

Research and Innovation Fund Stream 1 Manufacturing Technology Adoption Program Guidelines

The Department of State Development (DSD) is focused on developing a high performing research and innovation system that supports the growth of innovative and competitive businesses and industries.

The South Australian Research and Innovation Fund (RIF), managed by DSD, supports collaboration between businesses, researchers, and universities to:

- solve industrial problems,
- commercialise new products and services,
- attract investment into research and research infrastructure in the state, and
- encourage the establishment and growth of startups.

This supports the vision outlined in the [South Australian Economic Statement](#), which is for the state to be known as ambitious and capable, embracing technology, and driving innovation through targeted industry and research collaborations. It also supports the ambitions of [South Australia's Advanced Manufacturing Strategy](#), which aims to guide future industry and government collaboration, grow manufacturing, and drive South Australia's economic transition towards a knowledge-based, resilient, and greener economy.

The Manufacturing Technology Adoption Program is a [RIF Stream 1](#) funded Program. Stream 1 funds programs that create innovative solutions or translate research into industry or commercial outcomes that address economy-wide challenges for South Australia.

Manufacturing Technology Adoption Program

Accelerating the uptake of technology is critical to driving innovation and productivity and is one of the key objectives of South Australia's Advanced Manufacturing Strategy.

The Manufacturing Technology Adoption Program (the Program) is designed to increase the number of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing sector adopting innovative technologies, such as Industry 4.0, artificial intelligence, machine learning and data analytics, blockchain, augmented and virtual reality, additive manufacturing, Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), optics and photonics.

The Program will award funding to companies, on a competitive merit basis, of up to \$50,000 (excluding GST) in matched funding for projects to develop new or enhanced products or improve productivity and competitiveness through adoption of these technologies.

Program Objectives

The objectives of this Program are to accelerate the adoption of transformative technologies relevant to advanced manufacturing, as outlined in South Australia's Advanced Manufacturing Strategy under the Capability Strategic Priority, in order to:

- increase the development of new or enhanced products by South Australian SME manufacturers;
- support SME manufacturers to enter new markets; and

- support SME manufacturers to improve their productivity and competitiveness.

Funding

The total amount of Program funding is \$1,000,000. Round 1 awarded \$467,136 in funding, and \$532,864 in funding is available for Round 2.

Grant amount

Eligible Applicants (Applicants) can apply for a grant of up to \$50,000 (excluding GST) for Eligible Projects.

DSD reserves the right to award a lower grant amount than sought by Applicants.

Project Financial Co-Contribution

Applicants are required to make a financial co-contribution to their Project, based on a minimum 1:1 funding ratio. The Program will contribute up to 50 per cent of the Project's Eligible Expenditure; the Applicant's financial co-contribution must at least match the grant amount sought.

In-kind contributions (i.e., non-monetary resources) are excluded from any calculation of the co-contribution.

Funds received from other South Australian government agencies, or other State or Commonwealth Governments, cannot form part of the financial co-contribution.

Application Period

The first funding round closed on Friday 28 February 2025.

The second funding round opens for applications on Friday 1 August 2025 and closes on Monday 29 September 2025 at 5pm.

DSD may, at its discretion and at any time, close the Program or vary the opening and closing dates for the Program. DSD will advise of any such change on its website

<https://statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/> and by direct communication with Applicants with submitted applications.

Project Funding Timeframes

Funded Projects must be completed by 30 May 2026, unless otherwise agreed by DSD.

Projects must commence within one month of the execution of the Grant Deed.

Funding is only available for eligible expenditure incurred after the Grant Deed is signed. **There is no entitlement to grant funding for any retrospective activities.**

However:

- the Minister may, in their sole discretion, agree to fund some or all retrospective activities (that are otherwise eligible expenditure) from the grant; or
- an Applicant may, entirely at their own risk, choose to incur expenditure towards their proposed Project using their matched funding from the date the Applicant receives written confirmation from DSD of their application's approval.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply for this Program, applicants must:

- be an organisation comprised of one or more legal entities (not a person); incorporated or established in Australia;
- be an SME, defined as having fewer than 200 full-time equivalent employees;
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST;
- be carrying on an active manufacturing business located in South Australia, demonstrated by undertaking manufacturing activities at a premises located in South Australia, and employing staff based in South Australia;
- have been carrying on a business for more than one full financial year;
- be able to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement with the South Australian Government;
- be willing to provide information and data, including financial information as required;



- commit to the required finances co-contribution (minimum \$1 for every \$1 in grant funding applied for); and
- not have previously received grant funding from the State or Federal Government for the same project.

Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects must be a discrete technical project which involves the adoption of a technology relevant to advanced manufacturing into the operations of the Applicant's business, with the objective of enabling the development of new or enhanced products, supporting entry into new markets and/or increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the business.

Relevant technologies may include, but are not limited to:

- Artificial intelligence
- Augmented and virtual reality
- Additive manufacturing
- Advanced composite materials
- Robotics and automation
- Machine learning and data analytics
- Internet of Things
- Blockchain
- Optics and photonics
- Quantum technologies
- other Industry 4.0 technologies
- technologies which enable new manufacturing processes for decarbonisation or circular economy/closed loop systems.

Projects must be completed by 30 May 2026 unless otherwise agreed by DSD, and achieve a defined output with agreed timelines, milestones and KPIs.

Eligible Expenditure

Eligible Project expenditure includes direct project-related costs, including any third-party service providers engaged.

Applicants are encouraged to use South Australian suppliers and service providers to assist with their project/s where possible. [ICN SA](#), a team

embedded within DSD, can provide support in sourcing local suppliers.

DSD will consider each eligible application and its proposed project expenditure on its merits but will exclude the expenditure identified below as ineligible.

Ineligible Expenditure

Applicants will need to meet the cost of any Ineligible Expenditure associated with their Project. Grant funding will not be awarded, nor will the expenditure count towards any calculation of the required matched financial co-contribution, for the following expenses:

- **Business as usual activities, including but not limited to:**
 - salaries and general overhead costs
 - routine replacement of plant or equipment
 - energy efficiency purchases such as solar panels and battery storage,
 - routine operational expenses, including communications, utilities, accommodation, office computing facilities, printing and stationery, maintenance, postage, legal, banking and accounting fees
 - costs related to preparing the grant application, project reports and project variations
 - regulatory costs and intellectual property fees
 - building websites, marketing, sales, and promotional activities
 - travel expenses not directly related to the proposed Project
 - routine training costs
 - entertainment costs
 - general software upgrades and purchases, e.g., Microsoft Office/Windows operating systems
 - feasibility studies
 - business plans
 - land acquisition.
- **Activities that should be funded by an alternative source:**
 - retrospective funding for projects/activities that have already commenced or been announced



- projects undertaken as a result of South Australian Government contractual arrangements or regulatory requirements
- projects requiring ongoing funding from the South Australian Government once completed.

Application Process

Applications to the Program are to be submitted online on the [application site](#) during the Application Period. The following supporting documentation is required to be attached to the online application:

- a Project Plan for the proposed Project, which should include:
 - a description of the Project and expected Project outcomes,
 - any forecasted financial outcomes from the Project (increased revenues, profits, exports)
 - key personnel, milestones and deliverables;
 - a risk assessment;
 - a project schedule or Gantt chart;
 - the internal and external expertise required to successfully implement the Project;
 - a workforce training plan; and
 - a Project budget, including quotes for Eligible Expenditure for the total Project cost.
- audited or accountant-prepared financial statements, including Income Statement/Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet, for the last two (2) financial years;
- evidence of the availability of the required financial co-contribution, such as:
 - evidence of support from the Applicant's Board or parent company that the Applicant can undertake the Project and meet its cash co-contribution obligation; and
 - an approved debt finance facility from an Australian bank (including loan amount);

- cash at bank (current bank statement from an Australian bank); or
- management accounts demonstrating satisfactory cash flow or liquid assets.

All required documents are required to be submitted for an application to be considered complete and accepted for assessment. There is no specific template for the Project Plan.

Assessment

Applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel on a competitive merit basis, against the eligibility and merit criteria and in accordance with the [RIF Investment Principles](#). The Assessment Panel will comprise South Australian Government officials, and independent experts where required.

Applicants will receive a decision in writing within four (4) weeks of the application closing date.

Applicants should note that irrespective of eligibility and merit, there is no guarantee that an offer of funding will be made. DSD also reserves the right to award a lower grant funding amount than sought by the Applicant.

