Delivered by the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer in partnership with NSW Resources

NSW CRITICAL MINERALS PROCESSING AND ADVANCED MATERIALS INNOVATION PROGRAM – PHASE 1

Program Guidelines

August 2026

NSW GOVERNMENT

Grant Program Details - Indicative	
Opening date and time	7/08/2026 14:00 PM
Closing date and time	18/09/2026 15:00 PM
Application outcome date	4/12/2026
Project delivery timeframe (for successful applications)	December 2026 – August 2027
Evaluation timeframe (for successful applications)	3 weeks
Decision-maker	Secretary, Premier's Department (The Department)
NSW Government Agency	Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer, (OCSE)
Type of grant opportunity	Open, competitive
Grant value (total available funding for the grant and the available individual grant amounts, excluding GST)	$835,000 (excl GST) is available, a maximum of $100,000 per project will be awarded.
Enquiries	Program Manager Kristen Mulligan, grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

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Overview of grant program

1. Program Overview

The Critical Minerals Processing and Advanced Materials Innovation Program (CMPAMIP or Program) is a $4 million, two-phase NSW Government grant program supporting the translation and commercialisation of downstream critical minerals processing technologies and critical minerals-derived advanced materials.

The Program is delivered as part of the NSW Government's Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy 2024-2035, which outlines the Government's vision to establish NSW as a leader in critical minerals and high-tech metals across exploration, mining, processing, recycling, and advanced manufacturing. The Strategy identifies significant opportunities to increase the value captured by NSW through onshore processing and value-adding, supported by strong research capability and industry collaboration.

Through CMPAMIP, the NSW Government is providing targeted support for university-led collaborative research, partnering with industry and end-users to accelerate processing technologies and enable the development of high-value critical minerals-derived advanced materials.

The Program invites proposals from NSW-based research institutions for the development, refinement, validation, and piloting of innovative technologies and materials within NSW. It is designed to support sovereign capability, enhance collaboration across universities, industry, and government, and accelerate research translation, industry adoption, and market integration for sustained economic, workforce, and supply-chain outcomes.

For the Program the following definitions apply:

- **Critical mineral processing**: refers to activities that transform mined critical minerals into refined inputs, such as purified metals, oxides or chemical precursors, that prepare minerals for entry into industrial supply chains.
- **Critical mineral derived advanced materials**: refers to high value materials produced from processed critical minerals, such as alloys, permanent magnets, battery chemicals or advanced ceramics, designed for specific applications and used by downstream industries including clean energy, defence, electronics and advanced manufacturing.

Examples of the types of projects that may be eligible for funding include technologies to:

- improve recovery from mined ores, including low-grade or complex deposits
- enable processing of mined material that are currently uneconomic due to grade or complexity
- develop or optimise mineral processing steps and inputs so critical minerals can be produced in forms and qualities required for advanced materials and downstream manufacturing
- recover critical minerals from mine tailings, waste rock or residues alongside mine site rehabilitation
- reduce costs and environmental impacts through alternative inputs or reagents
- enable novel separation or materials processing methods that reduce reliance on imported or constrained inputs
- produce high-value advanced materials from critical minerals to support downstream industry development in NSW.

Applications will be assessed by a panel against assessment criteria specified in these Guidelines. Consortia involving industry partners, end-users and other relevant stakeholders are strongly encouraged to support the piloting and scaling activities required under the Program.

The CMPAMIP will run over two phases, with each phase applied for, assessed and awarded separately. Applicants are advised to consider their potential Phase 2 application when applying for the Phase 1 Proof-of-Concept:

- **Phase 1 – Proof-of-Concept:** A short-term (up to 8 months) grant of up to $100,000 to establish technical feasibility and potential viability of the technology for the purposes outlined in the proposal. Given the early-stage nature of these technologies, Phase 1 will support the generation of detailed technical evidence, testing and small-scale validation activities required to assess whether technologies are sufficiently mature to progress to Phase 2.
- **Phase 2 – Catalyser/Demonstrator**: A two-year grant of up to $1 million to further pilot, validate and refine the technologies in relevant and operational environments with end-user partners. Phase 2 will support scaling and commercialising successful technologies over the grant period. Applicants will need to demonstrate how the project will contribute to building NSW's critical minerals value-adding capabilities and talent pipeline. Phase 2 grant applications will be open only to those that have received a Phase 1 grant and satisfactorily acquitted that grant.

