



Australian Government
Department of Industry and Science

Science



Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF)

ROUND 9

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

2015

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1	Overview	4
1.2	Support available.....	4
1.3	Priority Areas.....	4
2	Project Assessment Criteria and Process	5
2.1	Notes on the assessment criteria	5
2.2	Compliance Requirements.....	5
2.3	Assessment Criteria.....	7
2.4	Conditions relating to assessment criteria	10
2.5	Eligibility checks and assessment of applications.....	10
3	How to apply	10
3.1	Application process.....	10
3.2	Applicant responsibilities.....	10
3.3	Online application process	11
4	Information required in the application	11
4.1	GST and the Project budget.....	11
4.2	Intellectual property rights.....	11
4.3	Supporting Documentation.....	11
5	Additional Information	12
5.1	Risk Management.....	12
5.2	Discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application	12
5.3	After submission	12

1 INTRODUCTION

The Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF) is a platform for bilateral collaboration in science, jointly managed and funded by the governments of Australia and India. The Department of Industry and Science ('the Department') is responsible for managing the programme in Australia. The Government of India's Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in India.

This document must be read in conjunction with the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund Guidelines ('the AISRF Guidelines'), which provide important information on the objectives and underlying principles of the AISRF.

1.1 Overview

The purpose of this document is to provide advice to Australian applicants for the completion and submission of an application for a Collaborative Research Project ('Project') under Round 9 of the AISRF. (Indian applicants should refer to guidelines and instructions promulgated by the relevant Indian government departments.)

Applicants should read all instructions and other accompanying documentation before contacting the AISRF team for any queries, by email aisrf@science.gov.au or phone (02) 6102 9079 (9.00am–5.00pm AEST/AEDT, Monday–Friday).

A complete application must consist of the following:

1. **completed** online application form; and
2. **uploaded** supporting documents.

1.2 Support available

Under Round 9 of the AISRF, activities that are eligible for funding are Collaborative Research Projects as defined in the AISRF Guidelines. Targeted Workshops and Early and Mid-Career Researcher Fellowships will not be funded under Round 9.

1.3 Priority Areas

Applicants can apply for a Project to undertake collaborative research in the following priority areas, under either the Science and Technology Fund or the Biotechnology Fund component in AISRF Round 9.

Indo-Australian Science and Technology Fund

Clean energy technologies

- Clean energy technologies and energy storage technologies that are efficient, cost-effective and reliable (e.g. solar, hydro)
- Smart grids that can readily integrate energy from all sources, including low- and zero-carbon sources, and/or help to reduce technical and commercial losses from electricity networks
- Low emission energy production from fossil fuels (e.g. clean coal, coal seam gas and shale gas)
- New materials for energy

Indo-Australian Biotechnology Fund

Food and agribusiness

- Biotechnological interventions for improved agricultural productivity targeting food security
- Biotechnological interventions for soil improvement and remediation

Clean energy technologies

- Bioenergy and biofuels

2 Project Assessment Criteria and Process

2.1 Notes on the assessment criteria

While completing an application, it is important to keep in mind the assessment criteria that assessors will use to evaluate applications. Please read these carefully and note any content that should be included in an application.

Applicants should note that, in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines for 'achieving value with relevant money', an application should clearly demonstrate that the activities will 'add value by achieving something worthwhile that would not occur without the grant'.

Please note the maximum number of characters or pages specified on the application form or in these Application Instructions, use clear language, avoid technical jargon wherever possible and spell out acronyms or abbreviations in the first instance. Include all relevant information and do not refer to other sources, e.g. websites.

Supporting documentation should be provided as listed under each of the criteria. It can be uploaded in the 'Attachments' section of the online application form.

The information provided in your application must be consistent with that provided by your Indian partner's application to the Government of India.

2.2 Compliance Requirements

Failure to comply with formatting rules is considered to be a breach of eligibility requirements and as such an application may be deemed ineligible and withdrawn from further review.

Naming and Formatting of PDF Documents

- All documents to be uploaded in the online application form must be in PDF format.
- The file size of all attachments should not exceed 20MB in total.
- PDF files must be named using the following convention:

[Applicant Organisation Name]_[Assessment Criterion-Document Contents].pdf

e.g. *University of Antipodes_A-Proposal.pdf*

University of Antipodes_A-CVs.pdf

University of Antipodes_C-Letters of support.pdf

- Applicants are advised to retain a copy of each PDF file they submit.

The formatting requirements for PDF files as listed in Table 1 must be strictly adhered to.