Applicants may be subject to due diligence assessments to enable the South Australian Government to assess financial and other non-financial risks. Outcomes from such assessments may be considered in any decision to recommend or award a grant and in contracting with successful Applicants. The assessment may include:

- whether the Applicant has failed to meet contractual obligations for previous funding agreements with the South Australian Government;
- business regulator checks such as the Australian Business Register, Australian Securities and Investment Commission and/or other applicable regulator.

Merit criteria

- The extent to which the Project contributes to achieving the Program Objectives



- The Applicant's ability to deliver the Project
- Impact of and rationale for government financial support.

The Decision Process

Final decisions to award funding under this Program rests with the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science (the Minister). The Minister's decision to offer funding to Applicants takes into account the recommendations of the Assessment Panel and the availability of funding, based on existing and future commitments of Program funds.

DSD reserves the right to:

- request the Applicant provide further information during the assessment and decision process;
- recommend for approval a lesser amount than that applied for; and
- amend these guidelines and application terms as required.

Successful Applicants must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a grant under this Program without prior approval from DSD.

Funding Agreements and Payments

To receive grant payments, an approved applicant will be required to sign a Grant Deed in the form of a formal written contract with the South Australian Government that stipulates all deliverable obligations, reporting obligations and all terms and conditions under which the grant funding is provided.

An approved applicant cannot claim any grant payments until a formal written contract is signed by both parties, including the applicant and a South Australian Government representative.

Payments will be provided at the times and in the manner specified in the Grant Deed. A payment schedule will be determined based on the proposed project milestones and the applicant's financial plans. A final payment is made in arrears once a

project completion report is validated, and a financial acquittal is completed for the entire project, which requires satisfactory expenditure of grant funding and matched funding.

Payment of grant funds will be made in accordance with payment milestones and other conditions set out in the Grant Deed, and within 30 days of receiving:

- evidence relevant conditions and payment milestones have been met; and
- a valid tax invoice.

Grant funding received is generally treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, unless specifically exempted. DSD does not provide any advice on tax and recommends that grant recipients seek independent professional advice on their taxation obligations.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Freedom of information

Applicants should be aware that all documents in the possession of the Government of South Australia, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1991 \(SA\)](#) (FOI Act). Information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the FOI Act.

The FOI Act gives members of the public a legally enforceable right to access documents – subject to certain exemptions – held by South Australian Government Agencies, local government authorities, statutory and regulatory bodies and South Australian Universities.

Privacy and Information Policy

DSD complies with the South Australian Government's Information Privacy Principles Instruction. DSD collects information (including personal information) as reasonably necessary for the purposes and functions of:

- administering our grants and funding programs;
- keeping you informed about the Program, relevant upcoming events, grant funding



- initiatives and outcomes, our services, special events or client feedback surveys, as well as our activities in general; and
- improving our websites and other services.

The collection and use of information extends to use of such information by the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science for the purposes as outlined above.

Any information contained in or relating to an application, including information identified by an Applicant as confidential information for the purposes of applying for funding under this Program, may be disclosed by DSD:

- to its employees, advisers or third parties to manage the Program, including but not limited to, for the purposes of evaluating and assessing the application (third parties will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement or similar document);
- for due diligence, monitoring, reporting and audit purposes;
- within the government of South Australia where this serves the legitimate interest of DSD;
- in response to a request by a House or Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia or South Australia;
- for training, systems testing and process improvement, including compiling statistics and reports;
- if an application is successful, for promotion of Project activities and outcomes;
- where information is authorised or required by law to be disclosed; and
- where the information is already in the public domain.

It is the intent of the South Australian Government to be transparent with regards to financial assistance provided to industry and will publicly disclose details of all financial assistance provided by the Government for this Program (which will include, but is not limited to, the name of the

successful applicant, details of the Project activity and amount of grant funding).

Disclaimer

No responsibility for any loss or damage caused by reliance on any of the information or advice provided by or on behalf of the state of South Australia, or for any loss or damage arising from acts or omissions made, is accepted by the state of South Australia, their officers, servants or agents.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

DSD will actively monitor the performance of this Program over its operational period, and may conduct one or more evaluations of the Program, at any time or interval it deems appropriate, to determine the Program's effectiveness in achieving the Program Objectives. For such purposes:

- in lodging an application, an Applicant provides consent to the disclosure of information relating in any way to the Applicant, the Application, the funding agreement and all related performance and compliance reporting, to DSD employees, advisers, third parties or other government agencies as required to monitor and evaluate the Program;
- recipients will be required to provide financial statements and other data as stipulated in the Grant Deed for the period of, and up to 2 years after, the Funding Period, or the funded Project is completed; and
- recipients agree to provide any other information and assistance reasonably requested by the Department for the purpose of monitoring, evaluating and promoting the Program, including the benefits for the Applicants, and the Applicant's implementation of the project.

