National Intelligence Explore Award (NIEA) 2026-27

Grant Guidelines

For funding commencing in 2027

Opening date:	**2 November 2026**
Closing date and time:	**10 December 2026**
Commonwealth policy entity:	**Office of National Intelligence (ONI)**
Administering entity:	**Office of National Intelligence (ONI)**
Enquiries:	**Email enquiries to NICRP@oni.gov.au**
Date Guidelines released:	**19 October 2026**
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Type of Grant Opportunity:	**Restricted competitive**

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1. National Intelligence Explore Award processes

The National Intelligence Explore Award (NIEA) is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives for research and innovation in national intelligence.

The Office of National Intelligence (ONI) works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs).*



The grant opportunity opens.

ONI on behalf of the Australian National Intelligence Community (NIC) publish the Grant Guidelines on GrantConnect. The SmartyGrants application portal is where NIEA documentation is published and where an Expression of Interest and Full Application is to be completed and submitted.



You (the Applicant) complete and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) application.

Your EOI must be supported by an Eligible Sponsoring University.



Via ONI the NIC assess all EOI applications.

ONI and the NIC assess EOIs against alignment to NIC interests and will shortlist approximately 50 EOIs.



You (the Applicant) are advised of the EOI outcome and may be invited to complete and submit a full application.

You may submit a 'Request not to Assess' request via email two weeks before the closing date for full applications.



Full application assessment.

ONI will manage the assessment process of full applications against eligibility criteria and assessment criteria, including an overall consideration of value for money.

Your full application will be assigned to Detailed Assessors comprising senior Australian academics and NIC subject matter experts (SMEs) to undertake in-depth assessments.

A Selection Advisory Committee will consider the Detailed Assessors' assessments and assess Your application and rank applications according to merit.



ONI will determine a priority shortlist.

ONI and the NIC will review the ranked merit list and recommend applications suitable for funding. ONI will consider advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies.



ONI Grant decision

The ONI Delegate will decide which applications, that address NIC priority research needs, are approved for funding by ONI.



ONI share the ranked merit list with potential Sponsoring Entity (NIC Agency or Commonwealth Entity or FVEYs International Partner).

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Other Entity Grant decision

A Sponsoring Entity (Entity other than ONI) Delegate may decide which applications, that address their priority research needs, are approved for direct funding by that entity.

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ONI will notify You of the outcome.

ONI will advise You if Your application was successful or not.

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ONI will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Sponsoring University.

OR

The Sponsoring Entity will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Sponsoring University.

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Delivery of the grant.

You undertake the grant activity and deliver reports as set out in Your Grant Agreement.

ONI will monitor the grant through informal direct engagement, such as university visits and your participation in NIC R&D events, and through formal reporting arrangements, e.g. Your progress reports.

ONI will provide reports to any Sponsoring Entity, e.g. other NIC agencies.

Any Sponsoring Entity is responsible for their own grant obligations, supported by the NIC Research Program, managed by ONI on behalf of the NIC.

2. Introduction

2.1. These Grant Guidelines contain information on the *National Intelligence Explore Award* (NIEA) program.

2.2. You and the named participants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

2.3. This document sets out:

a. the purpose of the grant opportunity;

b. the eligibility and assessment criteria;

c. how applications are considered and selected;

d. how grantees are notified and receive grant payments;

e. how grantees will be monitored and evaluated; and

f. responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

2.4. This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Office of National Intelligence (ONI).

2.5. Successful applications may be funded by ONI or other Sponsoring Entity (ONI or NIC Agency or Commonwealth Entity or FVEYs International Partner).

About the National Intelligence Explore Award (NIEA)

2.6. The National Intelligence Community (NIC) ensures the protection and security of Australian national interests and Australian citizens at home and abroad. The NIC was officially formed following the Australian Government's adoption of the 2017 Independent Intelligence Review recommendations. The NIC comprises the six agencies that formally made up the Australian Intelligence Community (AIC) as well as the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and the intelligence functions of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and the Department of Home Affairs. These agencies and departments form the Australian Government's intelligence enterprise, working to collect, analyse and disseminate intelligence information and advice in accordance with Australia's interests and national security priorities.

2.7. ONI, on behalf of the NIC, established the NIC Research Program in response to the 2017 Independent Intelligence Review's Science, Technology and Innovation recommendations. Contemporary guidance is provided in the Report of the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review.

2.8. The NIEA supports and identifies excellent research that deepens understanding of emerging science, social science, engineering and technology that addresses intelligence and national security interests. The grant program will facilitate and promote innovation and enhance national security and intelligence capacity. It will also enable the NIC to systematically engage with Australia's research and technology community.

2.9. The NIEA provides support to research that aligns with the priority research areas identified by the NIC. These research areas are presented in the *Research Topics* and in the *Intelligence Challenges* listed in section 5 – complete descriptions are available on SmartyGrants.

2.10. The program may also support research in areas identified by the UK (UKIC) and US (USIC)

Intelligence Community Research Programs.

Objectives

2.11. The NIEA objectives are to:

a. support excellent fundamental research (discovery, basic or blue sky research) in areas identified in the *Research Topics* and *Intelligence Challenges*;

b. build Australia's research capacity and capability in these areas by supporting researchers, fostering research trainees, and contributing to a greater body of open source research;

c. enhance collaboration in the research, science and technology community that can support the NIC; and

d. support systematic and coordinated engagement between the research, science and technology community and the NIC.

Intended outcomes

2.12. The intended outcomes of the grant program are:

a. increased scale of Australian research impacting or informing Australia's national security and potential future intelligence capability;

b. strengthened relationships and improving interaction between Australia's research community and the NIC, including Five Eyes partners;

c. produce ground-breaking research (peer-reviewed publications) that provides insight into emerging science, social science, engineering and technology that addresses NIC priorities, needs and interests; and

d. develop sovereign expertise and talent in field of high relevance to the NIC and enable potential capability development.

Other relevant information

2.13. ONI administers the program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs).*

2.14. You must include information on your assessment of the project's *technology readiness level* based on the Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) (refer link for definitions). This self-assessment is not an assessment or eligibility criteria, it will be used to understand the maturity of the proposed research.

2.15. Named participants on this application must provide certain personal information. This information will be used for the sole and exclusive purpose of confirming eligibility as detailed at section 4.17. The provision of this information provides express consent to use the information for this purpose.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. ONI, on behalf of the NIC, will fund up to 12 grant opportunities under NIEA, commencing July 2027.

