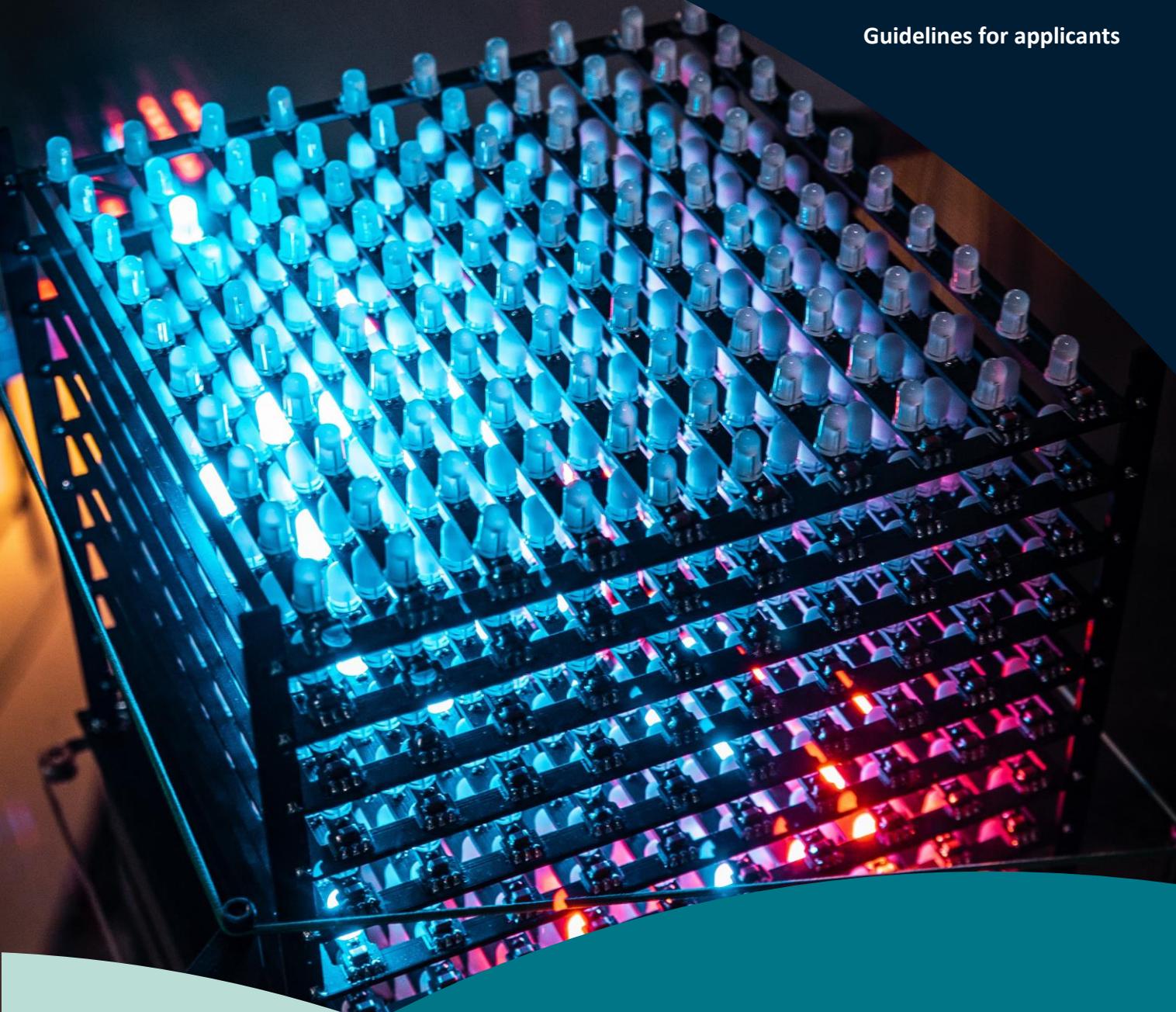


# Innovation Centre Model

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Guidelines for applicants



# Innovation Centre Model

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

AUGUST 2021

### 1 Background

**Innovation is a clearly articulated priority for the Governments of Australia and Vietnam** as a means to accelerate inclusive economic growth in Vietnam. Innovation is a priority of each government alone, as well as a key pillar of the bilateral relationship between the two governments. This priority is reflected in the Australia Vietnam Innovation Partnership, which builds on the trusted partnership between the two countries with a shared aspiration to become leading innovation nations together.

Under this overarching innovation umbrella, a flagship partnership program between Vietnam and Australia – Aus4Innovation – has been developed to strengthen the Vietnamese innovation system and prepare for Vietnam’s economic and digital future.

