

BRIDGING GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2019

1. Introduction

Bridging Grants are a program of assistance that target early stage proof of concept and knowledge transfer, product and services development and market testing, innovation and commercialisation activities.

They are designed to support international SME-Researcher partnerships grow beyond an initial level of engagement such as might be developed during a Priming Grant funded process, into a strong collaboration which leads to the translation of research knowledge and intellectual property into market ready products or services.

It is not a pre-requisite to have had a Priming Grant previously in order to apply for a Bridging Grant. The timing of Priming and Bridging Grant calls are not linked as a natural progression between the two. Further information on this is provided in the [FAQ section](#) on the GCF website.

The Bridging Grants provide between AUD25,000 to AUD50,000 per grant. They are highly competitive and are additionally supported on a matching funds/in-kind basis of additional resources from the applicant partners.

Bridging Grants are not to be used for basic research funding, for the acquisition of major capital equipment, or for conference travel.

Only one application per partnership proposal can be submitted.

The Bridging Grants (BG) program is administered by the Academy of Technology and Engineering (hereafter referred to as the Academy) and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation and Science. This initiative aligns with the Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other relevant material provided on the Global Connections Fund (GCF) website <https://globalconnectionsfund.org.au/>.

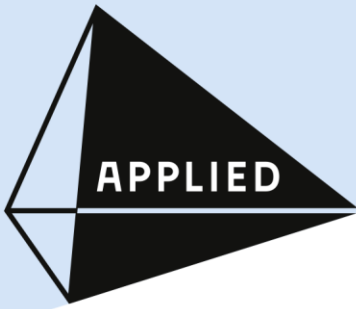
Special attention should be paid to the [BG FAQ section](#) on the GCF website which provides additional commentary and clarifications on the program and supplements the Guidelines.

2. Call details

Calls for Bridging Grants are announced on the GCF website, through the GCF mailing lists and through Australian Government media releases and their associated websites. All Australian universities and research organisations are notified of calls as well as relevant industry groups that support SMEs.

Each call has two phases: (1) an eligibility screening test and (2) if eligibility is approved, completion and submission of a full application due by the nominated close date.

Please visit the Bridging Grants timetable section of the GCF website for up to date details on the call dates, process and stages.



2.1 Priority areas covered

The priority areas that are the focus of Bridging Grant activity reflect the Australian Government's [Industry Growth Centre priorities](#) and are consistent with the [Australian National Science and Research Priorities](#). These are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Food and Agribusiness
- Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals
- Mining Equipment, Technology and Services
- Oil, Gas and Energy Resources

2.2 Which economies can you partner with?

In a change from previous rounds in this 2019 call the list of economies you may partner with has been expanded to 182. You can see the list here. Excluded from this list are economies that are subject to UN sanctions. A full list of eligible economies is accessible on the [GCF website](#).

2.3 SME status of international partners

If you are an Australian researcher your international partner will be an SME. As the definition of SMEs is differs for each economy, it is important for you to establish and confirm that the partner fits the definition of an SME within their own economy. The applicant will be required to declare that the proposed partner complies with this requirement and be prepared to provide the Academy with documented evidence if so requested by the Academy during the application process. Misleading declarations will lead to disqualification from the application process.

3. Funding arrangements

Bridging Grants are available for projects ranging from AUD25,000 up to AUD50,000. Grant applications for less than \$25,000 will not be considered eligible.

3.1 Matching funds

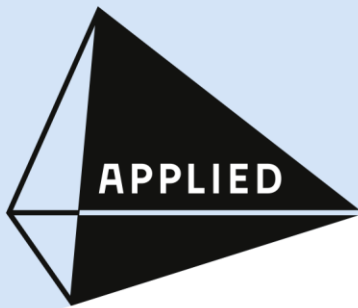
It is a requirement that the partners will collectively contribute cash and/or in-kind totaling 50 per cent of the value of the grant applied for.

Cash and in-kind are treated as equal for the purposes of the Bridging Grants matching funds component.

The proportion contributed by each partner (cash and/or in kind is left to the Applicant to determine.

For example, if the applicants applied for a \$40,000 grant, then a cash and/or in-kind equivalent to 50 per cent of this value will be required which is \$20,000. Of this amount, if each partner equally contributed to this component then they would each be required to contribute \$10,000 as cash and/or-kind.

Cash and in-kind contributions as detailed in the application will need to be validated by the Australia applicants through a signed declaration and the overseas partner will also be required to declare their contributions in writing.



These documents will be requested only if the grant has been approved and will form part of the required documentation to be submitted to the Academy in order to fulfil acceptance of the grant offer.

