



# NSW Space+ Program Guidelines

July 2024

Opening Date and Time	12noon AEST, 15 July 2024
Closing Date and Time	12 noon AEST, 30 August 2024
Type of grant opportunity	Open competitive
Enquiries	<a href="mailto:research.projects@smartsatcrc.com">research.projects@smartsatcrc.com</a>

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## About Investment NSW

The New South Wales (NSW) Government drives economic growth and social prosperity by cultivating a thriving environment for business, innovation, and talent.

The NSW space sector itself is thriving, backed by significant industry and government investment and the highest concentration of space organisations in Australia. The sector is bolstered by nine dedicated industry precincts, eight world-class universities with active space-related programs and five space industry incubators, accelerators, and hubs. Best positioned strategically, economically, politically, and geographically, NSW is primed to leverage the opportunities presented by this new space era.

As the lead agency for industry development, investment attraction, trade and export, Investment NSW delivers a wide range of initiatives to support the continued growth of the space industry, in alignment with Australia's space strategy.

With strong connections across industry, academia and government, Investment NSW is your partner for growth.

[www.investment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.investment.nsw.gov.au)

## About the NSW Space+ Program

### Introduction

Investment NSW, located within the NSW Premier's Department, has engaged the SmartSat Cooperative Research Centre (SmartSat) to support and manage this Open Call for project concepts to foster the creation and commercialisation of space-related technologies and innovations in NSW.

The NSW Space+ Program (the Program) aims at empowering the space-related industry ecosystem of NSW, creating State-based opportunities for industry, research organisations, SMEs, researchers, and students.

The NSW Government has committed \$500,000 to support NSW businesses to commercialise and showcase their world-leading capabilities to a global audience at the upcoming 76<sup>th</sup> International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in 2025.

Renowned as one of the most prestigious events in the space industry, the IAC draws an average of 7,500 participants from over 100 countries worldwide. With Sydney set to host the IAC2025, from 29 September to 3 October 2025, the event provides an unparalleled platform to showcase the State's strengths in space technology, advanced manufacturing, and innovation.

This document outlines the Program's objectives, funding opportunities, eligibility criteria, feasibility study details, funding coverage, application timeline, assessment process and criteria, outcome notification, and contracting process.

The Guidelines may be updated by SmartSat at any time. If this occurs, the revised Guidelines or any addenda will be published on <https://smartsatcrc.com/key-initiatives/new-south-wales-node/space-program>

Space+ Program: Guidelines and Instructions

## Objectives

The NSW Space+ Program aims to drive growth in the state's space sector by strengthening industry capability and capacity through strategic investments and partnerships.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- Drive the advancement and growth of NSW's space industry capability and capacity to ensure it remains competitive and innovative.
- Support the development and commercialisation of space capability that can integrate into national and international supply chains, delivering clear end-user benefits.
- Support NSW space industry scalability and growth through national or international partnerships.
- Advance space capabilities that contribute to broader societal goals, including delivering economic, environmental, and social benefits to NSW.

## Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the Program are to:

- Increased capability and capacity of the NSW space industry, ensuring it remains competitive and innovative and able to support the development of advanced manufacturing, technologies, services, and infrastructure.
- Increased the number and size of NSW business who are accessing opportunities in national and international supply chains and other space adjacent industries.
- Increase in the number of national and international partnerships that support NSW businesses, raising awareness of NSW and Australia's capabilities in advanced manufacturing and space industries.
- Realise meaningful social, economic (e.g. investments, high-value jobs), and environmental benefits by advancing space capability that have broad applications. This will result in improved public understanding of the value of space to the economy, the environment, and social prosperity for the people of NSW and Australia.

## Funding opportunity

### What funding is available?

The NSW Government will provide up to \$500,000 for the Program.

The grant amount can be up to 100 per cent of eligible project expenditure (grant percentage), although co-investment is strongly encouraged.

The minimum grant amount will be \$250,000 excluding GST.