Table 1: PDF formatting requirements

Component	Requirements
Header	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant organisation name must be included in top right corner.• Type of document (e.g. Proposal) must be included in the top left corner.• The header is allowed outside the margin rules but must be at least 1cm from the top of the page.
Footer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Page number must be included at the bottom right corner.• The footer is allowed outside the margin rules but must be at least 1cm from the bottom of the page.
Margins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All margins must be at least 2cm.
Font	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be Arial (not Arial Narrow or other Arial variation).• At least 11 point.
Line Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Line spacing must be set to single.
Character Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Character spacing must be set to normal.• Scale must be set to 100%.
Diagrams, Graphics and Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Colour diagrams, graphics and images may be included. However, you should keep in mind that the electronic file may be printed in black and white for distribution to the reviewing panel and there may be some loss of definition and colour in the images.
Labelling Graphs and Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Labelling of graphs and images may be in a reduced font.• The description and/or legends of all graphs and images must meet the font and line and character spacing specified above.
Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tabulated information containing text is not considered to be an image or diagram. Therefore, text within tables must meet the font and line and character spacing specified above.

Applicants must not include links to additional information on an external website, apart from references to published or peer reviewed journal articles that are only available online.

2.3 Assessment Criteria

Providing the eligibility criteria set out in the AISRF Guidelines have been met, applicants will be assessed against the following criteria, all of which must be addressed. The assessment criteria must be addressed as a written proposal of **no more than ten (10) A4 pages** (other than supporting documentation identified below), to be submitted as an attachment with the online application form.

NOTE: Use the same Project title as the one in the Project Details section of the application form. The Project title must be identical in both the Australian and Indian applications.

Weighting	Guide to addressing assessment criteria
A. 30%	<p>The scientific merit of the proposed research, including the potential of the anticipated outcome to advance the knowledge base of the discipline, and its likely scientific impact.</p> <hr/> <p>POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PROPOSAL:</p> <p>A1. Aims and background: Describe the aims and list the specific objectives of the proposed research collaboration in the context of recent international progress in the field of research, detailing how it will relate to, and benefit, work in the field. Refer only to papers that are available to national and international research communities.</p> <p>A2. Significance and innovation: Describe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the proposed activity is significant;• the need for the proposed activity to address an important problem; and• how the anticipated outcomes will advance the knowledge base of the discipline and/or address the problem. <p>A3. Approach and methodology: Outline the conceptual framework, design and methods, and demonstrate that these are adequately developed, well-integrated and appropriate to the aims of the proposed research collaboration.</p> <p>A4. Roles and research capability of personnel: Summarise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the role, responsibilities and contributions of the respective Project Managers and other key personnel, including the proportion of their time each will spend on this activity;• the leading-edge research capability of the Project's Australian and Indian partners which must be demonstrated by evidence of their academic awards and citations as contained in the submitted CVs, and/or other measures of research or innovation excellence; and• the roles and levels of involvement of other participants, such as technical staff, including the division of work between Australian and Indian investigators. <p>NOTE: Where possible, diversity (including gender), should be considered in developing the Project team compositions.</p> <p>A5. References cited: Include a list of all publications/documents cited in support of claims made against Criterion A.</p> <p>The following documentation must be provided in support of this criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curricula vitae for both Australian and Indian key personnel identified under A4. <p>NOTE: There can be a maximum of 10 key personnel, including the Australian and Indian Project Managers. No more than two (2) pages for each person using the template provided on the AISRF website www.science.gov.au/aisrf. All CVs must be combined and submitted as one PDF attachment with the online application form.</p>

Weighting	Guide to addressing assessment criteria
B. 30%	<p>The ability of the Project to maximise the application and commercialisation of research outcomes and contribute to economic growth and diversity (including gender) in Australia and India</p> <hr/> <p>POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PROPOSAL:</p> <p>B1. Expected outcomes and benefits resulting from the collaboration: Describe the expected outcomes and the likely impact of the proposed research collaboration, including the possible tangible benefits for the two countries, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relevance of the Project to industry or other end-user partners; • demonstrate a clear path to end use in support of economic growth and development in India and Australia, including the application and commercialisation of research outcomes; and • explain how the long-term benefits of the Project outcomes will be sustained beyond the term of funding. <p>B2. Diversity and other benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the research collaboration might result in any environmental, social or other benefits, including contributing to diversity (including gender), for India and Australia. • Provide a statement addressing diversity, including gender – for example, how the Project will support the development of female researchers as well as how outcomes from the Project have the potential to support women’s economic empowerment in the longer term. <p>B3. Details of intellectual property provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details of the intellectual property (IP) arrangements, including use of IP, the proposed ownership of IP generated by the Project and strategies for protecting Australia’s interests.
C. 30%	<p>Support for the Project from participating Australian and Indian organisations and the capacity of the partners to manage it and deliver the activities</p> <hr/> <p>POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PROPOSAL:</p> <p>C1. Roles and research expertise of each partner organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why these Australian and Indian partners are the key organisations to be involved in this Project and how the collaboration will be managed. • Provide details of the governance model. Outline how this will be applied and make it clear to the assessors that a sound governance structure will be put in place at the outset. • Demonstrate that the Project management arrangements are appropriate, including that any issues can be managed and key milestones met to ensure the objectives of the activity can be achieved. • Summarise the support available from the partners for the Project. • Summarise the research leadership and management credentials of the Project Manager and how the team will be managed. • Demonstrate how Project members will ensure they collaborate effectively over the course of the Project. <p>C2. Project Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be presented as a mature plan ready for implementation, leading towards the overall Project objectives and include proposed timelines, milestones and project management arrangements. It will form the basis of the funding agreement between the Australian Government and successful applicants.

