

Hazardous Agents Challenge

2021

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be the lead/contracting organisation?

The contracting organisation can be any university, business or publicly-funded research organisation (other than DSTG) that is based in Victoria or Tasmania. The contracting organisation will then be responsible for distributing funds to collaborating organisations. The contracting organisation does not have to be the largest contributor to the project.

I collaborate with someone from DSTG and would like them to be part of the project – can they be involved? Yes. DSTG staff can be part of the project. They need to be clearly identified so that conflicts of interest can be managed. Also, direct costs (salaries, on-costs) associated with DSTG contributions to the project cannot be funded out of the grants awarded under this Challenge.

How much money is available for each project?

Projects are invited for funding for amounts from \$50,000 to \$500,000. The Challenge is interested in projects which may require a small investment to get them to demonstrator stage (eg prototyping of a validated concept) and in projects which require more conceptual development to get to that stage.

Will both streams be funded equally?

While the intention is to support both streams, projects will be funded based on quality regardless of the stream. Thus, it is possible, albeit unlikely, that selected projects can all be in the sensor stream or in the human resilience stream.

Is there a limit on the number of proposals an organisation or an individual can be a part of?

No, but you must ensure that if all projects were selected you would be able to meet the commitments and that direct costs (salary, on-costs) of staff involved are not double-counted across selected projects.

I wasn't involved in the HAC workshop held 1st March. Can I still submit a proposal?

Yes. Involvement in the HAC workshop is not a pre-requisite to be able to apply.

Does applying for or holding a DSI-HAC grant affect my eligibility for other Defence-funded work in the CBRN field?

No. CBRN research is a strategic priority for Defence and there are a number of initiatives expected to be happening over the next couple of years that will be complementary to DSI-HAC and will be open to DSI-HAC participants.

Do I need to have identified everyone who will work on the project as part of the application? What if I want to use the funds to employ someone to work on the project that hasn't been identified or recruited yet?

If you want to use the funds to eg employ a research fellow to work on the project, you just need to identify them in the proposal and budget as yet to be appointed. When recruiting to fill the position you will need to keep in mind the citizenship and visa requirements, and the fact that they may be

required to undergo a security assessment. If the best candidate for the job is on a temporary visa, you will need to request permission for them to become involved in the project.

Can we have people working on the project that are here on a Temporary Work Visa and are in the process of applying for permanent residency or citizenship?

As a general rule, people working on the project must have already received their citizenship or permanent residency status. Permission may only be given for those on Temporary Work or Study Visas to work on the project under exceptional circumstances.

How do I request permission for someone on a Temporary Visa to be involved in the project?

If you have identified someone at the time of submission, include them as a nominated person in the application, and a justification as to why they should be involved (eg holder of a rare skillset that is vital for the success of the project). Permission to involve this person in the project is not guaranteed, so you need to be sure that the project could go ahead without them if successful.

If you are recruiting, email DSI-HAC21@DefenceScienceInstitute.com with their details, including country of citizenship and a justification as to why they are being selected (eg no suitable local candidates, holder of rare skillset that is vital for the success of the project).

Permission for temporary visa holders to work on the project will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Can students be involved in the project?

Students can be involved in the project, subject to the same citizenship and security conditions as other personnel. Funds cannot be used to pay stipends for students involved in the project, but they can be used to employ them in a casual or part-time capacity or pay for consumables etc. Projects in areas that are deemed to be sensitive may not be suitable for students to work on due to possible restrictions on publication.

Will we need to undergo any security checks?

Project personnel may be required to undergo a security assessment, depending on the potential for the project to involve research Defence identifies as potentially sensitive. Involvement in the project will be dependent on a favourable assessment.

Does this call involve classified research?

No. However, some proposals may include work that Defence identifies as potentially sensitive, in which case they may wish to engage with you outside this program, place limits on publication or request changes to the proposed project.

What are the expected deliverables at the end of the project?

Projects are expected to at deliver an output at minimum [Technical Readiness Level \(TRL\) 3 – 4](#), which can be assessed for potential future development and implementation. Systems presented above TRL 4 are also welcomed. TRL 3 - 4 represents a [minimum viable product](#) with sufficient functionality for Defence specialists to make a preliminary assessment and provide feedback for potential future refinement.

Appropriate deliverables are to be nominated as part of your proposal. Depending on the stream and the specific problem you are addressing deliverables could include laboratory validation of new techniques, early prototype components and devices, training modules for piloting, beta code & software, working models, testing or validation of prototypes.

Each project will be required to include a technical report and present on the work.

Conference and journal papers for submission will not be acceptable as deliverables for the project.

What can the funds be spent on? Is there anything that it can't be used for?

There are very few restrictions on the use of the funds. They can be spent on items such as salaries, consultants, consumables and components, bench fees, minor equipment, software, manufacturing costs, travel to meet with collaborators. All expenditure items are to be justified in the proposal budget.

Funds cannot be used for student stipends or to fund salaries for people in Australia on temporary visas unless those people have been approved or are New Zealand citizens. Approval will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Can my organisation recover indirect overheads from the money?

For projects requesting funds of \$75,000 or more, up to 20% of the value of the direct project costs can be used for indirect overheads.

For projects requesting less than \$75,000, no indirect overhead recovery will be allowed. This is in line with DSI's general position overheads for small projects.

Do I need to have any sort of co-contribution secured – either cash or in-kind?

No. There is no need for any co-contribution. However, Defence are looking for organisations that are wanting to be involved in Australia's CBRN research community in an ongoing capacity, developing our national capability. If you are able to make a co-contribution, that will help to demonstrate your willingness to be a long-term participant in this space and the alignment between this project and your strategic research priorities.

Will this be a new annual program?

At the moment there are only funds available for this call. There are currently no plans to run the program in later years.

How many / what proportion of proposals will get funded from this call?

As this is a new, one-off program we cannot make any predictions about the success rate. This will depend entirely on the number and quality of proposals received, along with the amount of funding requested by each project.

If I am successful in my proposal, will there be funding available for any further research and development that might be needed at the end of the project?

The program aims to identify approaches and prototypes that may be suitable for future development via a number of possible funding pathways supported by activities such as the [CDIC](#), [DMTC](#), [D.Start](#) or other programs. There will not be funding available from DSI for further work.

Will I be able to publish results from the research?

Generally, publication is possible but it must be approved by the Commonwealth first. Some projects may be working in areas of sensitivity where publication is not desirable and permission may be refused.

What happens with intellectual property I develop as part of the project?

You, or your employer, will own any intellectual property you develop and be recognised as the creator. You must provide a licence to use the IP to The Department of Defence for Commonwealth Purposes. This will be done via an IP Licence Deed that will form part of the funding agreement.

Do I need to have worked with or on defence or national security problems before to be able to apply?

No. People who have not worked on national defence and security problems before are strongly encouraged to apply. One of the aims of this program is to find talented people and teams who have not previously engaged with national security and defence and give them the opportunity to contribute to this important area and demonstrate their skills.