3.2. Other Sponsoring Entities (NIC agency or Commonwealth entity or FVEYs International Partner) may directly provide additional grant funding on an ad-hoc basis (leveraging the existing collection and evaluation process of the NIEA).

3.3. Individual grants will be funded up to a maximum of $750,000 (GST exclusive) for a period no longer than three (3) years.

3.4. Extension option for research translation:

a. Possible award of up to $260,000 (GST exclusive) for up to 1 year extension or spin-off translational research (TRL 3-5).

b. Builds on TRL 1-3 research according to NIC interests or collaborative activity with NIC agencies, Australian Industry or FVEY partners.

c. The extension option is by invitation only.

3.5. Other support for security nominated HDRs:

a. Option for ONI to fund a top-up grant up to $20,000 per year for a PhD candidate (maximum three years, as recommended by the NIC), to top-up a Research Training Program scholarship (or equivalent). Stipends may only be provided for students who hold NV1 security clearance.

b. The top-up grant is by invitation only.

4. Eligibility criteria

What are the eligibility requirements for applications?

4.1. To be eligible your EOI and full application must address a *Research Topic* OR one *Intelligence Challenge*.

4.2. You can submit up to three EOIs and, if invited, one full application for the invited EOI project.

4.3. EOI applications under this grant opportunity must have:

a. one Lead Chief Investigator (CI) who is an Early-Mid Career Researcher (EMCR); and

b. one Eligible Organisation (that is the Sponsoring Organisation).

4.4. Full applications under this grant opportunity must have:

a. one Lead CI (EMCR); and

b. one or more CIs;

c. none, one or more Partner Investigators (PIs);

d. one or more Eligible Organisations (including the Sponsoring Organisation); and

e. none, one or more Partner Organisations.

4.5. If a Partner Organisation is named on the application, a person representing that organisation must be named on the application.

Who is eligible to apply for a grant and be a named participant?

4.6. Named participants are those individual researchers who are nominated for the particular roles identified.

4.7. To be an eligible Lead Chief Investigator:

a. Be an individual that is an Australian citizen or New Zealand Special Category Visa Holder based at an Australian University. (A copy of the passport and/or visa number

will be required during the application process.)

b. Have a PhD in a relevant field within ten years of the application closing date. Career Interruptions will be considered within the first 10 years after the PhD was conferred, as long as the interruption period is less than the research working period after the PhD was conferred. If the PhD is not yet awarded, the PhD thesis must be submitted by the NIEA EOI application closing date and a letter provided from the Faculty Dean vouching for their anticipated conferral timeframe. The PhD must be conferred before 30 June 2027.

4.8. To be an eligible Chief Investigator:

a. Be an individual that is an Australian citizen or New Zealand Special Category Visa Holder based at an Australian University. (A copy of the passport and/or visa number will be required during the application process.)

b. Have a PhD in a relevant field.

4.9. To be an eligible Partner Investigator:

a. Be an individual that is an Australian OR FVEYs citizen (Australia, United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand), Australian permanent resident or New Zealand Special Category Visa Holder based at an Australian OR FVEYs University. (A copy of the passport and/or visa number will be required during the application process.)

4.10. All named participants in an application must:

a. satisfy the eligibility criteria above for the role they are to perform;

b. take responsibility for the authorship and intellectual content of the application, appropriately citing sources and acknowledging significant contributions, including from third parties;

c. provide ONI details of all Australian and non-Australian:

i. professional affiliations (past and present)

ii. sources of funding (past and present)

iii. publications

4.11. An EOI or full application will not be considered where a grant application has been excluded for a research integrity matter under the *ARC Research Integrity Policy*, involving a particular named participants for a period of time, whether or not they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements.

Who is eligible to be a Sponsoring Organisation?

4.12. To be an Eligible Sponsoring Organisation:

a. ONI will only accept EOI and full applications sponsored from the Eligible Organisations listed in **Table 2**; and

b. the Eligible Organisation that sponsors the application will be the 'Sponsoring Organisation'. All other Organisations named on the application will be a 'Participating Organisation'.

c. an official who is legally authorised to act for and on behalf of the Sponsoring Organisation is required to:

i. Certify that the University supports the application submitted.

ii. Confirm University in-kind and financial commitments.

iii. Confirm University commitment to serve as the host facility.

4.13. **Table 2:** Eligible Organisations:

Organisation Name	Organisation ABN
Adelaide University	41 202 953 738
Australian Catholic University	15 050 192 660
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	62 020 533 641
Avondale University	53 108 186 401
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	32 039 179 166
Bond University	88 010 694 121
Central Queensland University	39 181 103 288
Charles Darwin University	54 093 513 649
Charles Sturt University	83 878 708 551
Curtin University	99 143 842 569
Deakin University	56 721 584 203
Edith Cowan University	54 361 485 361
Federation University Australia	51 818 692 256
Flinders University	65 542 596 200
Griffith University	78 106 094 461
James Cook University	46 253 211 955
La Trobe University	64 804 735 113
Macquarie University	90 952 801 237
Monash University	12 377 614 012
Murdoch University	61 616 369 313
Queensland University of Technology	83 791 724 622
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)	49 781 030 034

Southern Cross University	41 995 651 524
Swinburne University of Technology	13 628 586 699
The Australian National University	52 234 063 906
The University of Melbourne	84 002 705 224
The University of New England	75 792 454 315
The University of New South Wales	57 195 873 179
The University of Newcastle	15 736 576 735
The University of Notre Dame Australia	69 330 643 210
The University of Queensland	63 942 912 684
The University of Sydney	15 211 513 464
The University of Western Australia	37 882 817 280
Torrens University Australia	99 154 937 005
University of Canberra	81 633 873 422
University of Divinity	95 290 912 141
University of Southern Queensland	40 234 732 081
University of Tasmania	30 764 374 782
University of Technology Sydney	77 257 686 961
University of the Sunshine Coast	28 441 859 157
University of Wollongong	61 060 567 686
Victoria University	83 776 954 731
Western Sydney University	53 014 069 881

Who is eligible to be a Participating Organisation?

4.14. Organisations that are not Sponsoring Organisations but that are named as a Participating Organisation on an application.

4.15. A Participating Organisation cannot be included if it is on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au).

