NSW Bushfire Response R&D Mission

Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network

Guidelines for Applicants

February 2023

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NSW Bushfire Response R&D Mission – Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network

Guidelines for Applicants

1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

The [NSW Bushfire Response Research & Development (R&D) Mission](#) (**the Mission**) is the first NSW R&D Mission recommended by the Turning ideas into jobs: Accelerating research & development in NSW Action Plan (the Action Plan).

The Action Plan recommends that the Mission should focus on improving planning, preparations for and responses to bushfires – aligning with recommendation five of the [NSW Bushfire Inquiry](#).

The Mission provides $28 million over four years to accelerate the development, commercialisation and adoption of bushfire technologies and services to better prepare the state for future bushfires and position NSW as a global leader in the commercial development and export of bushfire technology and services.

The Mission has four programs:

1. The Bushfire Commercialisation Fund (BCF) providing financial support for early-stage NSW businesses (Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3 – 7) to help them scale and attract private investment.

2. The Bushfire Technology Pilots Program (BTPP) to support NSW businesses pilot their field-ready technologies and services with NSW fire-response agencies to improve bushfire management and operations (TRL 7-9).

3. The Bushfire STEM in Schools Program to inspire and enable a new generation of technologists through education and skills training for school children focused on technologies of immediate relevance to bushfire response.

4. Host organisation to support the development of a Bushfire Technology Ecosystem to help coordinate and strengthen NSW's research and industry strengths in bushfire technology to drive adoption of bushfire technology, accelerate technology solutions, and deliver better connections to deliver economic benefits in NSW.

The Office of the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer (OCSE) within the NSW Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade (DEIT) administers the Mission.

This Guideline is for Program 4: to support the development of a Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network (the Network), recognising that many technologies used for bushfires have broader application to other natural hazards, such as flooding. Given the recent flood events, the Network will be established to support the commercial development of technologies and services for bushfires and natural hazards.

1.2 Program Purpose

The NSW Government is offering up to $5.2 million over 4 years to establish and operate the Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network (the 'Network') for a minimum of 6 years.

The objective of the Network is to support a world-leading, mature, and collaborative bushfire and natural hazards technology sector, by actively fostering the commercial development and adoption of technologies and services in NSW to better prepare for future bushfires and natural hazards, protect first responders and communities, and provide economic benefit to NSW.

The Network will cover all phases of bushfire and natural hazards management: preparation, preparedness, response, and recovery and will leverage the skills, expertise, and networks in existing NSW innovation networks, such as the NSW Smart Sensing Network (NSSN), the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre, or the Australian Government's Natural Hazards Research Australia to maximise its impact.

The values of the Network are to:

1. Actively facilitate and encourage participants to connect for mutual gain and overcome geographical, cultural, and social barriers.

2. Be sustainable by fostering a collegial pay-it-forward culture where participants are willing to help others, and "pay forward" any positive benefits they receive to create a continuous cycle of connection for mutual gain.

2   Timing

Assessment and notification timelines	**Applications open** February 2023
	Information session Thursday 16 February 2023
	Applications close 17:00 (AEDT) Monday 13 March 2023
	Applicants informed of the outcome May 2023

Note: dates may be subject to change.

3   Requirements

3.1   Functions of the Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network

The Network will have four key functions:

1. Build trusted relationships between stakeholders for mutual gain

2. Build capability and commercial pathways to scale for NSW businesses and researchers

3. Provide market demand and intelligence services to NSW businesses and researchers

4. Increase awareness and impact of NSW bushfire/natural hazards businesses and build global connections.

Function 1: Build trusted relationships between stakeholders for mutual gain

NSW bushfire technology businesses find it difficult to engage with researchers and end-user fire-response agencies and have provided feedback that they find connections more valuable than grant money. Similarly, researchers find it difficult to find the right people to ensure their research is relevant and meets the needs of fire-response agencies. While fire-response agencies would like to be able to work with businesses and researchers early in the development phase to help refine and improve technologies before procuring, their operational needs come first, and they lack both the time and opportunity to engage with researchers.

To increase impact, the Network will actively encourage and facilitate connections between researchers, businesses, end-user agencies and existing bushfire/natural hazards related associations, organisations, research centres and R&D networks to leverage existing expertise and activities. It will build a culture of trust, continuous improvement, openness to sharing information and ideas, and a willingness to collaborate and learn by doing.

