses

100% of the grant funding must be spent in NSW.

Applicants must provide a detailed breakdown on anticipated project expenses. The Department may ask applicants to verify the project cost and request evidence of costs such as supplier contracts, quotes and invoices. Grantees must demonstrate value for money by ensuring project costs are reasonable and reflective of actual costs incurred and reasonable market rates. The Department may use industry cost benchmarks to assess whether costs are reasonable. The

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

2.2 Assessment criteria

Applications that have met the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the assessment criteria below. The assessment of applications will be led by the OCSE Evaluation Committee. The

Applications for DTCTP will be considered against the criteria in Table 1, which will inform OCSE's recommendation to the Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology.

Table 1 – Assessment Criteria

Criteria	What we look for	Weight
1. Capability and technical aspects	Clear articulation of the organisation's capabilities and facilities Details on how these capabilities and facilities will deliver program requirements	15%
2. Skills and experience	Information on the organisation's experts who can provide training and development to DTCTP participants and deliver desired outcomes Evidence of the organisation's proven track record to successfully deliver programs comparable to the DTCTP	20%
3. Process and Outcomes	Breakdown of the proposed model's course structure, training levels, capability building and mentoring and networking arrangements Anticipated outcomes of the DTCTP for various types of participants Equitable program access, especially for regional, rural, and remote NSW participants, women, and Aboriginal participants	20%
4. Methodology	Alignment of the proposed DTCTP model to the NSW Government requirements stated in this Guidelines including governance structure, conflict of interest and risk management	20%
5. Financial arrangements and performance	Detailed budget proposal that breaks down major expenses related to the program Itemisation of relevant KPIs that will be achieved by the organisation Overall value for money, including the scale of expected ecosystem outcomes relative to the requested funding	15%
6. Impact to NSW	Credible potential for economic development and job creation in NSW and articulation of value Alignment with NSW Government priorities and strategies, particularly supporting the goals of the NSW Innovation Blueprint, the NSW Industry Policy, NSW Trade and Investment Strategy and NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap	10%

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Application process

3 Application process

3.1 How to apply

To apply you must:

1. Complete the Application form at <https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/DTCTP>
2. Include all requested attachments (**Section 3.1.1**)
3. Submit your application by the timelines outlined in **Key dates (Section 3.1.5)**.

Once you submit your application, the system will send you a confirmation email. You should keep a copy of your application and any attachments.

Information on the assessment process is provided in **Selection criteria (Section 2)** and **Assessment process (Section 4)**.

3.1.1 Application lodgement requirements

Applicants are required to provide additional attachments to their application form.

Applicants are required to provide the following attachments as part of their Application:

1. Evidence of insurance and financial viability
2. Key personnel CVs and letters of support
3. A program proposal including
 - a. The delivery model, curriculum outline and participant pathway
 - b. Program logic
 - c. Monitoring & Evaluation approach (metrics, data collection, impact reporting)
 - d. Communications and outreach plan (pipeline-building approach)
4. Governance, conflict of interest and risk management approach (including risk register)
5. Finance and performance:
 - a. Budget proposal (spreadsheet) and budget narrative/assumptions
 - b. Performance targets / KPI schedule (annual) aligned to intended outcomes (reach, participation, completion, satisfaction, progression outcomes)

3.1.2 Your responsibilities when applying for the grant

The DTCTP Program Guidelines contain information about the DTCTP, whether you are eligible to apply, and how you can make an application. You must read these Guidelines before applying for the grant.

The Guidelines may be updated at any time prior to applications closing. If this occurs, the revised Guidelines or an addendum will be published on the DTCTP webpage.

It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure:

- Their application form and attachments are complete and submitted through the official system prior to the closing deadline. Applications submitted via email or through any other channel will not be accepted.
- They clearly identify any information in their application form and attachments that they consider confidential.

- Their application is authorised by a representative of their organisation with appropriate authority (for example the CEO or their authorised delegate).
- Their application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is an offence under the Crimes Act 1900 No 40 (NSW). We will investigate any false or misleading information.
- They comply with all applicable laws including the NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct. Applicants must not lobby the NSW Government on an issue related or seen to be related to the DTCTP that may be perceived to give an unfair advantage to the applicant.

3.1.3 Accuracy and corrections

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au. If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask you to provide a clarification or additional information.