Weighting**Guide to addressing assessment criteria****C3. Cash and In-kind Contributions and Budget (to be input directly into the online application form, not in proposal):**

The indicative budget for the Australian applicant should itemise eligible expenses for which Project funding is sought from the Australian Government (see the AISRF Guidelines) and should clearly detail in-kind contributions.

- The supporting documentation must confirm and demonstrate claims. Support for the Project may encompass either a financial commitment or an in-kind commitment.
- In-kind costs must be directly related to costs of delivering the activities of the Project and can include salaries of staff for the time they are involved, and other direct costs incurred for the duration of the activity.
- Indirect costs cannot be included as in-kind contributions.

The following documentation must be provided in support of this criterion:

- Letter(s) of support from the applicant organisation and any other Australian partner organisation(s), demonstrating and clearly articulating the organisation's financial support (cash and/or in-kind) for the Project, the commitment to engage in the research collaboration, the potential to create enduring links, and the contribution to diversity, including gender.
- Letter from the Indian primary partner confirming (i) that the proposal is jointly prepared and the Indian partner is submitting an equivalent proposal to the Government of India, (ii) the level of financial support (cash and/or in-kind) the Indian partner organisation is committing to the Project, and (iii) the commitment to engage in the research collaboration and the potential to create enduring links.
- Letter(s) of support from any other Indian partner organisation(s) and, if applicable, any international partner organisations, demonstrating and clearly articulating the organisation's financial support (cash and/or in-kind) for the Project, the commitment to engage in the research collaboration and the potential to create enduring links.

NOTE: All letters of support must be prepared on official letterhead and be signed by a person who is authorised to commit such support. Each letter should be limited to one page preferably, two pages maximum. Letters of support must be combined and submitted as one PDF attachment with the online application form.

D.
10%

The contribution of the Project to building enduring Australia-India collaboration in a priority area**POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PROPOSAL:****D1. Value and longevity of collaboration:**

- Describe how the collaboration between Australian and Indian partner organisations is integral to achieving the outcomes of the proposed Project.
- Explain the strategy to maintain the momentum of this collaboration beyond the term of AISRF funding, including the expected timeframe.

Total
100%

2.4 Conditions relating to assessment criteria

The assessment criteria provide the basis for assessment of an application. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all relevant information and documentation as required.

Please note that:

- i. applicants may be asked to provide additional information to clarify any issues raised during the assessment process; and
- ii. the Department may also seek the applicant's permission to obtain further advice from third parties, if appropriate.

2.5 Eligibility checks and assessment of applications

All Australian applications received by the Department by the advertised closing date will be assessed in accordance with the AISRF Guidelines and these Application Instructions.

3 How to apply

3.1 Application process

Australian applicants must lodge their application online using the application form available at <http://www.science.gov.au/aisrf> (by the closing time and date). Incomplete applications, applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria or applications received after the closing date or outside of a formal round will not be considered.

Only one application can be submitted by an Eligible Research Organisation (ERO) in this AISRF round. Individuals should not submit an application directly but instead should discuss their proposal with their ERO's research office (or other authorised central area responsible for grant applications and management), which should decide in accordance with the ERO's internal processes which proposal is ultimately submitted as the sole application from that ERO.

However, an ERO which submits an application in this AISRF round can be involved as a partner in applications submitted by other EROs in this round. There is no limit as to how many applications an ERO may be involved in as a partner, as long as it only submits one application as the primary applicant organisation.

There can be a maximum of ten other collaborating organisations, in addition to the Australian applicant organisation and its Indian primary partner. Collaborating organisations should have a direct role in all or part of the Project.

In submitting an application to the AISRF, applicants must consent to Personal Information being used and disclosed by the Department as per the AISRF Guidelines.