The Network will be (and can be perceived as) a neutral broker of commercial relationships between all stakeholders.

Function 2: Build capability and commercial pathways to scale

To support and accelerate the development and commercialisation of technologies to address the impacts of bushfires/natural hazards in NSW, the Network will actively upskill and build business and researcher capabilities to deliver globally competitive, world-class technology companies.

It will actively facilitate introductions to help businesses or researchers efficiently and effectively build foundational business and commercial skills, determine market opportunities, and pathways to commercialisation by connecting them to real-world experts that have the right experience, skills, and capabilities to tap into and learn from at key stages of their product development. This function also includes connections to venture capital, helping businesses identify potential partners to deliver integrated solutions, and support taking new products to market.

The Network will link businesses and researchers to programs that support their work, and provide up-to-date information on all relevant programs, advice on suitability and practical support to help them apply. This will include actively funnelling early-stage businesses to the BCF and field-ready technology to the BTPP under the Bushfire Response R&D Mission. In addition to this, the Network will also support companies to access relevant test facilities in NSW, Australia and internationally and help facilitate and support pilots and testing of field-ready technologies with end-user agencies.

Function 3: Provide market demand and intelligence services

Businesses currently struggle to connect to end-user agencies to understand their needs. Researchers provided feedback that they also want to better understand the challenges faced by end-user agencies to direct their research.

The Network will actively foster a sense of 'co-creation' and shared ownership that fosters an agile and responsive ecosystem that is receptive to change. It will assess demand from the local/global end-use 'customer' and provide this information about what the market needs and values to NSW businesses and researchers.

The Network will also offer a strategic and functional market intelligence capability to provide information on technology development trends, competitor assessments and specific present and future business conditions to inform NSW technology businesses on emerging trends in the bushfire/natural hazards space and to help them to respond.

The Network will not provide incubation- or startups-type services but will be complementary to these services.

Function 4: Increase awareness and impact of NSW bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses and build global connections

Increasing awareness of NSW bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses

The bushfire/natural hazards technology sector is currently emerging, and connections and relationships are ad hoc and not well developed. End-user agencies are keen to better understand what technologies are available but currently have no efficient or convenient way to do this.

To increase awareness, and impact, the Network will host or facilitate well-curated events, showcases, demonstrations with end-user agencies, conferences, and meetings in NSW, Australia and internationally to increase awareness, connections, and the impact of NSW bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses. This will include connecting to existing networks and activities to increase awareness of NSW bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses.

Going global

NSW technology businesses provided feedback that they have limited international connections or support to navigate international markets in the bushfire and natural hazards space. Scaling for export is quite different to scaling for the national market and there is a lack of support to help facilitate this.

To address this, the Network will actively connect to international stakeholders, networks, and groups to help identify export opportunities for NSW businesses and facilitate introductions. The Network will also provide expertise to help businesses develop their export plans. NSW Government's International Trade and Investment team will be an important stakeholder and can help facilitate these connections, where required and/or relevant.

To increase exposure of NSW bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses globally, the Network will actively promote NSW businesses to international stakeholders, networks, and groups. Types of activities could include connecting or showcasing NSW businesses into relevant international markets or providing funding for promising businesses to attend international conferences or events.

3.2   Operational Model

Host organisation

The Network will be delivered by a host organisation, which is an organisation with a presence in NSW, or a consortium of organisations, with an organisational presence in NSW.

The host will be responsible for establishing the Network, appointing the Director to lead the operations, and providing administrative and strategic support in accordance with a funding agreement between the NSW Government and the host organisation (or lead organisation in the case of a consortium).

The host will be expected to support the success of the Network by:

- Attracting high quality staff to the Network.

- Minimising administrative burdens on the Network so it can focus on delivering its key functions.

- Leveraging the host's relationships with businesses, industry associations, research institutions and other participants in the bushfire/natural hazards ecosystem in NSW, Australia and internationally to support the Network to build similar links across the ecosystem.

- Being (and being perceived as) a neutral broker of commercial relationships between all stakeholders.

- Building creative collaborations and unconventional partnerships to maximise impact.

Operating model

Organisations or consortia that submit a proposal to host the Network are welcome to propose operating models, provided they cover the Requirements outlined in this document.