Contacts and Further Information

For all Program and application enquiries, please contact:

Department of State Development
E: manufacturing@sa.gov.au



Providers of support and advice for manufacturing technology adoption

Listed below are some of the facilities in South Australia who provide support and advice to manufacturers for technology adoption. The SA Manufacturing Team can assist you to connect with the relevant organisation. For further information please contact: manufacturing@sa.gov.au

South Australia's NCRIS-supported facilities

NCRIS research facilities provide critical research infrastructure for researchers and businesses to develop new products, services and solutions to major health, environmental and economic challenges.

Users of these facilities can access state-of-the-art equipment and highly skilled technical experts for advice, and support to refine and test new ideas and achieve research and development goals.

DSD supports a number of NCRIS facilities in South Australia, some of which may be able to assist manufacturers with technology adoption, including:-

- [Australian National Fabrication Facility SA Node \(ANFF\)](#)
 - University of South Australia
 - Flinders University
- [ANFF Optofab Adelaide](#)

Flinders Factory of the Future (FFOF) - Flinders University

The FFOF connects industry sectors of strategic economic importance, facilitate cross-sector innovation and develop sovereign capability. The team helps develop Industry 4.0 technologies, research and training by providing access to industrial scale test labs to de-risk investment in new technologies and capabilities.

Industry 4.0 Testlab - UniSA

The Industry 4.0 Testlab has been set up to demonstrate Industry 4.0 methodologies and practices and includes practical laboratory-based capabilities and a pilot scale manufacturing demonstration. The Testlab focuses on various sectors including defence, space, mining, agtech/food, medical/healthcare and automotive.

Australian Research Centre for Interactive and Virtual Environments (IVE) - UniSA

IVE is one of the largest concentrations of AR and VR research in Australia. They specialise in advanced manufacturing, Internet of Things (IoT),

design for healthcare and defence, working in collaboration with industry partners to transform industry challenges.

Future Industries Institute (FII) - UniSA

FII solves real world problems via collaboration, innovation and technological advances. Undertaking research across five key industry sectors, Healthy Environments; High-Tech Manufacturing; Medical Technology; Smart Energy; and Sustainable Resources, FII houses over \$80 million of specialised infrastructure, including state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment in purpose-built facilities, providing services such as, process development and optimisation support, troubleshooting and failure analysis.

Institute for Photonics and Advanced Sensing (IPAS) - University of Adelaide

IPAS engages with a wide range of priority industries to understand the sensing and measurement challenges they face, that if solved, would transform industry productivity. They harness the core capabilities and form interdisciplinary teams around a wide range of funded research projects in industries such as defence, health and biotech, mining and energy, advanced manufacturing and food and wine.

Australian Institute for Machine Learning (AIML) - University of Adelaide

Based at Lot Fourteen in Adelaide, AIML collaborates with industry, government and business to develop high-tech products and solutions to everyday problems. With more than 170 researchers, students and engineers they are one of the largest university-based research groups in machine learning in Australia. Their work is carried out to the following themes: machine learning theory; robotic vision; medical machine learning, trusted autonomous systems, surveillance and tracking, photogrammetry and 3D modelling.

South Australian Research and Development Institute

One of Australia's leading applied research institutes, dedicated to increasing the productivity, adaptability, and competitiveness of South Australia's primary industries.

South Australia's Innovation Districts

- Adelaide BioMed City Innovation District
- Lot Fourteen
- Tonsley Innovation District



- Waite Research Institute

DSD's Concierge Service and Manufacturing Hub

Gateway for SA manufacturers to access support for growth.

Discuss your business needs with an Industry Development Manager and be connected to relevant services, advice, expertise and funding sources, including other support for R&D and innovation through the RIF.

DSD's regular Emerging Technology Interest Group sessions can also help manufacturers explore new manufacturing technologies and how they can be used to improve efficiency and competitiveness.

Contact: manufacturing@sa.gov.au