The maximum grant amount to be awarded is \$500,000 excluding GST.

Proposals may be partially funded if there is insufficient funding available for the whole proposal or where only a component of the proposal is considered suitable/eligible.

### Who can apply?

This funding opportunity is open to both public and private organisations. Consortia bids are encouraged.

To be eligible for the Program, applicants must:

- Have a lead organisation with an Australian Business Number (ABN) registered in NSW, and have their business headquartered in NSW, or have substantial operations in NSW.
- Be non-tax exempt.
- Have an account with an Australian financial institution.
- Hold the Intellectual Property or the rights to commercialise the technology if proposed in the project.
- Demonstrate any funding from other NSW sources, or other state or federal government, or other grant programs, do not duplicate activities requested under this Call and/or be able to explain the additionality to be created from this grant.
- Provide evidence from the board (or chief executive officer or equivalent) that the project is supported, that you can complete the project and meet any costs of the project not covered by the grant.

**Note:** Contributions from lead and partner organisations may be used to fund work outside of New South Wales, however the majority of overall project effort must occur in New South Wales

**Note:** Applicants do not need to be a SmartSat Partner to be eligible to apply to this program.

### Who is not eligible to apply?

You are not eligible to apply for the Program if:

- You or any project partner are named by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency as an organisation that has not complied with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*.
- You or a project partner are insolvent.
- You are an individual.
- You are an unincorporated association.
- You are a Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agency or body excluding government corporate entities.

Space+ Program: Guidelines and Instructions

SmartSat, with Investment NSW guidance, may decide that an application is ineligible for funding. This may include any person or business activity that could cause reputational and/or other risks to the NSW Government.

## Eligible activities

The Call is open to any space product, services, infrastructure development, and/or ride to space.

## Eligible costs

Program funding can only be incurred on eligible activities or agreed Program activities. To be eligible, costs must:

- Be directly related to the funded activities.
- Be incurred within the project period.
- Reflect competitive market rates.
- Be a true and accurate reflection of costs required to deliver the activity.

For additional guidance on eligible expenditure, see appendix A.

For additional guidance on ineligible expenditure, see appendix B.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project cost and request evidence of costs such as supplier contracts, quotes, and invoices. We may request financial reports and credit checks from independent third-party service providers.

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.

## Timeline

Expected timing for this Program:

Activity	Timeframe
Open call for project concepts	Mid - July 2024
Proposal submission deadline	12 noon (AEST) on Friday 30 August 2024
Assessment of applications	2-3 weeks
Notification to successful/unsuccessful applicants	1 weeks
Negotiation and award of grant agreement	4 weeks
Project start date	4 November 2024
Project end date	30 September 2025
Project duration	11 months

All funded projects are expected to be ready to commence within two months of its project proposal submission to SmartSat and completed within eleven months from the project commencement.

All project proposals must be submitted before 12noon (Australian Central Standard Time) on the due date and by means outlined under Submission section of this document.

## Assessment

SmartSat will identify a joint assessment pool. The role of the assessors will be to review and provide advice to SmartSat and Investment NSW regarding which proposals are deemed high quality and fundable (and their relative rankings) with reference to the objectives of the funding scheme and assessment criteria.

### Assessment process

1. SmartSat will undertake an initial review of each proposal to determine compliance against the stated eligibility criteria. Any non-compliant responses will be available to the assessment panel to look at but will not be formally reviewed for funding.
2. Compliant submissions will be individually reviewed by pool of assessors against the assessment criteria.
3. Applications for specific project call areas may be separated and assessed by separate assessment panels.
4. Scores and comments will be collated and will form a recommendation to SmartSat and Investment NSW as to which proposal/s merit funding.

### Conflicts of interest

Upon receiving the applications for review, assessors will be required to declare any potential conflicts of interest to SmartSat. SmartSat will review potential conflicts and mitigation strategies and as a result may include excluding the identified assessor from reviewing a submission. Collated scores for that application will be normalised.