The Director will be critical to its success. Their role is commercial, and relationship-focused as they will primarily be dealing with local and international bushfire/natural hazards technology businesses and researchers from start-up to mature businesses and engaging with, and representing, the ecosystem. The Director must:

- Have experience and networks in the bushfire/natural hazards sector in NSW, Australia and internationally.
- Have the skills and experience to lead the establishment and operation of an organisation like the Network.
- Have the skills and experience to build trusted relationships between stakeholders in NSW as well as in Australia and overseas.
- Be (and be perceived as) a neutral broker of commercial relationships between all stakeholders.
- Have the reputation and influence to represent the NSW and Australian bushfire/natural hazards sector.

Location

It is not required that the Network has a permanent physical location, instead, a blend of virtual and physical space in NSW is sufficient, with some in-person time to develop relationships, and demonstrate technology.

Engagement

The Network's key stakeholders include:

- NSW businesses involved in bushfire and natural hazards related technologies

- NSW researchers and research organisations involved in bushfire and natural hazards research

- Bushfire/natural hazards related networks, industry associations or groups in NSW, Australia and internationally

- Australian and international businesses, and organisations involved in technology and research in the bushfire and natural hazards space

- End users of bushfire/natural hazards technologies and fire and natural hazards response agencies in NSW, Australia and internationally

- Federal government organisations involved in bushfire and natural hazards research, management, and operations.

The Network will be expected to engage with stakeholders through meetings, private and public workshops, events, and conferences. The Network is expected to have productive working relationships with international stakeholders, undertaking necessary international meetings and travel to establish, manage and leverage those relationships, where possible.

Related initiatives

The Network will be encouraged to engage with any other relevant NSW, Australian, and international bushfire and natural hazards sector initiatives, to seek further funding and pursue opportunities to offer additional services and sector support.

4 Eligibility

4.1 Eligible Applicants

To be eligible, the organisation/s applying must:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Be financially viable and able to demonstrate they are likely to remain so over the duration of the project.
- Be one of the following entities:
  o A company, or
  o An individual or partnership, provided you agree to form a company incorporated in Australia to enter into a legally binding grant agreement, or
  o University, publicly funded research organisation (PFRO), or their collaborative entities, or
  o Public sector organisation or other organisation, such as not-for-profit organisations.
- All single-entity applicants must have a presence in NSW. Joint (consortia) proposals will be highly regarded. If a proposal is consortium-based, the proposal lead must be headquartered in NSW.
- Ineligible applicants include consortia or partnerships with businesses that are insolvent.

DEIT, at its sole discretion, may take publicly available information about an applicant into account that may cause a business to be ineligible for support, such as any personnel or business activities that could cause reputational damage or other risk to the NSW Government.

4.2 Eligible activities

Types of eligible activities supporting each of the four key functions of the Network include:

Key function of the Network	Types of eligible activities
1. Build trusted relationships between stakeholders for mutual gain	o Well curated events or workshops on a regular basis with clear agenda and outcomes. o Connecting with existing networks (e.g. AFAC or NSSN), groups (Natural Hazards Research Australia) and international groups such as the Institution of Fire Engineers to increase reach and leverage existing expertise and activity.

		o Delivering showcases, expos, and events to increase awareness, connections, and impact.
		o Demonstration days to connect fire response agencies with promising technology businesses.
		o Creating a directory of companies and key contacts in fire response agencies, researchers, and existing networks.
		o Establishing a virtual network of businesses to connect to and share knowledge.
		o Brokering services to connect researchers, businesses, and fire response agencies.
2.	Build capability and commercial pathways to scale for NSW businesses and researchers	o Facilitating introductions for businesses to help them efficiently and effectively move to the next stage of product development.
		o Establishing a panel of commercial/business experts with real world 'commercial scars' that have founded several ventures, including some failures and bring experience, skills, and capabilities that early-stage businesses can tap into and learn from at key stages of their product development.
		o Establishing a panel of bushfire/natural hazards experts that businesses can connect to early on in their product development journey.
		o Establishing a facilitated peer support network to help businesses identify potential partners to deliver integrated solutions, and support to go to market.
		o Establishing strong connections to Natural Hazards Research Australia.
		o Connections with Venture Capital, and pitch events.
		o Connections to incubators and accelerator programs, and relevant commercial training programs.
		o Commercial and business mentoring services.
		o Funding for bushfire/natural hazards challenges.
		o Funding and/or support for businesses to apply for challenges or other grants or innovation prizes.
		o Funding for pilots and testing with end-user agencies.
		o Funding support to help businesses access relevant test facilities in NSW, Australia, or globally.
3.	Provide market demand and intelligence services to NSW businesses and researchers	o Identifying end-user challenges and needs through co-designed workshops or leveraging existing networks and resources in relevant NSW Government agencies, NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre, NSW research networks e.g. NSSN, industry networks/groups like AFAC, or national research bodies such as Natural Hazards Research Australia
		o Providing up-to-date information on all the programs available for businesses, and practical support to help them apply by, for example, helping businesses to develop a robust application or pitch.
		o Information on technology development trends, or competitor assessments to inform NSW businesses of emerging trends in the bushfire/natural hazards space and help them respond.