4.16. Participating Organisations must not be a NIC member entity. A list of NIC member entities is available at The National Intelligence Community | Office of National Intelligence (oni.gov.au). This may be managed post-award.

4.17. Participating Organisations may be:

a. Australian organisations.

b. FVEYs Universities (i.e. United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand).

4.18. Participating Organisations are not required to, but may choose to, make a cash and/or in-kind contribution to the project, but must be relevant to and involved with the project.

4.19. A Participating Organisation named on an application must have at least one Partner Investigator (PI) listed.

Lead Chief Investigator

4.20. The Lead CI is expected to:

a. be the Project Leader and must have the capacity to manage the project.

b. take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results;

c. ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of research personnel, including HDR candidates and postdoctoral researchers for whom they are responsible; and

d. make a commitment to carrying out the project and not assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be undertaken by others.

4.21. The Lead CI must:

a. be an EMCR with less than 10 years since the award of their earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions.

b. academic rank Level A or B only;

c. be engaged by the Participating Organisation for the period of the project activity, including any post project reporting period;

d. allocate at least 0.9 FTE at an Eligible Organisation to the project:

i. Part time arrangements may be requested but will only be approved for Carer/family responsibilities up to 0.5 FTE; and

e. reside in Australia for more than 90 per cent of the project activity period.

4.22. The Lead CI must be an Australian citizen or New Zealand Special Category Visa holder.

4.23. Lead CI must not undertake a HDR qualification during the project activity period.

Chief Investigators

4.24. CIs are expected to:

a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results;

b. ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of research personnel, including HDR candidates and postdoctoral researchers for whom they are responsible; and

c. make a commitment to carrying out the project and not assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be undertaken by others.

4.25. At least one CI must:

a. be engaged at an Eligible Organisation for the project activity period, including any post project reporting period; or

b. allocate at least 0.1 FTE at an Eligible Organisation to the project.

4.26. CIs must be Australian citizens or New Zealand Special Category Visa holders.

4.27. CIs must reside in Australia for more than 50 per cent of the project activity period.

4.28. CIs must not undertake a HDR qualification during the project activity period.

Partner Investigators

4.29. PIs are expected to:

a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the planning and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results;

b. have the relevant skills and experience to contribute to the project;

c. make a commitment to carrying out the project and not assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be undertaken by others; and/or

d. provide effective supervision, support and mentoring of research personnel, as required.

4.30. Only researchers who do not meet all of the eligibility criteria for being a CI may be PIs. For example, a participant may be a PI, if they would otherwise be a CI but will not reside in Australia for more than 50 percent of the project activity period.

4.31. PI's must be Australian citizens, FVEYs citizens, Australian Permanent Residents or New Zealand Special Category Visa holders.

5. What the grant money can be used for

Eligible grant activities

5.1. To be eligible, the application must propose academic research that addresses one of the defined *Research Topics* or *Intelligence Challenges*. Note: When completing an application refer to the detailed descriptions on the SmartyGrants application portal.

5.2. The 2026 Research Topics:

a. RISCV exploitation techniques and state of the market

b. Translating epidemiological-based violence prevention approaches to enhance threat identification and disruption in countering violent extremism

c. Multi-source intelligence fusion and decision advantage

d. AI-enabled psychological inference for personnel security

e. Insider risk in the Australian context

f. The intersection between immigration, diaspora exploitation, and serious organised crime in Australia

g. Opportunities for serious, organised crime in Australia's increasing reliance on emerging technologies and the Internet of Things

h. Integration of artificial intelligence into intelligence workflows

i. Scalable entity resolution using quantum computing

j. Engineering biology for sustainable power generation

k. Advancing risk assessment capabilities and understanding of LLMs and biological design tools

5.3. The 2026 Intelligence Challenges:

a. Covert Collection

b. Identity Management

c. Emerging Biological Science

d. Emerging Material Science

e. Extreme Environment

f. Emerging Data Science

g. Cyber Security, Protective Security and Physical Security

h. Situational Awareness and Multi-Source Assessment

i. Social Behavioural

j. Socio-Technical System

Ineligible grant activities

5.4. ONI will not consider EOI or full applications for a grant where one or more Organisation(s) is seeking expert external assistance, not available within their own organisation, in order to develop specific applications or outputs that involve little innovation or are low risk. Such applications are considered to be contracted research or a consultancy arrangement and these are ineligible.

5.5. Expressions of Interest and full applications will be deemed ineligible where research outputs include policy recommendations, options or solutions. The production or publication of policy advice or opinion during the course of research will be cause for grant termination and recovery of grant funds.

5.6. The same research activities, infrastructure or project previously funded or currently being funded through any other Commonwealth grant cannot be funded.

5.7. Production of policy options, recommendations or advice. Note Intended Outcomes (2.12)

What grant funds can be used for

5.8. You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure items that directly support the project and in accordance with any additional special conditions if applicable – both should be clearly set out in the Grant Agreement.

5.9. Expenditure items that must be included:

a. NIC Fellowship for the Lead CI, which includes:

i. salary up to $150,000 per year at an appropriate salary level (Level A and B only) at the Sponsoring Organisation. A maximum of 0.1 FTE time may be allocated for teaching and / or other duties.

b. NIC PhD Scholarship, which includes:

i. stipend top-up up to $30,000 per year for one PhD candidate, to top-up a Research Training Program scholarship (or equivalent) awarded via the Sponsoring Organisation or the relevant industry sector. Stipends may only be provided for students who are Australian citizens, Australian Permanent Residents or New Zealand Special Category Visa holders;

c. the fellowship and scholarship must be identified in the budget and can be on top of other funding requested for the project, or provided through other sources.