3.2 Applicant responsibilities

Before submitting an application, applicants must ensure that:

- the application is compliant with the AISRF Guidelines and these Application Instructions;
- the information provided is correct and sufficient; and
- the application meets the eligibility criteria and addresses the assessment criteria.

Applicants are responsible for any and all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of applications and in respect of any discussions, negotiations, enquiries or any work undertaken by them after the application has been submitted, including, if successful, any costs incurred prior to the signing of the Funding Agreement.

3.3 Online application process

Australian applicants must apply using the online application form, which will be available on the AISRF website (www.science.gov.au/aisrf) from the opening date for this round. Applicants should lodge their application form electronically by the closing time and date indicated on the AISRF website. Applications will **not** be accepted after this deadline or in any other manner (e.g. hard copy). Applicants are encouraged to submit their application form as early as possible to allow time to resolve any unexpected technical issues that may arise.

4 Information required in the application

Important issues to consider before submitting an online application are described below.

4.1 GST and the Project budget

The applicant's Project budget must include detailed costing (GST exclusive) of eligible activities to be funded. An applicant receiving Commonwealth funding may incur tax obligations. All applicants should seek independent professional advice on any tax implications. The Department does not provide advice on tax.

The Department will not provide funding to cover any amount of GST incurred by an applicant where the applicant is entitled to claim input tax credits for those GST amounts. Therefore, when submitting Project budgets, applicants must identify the GST exclusive cost of all items in respect of which the applicant is entitled to an input tax credit.

4.2 Intellectual property rights

Applicants must provide details of their plans with respect to intellectual property (IP) in their applications (under Assessment Criterion B). This includes both the use of IP in the Project and the proposed ownership of rights to IP generated by the Project as well as strategies for protecting Australia's interests. Where IP is likely to be generated by the Project, successful applicants will be required to conclude protocols or contracts with their Indian partners on the management of IP issues. These agreements should be in accordance with laws and regulations prevailing in Australia and India and provide for:

- adequate and effective protection and equitable distribution of any benefits from IP rights created in or resulting directly from cooperative activities (foreground IP rights);
- ownership of foreground IP rights to be allocated on the basis of respective contribution and equitable interests;
- terms and conditions for the commercialisation and other forms of dissemination of the foreground IP rights; and
- adequate and effective protection of IP rights provided by the organisations, enterprises and institutions prior to or in the course of such cooperative activities, for example, the licensing or utilisation of such IP rights on equitable terms (background IP rights).

4.3 Supporting Documentation

Applicants are responsible for ensuring the correctness, sufficiency and eligibility of their application, including the supporting documentation. Experience has shown that there can be delays in obtaining letters of support or CVs if these are not requested early in the application preparation process. Therefore, applicants are urged to seek and collect all supporting documents from partner organisations and key personnel as soon as possible to avoid missing the application closing date, as late applications or late attachments to submitted applications will **not** be accepted.

5 Additional Information

5.1 Risk Management

Every business decision has an element of uncertainty and carries a risk that can be managed through effective oversight and internal control. Assessment of risk begins with the application phase and is reported annually to the Department throughout the life of the Project.

It is the responsibility of the Project Manager and research office to recognise and manage risk factors and ensure that the Project will be completed regardless of whether or not the key personnel continue to be available.

5.2 Discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application

The Australian Government will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with the AISRF Guidelines or these Application Instructions, or arising from any discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency, error or omission contained in an application.

If an applicant discovers any material discrepancy, ambiguity, inconsistency, error or omission in their application, they must **immediately** bring it to the attention of the Department via email to aisrf@science.gov.au.

The Department may request further information from an applicant and allow an applicant to remedy any discrepancies, ambiguities, inconsistencies, errors or omissions in an application at any time, including after the round closing date. The Department reserves the right to consider new information regarding matters referred to in the original application at any time, including after the round closing date. The Department also reserves the right to refuse further information.

The Department reserves the right to allow applicants to correct errors or omissions in submitted applications. In relation to these matters, the Department's decision will be final. No correspondence will be entered into in relation to the decision other than to inform the applicant of the decision.

The Department may consult with other Australian Government agencies if it believes the applicant is seeking duplicate funding. The Department may also seek an applicant's permission to obtain further advice from other third parties if appropriate.

Please note that giving false or misleading information to a Commonwealth entity is an offence under section 137 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth).

5.3 After submission

Following the successful submission of an application form, applicants will be provided with a submission acknowledgement and receipt number. This number should be retained for future reference. Applicants can save or print a copy of the completed form and acknowledgement. Copies of uploaded supporting documentation will need to be saved and printed separately.