4. Increase awareness and impact of NSW bushfire/ natural hazards technology businesses and build global connections	o Showcases of NSW businesses into relevant international markets using, for example, Investment NSW's international connections.
	o Funding for promising businesses to attend international conferences or events.
	o Expertise and support to help businesses develop export plans and identify export markets.
	o Facilitate introductions and/or meetings to relevant international stakeholders.
	o Promote NSW businesses to international stakeholders, networks, and groups.

4.3   Eligible Support

Up to $5.2 million is available to the successful applicant to establish and run the Network. Funding will be paid in annual instalments of $1.3 million over 4 years, with the Network to run for at least 6 years. Annual payments will be linked to clear milestones and performance measures in the Deed of Agreement. Funding can be expended over 4 or more years to establish and deliver the Network. The funding will be awarded based on merit-based assessment and will depend on the overall quality and quantity of applications received.

The project must ensure all grant monies are used on activities undertaken to deliver the Network for the benefit of NSW citizens.

The funding support will be in the form of a grant to be provided in accordance with a Deed of Agreement entered with DEIT.

Applications can include co-funding proposals and potential leveraging opportunities. If other in-kind assistance is sought, these should be included in proposals where feasible, and will be considered during the assessment process. A letter of intent/support will be required to demonstrate this.

DEIT may choose not to award or recommend funding under this program.

Funding for the Network can be used for:

- Salaries and access to external expertise that is directly related to delivery of the Network

- Hosting and managing events, workshops, and/or delivering showcases/ expos, and demonstration days

- Establishing an online presence, virtual networking platform and/or online directory services

- Challenges

- Practical support and expertise for businesses to apply for grants, innovation prizes and/or identify market opportunities, develop commercialisation strategies, or export plans, and conduct commercial feasibility studies

- Pilots or testing of bushfire technologies or services

- Economy travel and accommodation to conferences, workshops for businesses and/or Network staff in NSW, Australia or globally

- Economy travel, accommodation, and fees, where necessary, for businesses to access relevant test facilities in NSW, Australia or globally

- Conducting market and product assessments

- Specialist equipment and/or infrastructure necessary to deliver the objectives of the Network

- Intellectual property protection or advice.

Examples of ineligible activities for funding:

- Business airline travel

- Activities not aligned to the objectives of the Network

- Office rental costs

- Project costs that are already the subject of another government grant, subsidy, or financial assistance

- Project costs incurred prior to an application being submitted (no retrospective funding will be awarded).

5 Assessment Criteria

As this is a competitive grants process, the assessment will be a comparative assessment of the application against all other eligible applications. An independent Expert Panel will assess proposals against the assessment criteria in Table 1.

The application will be submitted via SmartyGrants and assessed against the criteria below.

Table 1. Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria	Criterion	Description
Impact (40%)	1 (20%)	How will the proposal establish the Network to achieve its objectives and values, and deliver its functions? *(Question B1)* Note proposals that include co-funding and/or leverage opportunities with other associated organisations or networks will be assessed more favourably.
	2 (20%)	To what degree does the organisation or consortium have high quality links to the bushfire/natural hazards technology sector to support activities that establish NSW as a major world centre of bushfire/natural hazards research, and technology development and commercialisation? *(Question B2)*
Deliverability (60%)	3 (15%)	To what extent does the proposed team have the necessary capabilities to lead the delivery of the Network's objectives, values, and functions? *(Question B3)*

	4 (15%)	How does the proposed operating model support the Network to meet its objectives and deliver its functions? *(Question B4)*
	5 (15%)	How does the project plan and strategy set out an effective approach to growing the impact and influence of the Network? *(Question B5)*
	6 (15%)	In what way does the financial model maximise the sustainability, resilience, and impact of the Network in delivering each of its functions? *(Question B6)*

DEIT may seek clarification from any applicant in relation to its application, including seeking further information on the eligibility or assessment criteria.