5.10. Other eligible expenditure items are:

a. Honours or Masters degree top-ups or supports, up to $10,000 per year;

b. on-costs for the Lead CI up to a total of $20,000 per year;

c. teaching relief for CIs up to a total of $20,000 per year;

d. travel costs essential to the project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel and accommodation up to a total of $50,000 over the project activity period. Travel and accommodation costs related to carrying out field research or any carers' costs are not included in this $50,000 limit;

e. expenditure on field research essential to the project, including technical and logistical support and travel expenses (including accommodation, meals and incidental costs);

f. equipment (and its maintenance) and consumables essential for the project. Funding will not be provided for equipment or consumables that are considered to be for broad general use; and

g. other, which may include:

i. expert services of a third party if the services are directly related to and essential for the project. Such services include, but are not limited to:

- language translation services, transcribing services;
- purchase of bibliographical or archival material (electronic or hard copy);
- data collection and analysis services;

ii. access to national and international research and infrastructure facilities including specialist archives, collections and databases;

iii. access to technical workshop services linked to and justified explicitly against the project (for example, machine tools and qualified technicians);

iv. publication and dissemination of peer-reviewed project research outputs and peer-reviewed outreach activity costs;

v. access to security measures as agreed to by Your University security officials/protocols;

vi. specialised computer equipment and software essential to the project;

vii. web hosting and web development specific to the project;

viii. workshops, focus groups and conferences that are essential for the conduct of the project (including reasonable hospitality costs such as morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea); and

ix. reasonable essential costs to allow a participant who is a carer, or who personally requires care or assistance, to undertake travel essential to the project.

What grant funds cannot be used for

5.11. You cannot request or use grant funds for the following activities:

a. on-costs in excess of $20,000 for the Lead CI;

b. salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part for named CIs and PIs;

c. university overheads;

d. indexation (applicant to include in the budget);

e. basic facilities that should normally be funded by a Sponsoring Organisation and/or Participating Organisation (including standard refurbishment costs of a laboratory);

f. capital works and general infrastructure costs;

g. costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to professional membership fees, professional development courses, fees for patent application and maintenance, equipment for live music or drama performances, equipment for gallery and museum exhibitions, visas, relocation costs, entertainment costs, purchase of alcohol, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges) and other indirect costs; and

h. fees for international students or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students;

5.12. Unless the following activities meet the definition of 'research', the NIEA does not support production of:

a. computer programs, research aids and tools;

b. data warehouses, catalogues or bibliographies; or

c. teaching materials.

What basic facilities must be provided

5.13. The following basic facilities must be provided (where relevant) and funded by the Sponsoring Organisation, or Participating Organisation(s). These are not funded by the grant:

a. bench fees or similar laboratory access fees;

b. access to a basic library collection;

c. access to film or music editing facilities;

d. work accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished);

e. basic computer facilities such as desktop computers, portable computer devices, printers, word processing, and other standard software; and

f. standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services.

6. The assessment criteria

6.1. You must address all of the relevant assessment criteria in Your application. Your application will be assessed based on the weighting given to each criterion. Different weightings are assigned to individual criterion.

6.2. The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence You provide in Your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form includes character, word and page limits.

6.3. The NIEA assessment criteria are:

a. Project quality and benefit 60%

Demonstrate this through identifying the:

i. contribution to an important gap in knowledge or significant problem;

ii. novelty/originality and innovation of the proposed research (including any new methods, technologies, theories or ideas that will be developed);

iii. clarity of the hypothesis, theories and research questions;

iv. cohesiveness of the project design and implementation plan (including the appropriateness of the aim, conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses);

v. new or advanced knowledge resulting from outcomes of the research;

vi. extent to which the project would build research capacity; and

vii. potential to enhance Australian intelligence and national security capabilities.

b. Investigator/Team/Capability 25%

Demonstrate this through identifying:

i. Chief Investigators' Curriculum Vitae and 10-year publication list;

ii. Scope of proposed PhD research

iii. time and capacity to undertake the research;

iv. evidence of experience in research training, mentoring and supervision (where appropriate); and

v. the capability of the investigator or team to build research relationships within Australia, the NIC and research institutions in Five Eyes nations.

c. Feasibility and commitment 15%

Demonstrate this through identifying the:

i. cost-effectiveness of the research and its value for relevant money;

ii. suitability of the environment for the research team and their project, and for HDR students where appropriate, including availability and resourcing of Postgraduate Researchers and Postdoctoral Research Associates;

iii. availability of the necessary facilities to complete the project; and

iv. extent to which the project's design, participants and requested budget create confidence in the successful completion of the proposed research on time.

7. How to apply

7.1. Before You submit an EOI or full application, You and the named participants must read these Grant Guidelines and the draft Grant Agreement. These documents may be found on SmartyGrants and GrantConnect. Any alterations and addenda will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website you will be automatically notified of any changes.

7.2. To apply, You must:

a. complete the EOI form and, if invited, the full application form in the format required as detailed in the Instructions to Applicants;

b. address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria;

c. make sure that Your EOI and full application is submitted in accordance with these Grant Guidelines, Grant Agreement and Application Form. You must only submit an application if it and the named participants, will be eligible for the Grant Opportunity as per these Grant Guidelines;

d. certify that the EOI and full application is compliant with these Grant Guidelines and all relevant laws and regulations including having regard to the *Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector* published on the Department of Education website;

e. certify that the EOI and full application is compliant with Australia's obligations under the *Defence Export Controls Legislative Framework*. These include Australia's international obligations including the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention)*. Consideration must be given to ensure proposals are not open to misinterpretation, and do not put at risk Australia's long-standing commitment and reputation.

f. submit Your EOI and full application via SmartyGrants; and

g. ensure that the person assigned the Research Office Delegate is authorised to certify applications.

7.3. There are no minimum cash or in-kind requirements for any organisations named on the full application. If included in the full application, in-kind contributions must be essential and central to the full application. It is Your responsibility to establish the merit of the case for recognition of in-kind contributions.

7.4. In-kind contributions in the budget section of the application should not include basic salary for any Commonwealth Fellowships, unless it is salary over and above the Commonwealth component supported.

7.5. Your full application cannot include cash or in-kind contributions in years beyond the project activity period.

7.6. You are responsible for ensuring that Your EOI and full application is complete and all details in the application are accurate and current at the time of submission. Failure to do this may result in Your EOI and/or application being unsuccessful.

7.7. You cannot change Your EOI or full application (additions, deletions or modifications) after the application submission date and time, unless invited by the ONI.

7.8. ONI reserves the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from You to support the certification of EOI and full applications.

7.9. You may use AI as a support tool when preparing applications but remain responsible for the authorship, intellectual content and accuracy.

7.10. The EOI and full application forms include help information and further information is available on SmartyGrants. If You have any technical difficulties with SmartyGrants email service@smartygrants.com.au.

Attachments to the application

7.11. You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided in the Application form. You should only attach requested documents. ONI will not consider information in attachments that are not requested.