**Aus4Innovation** is a four year, AUD 13,45 million program running from 2018 to 2022, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), managed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), and in partnership with the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam (MoST). The program aims to deliver:

- An enhanced partnership between Vietnam and Australia – as embodies in many different aspects, for example: Government to Government through the high-level Innovation Partnership, collaboration between institutions, businesses and individuals for knowledge exchange, commercialisation of innovative ideas, and two-way business development.
- Practical development outcomes through the realization and deployment of innovative ideas, including services, products, or business models to help accelerate socio-economic development and growth in both countries.
- Potential for future development, be it policy recommendations for a more enabling environment to spur innovation, or cooperative research on addressing the challenges and maximising the socioeconomic opportunities that future trends and directions present.

The program is guided by a Steering Committee comprised of senior members from DFAT, MoST, CSIRO, and an independent representative from the private sector.

### 2 The Innovation Centre Model Partnership Grant

**The Innovation Center Model Partnership Grant** (hereinafter referred as “Grant”) is an activity under the Innovation Policy Exchange work stream, which is to be delivered in collaboration with the Vietnam Institute for Science, Technology and Innovation (VISTI) under MoST.

The specific purpose of the activity is to support VISTI in introducing best practice innovation support models from Australia and develop a pilot Innovation Centre to build experience and

collect necessary data/evidence that will provide policy recommendations to the Government of Vietnam on sustainable innovation centre models for Vietnam.

To realise this plan, MoST has equipped VISTI with a building in the center of Hanoi together with funding to upgrade the facilities, and ten dedicated staff to work at the Center.

VISTI's objective is to develop an innovation centre focused on raising the innovation capacity of Vietnam's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (in contrast to other on-going innovation centre-like bodies in Vietnam that mainly target startups). Specifically, VISTI's Innovation centre aims to provide SMEs with the following:

- knowledge exchange and brokering, and technology transfer support
- innovation activities promotion, including the use of innovation approaches for enhancing capabilities and competitiveness
- matching services between technology and innovation demand (enterprise) and supply side (research and development organizations)
- support in managing and exploiting their intellectual property (IP), or acquisition of IP
- access to networks, partners, potential investors to enable their innovation ideas and projects

Additionally, the Centre will provide supports to enterprises in Vietnam to expose to the value of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), in order to broaden the impact of STI across the economy.

VISTI's key expected long-term outcomes of the Innovation Center include:

- Demonstrate an Innovation center model that is self-sustained in the long run
- Provide policy recommendations to support the Vietnamese innovation ecosystem by enabling similar centers across the country

To respond to VISTI's needs and expectation, the Aus4Innovation program develops this grant call, in collaboration with VISTI to identify an Australian partner to build up a partnership with VISTI to:

- Jointly develop a model for VISTI's pilot Innovation Centre – most preferably through contextualizing relevant well-proven models and best practices in Australia
- Jointly develop the first 9 to 12-month business plan (with key milestones for next 36 months) to translate the model into concrete activities
- Jointly implement some activities identified in the workplan, which mutually discussed and agreed among VISTI, the selected partner, and the A4I office as pilot activities
- Build capacity for VISTI's staff working at the Centre – through on-job, experiential training (or formal training where appropriate)
- Towards the end of agreed activities, co-develop with VISTI a report on insights into how the model could be scaled up / deployed across Vietnam
- Demonstrate a long-term vision to retain and further enhance the partnership establish through this work beyond the support of the grant

## Eligibility

- Applications will be accepted from an Australian entity that proves to have breadth and depth experience in providing advice and training, or operating an Innovation Centre in Australia:

- Eligible entities may include any private, public sector, universities, research institutes, or civil society organisation operating in Australia.
  - Eligible entities may form an alliance with one or more partner entities – either from Australia or Vietnam – in initiating the idea and deploying it, together with VISTI. A single Australian entity must be nominated as the lead.
  - Organisations submitting an application must have no reason preventing them from operating in Vietnam.
- CSIRO (the managing agency for this program), and its employees are ineligible to apply.

### Funding window

A funding package of up to AUD 150,000 will be available for this grant for the during between Sep / Oct 2021 – Aug / Sep 2022

### Application process and key activities timeline

The application process and timeline are highlighted in the below table:

Steps	Key tasks to be delivered	Timeline (Indicative)
1	- Grant call to be published on the Aus4Innovation website	(Early) Aug 2021
3	- Proposal submission	(End of) Aug 2021
4	- Proposal selection process, interviews with potential candidates and due diligence (where needed)	Mid Sep 2021
5	- Contract negotiation with selected grantee and grant agreement conclusion	(End of) Sep 2021
6	- Contract commencement	(Early) Oct 2021
6	- Deliver a report co-developed with VISTI to identify a model for VISTI's pilot Innovation Centre	Jan 2022
7	- Develop a workplan, in agreement with VISTI to rollout the Centre's activities for the coming 09 months, with key milestones for next 36 months	Jan - Feb 2022
8	- Propose some selected activities from the workplan to be funded by A4I within the scope of the grant and implement	Feb – Jul 2022
9	- Develop report on insights into how the model could be scaled up / deployed across Vietnam (jointly with VISTI)	Aug – Sept 2022

## Application

Applicants are requested to submit their proposals in [this template](#), via the [SmartyGrant Platform](#) by the deadline.

