

ITF guidelines

IndustryTech Fund guidelines for applicants

Introduction

The Queensland Government's \$650 million Advance Queensland strategy delivers on the government's commitment to building a new economy—one that is strong and diversified, builds on the state's competitive strengths and generates the knowledge-based jobs of the future.

The Advance Queensland IndustryTech Fund (ITF) aims to accelerate the development and deployment of significant, highly collaborative, industry-based platform technology projects in Queensland to spur innovation-led economic growth.

A platform technology is a group of technologies that is used as a base upon which other applications, processes or technologies are developed.

Platform technologies function as innovation catalysts. They facilitate the development of follow-on technologies which can be utilised in many and varied industries, and significant opportunities arise from the convergence of platform technologies.

Platforms once developed potentially can be utilised by others to be further developed.

Examples of platform technologies that may form the basis of an ITF application include, but are not limited to, the following:

- autonomous vehicles
- sensors
- robotics
- application of big data
- internet of things
- blockchain
- artificial intelligence
- nanoelectronics and nanotechnologies
- biotechnology
- advanced manufacturing
- quantum technologies
- advanced materials.

Platform technologies can be combined into systems that solve challenges and deliver significant global commercial opportunities.

Funding

Queensland Government funding from a minimum of \$250,000 to a maximum of \$5 million will be available per project.

ITF projects will be funded at a minimum 1:3 ratio of government-to-applicant funding.

For example a total project investment of \$1 million (i.e. a minimum \$250,000 government grant and a \$750,000 cash contribution from lead applicants and their partners, excluding GST).

The cash contribution from the lead applicant and their partners may include contributions from governments other than the Queensland Government. However, the cash contribution from private sector sources must be at least 25% of the project costs.

The cash contribution must be new investment. Historic or expenses incurred prior to application cannot be counted towards the cash contribution.

Queensland Government funding under the program will be paid progressively against agreed project milestones.

Funding is limited by the ITF's overall budget.

Funded projects may span up to 3 years.

Objectives

The ITF aims to deliver a transformative 'step change' that speeds the emergence of new products and/or services based on a platform technology, or the convergence of platform technologies, with global potential across 1 or more industry sectors.

These industry sectors include the 6 Advance Queensland priority sectors:

- advanced manufacturing
- aerospace
- biofutures
- biomedical and life sciences
- defence
- mining equipment, technology and services.

Initiatives in other industry sectors and key Queensland industries such as education, tourism, health and community services, and agriculture will also be considered.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, the lead applicant funder must:

- be a business (GST-registered, with an ABN)
- have total cash contributions (from the applicant and partner organisations) that are at least 3 times greater than the ITF funding sought
- be able to demonstrate an ability to fund at least 75% of the cost of the eligible project, other than from Queensland Government funding sources, e.g. by providing certified financial statements (including profit and loss statement and balance sheet) for the previous 2 financial years or otherwise demonstrating that match funding is guaranteed
- where a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) is formed for the project, key participants in, and funders of the SPV may be required to meet the above due diligence requirements
- have ownership, access to, or beneficial use of, any intellectual property that is the subject of, or is necessary to carry out your project.

ITF projects

ITF projects should:

- deliver the development and deployment of an innovative, unique or new platform technology product, process or service with the potential to achieve high growth and create jobs in Queensland

- be based around formalised partnerships with separate Queensland-based industries, small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and/or startups (for the purposes of this project, SMEs are classified as companies with less than 200 employees)
- involve a minimum of 3 Queensland-based collaborators contributing funding and/or in-kind support:
 - collaborating organisations cannot be related, such as part or subsidiary
 - collaborators may include Queensland-based SMEs and/or startups, customers or end users, universities, research institutes and other organisations that can contribute to the demonstration and commercial development of platform technologies
- commit a 30% minimum portion of ITF Queensland Government and overall funding to be spent with Queensland SMEs and/or startups as part of the project (excludes funding spent on the lead applicant and partners e.g. salaries and on-costs etc)
- have identified applications and growth paths for the platform technology, ideally across multiple sectors
- commence within 90 days after the Queensland Government signs the application approval (Financial Incentive Agreement)
- be completed within an agreed project timeframe up to a maximum of 3 years
- have a distinct set of activities, with aims and outcomes achievable and reportable within set timeframes
- undertake research and development, testing, demonstration trials or commercialisation of a platform technology or the convergence of platform technologies into new systems
- aim to deliver a transformative 'step change' that speeds the emergence of new products and/or services based on a platform technology, or the convergence of platform technologies, with global potential across 1 or more industry sectors.