Important information when submitting:

Applicants need to:

- submit the online application form through Smarty Grants, ensuring all questions are answered or indicated not applicable.

- clearly identify in their application (including attachments) any information that the applicant requests be treated as confidential.

- sign their application. If applying as a consortium, the lead applicant must sign and have at least one of the core participants sign (by the head of the organisation or their authorised delegate). If all core participants' representatives have not signed the application, the signatories must acknowledge that the application is made with the knowledge and on behalf of all core participants.

Failure to provide the above information may result in the application being set aside from further consideration at DEIT's absolute discretion.

Late proposals will not be considered except where DEIT is satisfied that the integrity and competitiveness of the program has not been compromised.

6 Assessment Process

The assessment of applications will be led by the independent Expert Panel, supported by the OCSE as Secretariat to the Bushfire Response R&D Mission.

Once applications close, OCSE will review the applications for eligibility and provide a report to the Expert Panel on all eligible and ineligible applications. The OCSE, on behalf of the Expert Panel, may seek further information on individual applications in relation to eligibility.

The Expert Panel will:

- identify any conflicts of interest in relation to any eligible applications and sign a confidentiality agreement

- assess and rank eligible applications according to the assessment criteria

- engage with applicants through the OCSE Secretariat, where appropriate, to clarify aspects of an applications or explore opportunities to collaborate between applicants, and

- make recommendations on which applicant, if any, should receive the grant and the amount of those grant.

If the Expert Panel decides to engage with applicants to explore opportunities to collaborate, those applicants will be provided with an opportunity to submit a revised application that reflects the collaborative approach.

The Expert Panel will assess each eligible application on a competitive basis relative to the criteria and other applications and agree, by consensus, on a shortlist.

The Expert Panel will conduct interviews with shortlisted applicants to discuss aspects of their proposal and further assess against shortlisted applications assessment criteria.

When making their recommendations, the Expert Panel may take into consideration:

- The total funding available

- The assessment criteria outlined above

- Any information received during any interview or presentation

- The requested amount against the scope of the project i.e. could the applicant effectively deliver the proposed project with less funding

- Whether the requested funding amount is too large compared to the project as a whole

- Whether applicants have sufficient or additional resources or avenues available to raise capital other than this grant that could assist with the success of their project

- Whether a decrease of funding will impact achieving the overall aim of the Network.

The Expert Panel has discretion to recommend that an applicant receive a smaller amount of funding than they originally applied for.

The Expert Panel will provide advice on the most appropriate portion of the funding to be allocated to best deliver the objectives of the Network.

Expert Panel

The Expert Panel will:

- be chaired by an independent person with relevant experience,

- comprise members with expertise in the bushfire/natural hazards sector, and

- draw on advice or expertise as required. Expertise could include individuals with significant subject-matter expertise specific to the opportunities identified by applicants, but who are not conflicted.

An independent probity advisor will be present to provide guidance to DEIT and the Expert Panel on integrity, fairness, and accountability, and ensure transparency of the Program's administration. Further information about probity controls is at Section 9.

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During the assessment process, the OCSE may ask applicants to provide clarification information to assist in the assessment process. Advice may be sought from other NSW Government agencies or other sources to assist in the assessment of projects as required.

6.1   Decision Making

The Expert Panel will provide its recommendations to the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer and the Secretary of DEIT for consideration. The Secretary of DEIT makes the final decision on whether to fund a proposal.

The final decision will be recorded in writing and any departure from the Expert Panel's recommendation will be documented with reasons for the variation and published. Records relating to the decision will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998.*

The Expert Panel recommendations will include which application to fund, the amount and type of funding, and any specific funding conditions to be included in the Deed of Agreement. Assessment will be merit based against the assessment criteria and competitive, and the NSW Government may choose not to award or recommend funding under this program.

The Expert Panel will provide advice on the most appropriate portion of the *Bushfire & Natural Hazards Technology Network* funding to be allocated to best deliver the objective of the program.

