

## Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF): Summary of Q&A arising during 19 March 2025 webinar

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### Project scope

#### **1. *What stage of research is the AISRF targeting? Will discovery research be funded? Is there a preferred TRL?***

Collaborative research proposals need not target a particular stage of research or Technology Readiness Level.

Basic and applied research proposals are welcome. Proposals should articulate expected outcomes at the end of the project period and the proposal's translational research potential.

Translational research proposals are also welcome. Proposals should articulate the tangible benefits likely to accrue at the end of the project.

#### **2. *How similar should Australian and Indian proposals be?***

Submissions from Australian and Indian lead applicants should not be identical. They can have the same or similar objectives and should look to leverage partners' respective complementarities and synergies.

Lead organisations are encouraged to describe how their (and their project partners') activities and input will contribute to overarching project timelines and objectives.

#### **3. *What is the minimum and maximum duration of a research project?***

The maximum project period is three (3) years. There is no minimum project period.

### Project teams

#### **4. *Can a startup or business be a lead organisation?***

The lead Australian organisation can be a startup or business provided it satisfies the eligibility criteria (refer Section 4 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines).

The lead Indian organisation can be a startup or business in respect of a proposal submitted under the Biotechnology stream provided it satisfies the eligibility criteria.

The lead Indian organisation in respect of a proposal submitted under the Science & Technology stream need to be either an academic or research organization (Govt./ Private) (University/ Institute/ National Labs etc) and any Section 8 Company within these organizations can be a part of the research team submitting the proposal as per DST Guidelines.

#### **5. *Does at least one academic institution need to be involved as a project partner?***

For proposals submitted under the Biotechnology stream, an academic institution is not a mandatory requirement to be a project partner (refer response to Question 4). An academic partner is however encouraged.

Proposals submitted under the Science & Technology stream must include at least one academic institution or research organisation (refer DST Guidelines and response to Question 4).



**6. *Can there be multiple Indian project partners and only one Australian partner (the lead organisation)?***

Yes. While joint applications involving multiple Australian and/or Indian partners (consortia) are welcome, proposals may involve a minimum of one Australian lead organisation and one Indian lead organisation (provided both organisations meet relevant eligibility criteria).

**7. *How many proposals can a lead organisation lodge?***

Australian lead organisations may submit a maximum of two proposals but only one proposal per priority area.

Indian lead organisations may submit up to two proposals though should avoid the same priority areas.

**8. *Can an overseas branch campus of an Australian University be the Australian lead organisation?***

The Australian lead organisation must have an Australian Business Number and satisfy the other eligibility criteria (refer Section 4 of the Grant Opportunity Guidelines).

**Project funding**

**9. *How much funding will be made available to Australian and Indian PIs? Is there a funding cap?***

The minimum grant amount for Australian PIs is AU\$200,000. The maximum grant amount is AU\$1,000,000.

For Indian lead organisations:

- There is no explicit funding limit under the Biotechnology stream. The projects must be made with a rationalised budget as per the proposed objectives and workplan.
- Maximum support available under the Science & Tech stream is Rs 70-80 lakhs.

**10. *Can an Indian organisation be a lead organisation if it is already receiving funding from DBT/DST?***

Yes, provided the lead organisation, if successful, will receive funding from DBT or DST. Kindly note concurrent funding for more than three (3) projects from the same agency is generally not encouraged.

**11. *Are Australian or Indian lead organisations eligible for funding if they are already receiving funding for the project?***

The Australian Government cannot fund a project if the lead organisation receives funding from another government grant for the same activities. Australian public sector agencies can be project partners. Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage with the Business Grants Hub if they require more information.

Indian organisations looking to submit a proposal under the Science & Tech and Biotechnology streams cannot seek funding for activities funded under another Indian Government program.