Eligible project costs

The following are examples of eligible costs under the ITF:

- salary costs (including on-costs) for staff and contractors working on the activities of the funded project
- capital expenditure on plant and equipment for the exclusive use of the project, to a maximum total amount of 20% of the total project cost (excluding GST) unless otherwise negotiated as part of the Financial Incentive Agreement
- consumables required specifically for the project, to a maximum amount of 10% (excluding GST) of the total project cost
- services provided by unrelated external parties (including testing, design and other professional services)
- legal and intellectual property costs
- travel, accommodation and subsistence costs solely associated with project activity
- technical validation/demonstration processes.

Ineligible project costs

Ineligible costs include all costs not directly related to the project, including the following:

- general operating costs incurred by the recipient and collaborative partners including administrative, general business, training, operational and production costs
- organisational overheads
- financial and compliance costs
- infrastructure and inventory costs
- capital works and/or physical infrastructure including any buildings, land transportation, telecommunications and IT networks
- costs associated with the ongoing programs of work and/or core business of the applicant or partner organisations.

Assessment criteria

Considering the intent of the program outlined in the introduction to these guidelines, applications will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria at both stages 1 and 2.

To be considered, an activity should perform very strongly against most, if not all, of the following criteria:

1. **Impact:** the extent to which the ITF project will achieve a step change to speed the adoption of identified platform technologies and enabled processes or services. Integrated use of technologies, scalability and transferability across sectors and clear pathways to achieve job creation, productivity gains, and increased capability are defining features.
2. **Competitive advantage:** the extent to which the ITF project is of strategic importance, and enhances the competitive advantage of Queensland firms, industry or the state's economy. This may include an area in which Queensland has an existing competitive edge, or the development of new competitive advantage in global value chains, 'niche' products, components and/or services. Projects may exploit opportunities to introduce new capabilities or diversity to the Queensland economy.
3. **Collaboration:** applicants must demonstrate how they will grow networks, collaboration and shared benefits across Queensland including industries, SMEs, startups, technology developers, researchers or customers (end users).
4. **Capability:** clear delivery capacity within the project partners and partner readiness to commit to the ITF project. A demonstrated track record combining the technical, development and commercial capabilities to deliver in the timeframes of the program and foster productive relationships.
5. **Technical merit:** applications must demonstrate the project has scientific or technical merit, is well planned, technically feasible and achievable in the context of project deliverables and outcomes (note – criteria 5 only applies to stage 2 application assessment).

How to apply

The ITF has a two-stage application process.

Proposals will be accepted at any time from the opening date.

Assessments will occur regularly until all program funds are committed.

Stage 1—Expression of Interest

Expressions of interest (EOI) should be submitted online through the Advance Queensland ITF website.

Guidance to assist in the completion of ITF EOIs is available in the [EOI application handbook \(PDF, 213KB\)](#).

Following assessment of the EOI applications, shortlisted applicants with their partners may be invited to pitch their projects to an assessment panel.

Shortlisted applicants may also be invited to submit a stage 2 full application.

EOIs not shortlisted for progressing to the full application stage will not be considered for funding.

Stage 2—Full Application invitation

A stage 2 full application will include:

- a more detailed response to each of the assessment criteria
- a detailed project plan including milestones, timeframes, budget and funding breakdown
- evidence of level of commitment of all partner organisations

- evidence to demonstrate the ability to fund 75% of the total project costs (e.g. financial statements or other assurance).

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supplied supporting material.

The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

Application assessment

ITF applications will be assessed by a panel of assessors against the criteria.

Stage 1 EOI shortlisted applicants with their partners will, on invitation, be required to attend an interview to pitch their proposal.

Applicants may be contacted at any stage of the assessment process to clarify any information provided in stage 1 or 2 and/or to request further information to enable a due diligence and probity assessment.

There is no implicit guarantee of approval at any stage of the application process.

Funding agreements

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding [Financial Incentive Agreement \(PDF, 397\)](#) with the Queensland Government. Ensure you have read and accept the terms and conditions of the Financial Incentive Agreement, prior to submitting an application, as they will not be negotiable at the time a funding offer is made.

Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to evaluate applications for the program. Only authorised departmental officers, experts engaged to assist with assessment, and approved grant assessors have access to this information.

Applicants should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government. Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

Your personal information or information marked as commercial-in-confidence will not be disclosed to any other third party without your consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

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