The CMPAMIP is administered by the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) in collaboration with NSW Resources in the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD). NSW Resources oversees the Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy 2024-2035 and the development of NSW minerals sector while OCSE supports advancing opportunities aligned with the NSW Innovation Blueprint, the NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap and the NSW Trade and Investment Strategy.

These Program Guidelines are for **Phase 1 Proof-of-Concept** and outline the key information required to apply for the Phase 1 grant. Only eligible research organisations that were awarded a grant in Phase 1 and successfully acquitted that grant are eligible for Phase 2. The Program is administered in accordance with the *NSW Grants Administration Guide*.

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The Program's purpose is to:

(1) Advance the development, demonstration and commercialisation of innovative critical mineral processing technologies and critical minerals derived advanced materials in NSW

(2) Strengthen industry-research-market collaboration through site-based problem solving and end user qualification

(3) Deliver focused R&D in mineral processing and chemical engineering

(4) Create a pipeline of local technologies ready for scale-up and investment.

The objectives of Phase 1 – Proof-of-Concept projects are to:

- Clearly define the industry end-user problem and/or opportunity addressed by the proposed mineral processing solution or advanced material.
- Undertake targeted laboratory or bench-scale testing to validate the functionality of the technology/material and establish its Technological Readiness (TRL).

- Demonstrate TRL progression by the end of Phase 1 of the technology or advanced material to a minimum of TRL 4, through proof-of-concept activities, including adaptation, refinements or validation within the approved project scope.
- Collaborate with industry end-users and relevant NSW based Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) providers, manufacturers or material users to assess practical viability, deployment considerations and potential pathways to scale.
- Assess commercial potential of the technology or advanced material. This could include initial feedback from industry and/or end-users as well as market or other research into the problem or opportunity area the solution addresses.
- Identify skills, training and research capability requirements for deploying the technology or advanced material in industry.

The objectives for Phase 2 – Catalyser/Demonstrator projects will be to:

- Deliver priority research, development and demonstration initiatives that advance the technical and commercial maturity of the solution or material.
- Adapt, refine and validate the technology or advanced material with end-users, progressing TRL and establishing a clear Commercial Readiness Level (CRL) to support scale-up and commercialisation.
- Demonstrate the technology in partnership with industry and relevant stakeholders in a NSW operating or processing environment.
- For advanced materials: qualify the material with end users.
- Clearly articulate how the project builds NSW mineral processing and advanced material production capability, including strengthening the skills, training and talent pipeline for the industry.

Phase 1 targets processing technologies and advanced materials within the TRL range of 3-7 and supports them to move along the TRL scale toward commercialisation (Figure 1). For Phase 2 the minimum TRL eligible to the Program is 4. A more descriptive breakdown of the TRLs can be found in Appendix A.

FIGURE 1 – TRL LEVELS FOR PHASE 1

Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are used to represent the development of an innovation.

Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Basic principles observed	Technology concept formulated	Experimental proof of concept	Technology validation in lab	Technology valid in relevant environment	Demonstration in relevant environment	Demonstration in operational environment	System complete and qualified	Successful mission operations
Not eligible		Eligible					Not eligible	

1.2 Grant value

The CMPAMIP's Phase 1 total grant pool is $835,000. Funding will be awarded to eligible NSW-based research organisations through an open competitive process. The maximum individual grant value per application is $100,000. Phase 1 grants will be paid with the condition that 75% is available at project

commencement and 25% is held in trust by the eligible research organisation, and only payable on submission of the final report and a payment release letter from the OCSE.

Consortium applications are encouraged and partner companies or other collaborators in Phase 1 are required to provide a letter of support for the proposal noting their intention to participate in the Program.

When developing your proposal, it is recommended that you strongly consider Phase 2 requirements before submitting.

For Phase 2:

- Only research organisations that were awarded a grant in Phase 1 and successfully acquitted that grant are eligible to apply for a Phase 2.
- Applications must have end-user partners confirmed through a letter of support to be eligible and meet the objectives and purpose of the program.
- The maximum grant value is up to $1 million per project over a maximum of two years.
- The grant will be paid in instalments.
- Industry partners, including mining companies, processors and NSW-based METS providers, will be required to collectively contribute a minimum of 20% of the project value in Phase 2 through cash and/or in-kind support. This minimum contribution must be formally committed through a letter of support from each contributing partner, attached to the application.
- Non-industry partners are not required to provide a contribution, however, their participation in the project must be clear in the application and evidenced by a letter of support to be attached to the application.