Timing of the grant opportunities

7.12. ONI will publish open and closing times for submission on GrantConnect.

7.13. You must submit Your EOI and full application between the grant opportunity opening and closing dates and times specified on GrantConnect. ONI will not accept late EOIs or full applications, other than in exceptional circumstances (such as due to natural disasters) in which case this will be discussed this with You, and if agreed, invite You to make a late application.

7.14. If You are successful, grants must commence no later than 31 December 2027. Extensions will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Questions during the application period

7.15. Questions during the application period should be directed to ONI at NICRP@oni.gov.au.

Withdrawing an application

7.16. ONI may approve the withdrawal of an application upon receipt of a written request with justification from You. ONI will only approve such a request in exceptional circumstances.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. All EOIs and full applications will be considered through a competitive peer-review process.

8.2. ONI will manage the assessment of EOIs and full applications.

8.3. ONI will seek advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies in relation to the EOI and full application.

8.4. ONI may seek information from You regarding due diligence activities in relation to the EOI and full application.

8.5. ONI may seek information from third party sources.

8.6. You are responsible for ensuring that Your EOI application and (if applicable) full application are complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth). ONI will investigate any incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information and may recommend to the ONI Delegate that Your EOI application or full application not be considered further.

8.7. For the avoidance of doubt, an application being incomplete, inaccurate or misleading includes failure to disclose any foreign affiliation, or any conflict of interest of any named participant, including but not limited to matters described in clauses 3.1 and 3.3 of the *ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy (2025)* on the ARC website.

8.8. ONI may also, at its discretion, recommend that Your EOI application or full application not be considered further if it contains or amounts to a breach of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

9. What is the grant assessment process?

The EOI process

9.1. Applicants are required to submit an EOI outlining the proposed project and its alignment with a *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge*.

9.2. ONI and the NIC will review all submitted EOI applications to determine whether the proposed project aligns with the *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge*.

9.3. EOI applications submitted will be shortlisted for full application if ONI and the NIC determine that the project aligns with the *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge*.

9.4. If Your EOI application is shortlisted, ONI will invite you to submit a full application for grant funding under the relevant Grant Opportunity.

9.5. If Your EOI application is not shortlisted, ONI will notify you that Your application has not been successful.

Eligibility criteria assessment

9.6. ONI will review Your EOI application and, where relevant Your full application, against the eligibility criteria.

9.7. ONI may determine whether an EOI application or full application meets the eligibility requirements in these Grant Guidelines at any stage during assessment of the application.

9.8. If an EOI application or full application is considered ineligible, You will be notified of that decision. You may submit an appeal against the administrative process in relation to this decision (eligibility appeal) within 30 days of the date of the eligibility decision notification, as specified in section 14 of these Grant Guidelines.

9.9. If an EOI application or full application is ineligible, the application may not be progressed through the assessment process.

The full application assessment process

9.10. All full applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using all the assessment criteria. Your full application will be considered on its merits, based on:

a. how well it meets the assessment criteria;

b. how well it addresses the *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge*;

c. how it is ranked against other applications; and

d. whether it provides value for relevant money (as defined in the Glossary).

9.11. ONI may request additional information during the full application assessment process, which does not change the nature of Your application.

9.12. ONI will ask NIC SMEs and Detailed Assessors, to assess applications as part of the assessment process. Any expert, who is not a Commonwealth Official, will be required/expected to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

9.13. The assessment process includes the following steps.

a. Full applications are assigned to at least two Detailed Assessors and one or more NIC SMEs. In assigning assessors, ONI may take requests not to assess into account (see below for further information on this process).

b. Detailed Assessors provide assessments to ONI. Assessments include scores and written comments against assessment criteria.

c. Full applications, scores and comments provided in the detailed assessments are provided to a Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) for consideration.

d. The SAC meets to discuss the assessment of each full application relative to other applications and determines a ranked merit list including advice to ONI on the extent to which the application addresses a *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge* or NIC Priority need.

e. ONI, in consultation with the NIC, reviews the ranked merit list to determine which applications are suitable for funding based on the fit with a *Research Topic* or *Intelligence Challenge*, the NIC's priority research needs, Australia's national interest, including national security, applications already funded and available funding.

f. The list of recommend applications suitable for funding is provided to Sponsoring Entities (ONI or

g. NIC Agency or Commonwealth Entity or FVEYs International Partner).

h. ONI will seek advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies.

Request not to assess process

9.14. You may name up to three persons whom You do not wish to assess an application by submitting a *Request Not to Assess* (RNTA) request via email to NICRP@oni.gov.au. This request must be received two weeks prior to the grant opportunity closing date.

9.15. Only one request containing the names of up to three individual assessors may be submitted per full application.

9.16. ONI will decide whether to accept or refuse a 'Request Not to Assess'. ONI will not notify you of the outcome.

Who will assess applications?

9.17. The extent to which the EOI and full application addresses a *Research Topic* or one *Intelligence Challenge* will be assessed by ONI and the NIC.

9.18. Full applications will be assessed by at least three assessors (Detailed Assessors and NIC SMEs) and a SAC comprising independent Assessors.

9.19. All assessors must adhere to and uphold the Australian Code for the Responsible

Conduct of Research (2018) and abide by the ARC's Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence.

9.20. Any SAC members who are not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

9.21. There are procedures in place for managing organisational and personal Conflicts of Interest for Assessors. Details of these procedures are in the relevant section of these Grant Guidelines and in the ARC's *Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy* available on the ARC website.

Who will approve grants?

9.22. For grants to be funded by ONI, the ONI Delegate will approve grants.

9.23. For grants to be funded by another Sponsoring Entity, the relevant Delegate from that entity will approve a grant(s).

9.24. ONI will seek advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies before making recommendations to the relevant Delegate. ONI will also seek information from third party sources. ONI will make recommendations for funding to the relevant Delegate based on any number of assessments and may take into account any advice received on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies, or information received from other information sources.

9.25. The relevant Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

a. the approval of the grant;

b. the grant funding amount to be awarded;

c. the duration of the grant; and

d. the terms and conditions of the grant.

9.26. There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

10. Notification of application outcomes

Expression of Interest applications

10.1. You will be notified of the outcome of Your EOI application via email following a decision by the ONI and the National Intelligence Community.