However, to avoid delays and uncertainty in this post assessment phase we strongly advise all applicants to make sure these cash and/or in-kind arrangements are agreed upon between partners prior to the submission of a Bridging Grant proposal.

Examples of in-kind contributions could be:

- Use of equipment, laboratory or test-bed facilities, or specialist machinery used in undertaking prototyping activities, based on hours used and operating costs
- Staff time allocated to the project for the purposes of carrying out the tasks identified in the project proposal
- Travel expense contributions from either partner

3.2 Institutional on costs

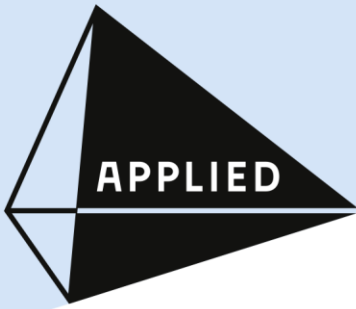
Many research institutions impose a charge on grants received to cover institutional internal administrative costs. Due to the small size and focused purpose of these grants the GCF does not support the charging of on costs.

3.3 What activities do Bridging Grants support?

- Product and service development activities (e.g. technical development, compliance testing, proof of concept, product testing, validation, laboratory verification and certification)
- Product or services design (e.g. design work, prototyping, innovation design, manufacturing establishment)
- Software development and beta testing for a specific application
- Market testing and analysis, small run supply of prototypes for testing and evaluation
- IP scanning: Freedom to Operate searches and provisional patent applications. Expenses for these IP related items are capped at AUD 5,000
- A limited travel component to enable specific project activities to occur. This amount is capped at AUD3,000

3.4 What activities are not supported by Bridging Grants?

- Basic research projects
- Routine replacement, purchase and/or upgrade of equipment
- Activities that would be undertaken in the normal course of business, such as website development, or the purchase, development and/or integration of standard software for core purposes (e.g. accounting, financial management), business planning, sales and promotional activities
- Retrospective activities (i.e. where expenditure is incurred prior to the award of a Bridging Grant)
- Airfares to attend conferences etc.
- Anything else as determined by the Academy as not meeting the Bridging Grant objectives



4. Who can apply?

Applicants must be an Australian Researcher or an Australian-incorporated SME and have a proposal supporting an international SME-Researcher partnership.

Only the following partnership collaborations are supported:

- Australian SMEs looking to partner with Researchers in a listed economy.
- Australian Researchers seeking to partner with International SMEs in a priority [listed economy](#).

We do not support Researcher-Researcher or SME-SME Partnerships.

Applicants can only submit one Bridging Grant application, and only one application per research group or SME will be considered.

Further details on this are provided in the online FAQ and we encourage you to read these carefully.

4.1 Australian Researcher applicants

The applicant must be an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident and living in Australia at the time of submitting the grant application.

If successful, Bridging Grant applicants will need to provide proof of citizenship or permanent residency if requested, as a condition of receiving funds.

Australian research applicants are defined as those employed by a tertiary education institution, publicly funded research organisation, not-for-profit research organisation, or cooperative research centre.

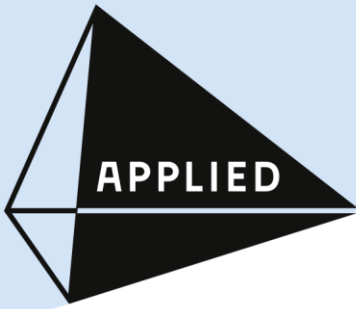
Where an applicant's institutional arrangements are such that the institution is deemed the applicant in the grant application, the applicant should also ensure institutional sign off.

4.2 Australian SME applicants

SME applicants must meet the business.gov.au definition of an SME, which is the term used to refer to microbusinesses, small businesses and medium sized firms. A small business has less than 20 employees, a medium business has between 20 and 199 employees and SMEs have less than 200 employees;

SME applicants:

- Must be incorporated as a Pty Ltd or Ltd entity
- Must have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Must be incorporated and registered for GST
- Must not be set up as a trust structure
- Must not be a sole trader



- must not be engaged in any litigation, arbitration, administrative proceedings, investigations, of or before any court, tribunal, commission, arbitral body or other agency in any jurisdiction in the Commonwealth of Australia (for enterprises based in Australia) or in the nominated priority economy

5. Making an application

5.1 The application process

Please consult the website for up-to-date details on the timetable for the Bridging Grants application calls.

The timeline for applications for Bridging grants will be clearly identified on the Global Connections Fund website.