Please note: The NSW Government reserves the right to increase or decrease the available funding pools and grant amounts.

Applications may be partially funded at the absolute discretion of the NSW Government, for example if there is insufficient funding available for the whole application or where only a component of the application is considered suitable and/or eligible.

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Selection criteria

2. Selection criteria

To be considered for funding in Phase 1, 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 be assessed against the criteria set out in Assessment criteria (Section 2.2). The assessment will be led by an Assessment Panel.

During the eligibility and assessment process, 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 CMPAMIP based on publicly available or confidential information.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria comprise:

1. eligible lead applicant
2. eligible grant activities
3. eligible expenses.

Your application must satisfy all of these eligibility criteria to be eligible for funding through the CMPAMIP. If at any time during the assessment process, falsified or incorrect declarations are identified, the application may be deemed ineligible by the Department.

2.1.1 Eligible lead applicants

Lead applicants must satisfy all eligibility requirements as outlined in Table 1.

TABLE 1 - ELIGIBLE CMPAMIP LEAD APPLICANTS

Eligibility requirements – lead applicants must:	
1a	A lead applicant must belong to one of the following research organisation categories: • University • Private non-profit research institute • NSW and federal government research organisations, labs or groups. A lead applicant (researcher, laboratory, or group) must have the approval of its research organisation to apply for the CMPAMIP.
1b	Be headquartered in NSW.
1c	Own the IP or have an exclusive license to commercialise the IP in Australia and globally.
1d	Confirm that their application considers *Phase 2 - Catalyser/ Demonstration grants* and have a proposal and partnerships that will allow their technology to be piloted in NSW should they be successful for Phase 2.

Organisations that do not meet the above eligibility criteria are permitted to be a partner to an application provided the lead applicant satisfies the above eligibility criteria. Consortium applications are encouraged under the Program as collaborations with industry or other end-user stakeholders can help lead applicants address the assessment criteria laid out in section 2.2.

For the avoidance of doubt, you are not eligible to be a lead applicant if you are:

- A for-profit company
- An individual, or
- Not an incorporated separate legal entity (e.g. an unincorporated association).

Eligible applicants for Phase 2 are those lead research organisations that received a Phase 1 grant which was successfully acquitted.

2.1.2 Eligible grant activities

Proposed grant activities must satisfy all the eligibility requirements outlined in Table 2.

TABLE 2 – CMPAMIP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility requirements – projects must:	
2a	Be at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3-7 at the time of application as defined on the TRL scale (Figure 1).
2b	Involve an existing prototype relevant to mineral processing or critical mineral derived advanced materials in NSW.
2c	Over the activity period of the grant undertake proof-of-concept activities to demonstrate the feasibility of the solution in minerals processing or advanced materials development including laboratory-scale or early pilot-scale testing where appropriate.
2d	Be completed within a maximum of 8 months from execution of the funding deed, with progress monitored and reported throughout the grant period and documented in a final report.
2e	Not have previously received government (Commonwealth or State) grant funding for the specific activities proposed in the application.

Proof-of-Concept activities can include but are not limited to:

- Designing, prototyping or refining proof-of-concept units for mineral processing technologies or advanced materials,
- Undertaking targeted research activities, including engagement of PhD candidates or postgraduate researchers to address specific technical or materials-development challenges,
- Procuring specialised technical equipment, materials or components required to test, validate or the technology or advanced material
- Conducting experiments, laboratory testing and/or technical studies to validate performance, feasibility or capability,
- Engaging specialist technical expertise (e.g. mineral processing engineers, metallurgists, chemical materials scientists, chemical engineers, geologists or advanced manufacturing specialists),
- Working with end-users, industry partners and/or NSW based METS providers to assess and define:
    - intended end-user application of the technology,
    - scalability and adoption potential with a commercial context,
    - practical on-site use considerations (e.g. use at mining sites, in processing or materials development environments in NSW), with these considerations informing technology or material design.

