

Projects Fund FAQ's:

What is the Queensland METS Collaborative Projects Fund?

The Queensland METS Collaborative Projects Fund is a co-funding scheme funded by the Queensland Government and administered by METS Ignited, the Industry Growth Centre. The funding is directed towards projects which support industry-led collaborative solutions which improve the productivity, competitiveness and innovative capacity within the METS sector in Queensland.

What are the minimum and maximum amounts that can be applied for?

The minimum grant amount is \$50,000. Maximum funding to any one project is limited to \$250,000.

What are the industry cash matching requirements?

Grants must be at least matched by Industry cash considering ALL government funding sources. By way of example, if a METS Ignited grant is \$100,000, and the project proponents have also sourced Federal Government funding of \$100,000, industry matched cash must be at least \$200,000. Cash contributions are the financial/cash contributions of the participants.

Project Funds cannot be used to duplicate, but may complement and leverage funding arrangements from other government sources including from Federal, other State and Territory Governments. Any additional Government cash contributions must also be matched with equal additional industry cash co-contributions.

What are the minimum and maximum project periods?

There is no minimum project period. The maximum project period is limited to 1 year. Follow-on projects are permitted provided they demonstrate a clear difference to the initial work.

When can I apply?

Funding proposals are now being accepted. The final date for submission of proposals is 16 March 2020.

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must be a METS company, representing a consortium of industry partners that may include companies from outside the METS sector. A consortium must include a customer (e.g. a mining operation or a global METS firm or OEM) and may include members from research organisations, universities and other associations across the METS value chain, with at least two METS companies represented and a minimum of three SMEs in total. The lead applicant must be based in Queensland but the consortia may include organisations from interstate and overseas.

Companies in the consortia must have a demonstrated commercial track record. There are no upper limits or lower limits on company revenue.

What are the selection criteria?

Proposal must clearly demonstrate state, national or sector wide benefit for miners and/or METS. Criteria will include:

- Extent to which the Project addresses a gap in the capacity and capability of the METS sector, and is business ready (i.e. has viable commercial pathways)
- Extent to which the Project will deliver state, national and sector wide impact, considering also the funding ratio (government to industry cash proportions)
- Extent of the collaboration between METS companies which delivers more rapid and deeper market penetration
- Presence of a customer in the consortium which can provide matched funding
- Demonstrated evidence of technical, methodological and management capability to deliver the project, including track record and risk profile.
- Projects from all areas of mining and METS innovation will be considered, with a focus in any of the following fields strongly encouraged:
 1. Robotics and/or automation
 2. Digital and data analytics
 3. Tailings and mine affected water.

Will my application be treated as confidential?

Yes. METS Ignited may be required to disclose information to the Federal Government Department of Industry Innovation & Science or the Queensland Government. Both organisations have processes in place for commercially sensitive information.

How will I know if my application has been successful?

Applicants will be notified in writing of the success or otherwise of their applications.

When can a project start and begin accruing eligible expenditure?

The earliest start date for selected projects is the day you sign a funding agreement, and eligible expenditure can be accrued from that day.

Grant funding will not be provided to unsuccessful applicants. If you choose to start a project prior to having a funding agreement in place, you do so at your own risk, and any expenses incurred may not be included into the consortium contribution to the project.

What is eligible expenditure?

Project Funds are not intended to support discovery or basic research. However, applied research and development that has known commercial application(s) and a clear timeframe for implementation are eligible.

The Project Fund is intended to be flexible and can support a wide range of Projects including those that focus on market, value chain or technology issues to deliver commercial outcomes that have sector wide impact.

Project Funds may be used to pay for the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings or laboratories, but only where the primary purpose of those facilities is to achieve the outcomes of a *Project*. It is expected that any such facilities would provide benefits to the wider sector beyond the Project participants (e.g. a facility that could be accessed by businesses in the sector to test or pilot new or improved processes).

Where outsourcing of some of the project is directly related to research elements in a project, this may be considered eligible funding by the consortium. Outsourced activities must be highlighted in the application and receive approval in the funding agreement. All outsourced activities not requiring direct payment by the consortium are considered in-kind and not eligible as part of the project costing.

Are the terms of the funding agreement negotiable?

The general terms of the agreement are not negotiable. The schedules covering project details, activities, milestones, payments, and reporting requirements will be specific to projects and will be agreed with successful applicants.

Once a funding agreement is in-place and a project is underway, project variation requests will be considered in the context of issues including impact on outcomes, timelines, and availability of programme funds.

If exceptional circumstances have affected the project timelines, these may be extended. All such variation decisions are at the sole discretion of METS Ignited.

The total grant amount specified in the funding agreement is the maximum grant amount that can be paid for that particular project. This is based on the estimated project costs the applicant proposed in their application. METS Ignited will not provide additional funds above the maximum estimate provided in the application and the agreement for each project.