Proposals should be in pdf format and in English.

## Request for Clarification

During the application process, should applicants have any questions or need further clarification to help them complete the proposal, they can email [aus4innovation@csiro.au](mailto:aus4innovation@csiro.au), noting that phone calls are not encouraged. The Aus4Innovation Program Office is responsible to respond to such enquiries via emails within five (5) working days.

## Confidentiality

Applicants should be cognisant of their own need to retain security over actual or potential intellectual property rights.

Submitted application data will be kept in strict confidence by DFAT, CSIRO, and Aus4Innovation reviewers. Personnel are bound by confidentiality, or non-disclosure arrangements. Applications, however, will be reviewed by VISTI, giving third party members and their personnel the opportunity to access data. Aus4Innovation, DFAT and CSIRO cannot take responsibility for the loss of any information outside their direct control. Applicants are reminded to consider the above, prior to disclosing potentially sensitive information, and to seek their own professional legal advice.

# 3 Grant Assessment Principles

Assessment of applications will be based on two key criteria:

- Viability and Sustainability of the approach that the applicant would want to propose, and
- Strength and Qualification of the applicant as a potential partner

## 3.1 VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE APPROACH

### 3.1.1 Strength of approach and technical merits

Applicant is expected to provide succinct description of the approach, why it is effective to deliver the intent outputs and outcomes, any outstanding technical characteristics. If applicant plans to introduce an existing model in Australia and customises for Vietnam market, applicant will need to justify:

- How the model has been successful in Australia? What have been achieved? What made it that successful? What have you learnt from running that model?
- How long has the model been there? What made it sustainable?

### **3.1.2 Capacity Building and Engagement**

One of the key expectations from VISTI in working with an Australian partner in building up an Innovation centre model is the opportunity to learn and improve the capacity for the staff and their centre as a whole. Experiential capacity building, gained through pilot activities managed jointly between VISTI staff and the Australian partner, is highly preferred. Applicants should present in their proposal how they can meet this expectation from VISTI, both within the implementation period of this grant and beyond. Opportunities for VISTI to enter a business relationship with the selected Australian partner(s) to deliver services in the Vietnamese market, or other forms of deep, lasting engagement, will be highly considered.

### **3.1.3 Relevance to Vietnam**

Applicants will need to justify:

- How the model will work in the context of Vietnam, demonstrating that the local context has the appropriate pre-conditions exist and basic operating principles have been established/tested to make the model work
- How the model can be integrated into the local ecosystem and complement with other elements or factors that already exist the system
- The proponents' long-term vision to build a footprint in the Vietnamese market and the potential to develop a long-term partnership with VISTI and/or other Vietnamese partners

### **3.1.4 Value for Money**

Please describe how your approach represents value for money. Consider how the funding from Aus4Innovation will stimulate additional funding – either from the proposed partners themselves, or from other sources that can be brought to the partnership.

## **3.2 STRENGTHS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED PARTNERS**

### **3.2.1 Business Scale of Applicants**

Applicants need to demonstrate the scale of your portfolio, including areas that you specialise and/or have depth experience, for example:

- Experience in technology transfer
- Experience in business / technology matching
- Experience in IP related issues
- Engagement with / linkage to the SMEs network in Australia
- Financial capacity – size of projects the company has fulfilled
- Staffing capacity

### **3.2.2 International Experience**

Applicants are suggested to provide information on international partners they have been working with, overseas projects that they have been working on, overseas offices or staff they have, or plans to expand into markets outside Australia.

### **3.2.3 Linkage to Vietnam**

Applicants are suggested to provide describe work they have carried out previously in Vietnam or with Vietnamese partner(s); whether they have a representative office or staff located in the country; or have a plan to do so. Plans to enter the Vietnamese innovation and technology market in the near future, and plans for collaboration with a local partner, such as VISTI, will be highly considered.

## **3.3 COVID 19 ADAPTABILITY**

Given the on-going challenges that COVID 19, applicants need to ensure that the implementation of the proposed idea, if it is selected and funded, will be adaptive to the COVID 19 context, negative impacts will be minimised, and that the implementation plan will remain feasible.

Specific risks created by the pandemic, and solutions to respond to emerging challenges, will need to be demonstrated in the application.

## **OTHER POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

The Australian Government operates under strict international policies for risk management. Applicants must be aware of and comply with the following policies:

- Environmental and social safeguards
- Child protection policy
- Fraud control and anti-corruption
- Risk management for aid investments
- Ethical human research
- Animal welfare



**For further information**

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