2.1.3 Eligible expenses

Grant funding and financial and in-kind co-contributions must only be spent on the eligible activities as outlined in Table 3

TABLE 3 CMPAMIP ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligibility requirements – to be eligible, costs must:	
3a	Be directly related to the eligible grant activities.
3b	Be incurred within the project period.
3c	Reflect competitive market rates.
3d	Be spent in NSW on activities occurring in NSW, with the exception of acquiring specialised equipment, components or inputs that are not available in NSW.
3e	Be a true and accurate reflection of costs required to deliver the activity.

Eligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- Capital costs,
- Labour expenditure for temporary employment for the project,
- Licence fees incurred as part of the project,
- Data analysis and/or management costs.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project costs and request evidence of actual costs incurred such as supplier contracts, quotes, and invoices.

You must demonstrate value for money by ensuring project costs are reasonable and reflective of market rates. We may use industry cost benchmarks to assess whether costs are reasonable.

OCSE may, at its absolute discretion, determine a cost that falls within the category of eligible expenditure is in fact ineligible where it is unreasonable or excessive.

The grant cannot be used for the following, non-exhaustive, list of activities:

- the purchase of land or property,
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation,
- equipment financing arrangements, insurances, marketing campaigns and the depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project,
- overseas travel,
- participation at conferences including travel to attend,
- the covering of retrospective costs,
- wage costs incurred prior to the activity period of the project or outside of approved project activities,
- on-going wage costs
- non-project related staff training and development
- projects or expenses that are ongoing or constitute the normal course of business,
- activities that have commenced or have been completed prior to an offer of funding being made to successful applicants,
- activities that will not be delivered prior to the end of the grant funding period.

2.2 Assessment criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against the below Assessment Criteria (Table 4). The Assessment Criteria apply to eligible applications for Phase 1 - Proof of Concept application.

TABLE 4 – ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CMPAMIP PHASE 1

Criterion	What we look for	Weighting
1. Technology Proposal and Innovation	**Uniqueness and need:** Clear rationale for why the solution is novel and needed, including how it advances critical mineral processing and /or the development of critical minerals derived advanced materials. Proof that this capability is not commercially available in NSW. **End-user engagement:** Evidence that the applicant understands the intended use cases, end users or downstream markets for the technology or advanced material. **Technical viability:** Evidence that the technology or advanced material can work as intended, supported by a plan to demonstrate feasibility through proof-of-concept activities. Projects must show a pathway to achieving a minimum TRL of 4 by the end of Phase 1. **IP position:** Ownership/licensing position and credibility of IP strategy (e.g., patents/trademarks). Including how IP is to be managed with partners and collaborators to support translation and commercialisation.	30%
2. Value adding to NSW Critical Minerals	**Minerals processing industry**: Justification for how the technology will contribute to building critical minerals processing capability in NSW and the value unlocked through commercialisation and scale-up. This may include alignment to circular economy outcomes (such as mine-tailings reprocessing) and the development of new sub-industries and sovereign capabilities (e.g. advanced processing, advanced materials manufacturing and metallisation). **Critical minerals derived advanced materials:** Clear definition of how the project supports the development and future production of higher-value materials, intermediates or precursors that enhance NSW critical minerals, support pathways to downstream manufacturing and emerging markets and strengthen NSW's capability in materials development, validation and scale-up. **Broader benefits to NSW:** Provides economic, environmental and/or social benefits and alignment with NSW Government priorities and strategies (NSW Critical Minerals & High-Tech Metals Strategy, NSW Innovation Blueprint, NSW Industry Policy, NSW Trade and Investment Strategy, and NSW 20-Year R&D Roadmap).	30%
3. Deliverability	**Plan and milestones:** A credible high-level plan of proof-of-concept activities, rationale and milestones to be delivered during Phase 1 (including TRL milestones where relevant). **Team capability:** Track record, expertise, capacity, alignment and access to required partners/advisers. Details of consortium partners engaged in the project and how they will support proof of concept.	30%

	Budget and risk: Provision of a high-level and realistic project budget for Phase 1 including any cash and in-kind contributions from consortia partners. Overview of risks identified and mitigations/controls.	
4. Why CMPAMIP funding is needed	**Need:** Why sufficient funding cannot be accessed elsewhere; why the project would not proceed at this scale in NSW without CMPAMIP support; and when and how future private investment will be secured. **Critical input awareness:** Demonstrate a detailed awareness of skills and input needed to meet objectives of Phase 1. Articulate an understanding of what the likely input requirements may be needed in Phase 2.	10%

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Application process

3. Application process

3.1 How to apply for a Phase 1 CMPAMIP grant

Before applying, you must read these Guidelines. Any alterations and addenda will be published on the Critical Minerals Processing and Advanced Materials Innovation Program website https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/cmpamip.