7 Reporting and Data

7.1 Monitoring

Required reporting by the successful applicant will be outlined in the Deed of Agreement and will involve 6-monthly and/or annual reporting, dependent on the size of the grant and the nature of the proposed activity. Funding will be paid in annual instalments of up to $1.3 million over 4 years, after approval of annual reporting/ evaluation requirements set out in the Deed of Agreement.

Development of key performance indicators (KPIs) for each of the five Network functions will be the first task of the successful recipient in consultation with OCSE and key stakeholders. The agreed upon KPIs will be incorporated into reporting and management processes.

Templates will be provided for reporting and will require providing information such as:

- progress against agreed project milestones, outcomes and KPIs
- project costs
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant.

7.2 Evaluation

DEIT will conduct internal evaluation and reporting to measure the extent to which the Program's outcomes and objectives have been achieved and may use information from applications and reports for this purpose.

8 Important Terms and Conditions

Applicants should note:

- The NSW Government will publicly announce funding for the individual application. It may also use information provided to create case studies.
- Requests for variations or changes to the project may be considered about probity principles being upheld.
- The successful applicant will be required to pay back grant funds where the corresponding spending was not accordance with the Deed of Agreement.

- The successful applicant will be required to participate in program evaluation after the project has commenced.

- In accordance with the Deed of Agreement, the successful applicant will be required to provide evidence of how projects have resulted in measurable benefits consistent with the Network's objectives, values, and key functions.

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

- You must seek our written consent prior to any significant public announcement, marketing, press announcements, or official launch in relation to the Network.

- The grant will be payable upon the execution of the Deed of Agreement. Invoices for grant payments will be submitted and paid in a single tranche, or as dictated by the Deed of Agreement.

- Payments will be GST inclusive. Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. It is recommended applicants seek independent professional advice about taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The NSW Government does not provide advice on individual taxation circumstances.

- DEIT reserves the right to undertake an audit of funding and support within seven years from date of the Deed of agreement. Tracking and reporting will be a requirement of the deed of agreement, which will include regular performance reporting.

9 Communication

9.1 Successful Applicant

The successful applicant will be notified via email and/or letter within 30 days of the final determination. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant including a request to keep the grant confidential for a period, if an announcement is likely to be made by the NSW Government.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email and/or letter of the outcome of their application and will be offered a feedback information session within 30 days of the final determination.

9.2 Deed of Agreement

The successful applicant who accepts the offer of a grant will be required to enter into a formal Deed of Agreement with the NSW Government relating to the grant. The Deed of Agreement will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for activities occurring in NSW, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant for the duration of the term. The NSW Government makes no binding funding or support commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign the Deed of Agreement, including the lead applicant identified in the proposal.

The successful applicant is required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations and will be specifically requested to comply with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).*

9.3 Complaints

If an applicant has a complaint, this should be raised with DEIT by emailing communications@enterprise.nsw.gov.au or via the website https://www.investment.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/.

DEIT will handle all complaints in line with its Complaints Handling Policy or the Terms and Conditions of the Program.

10 Controls

10.1 Probity Advice

DEIT will ensure that the grant opportunity process is fair according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities, and other inappropriate conduct.

An independent probity advisor will be engaged as part of this Program to provide guidance to the OCSE on any issues concerning integrity, fairness and accountability that may arise throughout the application, assessment, and decision-making process. This will ensure decisions are made with integrity, fairness, and accountability, while delivering value for money for NSW.

10.2 Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

Applicants should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive may be withheld. The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:

- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available

- encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible

- giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information

- restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

10.3 Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest for DEIT will be handled as set out in the Department's Code of Ethics and Conduct.

10.4 Privacy

We treat applicants' personal information according to the DEIT Privacy Management Plan available at investment.nsw.gov.au/privacy and the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).*

This includes letting applicants know:

- what personal information we collect

- why we collect your personal information

- who we give your personal information to.

An applicant's personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies.

10.5 Disclaimer

DEIT does not guarantee or warrant and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to, the accuracy, reliability, currency, or completeness of any material contained in this publication. Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.

DEIT recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

The Guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of DEIT.

11 Contact Details

Any enquiry about the assessment process or the outcome of an application should be sent to
investment.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/