10.2. ONI will advise You whether Your EOI application has been shortlisted. If it has been shortlisted, the notification will include information about submitting a full application.

Full applications

10.3. ONI will advise You of the outcome of Your full application, following a decision by the Delegate.

10.4. If You are unsuccessful, You may submit a new application for the same, or similar, research in future grant opportunities. This will depend on the specific provisions of the grant opportunity You are applying for.

10.5. If You are unsuccessful, for an ONI funded grant. Another Sponsoring Entity (NIC or Commonwealth Entity, or FVEYs International Partner) **may directly provide** additional grant funding on an ad-hoc basis,

11. Successful grant applications

The Grant Agreement

11.1. If You are successful, You must enter into a legally binding Grant Agreement with ONI or a Sponsoring Entity.

11.2. ONI uses a NIEA Grant Agreement which contains standard terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample Grant Agreement is available on SmartyGrants and GrantConnect. Any special conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the Grant Offer.

11.3. You will have 30 calendar days from the date of the Grant Offer to execute this Grant Agreement with the Commonwealth.

11.4. ONI or a Sponsoring Entity must execute a Grant Agreement with You before any payments can be made. ONI or a Sponsoring Entity is not responsible for any of Your project expenditure until a Grant Agreement is executed.

Specific research policies and practices

11.5. You and each participant are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations and have regard to any relevant guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, Australia's obligations under the *Defence Export Controls Legislative Framework*, Australia's international obligations including the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention)* and Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Amendment Act 2026. Consideration must be given to ensure proposals are not open to misinterpretation, and do not put at risk Australia's long-standing commitment and reputation.

Responsible ethical and research practices

11.6. All applications and funded research projects must comply with the requirements for responsible and ethical research practice specified in the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and the codes, guidelines, practices and policies on the ARC website including the *ARC Conflict of Interest Policy* and any actions that have been applied under the *ARC Research Integrity Policy*. An ethics plan must be in place prior to the commencement of the project in line with the Grant Agreement. A copy of the approved ethics plan must be provided after the grant commencement date.

Intellectual Property

11.7. The Sponsoring Entity does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in an application or in any research arising from a project.

11.8. All NIEA research projects must comply with the National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research (2022).

11.9. NIEA Intellectual Property arrangements should be negotiated between You, Other Eligible Organisations and Other Organisations as relevant.

Publication and dissemination of research outputs and research data

11.10. All NIEA grants must comply with the *ARC Open Access Policy* on the dissemination of research findings, which is on the ARC website.

11.11. A data management plan must be developed prior to the commencement of the project in line with the Grant Agreement.

11.12. ONI strongly encourages depositing data arising from a project in an appropriate publicly accessible discipline and/or institutional repository.

11.13. All participants applying for grants are encouraged to have a persistent digital identifier such as an Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier (ORCID ID).

11.14. ONI requires written consultation with reasonable notice if you or your university plan to issue a media release or public disseminate outputs in relation to your grant.

11.15. Reference to the grant must comply with the Acknowledgment section of the Grant Agreement. Reference must not misrepresent you or your university's grant recipient status with ONI, the NIC or Five Eyes partners.

11.16. ONI strongly encourages research outputs to be peer-reviewed before dissemination.

How the grant is paid

11.17. Payments will be made as set out in the Grant Agreement:

a. For ONI funded grants, grant funding will typically be paid annually through the ONI payment system.

b. For other Sponsoring Entity ad hoc grants, – payments will be made directly based on the specific arrangements in the grant agreement and in $AUD.

11.18. The Grant Offer will specify the approved grant amount to be paid.

11.19. You will not be paid more than the approved grant amount under any circumstances. If You incur extra costs, You must meet them.

11.20. Once the Grant Agreement is executed by the Commonwealth, payment will be made as agreed.

11.21. Any grant awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the project and the continued satisfactory progress of the project.

Grant payments and GST

11.22. All amounts referred to in these Grant Guidelines are exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), unless expressly stated otherwise.

11.23. You are responsible for any and all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

12. Announcement of grants

12.1. If successful, Your grant will be listed on GrantConnect within 21 calendar days of the date of effect as required by section 5.4 of the CGRPs.

12.2. You should ensure that information contained in the project title and summary descriptions will not compromise Your requirements for confidentiality (such as protection of intellectual property).

12.3. In making information public about a project that has been approved for a grant, ONI may use a project description, including title and summary, which differs from that provided in the application.

13. How Your grant activity is monitored

13.1. ONI will monitor Your grant activity through informal direct engagement (e.g. university visits), your participation in NIC R&D events and through formal reporting arrangements. ONI will provide reports to any Sponsoring Entity, e.g. other NIC agencies

Reporting changes

13.2. You must let ONI know if anything is likely to affect Your project.

13.3. You must also inform of any changes to Your:

a. name;

b. address(es);

c. nominated contact details; and

d. bank account details.

13.4. NIEA grant recipients are required to provide a copy of articles, peer-reviewed papers or other research outputs as soon as practical after acceptance by the relevant publisher. Information regarding publications and published materials, including when publications are accepted, must also be provided in progress reports and the final reports.

13.5. NIEA grant recipients are required to attend and present funded research outcomes annually in Canberra, or an advised alternative location, at a NIC academic, industry and/or Government event. At least one named project chief investigator should attend the event. Applicants should include a line in each year of the budget for travel to the event (e.g. travel to Canberra).

13.6. If You become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the Grant Agreement, including in regard to any foreign interference risk or developments, You must contact ONI immediately.

13.7. You must advise ONI of all personnel working on Your project (un-named in the application) as soon as they are recruited with copies of identification documents provided to ONI (NICRP@oni.gov.au). All personnel working on Your project must meet the Grant eligibility requirement.

Project reporting

13.8. You must submit reports in line with the Grant Agreement. Reports must be submitted through SmartyGrants, unless otherwise advised.

13.9. The amount of detail You provide in Your reports should be relative to the project's size, complexity and grant amount.

13.10. ONI will monitor progress by assessing reports You submit. ONI or the Sponsoring Entity may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of Your reports if necessary. ONI or the Sponsoring Entity may occasionally need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

13.11. The form for these reports will be available in SmartyGrants, with instructions in the form.

Progress report

13.12. You must submit a report on planned activities and progress annually during the project activity period in the format and by the timeframes detailed in the Grant Agreement.