To apply you must:

1. Complete the SmartyGrants online application form for the CMPAMIP Program at **https://chiefscientist.smartygrants.com.au/P1CMPAMIP**
2. Provide all the information requested
3. Address all the eligibility criteria
4. Address all the relevant assessment criteria
5. Include all necessary attachments, and
6. Submit your application by the timelines outlined in Section 3.3 Key dates.

Please note:

- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Clearly indicate any information that should be treated confidentially.
- Eligible applicants will be assessed on merit against the Assessment Criteria. However, the NSW Government, at its absolute discretion, may choose not to award a grant to an applicant.

You are responsible for ensuring your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW). We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

Applicants must not lobby the NSW Government on an issue related or seen to be related to the CMPAMIP Program that may or may be perceived to give an unfair advantage to the applicant. Applicants are required to comply with all applicable laws and policies including the NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au . You cannot change your application after the closing date and time.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may at our discretion ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

An independent probity advisor will be engaged to provide guidance to OCSE and the Assessment Panel on integrity, fairness and accountability matters, and ensure transparency of the Program's administration. Further information about probity controls is outlined in Section 6.3.1 conflict-of-interest management.

3.2 Support available to applicants

To support applicants OCSE will:

1. host a public webinar briefing on the Program register via Humanitix https://events.humanitix.com/nsw-grant-webinar-critical-minerals-processing-and-advanced-materials-innovation-program-phase-1
2. the webinar will be recorded and posted on the CMPAMIP webpage of the OCSE https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/cmpamip
3. respond to Program enquiries posting responses to the CMPAMIP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/cmpamip/faq

3.2.1 Webinar

The CMPAMIP Webinar will be hosted by OCSE via MS Teams to get access to the Teams dial in details register via the Humanitix link above. Once completed the recording of the webinar will be posted on the CMPAMIP webpage.

3.2.2 Questions

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

To ensure equal access to information, OCSE may disclose questions and their answers on the CMPAMIP FAQ page which can be found at the CMPAMIP website. 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.

Other resources of importance include NSW Government strategies and plans such as the Critical Minerals & High-Tech Metals Strategy 2024-35 and the NSW Innovation Blueprint can be accessed via these links: Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy 2024-35 | NSW Government and NSW Innovation Blueprint | NSW Government .

3.3 Key dates

Applications must be completed and submitted before the closing date (Table 5). Late submissions will not be considered except where the OCSE is satisfied there are exceptional circumstances that justify the late submission and that the integrity, fairness and competitiveness of the Program would not be compromised. Acceptance of late applications is at the sole discretion of the OCSE.

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

TABLE 5 – KEY DATES AND EXPECTED TIMING

Milestone	Timeframe
Phase 1 - CMAMIP	
Applications open	Friday 7 August 2026 14:00
NSW Grants Webinar	Tuesday 25 August 14:00
Applications close	Friday 18 September 2026 15:00
Assessment process	18 September – 16 October 2026
Notification of outcomes	Friday 4 December 2026
Grant activity period	December 2026 – August 2027
Final report	Friday 27 August 2027
OCSE payment release letter if requirements satisfied	Friday 03 September 2027

Phase 2 – CMAMIP (estimated)	
Release of Phase 2 Grant Guidelines and opening for applications	September – December 2027 (estimated)
Anticipated grant activity period	April/May 2028 to April/May 2030 (estimated)
Final reporting and evaluation	May/June – November/December 2030 (estimated)

The specific requirements and guidance for Phase 2 grants will be contained within the Phase 2 grant Guidelines.

As a reminder only fully acquitted recipients of Phase 1 grants will be eligible to apply for Phase 2.

4

Assessment process

4. Assessment process

4.1 Assessment of grant applications

4.1.1 Assessment process

OCSE will administer the assessment process. Your application will be considered based on a two-stage process.

Stage 1: Eligibility Assessment

OCSE will assess applications according to the Eligibility Criteria.

Applications which meet all Eligibility Criteria will proceed to Merit Assessment.

Applications that do not meet the Eligibility Criteria will be considered ineligible.