Corrections to errors in applications will not be accepted except where the Department is satisfied there are exceptional circumstances that justify the correction and that the integrity, fairness and competitiveness of the DTCTP would not be compromised.

Further information about probity controls is at Conflict of interest management (Section 6.3.1).

3.1.4 Clarifications and additional information

The Department may request clarification or additional information to support assessment. Applicants should respond within the timeframe specified.

3.1.5 Key dates

Applications must be completed and submitted before the closing date (Table 2). Late submissions will not be considered except where the Department is satisfied there are exceptional circumstances that justify the late submission and that the integrity, fairness and competitiveness of the DTCTP would not be compromised. Acceptance of late applications is at the sole discretion of the Department.

Table 2 – DTCTP timeline

Activity	Timeframe
Applications open	10:00 AM AEDT 30 March 2026
Applications close	10:00 AM AEST 23 April 2026
Successful applicants notified	May 2026
Public announcement	June 2026

The Department, at its absolute discretion, may vary these dates.

3.2 Questions

If you have any questions, please contact the OCSE at grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au. This OCSE mailbox is monitored during business hours. The OCSE will aim to respond to enquiries within 3 business days.

To ensure equal access to information, the OCSE may disclose questions and their answers on the DTCTP frequently asked questions (FAQ) page which can be found at the DTCTP webpage. The OCSE will not identify the organisation that has asked the question. If your question includes confidential information, you must expressly indicate that when you contact the OCSE. The OCSE accepts no responsibility for the disclosure of information except where the party has expressly indicated that it should be treated as confidential.

4

Assessment process

4 Assessment process

4.1 Assessment of grant applications

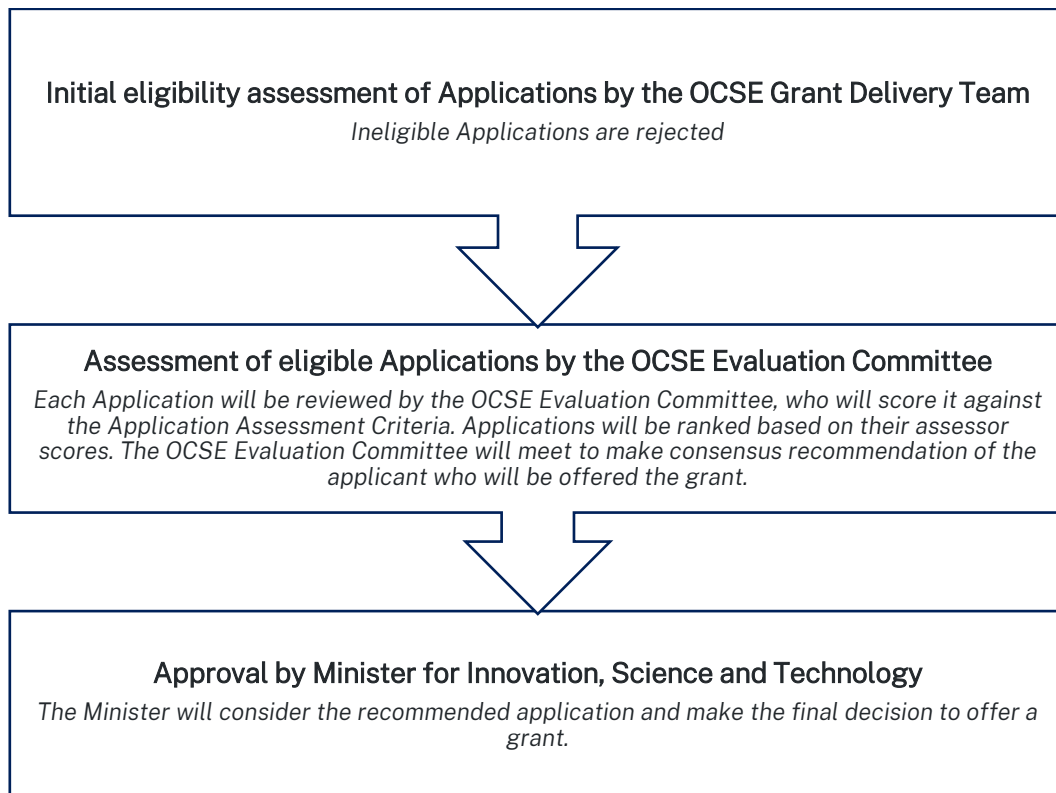
The assessment of applications will be administered by the OCSE Evaluation Committee.