End of year financial report

13.13. You must submit an end of year financial report annually during the project activity period in the format and by the due dates detailed in the Grant Agreement.

Final report

13.14. You must submit a final report for the project within 2 months of the final approved project end date.

13.15. The final report must address compliance with the conditions on which funding was granted, as set out in the Grant Agreement.

Grant agreement variations

13.16. Unexpected events may affect the progress of a project. In these circumstances, You can request a variation to Your Grant Agreement by submitting a Variation to Grant Agreement (Variation) to ONI.

13.17. You cannot request an increase to the approved grant amount.

13.18. You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. Your request will be considered based on provisions in the Grant Agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes and any national security risks.

Compliance visits and record keeping

13.19. ONI or the Sponsoring Entity may visit You during or at the completion of Your project to review Your compliance with the Grant Agreement. Your records You are required to keep under the Grant Guidelines and Grant Agreement may be inspected. You will be provided with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

13.20. You must retain the evidence and paperwork relied upon to certify Your application and make this available if requested.

Acknowledgement

13.21. We request that you acknowledge Commonwealth support in all Material, publications and promotional and advertising materials published in connection with the Grant Agreement. This is for the purposes of funding recognition and to acknowledge the Commonwealth as directly funding the research.

14. Probity

14.1. The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct, and is consistent with the CGRPs.

14.2. You must comply with these Grant Guidelines and all relevant laws and regulations including having regard to the *Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector* published on the Department of Education website.

Appeals process

14.3. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the application has been treated fairly and consistently in the context of selection processes.

14.4. Appeals will only be considered against the administrative process and not against committee decisions, assessor ratings and comments or the assessment outcome. Appellants must identify the specific guideline clause, policy or procedure which they believe has been incorrectly applied.

14.5. Prior to submission the appeal must be **authorised** by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent.

a. For an eligibility appeal, the appeal must be received **within 30 days** of the date of the eligibility decision notification at section 9.10 of these Grant Guidelines.

b. For other appeals against administrative process, the appeal must be received **within 30 days** of the date You receive notification of the outcome of Your application.

14.6. Appeals must be submitted electronically to NICRP@oni.gov.au.

14.7. If You do not agree with the way ONI have handled Your appeal, You may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with ONI.

14.8. To make a complaint You can use the online form on the ombudsman website at:

a. Contact us - Commonwealth Ombudsman, or if unable to complete the online form, via phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072.

14.9. Applicants may at any time seek to appeal decisions using available external appeal options. Regarding available options for external appeal, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal does not have general power to review decisions.

Enquiries and Feedback

14.10. Any questions you have about grant decisions for this grant opportunity should be sent to NICRP@oni.gov.au.

14.11. The Office of National Intelligence Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about this grant opportunity. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing by emailing NICRP@oni.gov.au.

14.12. If you do not agree with the way the Office of National Intelligence has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security. The Inspector General of Intelligence and Security will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Office of National Intelligence.

The Inspector General of Intelligence and Security can be contacted on:

Email: complaints@igis.gov.au

Post: 3-5 National Circuit Barton ACT 2600

Phone: (02) 6141 4555

Conflict of interest

14.13. Any conflicts of interest could affect conduct of the selection processes and/or the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the relevant ONI staff, an assessor, member of a committee or advisor and/or You or any of Your personnel:

a. has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government

officer or SAC member;

b. has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or

c. has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the NIEA program.

14.14. You will be asked to certify, as part of Your application, that any perceived, potential or existing conflicts of interests have been declared, or that, to the best of Your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. Each individual or organisation named in an application must declare any conflict of interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the application or project to You at the date of submission.

14.15. If a Conflict of Interest exists or arises, You must have documented processes in place for managing the Conflict of Interest for the duration of the project. Such processes must comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018).

14.16. If You later identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential Conflict of Interest or that one might arise in relation to an application, You must inform ONI in writing immediately.

14.17. ONI will handle any Conflicts of Interest as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be managed as set out in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7)) of the Public Service Act 1999. Committee members and other officials must also declare any conflicts of interest.

Security

14.18. All applications and approved research projects are to be undertaken in compliance with university obligations under the *Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Amendment Bill 2026 – Amendment (1) Foreign research projects.*

14.19. Upon receiving a NIEA, contact your University security office (foreign interference) to advise them of the nature of your research. It is strongly advised that you:

a. ensure an ongoing engagement and follow their advice in accordance with University security (foreign interference) policies and procedures;

b. establish and maintain a point of contact within the security office in relation to all your travel, collaboration, publication and professional engagement.

Your University Research office can advise of the best initial point of contact.

Privacy and protection of personal information

14.20. ONI treats your identifiable information according to the Office of National Intelligence Rules to Protect the Privacy of Australians made under the Office of National Intelligence Act 2018 (Cth) and applicable to ONI.

14.21. ONI may share the information you provide with other Commonwealth entities for

purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

14.22. As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

Confidential information

14.23. The Australian Government may use and disclose confidential information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the NIEA program to any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes. ONI may reveal confidential information to:

a. assessors, the SAC and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help manage the program effectively and in accordance with any other provision of these Grant Guidelines or subsequent Grant Agreement;

b. the Minister and their staff;

c. employees and contractors of ONI to research, assess, monitor and analyse grant programs and activities;

d. employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;

e. other funding bodies for the purpose of obtaining funding from that body;

f. other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations;

g. the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner; and

h. a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

14.24. Other than information available in the public domain, You agree not to disclose to any person, other than ONI, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

14.25. ONI may at any time, require You to arrange for You; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form considered acceptable.