Read the guidelines carefully. If you consider that you are eligible to apply, then complete the Eligibility Screening Test and submit for approval

The on-line application process is a two-stage process as follows:

1. Complete and submit an on-line the BG eligibility form.
2. Once submitted the information will be assessed for eligibility to proceed to a full Bridging Grant Application.
Note: as these are checked manually it may take 12 to 24 hours for you to receive your determination. Under normal circumstances we expect feedback on the eligibility status within a few hours.
3. If the eligibility is approved, a BG Application number will sent be along with a link to the online Bridging Grant Application form. These details will be emailed to the eligible applicant.

Note: A BG Application number is required to complete the online Bridging Grant Application Form. If you do not have a number, you will not be able to make a grant application.

Please note that during the application process the BG Application Form can be saved after each page so that you can return to it to complete (you will be provided a link to the form) at a later date if required.

We suggest you download the Example Form from the website and write the text responses to each section in a word processor (without formatting) and then cut and paste into the sections as you complete them.

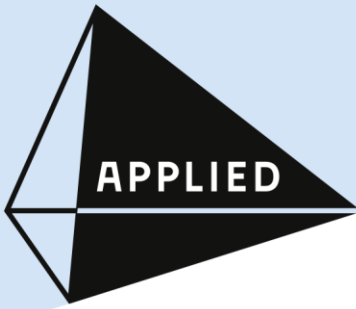
5.2 Budget form preparation

The budget is prepared and submitted on a separate form.

This form is an Excel spreadsheet and can be downloaded from the Global Connection Fund website either prior to or during the process of completing the online application.

Once you have completed the Budget Form you should save it on your computer and then return to the online BG Application Form. The Form should be saved in the format:

BGAnumberLastName (e.g. BGA7896345Smith).



In the online BG Application Form under the section **Project budget and resources**, you will see the following:

Upload your budget file here. Ensure file is saved as BGA number and Last name *

no file selected

Ensure file is saved as BGnumberLastname

Click Choose File and select your saved budget. The file name will load into the box.

Continue with filling in the remainder of the form and when ready click Submit.

6. Assessment

All grants will undergo a peer review assessment process by the Academy. Assessors are specialists in the grant priority areas with expert knowledge of translational research and development activities.

Each project will be assessed against four main **Assessment Criteria** (equally weighted). These are:

1. Project description (25 points)

Assessment will be based on:

- Problem being addressed clearly defined
- Clear market need is being addressed
- Approaches proposed realistic/achievable
- How this fits in a competitive landscape
- Resources available to complete project

2. Project Activities & Resources (25 points)

Assessment will be based on:

- Clearly defined list of actions to achieve outcomes
- Time scale is realistic and achievable
- Personnel appropriate to the task
- Budget is realistic
- In-kind and cash contributions are appropriate

3. Impact of the work (25 points)

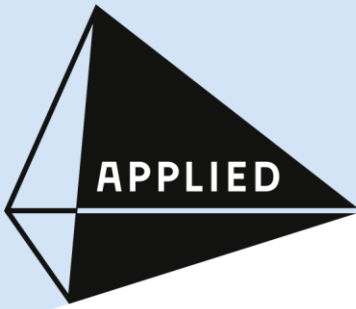
Assessment will be based on:

- Is the project likely to result in an ongoing collaboration?
- What is the likelihood of a successful demonstration of the project technology?
- What is the likelihood that the project will result in a commercialised product or service?
- What impact will a successful outcome have on the current market?
- Are there likely to be returns on investment to both the researchers and SME partners involved in the project?

4. What are the benefits of this work to Australia? (25 points)

Assessment will be based on:

- Is it disruptive and likely to create new business opportunities?



- Will it contribute to growth in the priority area it covers?
- Will it provide training opportunities for researchers and SME staff?
- Will it foster bilateral business, scientific and technology relationships?

7. Grant duration and reporting

The grant activity must be completed within 12 months of the award being accepted.

Acceptance of grant offers **must be taken up within 1 month** of the letter being issued by the Academy.

Bridging Grant activities should **be initiated** within **three months** of grant payment and must be actively underway by **six months**. All grants must be completed within 12 months of grant payment. No extensions are possible.

The Academy reserves the right to withdraw the funding/offer of funding if collaborations are not commenced within these timeframes.

There will be two reporting points; an interim progress report at six months and a final report due at 13 months i.e. 1 month after the grant period expires.

Grantees will also be required to participate in an exit survey.

It is the responsibility of the *Australian Applicants* to prepare and file the reports.

There may be a requirement for the applicant to provide a signed financial statement of expenditure of the grant on request.

All grantees will be required to provide a small vignette on the project for public use by the Academy and/or the Australian Government when reporting publicly on the outcomes of the project.