### What is considered a conflict of interest

Conflicts of interest for assessors may occur on two different levels:

A **direct conflict of interest** is where an assessor:

- is directly involved with a proposal (as a participant, manager, mentor, or partner) or has a close personal relationship with the applicant (e.g. family members), or
- is a collaborator or in some other way involved with an applicant's proposal.

An **indirect conflict of interest** is where an assessor:

- is employed by an organisation involved in a proposal but is not part of the applicant's proposal,
- has a personal and/or professional relationship with one of the applicants (for example an acquaintance), or
- is assessing a proposal that may compete with their business interests.



## Assessment criteria

To evaluate applications for the NSW Space+ Program, the following assessment criteria will be used, aligned with the Program's Objectives, and intended Outcomes:

1. The project demonstrates significant potential to drive the advancement and growth of NSW's space industry capability and capacity, ensuring It remains competitive and innovative, while delivering clear economic and broader benefits to NSW. (25%)

Assessors will look for evidence of how the proposal:

- Leads to unique, different, increased capability which would have national and international significance, impact, and recognition.
- Leads to increased capacity of space ecosystem and activities in NSW.
- Has the potential to deliver significant social, economic, and environmental benefits to NSW.
- Has the potential to create high-quality jobs and attract investment in NSW.
- Clearly describes the limits of current practices and challenges, and the projects ambitions, novelty, and innovation of the proposed approach.
- Clearly outlines the purpose and outcomes, which support the purpose and objectives of the Program.

2. The project supports the development and commercialisation of space capabilities that can integrate into national and international supply chains, delivering clear end-user benefits. (25%)

Assessors will look for evidence of how the proposal:

- Shows evidence of a clear commercial opportunity (including benefits and ROI).
- Shows evidence of a clear commercialisation strategy, the potential to integrate into national and international supply chains and access new markets.
- Has a clear demonstration of the benefits to end-users.

3. The project team have proven experience, skill capacity, networks, and the ability to deliver the project. (20%)

Assessors will look for evidence of how the proposal:

- Is led by a leader(s) with the skills and knowledge to deliver the proposed activities.
- Project teams have excellent track records of collaborating with other institutions and industries and delivering commercially viable products.
- Partners bring a mix of complementary resources, capabilities, and world class expertise to the proposed project, building a connected and high performing project team.
- Utilises sound practices and principles, including a well-designed project plan, including a credible approach to risk management.
- Provides the mix of complementary skills, knowledge, and resources to deliver the proposed activities and to manage risk.

- The project team and its partners have the capabilities and capacity to build and manage a substantive partnership, to fully realise the stated opportunities outlined in the proposal, including the proposed activities.
4. The project supports NSW space industry scalability and growth through national or international partnerships. (15%)

Assessors will look for evidence of how the proposal:

- Shows evidence of the strength and relevance of national and international partnerships to the project's goals.
  - Shows evidence of the intention for the collaboration to continue.
  - Shows evidence of the project's ability to leverage partnerships to achieve scalability and growth.
  - Maximises the involvement of NSW space industry in the project and towards building international awareness of local capabilities.
5. The project delivers value for money for NSW, attracts significant external investment to support the project's long-term development and growth. (15%)

Assessors will look for evidence of how the proposal:

- Project team have secured commitments, letters of intent, or expressions of interest from venture capitalists, private equity firms or other funding sources.
- Project team have a demonstrated history of securing investment and delivering positive returns.

## Assessment decisions

In consideration of the assessors' results, SmartSat and Investment NSW may decide to either:

- Approve the proposal.
- Decline the proposal.
- Approve the proposal with conditions that must be met before or during the contract.
- Approve the proposal for an adjusted amount of funding.

If applications do not sufficiently address the criteria or do not represent excellent science and innovation, SmartSat and Investment NSW may choose not to fund any project.

