



FACTSHEET

Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program Round 21

CRC guidelines – what has changed?

New grant opportunity guidelines for Round 21 of the CRC Program have been developed in accordance with the Streamlining Government Grants Administration Agenda which is designed to bring government grant programs in line with agreed whole of government terminology, templates and processes. Consistency across government programs will enable businesses to more easily apply for and enter into grant agreements for government programs.

The changes for Round 21 do not change the scope or intent of the program. The key changes are:

- Streamlining of merit criteria to assist with the merit assessment of applications. Note that most of the sub criteria from the previous guidelines have been mapped through to the new merit criteria. Each of the four new criteria are equally weighted and the specific indicators under each criterion have been assigned point values.
- The application and assessment process has been streamlined. A stage one application is a comprehensive project proposal including responses to merit criteria. A stage two application will focus on any changes to the application based on stage one feedback as well as providing further details including the proposed budget, milestones and impact tool. It is anticipated that interviews will occur before the end of the year as will the announcement of outcomes. This will give successful applicants as much time as possible to negotiate grant agreements.
- Introduction of the concepts of 'eligible expenditure' and 'eligible special purpose expenditure' to replace the previous terminology 'Commonwealth funded activities' and 'participant funded activities' which more closely align with whole of government terminology.
- Replacing the terminology 'participant' with 'partner' for consistency with other government programs. Partner includes all organisations in your collaboration including research, industry and government organisations.
- Greater detail is provided in the guidelines on eligible expenditure items for consistency with other government programs.
- Staff in-kind contributions will now be based on eligible salary costs plus up to an additional 30% for associated on costs.

The [CRC Round 21 Grant Opportunity Guidelines](#) apply to applicants and grantees awarded in Round 21 only. Previous grantees are subject to the relevant CRC Program guidelines that the CRC was awarded under. New grant opportunity guidelines will be published for each CRC selection round.

What activities are eligible?

CRC grant funds must only be spent on eligible expenditure activities as defined in your grant agreement. Your total project value may also include eligible special purpose expenditure. Eligible

special purpose expenditure contributes to your total project value but is not included in the calculation of your grant amount. You cannot spend grant funds on these activities.

Further details are available in the [CRC Round 21 Grant Opportunity Guidelines](#):

- For guidance on eligible expenditure, see appendix C.
- For guidance on in-kind contributions, see appendix D.
- For guidance on eligible special purpose expenditure, see appendix E.
- For guidance on ineligible expenditure, see appendix F.

How do I apply for a CRC grant?

CRC applications must be submitted online through a smart form. The link to the smart form is available once a round is opened from the CRC Grants page at [business.gov.au](#).

You can only create and submit an application during an open selection round. The opening and closing dates and times for each selection round will be published on [business.gov.au](#). Please remember that any specified times refer to Canberra time, whether AEST or AEDT.

Before you begin an application it is strongly advised that you familiarise yourself with the [CRC Program Round 21 Grant Opportunity Guidelines](#) and the various CRC Grants Fact Sheets applicable for Round 21. All are available on [business.gov.au](#).

Ensure you allow ample time to complete the online application – do not leave completion and submission of the application to the last minute. Submitting by the due time is your responsibility and incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

Applications can only be submitted via the smart form once all mandatory requirements have been met. An incorrectly completed application will not be able to be submitted. The smart form will alert you to any mandatory fields that have not been completed, or in some cases, if information provided is invalid or unacceptable. All questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory fields. You can click the **'Check Form for Submission'** button (at the end of the final section of the form) at any time to check the form's completeness. Once all mandatory fields are completed correctly and the application is complete, the form can be submitted. Please leave plenty of time before submission to populate incomplete information. Correcting such errors can be time-consuming, particularly against a looming deadline.

Key tips when completing your application:

- Keep a record of the Tracking Code (top right hand corner of the page) when you create the form. You will need this code to reopen your saved form and if you have any queries regarding your form.
- SAVE regularly. A new form will expire after 8 hours if not saved. Click the 'Save for Later' button regularly while completing this form to ensure the information entered is saved. Saved forms will be retained for a maximum of 30 days. If you do not save or submit your form within this timeframe, you will need to start a new form.
- Text entry fields DO NOT accept formatted text (all formatting will be lost if formatted text, including bold, italics, dot points, images etc is copied into these fields).
- Variable character limits apply to text entry fields (please note the relevant character limits at the bottom of the relevant field for each relevant question contained in the application). The character count include spaces and returns as characters and formatting may also affect the character count. Therefore, please ensure you only use plain, unformatted text. Ensure you use the character limits wisely and write a concise response to directly answer the questions covering any additional guidance provided.
- The form can be viewed by more than one person by sharing the form's unique tracking code however, the form can only be used by one person at any one time. If multiple users access the form at the same time, any information entered may be lost. Sharing the tracking code also increases the risk of losing unsaved information. Only one person at a time, has permissions for the application form. The last person that accesses the form has the saving permission. If the form is shared, it is recommended that the form is saved regularly.

- We suggest that you complete as many sections of the form as you can prior to updating the partner section. Due to the checking that occurs to the partner details (such as ABN) the form can slow down as you add more partners.
- Please leave ample time to complete the form. If you experience any difficulties in completing the form contact us well before the closing date and time.

When your application is submitted you will be provided with a receipt to confirm that your submission has been successful. Please keep this receipt for your records. A copy of your complete application is also emailed to both the contact person and the declarant email addresses supplied in your submitted form. Once submitted you will no longer be able to amend the application. A submitted application can be withdrawn, but it cannot be retrieved or amended.

If you have any queries relating to submission of your form you will need to provide your receipt number or tracking code.

Submitted applications will be checked for eligibility and compliance. Compliant applications will proceed to assessment, and will be referred to the CRC Advisory Committee, an independent committee of Innovation and Science Australia, to assess the merit of the application against the merit criteria and other applications.

What is a partner declaration?

The Partner Declaration is a declaration of intent made by a partner organisation to the Commonwealth to confirm its intention to participate in the proposed CRC should the application be successful. The declaration (and application form) should only include the resources that are intended as a firm commitment to the proposed CRC.

The Partner Declaration is not a contract between the Commonwealth and the partner organisation. The declaration does not create any binding legal obligation on the partner, nor does it create a binding legal relationship between the signatory and the other partner or the Commonwealth.

In signing the declaration the partner organisation affirms the truth and accuracy of the information provided and acknowledges the obligations on partners in the CRC.

A signed Partner Declaration for each partner organisation in the collaboration must be uploaded to the grant application. Failure by the applicant to do so will mean that the application is incomplete and may not be considered for assessment.

The template declaration is available at business.gov.au.

What are the reporting requirements?

You will be required to submit reports quarterly to the department in line with the grant agreement. We will provide samples of these reports as appendices in the grant agreement and remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due.

Further details are available in the [CRC Round 21 Grant Opportunity Guidelines](#).

Where can I find more information?

For more information on the CRC Program visit business.gov.au or call 13 28 46.