

NSW SPACE RESEARCH NETWORK

RESEARCH PILOT PROJECT GRANTS

Guidelines for applicants 2021-22

1. Scheme Purpose

- 1.1. SRN Research Pilot Project funding scheme is an annual, competitive program that supports cross-discipline university collaboration in NSW. The scheme is administered by the NSW Space Research Network and funded by the NSW Government.
- 1.2. The key objective of the SRN Research Pilot Project Funding is to conduct a rapid feasibility study on new ideas for Space and develop these ideas into concepts or technology that can attract further investment from the Government or industry. Research Pilot Projects should demonstrate high potential to satisfy an existing or emerging Space capability need or a current or emerging space industry need.

2. Support available

- 2.1. The total funding available for university research projects is \$600,000 in 2021/22.
- 2.2. Successful proposals can be funded up to \$150,000 for projects scoped for 6-12 months.
- 2.3. Funding will be paid to the lead university in a single tranche. The lead university is responsible for the distribution of the funds to Collaborating organisations.

3. Eligibility criteria

- 3.1. Project proposals must be led by a SRN member university, and the funding can be accessed by the SRN member universities only.
- 3.2. Project proposals must demonstrate inter-university collaboration and must involve at least two SRN member universities.
- 3.3. Projects funded by SRN Research Pilot Project Grant Scheme must be Space relevant and must be capable of generating additional funding or investment to facilitate progress towards commercialisation.
- 3.4. A chief investigator can lead a maximum of two SRN projects in four years. There is no limit on how many projects a researcher can participate in.
- 3.5. Industry partners may be part of the project team applying for Research Pilot Project funding, but the SRN funds cannot be used to cover industry partner expenses.
- 3.6. To be eligible, an industry partner must have an Australian Business Number and must be registered as a company, other entity or individual that will agree to form a company to enter into a grant agreement.
- 3.7. Where an industry partner is part of a project, a separate agreement between the industry partner and the lead university must also be signed.

4. Use of funds

- 4.1. Funding from the SRN Research Pilot Project Grant Scheme will take the form of a cash contribution following the execution of a Multi-institutional Collaborative Agreement between participating universities and the Space Research Network (administered by the University of Sydney and UTS).
- 4.2. Funds must be used to support the research project described in the application directly and can include the following items:
- *Direct salary costs* for employees working on the project including chief investigators, early career researchers, research assistants etc. Where chief investigator salaries are claimed, this must be specifically justified and is subject to approval. SRN's preference is to use funds for research associates and fellows working directly on the project.
 - *On-cost salary expenses* up to a maximum of 30% of direct salary costs and consistent with the university policy. On-costs must be itemised in the application and can only include the following items: superannuation, payroll tax, payroll tax on superannuation, workers compensation, long service leave, and parental leave. Universities must submit their on-cost salary expenses itemised by each category as the attachment of the application form.
 - *Equipment, software, material and consumables* essential for the project. Funding will not be provided for equipment and consumables that are considered to be for broad general use or already held by the university.
 - *Travel costs* essential to the project for the employees working on the project.
 - *Stipends for HDR students* working on the project.
- 4.3. Budget items that are not supported by the Research Pilot Project funding and should NOT be requested in the budget include:
- *Infrastructure (overhead) costs* related to the general operations of the university shared among projects and functions.
 - *Salaries of industry partners* working on the project or any other industry partner expenses
 - *Costs not directly related to the project* including but not limited to conference fees and travel, workshop expenses, entertainment costs, professional membership fees, professional development courses, visas, relocation costs, insurance and other indirect costs.
- 4.4. All expenses must be itemised in the budget section of the grant application. Grant funds must be spent in accordance with this budget, and any requests for variations must be made to the Space Research Network Operations Manager and approved in advance.

- 4.5. The SRN Technical Panel will have sufficient flexibility to tailor funding support according to what it believes is required to assist with the project delivery.

5. Selection criteria

- 5.1. SRN Technical Review Panel will evaluate applications against information and evidence provided concerning the selection criteria:

- Identified Need in Space
- Potential for impact and implementation pathway
- Novelty and potential to become world-leading
- Technical/ Scientific Merits, Scientific and Technical Risk, Best Collaborative Team

- 5.2. SRN Technical Review Panel will make the final decision regarding funding allocations to projects and submit this decision to the SRN Steering Committee for noting.

6. Application process

- 6.1. Application for the SRN Research Pilot Project Grants is a one stage process.
- 6.2. Applicants must submit an electronic copy of the application by the due date to admin@srn.org.au.
- 6.3. The SRN Technical Review Panel will assess all eligible applications on merit against the selection criteria and, at its discretion, may choose not to provide funding to applicants.
- 6.4. Applicants should clearly identify in their application (including attachments) any information that needs to be treated as confidential.

7. Selection Process

- 7.1. SRN will collect applications and will conduct an initial completeness review of the applications. Advice will be provided to the SRN Technical Review Panel regarding eligibility.
- 7.2. The SRN Technical Review Panel will assess each application on a competitive basis relative to the criteria and other applications.
- 7.3. The SRN Technical Review Panel may seek further advice and request an additional assessment from subject matter experts.
- 7.4. All applicants will be informed of the outcome and the decision on their applications, whether or not they are successful.
- 7.5. The timeline of the selection process is as follows:

07-Dec-21	Funding Announcements Released
18-Feb-22	Applications due
25-Mar-22	Technical Review Panel Assessment
01-Apr-22	Result announcement
Apr-May-22	Contracting
01-Jun-22	Project Start

8. Funding Agreements, Reporting Requirements & Acknowledgement

- 8.1. All successful applicants who accept a grant will be required to enter into a formal Multi-institutional Agreement. The Agreement will specify the obligations and accountabilities of the recipients.
- 8.2. Where an industry partner is part of the project, a separate agreement between the industry partner and lead university must be signed before the project work can start.
- 8.3. Successful applicants will be required to provide a final report to the SRN (Administered by the University of Sydney and UTS) at admin@srn.org.au within two months of the end date negotiated in the Agreement.
- 8.4. The final report consists of a Technical report and Financial acquittal. The Lead organisation submits Financial acquittal for the project as a whole, including Collaborating organisations' financial acquittal.
- 8.5. All expenditure must be in accordance with the project description and broad structure of the proposed project costs detailed in the proposal. Lead organisation must retain the evidence of the expenditure.
- 8.6. All changes to the project cost or roll-over of the funds must be justified and approved by the SRN (Administered by the University of Sydney and UTS).
- 8.7. Any material or research findings published in respect of a SRN Research Pilot Project – funded activity must include acknowledgement of SRN Research Pilot project funding and the NSW Government in a form: *"We thank the NSW Space Research Network and NSW State Government for financial support of this project through grant SRN Research Pilot Project grant 2022-xx"*