## Notifying you of the outcome

When a decision about your proposal has been made, SmartSat will advise the contact person listed in the application by email.

Following notification, SmartSat and Investment NSW will publish their decisions and may announce these with a press release. The details SmartSat or Investment NSW may make public are the:

- Name of organisations participating in the project.
- Title of the project.
- Description and public statement of the proposed project.
- Total amount of funding applied for and awarded.
- Duration of the project.

## Contracting process

It is expected that successful recipient(s) will enter into a funding agreement with SmartSat for the funding.

## How the funding will be paid

The funding will be payable on achievement of key milestones to be detailed in the executed funding agreement.

## How the project will be monitored

The recipient(s) will be required to submit progress reports in line with the timeframes in the funding agreement. SmartSat will establish templates for these reports.

The progress reports will address:

- Progress against agreed project milestones and outcomes.
- Contributions of participants directly related to the project.
- Expenditure of the grant funds.

The project plan submitted as part of your application will form the basis of the project reporting requirements.

When recipient(s) complete the activity, they are required to submit a final report. Final reports must:

- Identify if and how outcomes have been achieved.
- Include the agreed evidence as specified in the funding agreement.
- Identify the total eligible expenditure incurred.
- Be submitted within 30 business days of completion in the format provided by SmartSat.

It is also expected that the recipient(s) will also support and attend any NSW Government events associated with IAC2025.

## Branding and Acknowledgments

Grant recipients agree that SmartSat and NSW Government may use its name and logo, the title, and a non-confidential summary of the Project, in any announcement regarding the NSW Space+ Program: Guidelines and Instructions.

Each Applicant agrees to acknowledge the support of SmartSat and the NSW government, in relation to any brochure, publication, and public statement relating to the NSW Space+ Program: Guidelines and Instructions and associated activities, using the following attribution: *This work has been supported by the NSW Government, via Investment NSW.*

## Records and Access

The grant recipient will keep invoices and bank records and proper books and records, in accordance with applicable accounting standards, to verify its compliance with the guidelines for at least seven years after completion of the Project. SmartSat will be granted access to such records upon reasonable request. If any funding has been spent other than in accordance with this Agreement, the applicable Applicant agrees to repay that amount to SmartSat.

## Enquiries

For further information or clarification, you can contact us via:  
[Research.Projects@smartsatcrc.com](mailto:Research.Projects@smartsatcrc.com)

## APPENDIX A

### Eligible expenditure

- You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure that you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.
- To be eligible, expenditure must be a direct cost of your proposed project.
  
- Eligible expenditure includes:
  - Base salary + direct on costs (allowing for superannuation and other direct employment on-costs)
  - Travel and transport costs required to conduct agreed project activities and deliver the project. This incorporates economy class travel, accommodation, ground transport and meals (generally in line with ATO rates). Travel cannot exceed 10% of the total project costs.
  - Purchase and maintenance of project specific equipment, hardware or software directly related to the project.
  - Staff training that directly supports the achievement of project outcomes
  - Direct costs associated with the access to, and maintenance of, project.
  - Specific facilities.
  - Direct costs associated with running project workshops.
  - Costs associated with access to project-specific information and data.
  - Contingency costs equating to not more than 5% of the eligible project costs.
  - Other eligible expenditure as approved.
  
- If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence, such as quotes for major costs.
- You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible.
- You must not commence your project until you execute a grant agreement with SmartSat.

## APPENDIX B

### Ineligible expenditure

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- Business as usual expenses, or maintenance costs
- Routine operational expenses, including communications, accommodation, office computing, facilities, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees, and bank charges, not directly related to the project.
- Non-project-related costs, or costs associated with ineligible activities.
- Capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers or photocopiers and the construction, renovation, or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories not directly related to the project.

Other costs may be ineligible where we decide that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

SmartSat may impose limitations or exclude expenditure, or further include some ineligible expenditure listed in these guidelines in a grant agreement or otherwise by notice to you.