During the assessment process, the OCSE may ask applicants to provide additional information. Advice may be sought from other NSW Government agencies or other sources to assist in the assessment of projects as required. Applicants may withdraw their application at any time.

4.1.1 Assessment process

The DTCTP assessment process is outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – DTCTP assessment process



4.1.1.1 Due diligence checks

The Department may conduct due diligence checks of applicants including financial assessments, verification of insurances, referee checks, and reputational checks proportionate to the grant value and risk profile. The Department may also consult other agencies or external experts.

4.1.2 Who will assess applications?

Eligible applications will be assessed by the OCSE Evaluation Committee and scored as per the Assessment Criteria. Each committee member will declare conflicts of interest. Actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed by the Chair of the OCSE Evaluation Committee.

Applications will be assessed through a competitive, merit based process. The OCSE Evaluation Committee will make a recommendation to the Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology who is the final decision-maker.

4.2 Notification of application outcome

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via email. Successful applicants will be notified via email within 30 days of the final determination including any specific conditions attached to the grant.

Successful applicants will be required to keep the grant confidential until the NSW Government makes a public announcement of the DTCTP outcomes. The NSW Government will publicly announce funding for individual applications and provide information on the [NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder](#).

4.2.1 Feedback on applications

Unsuccessful applicants may request receive feedback on their application. Any enquiries regarding the assessment process or the outcome of an application should be directed to the OCSE Grants Delivery Team at: grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

There is no formal appeals process for DTCTP. All assessment decisions are final and at the discretion of the NSW Government. However, applicants are encouraged to seek feedback to support future applications and engagement with other programs.

4.3 Publication of grants information

The Grants Administration Guide (**Guide**) requires that certain information is published in relation to grants awarded no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect (see section 6.5 of the Guide and Appendix A to the Guide). This information is also open access information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) (**GIPA Act**), which must be made publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

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

All records in relation to this decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW).

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Successful grant applications

5 Successful grant applications

5.1 Grant agreement

The successful applicant will be required to enter into an agreement with the Department to receive the grant. The agreement will specify obligations, including use of the grant for activities, return of any unspent grant funds and reporting requirements.

Requests for variations or changes to the project may be considered in exceptional cases within the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.

5.2 Grant payment

The grant will be paid across three tranches – in June 2026, June 2027 and June 2028. The second and third payment of the grant will depend on the OCSE review of the recipient's reporting and meeting KPIs.

5.3 Unspent funds

You must obtain the Department's prior written consent before any expenditure of the grant funding other than expenditure which has previously been approved by the Department in the funding agreement.

Any funds spent in breach of the funding agreement, or any unspent funds remaining upon the completion of the project, must be returned to the Department.

5.4 Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

The funding agreement will set out the regular reporting obligations. Templates will be provided for these reports.

During the term of the Agreement, the grantee must provide a written Activity Progress Report annually to document progress on the Project to date and is to include:

- activities
- progress against agreed milestones
- capture measurable outcomes, including program access, delivery, reach, and short-, medium-, and long-term impact
- provide a minimum dataset for monitoring and evaluation, including (as applicable) participant numbers, demographics relevant to equity of access, attendance/completion, satisfaction metrics, and evidence of capability uplift or progression outcomes
- project expenses
- learnings and evaluation
- results achieved to date from the project

The Final Report is to document completion of the Project and is to include:

- all activities undertaken during the period
- evaluation of the project and how successful the project was in achieving the objectives

- the status of results achieved to date from the project
- details about any unspent funds which, unless authorisation has been sought, must be returned to the Department
- a complete financial acquittal of how the funds were spent during the grant period.

In addition to the reporting outlined above, the following minimum assurance requirements will apply to the grant recipient (and will be reflected in the funding agreement):

- Maintain appropriate governance and oversight arrangements for DTCTP delivery, including managing conflicts of interest (for example, in participant selection, mentor engagement and any referrals to follow-on funding).
- Maintain accurate records and evidence of expenditure (including invoices/receipts and staff time records where relevant) sufficient to support financial acquittal and audit.
- Retain program and financial records for the period specified in the funding agreement and make records available to the Department for assurance activities as reasonably required.
- Comply with privacy obligations and obtain appropriate participant consent for any personal information collected for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Promptly notify the Department of material issues that may affect delivery, including significant changes to key personnel, delivery model, budget allocation, or any suspected fraud or misuse of funds.
- Support Department evaluation activities, including participating in interviews or surveys and providing additional information reasonably required to assess program effectiveness and value for money.