Stage 2: Merit Assessment

All eligible applications will be assessed by Panel members against the Assessment Criteria.

The Assessment Panel may request additional information from applicants. These requests will be managed by OCSE, which will communicate with the relevant applicants directly in writing to seek their response.

The Assessment Panel will meet to discuss the eligible applications and agree on consensus recommendations for applications to receive grant funding.

The Assessment Panel's recommendations will be provided to the Designated Decision Maker who will determine the grants awarded.

4.1.2 Who will assess applications?

An Assessment Panel will be appointed by OCSE and may include representatives from NSW Government agencies as well as independent experts with scientific, business, technology innovation and commercialisation experience.

The Assessment Panel may seek advice from external experts through OCSE to inform the assessment process. Any expert and advisor will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct – Premier's Department including maintaining the confidentiality of the application and declaring any conflicts of interest.

4.1.3 Who will approve the grants?

The Designated Decision Maker is the Secretary Premier's Department. The Secretary determines the successful grant recipients, funding amounts and any conditions after considering the recommendations of the Assessment Panel. Where applicable, advice from a probity adviser may be considered in making the final decision.

The Government has the discretion to reject, refuse or cease assessment of an application at any time.

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 are not entitled to receive payment until they and OCSE have signed a funding deed.

Successful applicants will be required to keep the grant confidential until the NSW Government makes a public announcement of the CMPAMIP 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 and appeal process

Unsuccessful applicants may request 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.

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. 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 NSW Government makes no funding or other commitment to the successful applicant until all parties have signed a funding agreement. You must not make financial commitments reliant on this grant until the funding agreement is signed and executed by all parties.

Amendments to the funding agreement template are not encouraged. However, where you cannot accept the terms and conditions in the template, you must notify OCSE in writing of your proposed amendments to the template and qualify the reasons for your proposed amendments. OCSE may or may not accept these proposed amendments at its discretion.

The funding agreement can only be signed by authorised officers or delegates of your organisation.

All applicants must provide the contact details (email address, phone number, name, and position) of the relevant authorised signatories, or their delegates, in the contracting form that will be provided to you via SmartyGrants.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure signatories have the capacity and availability to understand, complete and sign documents, to carefully read the terms and conditions of their funding agreement, and for it to be signed by the correct authorised signatories. Important terms and conditions associated with the funding are attached to the funding agreement.

The Government may revoke the offer of a grant at any time prior to the execution of the funding agreement.

The funding agreement will include conditions for milestones. monitoring and reporting requirements, financial acquittal and other key responsibilities in relation to the grant.

Any variations to the funding, including project scope or activities, location or times outlines in the application form and Guidelines must be submitted for approval to the OCSE. Failure to so may result in the withdrawal of the grant offer. The Department has the discretion to approve or reject any variation request from a grantee where the funding agreement has already been executed.

All grant recipients must acknowledge this financial support in accordance with the Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines for Recipients of NSW Government Rebates available at nsw.gov.au/branding/sponsorship-and-funding-acknowledgment-guidelines.

All grant recipients must seek written consent of OCSE prior to any significant public announcement, marketing, press announcements or events in relation to the grant.

The NSW Government logo must be displayed on all public materials related to the grant. The public materials must also include an acknowledgement of the support of the NSW Government.

5.2 Grant payment

A condition of the funding deed will require that 25% of the Phase 1 grant amount will be held in trust by the lead applicant research organisation and released only upon receipt of a payment release letter from the OCSE. This letter will be provided upon successful submission of the Phase 1 final report.

5.3 Unspent funds

You must obtain OCSE's prior written consent before any expenditure of the grant funding or co-contribution which has not previously been approved by the Department in the funding agreement. Any funds spent in breach of the funding agreement or not satisfactorily acquitted, and any unspent funds remaining upon the completion of the CMPAMIP project, must be returned to the Department.

5.4 Indicative reporting and acquittal requirements

The funding agreement will set out the regular reporting obligations. The reporting requirements for the CMPAMIP Phase 1 will require information such as:

- progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes,
- project expenses,
- risk management and mitigations,
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant.

This information will be provided through a regular activity progress report during the term of the funding agreement. This will be a written report, and the grant delivery team may request check-in meetings to discuss elements of the report further.