5.5 Evaluation

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

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

6

Additional information and
resources

6 Additional information and resources

6.1 Complaint handling

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

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

6.2 Access to information

The GIPA Act provides for the proactive release of government information by agencies and gives members of the public an enforceable right to access government information held by an agency (which includes Ministerial offices). Access to government information is only to be restricted if there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The NSW Legislative Council has the power to order the production of State papers by the Executive Government. Standing Order 52 provides that the House may order documents to be tabled by the Government in the House. The Cabinet Office coordinates the preparation of the papers – that is, the return to order. The return to order may contain privileged and public documents. Privileged documents are available only to members of the Legislative Council.

Note that documents submitted as part of a grant application may be subject to an application under the GIPA Act or an order for papers under Standing Order 52.

6.3 Ethical conduct

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

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

6.3.1 Conflict of interest management

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

6.3.2 Confidentiality and Privacy

We are committed to protecting your confidential and personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)* (the Act) and the Premier's Department Privacy Management Plan, available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/contact-us/privacy>.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the Act and agree to impose the same privacy obligations on any officers, employees, agents or subcontractors engaged to assist with the funded activity. You must not do anything that would cause us to be in breach of the Act.

We will collect personal information to assess your application and manage the grant if you are awarded funding.

Your personal information will only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies. The OCSE may also use or disclose information about applicants and recipients for program reporting purposes. We may share your information with other NSW Government entities or external reviewers to support government administration, research, assessment, and service delivery, in line with relevant Australian and NSW legislation.

Relevant information about grants awarded will also be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder as outlined in **Publication of grants information (Section 4.3)**.

Providing your personal information is voluntary, although we will not be able to assess your application if you do not provide this information.

You agree not to disclose to any person (other than us) any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or funding agreement, without our prior written consent. This obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

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

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

We will not be in breach of this obligation if information is required or authorised to be disclosed by law or is disclosed to:

- NSW Government employees and contractors engaged to manage or evaluate the Program
- our employees, contractors and professional advisers to research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other NSW Government departments or agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery purposes
- Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports or consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Secretary
- a House or a Committee of the NSW Parliament.

You may also be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement, or ensure that your employees, agents or subcontractors do so, if we request it.

The funding agreement may outline any additional confidentiality or privacy requirements, including for special categories of information collected, created or held under the agreement.

You have the right to access your personal information held by us without excessive delay or expense. You also have the right to request that the information we hold about you is amended, for example, if it is incorrect.

If you have any questions about the application of our privacy policy, would like to request access to the information we hold about you, request a correction or make a privacy complaint, please contact:

Information and Privacy Unit

The Cabinet Office

52 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000

Email: infoandprivacy@tco.nsw.gov.au.

6.3.3 Probity

The Department will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines and incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct. The grant process will be administered in accordance with the NSW Grants Administration Guide.

6.3.4 Privacy, data and participant consent

Recipients must manage any personal information collected as part of DTCTP delivery, monitoring and evaluation in accordance with applicable privacy obligations and the funding agreement. Where participant data is collected, recipients must obtain appropriate consent and inform participants how information will be used and reported.

6.3.6 Intellectual property and use of materials

Unless otherwise specified in the funding agreement, recipients retain ownership of their pre-existing intellectual property and any training materials developed. The funding agreement may grant the Department a limited licence to use non-confidential materials for reporting, evaluation and public communication purposes.

6.4 Copyright

This publication is protected by copyright. With the exception of: (a) any coat of arms, logo, trademark or other branding; (b) any third-party intellectual property; and (c) personal information such as photographs of people, this publication is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence. The license terms are available at the Creative Commons website at: creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode.

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6.5 Branding, publicity and acknowledgements

Recipients may be required to acknowledge NSW Government support in program communications and events. Any use of NSW Government branding or logos must be approved by the Department prior to publication.

6.6 Disclaimer

The Department 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.

The Department 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.

The Guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department.