5.4.1 Final reporting and acquittal

A Final Phase 1 Report will be required post the grant activity period and will include, but not be limited to, an outline of:

- activities undertaken during the grant period,
- evaluation of the technology/s performance, progress up the TRL scale,
- engagement with industry and end-user partners and articulation of likely use cases, receptivity of the ecosystem and feedback.

The Final Phase 1 Report will form a key component to the Phase 2 application.

A complete financial acquittal of how the funds were spent during the grant period will be required and will include a definitive statement as to whether:

- the financial information for the project represents the financial transactions fairly and is based on proper accounts and records,
- if the grant was expended in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the funding agreement, you must contact us immediately.

OCSE reserves the right to undertake an audit of the CMPAMIP support within seven years from date of expiry or termination of the funding agreement.

5.5 Evaluation

The Department will evaluate the CMPAMIP to measure the extent to which the Program's objectives have been achieved and may use information, including confidential information, from applicants and reports provided by applicants for this purpose. Successful applicants will be required to participate in evaluations after the project has commenced and for up to three years following the final grant payment. The Department may interview or request information from applicants or related partners. This could include information about revenues, costs, employment, and other matters. Any confidential information included as part of this evaluation process will be treated as confidential and not disclosed outside of the NSW Government. Evaluation helps us to understand the impact of NSW Government support programs and inform how we develop future programs.

6

Additional information and resources

6. Additional information and resources

6.1 Complaint handling

Any complaint in relation to the process may be made to OCSE in writing to grants@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au. Complaints will be reviewed by OCSE.

If you do not agree with the way OCSE have managed your enquiry or complaint, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman. The NSW Ombudsman will not usually investigate a complaint unless the matter has been first raised directly with the OCSE.

NSW Ombudsman

Level 24, 580 George Street,

Sydney NSW 2000

ombo.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

6.3.1 Conflict of interest management

The OCSE is committed to ensuring the grant opportunity process is conducted fairly, transparently, and in accordance with the published guidelines. Appropriate safeguards will be in place to prevent fraud, unlawful activity, and other inappropriate conduct throughout all stages of the Program.

An independent probity advisor will be engaged to support the integrity, fairness and accountability of the Program. The probity advisor will provide expert guidance to the OCSE on any issues that may arise during the application, assessment and decision-making process. They will also review Program documentation, observe assessment panel meetings (with a focus on conflict-of-interest management), review funding recommendations, and provide a final probity report outlining their observations.

All individuals involved in the assessment of applications—whether internal or external to the OCSE—must complete a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration prior to accessing confidential material or participating in the assessment process. All declared conflicts— whether actual, potential or perceived— will be recorded in the Program's Conflict-of-Interest Register and reviewed by the Program probity advisor.

Should a conflict be identified, the Program Manager will determine, in consultation with the probity advisor, the appropriate management action. All assessors are required to actively monitor their participation throughout the process and notify the Program Manager if circumstances change.

6.3.2 Confidentiality

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 reporting purposes. We may share your information with other NSW Government departments and agencies (including the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) 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 may 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:

- members of the Assessment Panel and other 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.

6.4 Copyright

6.5 Disclaimer

The Guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department. Any changes will be published at Grants and funding | NSW Government.

Appendix A: Technology Readiness Level (TRL)

Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are a standardised 1–9 scale used to measure how mature a technology is, from early scientific principles (TRL 1) to a fully proven system in operational use (TRL 9).

TRL	TRL definition	TRL description/evidence of achievement
1	**Basic Research.** Initial scientific research begins.	Basic principles are observed. Focus is on fundamental understanding of a material or process.
2	**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.
3	**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.	Analytical studies and laboratory-scale studies are designed to physically validate the predictions of separate elements of the technology. 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. Examples include research on materials, components, or processes that are not yet integrated.
4	**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.
5	**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.

6	**Prototype System Verified.** System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (Beta prototype system level).	Engineering-scale models or prototypes are tested in a relevant environment. This represents a major step up in a technology's demonstrated readiness. 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 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.
7	**Integrated Pilot System Demonstrated.** System/process prototype demonstration in an operational environment (integrated pilot system level).	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.
8	**System Incorporated in Commercial Design.** Actual system/process completed and qualified through test and demonstration (pre-commercial demonstration).	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.
9	**System Proven and Ready for Full Commercial Deployment.**	The actual system is proven through successful operations in operating environment, and ready for full commercial deployment. The technology is in its final form.