14.26. ONI will treat the information You provide as confidential if it meets one of the four conditions below:

a. You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why it should be treated as confidential;

b. the information is commercial in confidence;

c. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to You or someone else; or

d. You provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

14.27. ONI will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

a. the NIC members and staff, other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help manage the program effectively;

b. ONI employees and contractors so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities;

c. employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;

d. other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations;

e. the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner;

f. the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary; and

g. a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

14.28. The Grant Agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the Grant Agreement.

15. Consultation

15.1. The NIC has been consulted in the development of these Grant Guidelines.

16. Glossary

16.1. For the purposes of the NIEA Grant Guidelines, acronyms have the meanings defined below:

ARC	Australian Research Council
CGRPs	*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024*
CI	Chief Investigator
EOI	Expression of Interest
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
NIC	National Intelligence Community
NIEA	National Intelligence Explore Award
ONI	Office of National Intelligence
ORCID ID	Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier
PI	Partner Investigator
SAC	Selection Advisory Committee

16.2. For the purposes of the NIEA Grant Guidelines, terms have the meanings defined below:

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	a person of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they live or have lived.
Academic rank Level A or B	Level A — Associate Lecturer/Research Associate/Postdoctoral Research Fellow Level B — Lecturer/Research Fellow
active project	a project that is receiving funding according to the terms of an existing Funding Agreement or Grant Agreement, or has any carryover funds approved by the Sponsoring Entity, or an approved variation to the project end date.
Allowable Career Interruptions	Allowable Career Interruptions are as follows: International relocation commensurate with the interruption, not exceeding three months per international relocation Primary carer of a dependent child, for up to two years, inclusive of parental leave, per dependent child. If required, an additional period of time commensurate with the interruption. Any of the following: • Caring responsibilities • Disability • Disaster management and recovery • Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions • Medical conditions • Non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment • Parental leave • Unemployment commensurate with the interruption.
applicant	the Lead Chief Investigator completing the grant application.
application	a request for funding submitted through SmartyGrants by the applicant seeking grant funding under this grant program. It includes the specifics of a proposed grant activity as well as the administrative information required to determine the eligibility of the application. In this grant opportunity it refers to either an EOI or full application, or the combined process of both stages.
assessment criteria	the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be considered. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of applications and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.

Australian National Intelligence Community (NIC)	The NIC unites ten agencies that work together to protect and enhance Australia's security, prosperity and sovereignty. The NIC comprises ten core intelligence agencies: the Office of National Intelligence (ONI), the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation (AGO), the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO), Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and the intelligence functions of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and The Department of Home Affairs.
Australian National Security Community	comprises the Department of Defence, the Department of Home Affairs, Office of National Intelligence, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.
Australian Organisation	an Organisation that has its headquarters in Australia, has a board with a majority of Australian citizens or Australian Permanent Residents or New Zealand Special Category Visa holders, and has an Australian Business Number (ABN).
bench fees	fees that an organisation charges for an individual to use infrastructure which would normally be provided by the organisation for their employees. This infrastructure may vary and could include, for example, an office or laboratory space with appropriate equipment, or access to non-specialised equipment owned by the organisation.
Chief Investigator (CI)	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a CI under these Grant Guidelines.
Commonwealth	the Commonwealth of Australia.
Commonwealth Entity	has the meaning given in Section 10 of *the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
Consultancy	the provision of specialist advice, analysis, assistance, services or products to another organisation(s), generally where the consultancy services are for the sole or preferred use of that other organisation(s).
date of effect	the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date.
Detailed Assessors	assessors who are assigned applications to review for their specific expertise in a field of research.
eligibility criteria	the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Eligible Organisation	an organisation listed in section 4 of these Grant Guidelines.
Engaged	Engaged means that a formal arrangement is in place that attaches the CI to the relevant eligible organisation. If not an employee, the researcher must have access to research support comparable to employees e.g., an emeritus appointment.

Expression of Interest (EOI)	a preliminary request to the ONI for a research Program which is submitted in accordance with the Grant Guidelines approved by the delegate.
field research	the collection of information integral to the project outside a laboratory, library or workplace setting and often in a location external to the individual's normal place of employment.
Five Eyes or FVEYs	the common abbreviation for the Five Eyes, an intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
FVEYs International Partner	an Organisation that is based in a FVEYs country.
full application	The complete application for invited applicants shortlisted from the EOI stage of the process.
grant activity	the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake. A project consists of a number of grant activities.
Grant Agreement	the agreement entered into by the Office of National Intelligence and an Administering Organisation when an application from that organisation is approved for grant funding.
grant commencement date	the date on which grant funding may commence.
grant offer	the details listed in the RMS under 'Grant Offers' showing the project details and grant amount.
GrantConnect	the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
grant opportunity	the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant opportunity closing date	the last day on which applications for a grant opportunity will be accepted for consideration for a specific grant opportunity.
grant opportunity opening date	the first day on which applications for a grant opportunity will be accepted for consideration for a specific grant opportunity.
grant recipient	an individual or organisation who has received grant funding from ONI or an Commonwealth Entity.
GST	the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999.*
Higher Degree by Research (HDR)	a 'Research Doctorate or Research Masters program, for which at least two-thirds of the student load for the program is required as research work' as defined by the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017.

Honorary academic appointment	An honorary academic appointment for eligibility purposes means a position that gives full academic status to the researcher, as certified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (or equivalent) in the application. The researcher must have access to research support comparable to employees e.g., an emeritus appointment. The researcher is not eligible to be a Chief Investigator using their honorary academic appointment if they are employed by an organisation other than an Eligible Organisation for more than 0.2 FTE.
in-kind contribution	a contribution of goods, services, materials and/or time to the project from an individual, business or organisation. Values should be calculated based on the most likely actual cost, for example, current market, preferred provider or internal provider rates/valuations/rentals/charges (that is in the financial year of the date of the application) of the costs of labour, work spaces, equipment and databases. The calculations covering time and costs should be documented by the Administering Organisation. These calculations may be audited.
Instructions to Applicants	a set of instructions prepared by ONI to assist applicants in completing the application form.
Intelligence Challenges	those challenge areas aligned with the National Security Science and Technology Priorities identified by the Australian Government to be funded by the ONI, and available on the RGS website.
legislative instrument	a law on matters of detail made by a person or body authorised to do so by the relevant enabling legislation.
Minister	the Minister responsible for the administration of the ONI.
named participants	individual researchers nominated for particular roles in an application.
NIC Fellowship	a position held by the Lead CI where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the Commonwealth.
officials	officials of a Commonwealth entity. An official of a Commonwealth entity is an individual who is in, or forms part of the entity (see section 8 of the PGPA Act).
ONI Delegate	the Director-General of National Intelligence, or the Director-General's Delegate.
ORCID Identifier	a persistent digital identifier for an individual researcher available on the ORCID website, www.orcid.org.
Other Eligible Organisation	an organisation listed in section 4 of these Grant Guidelines which is not the Sponsoring Organisation on an application.
Other Organisation	an organisation that is not a Sponsoring Organisation or Eligible Organisation or Other Eligible Organisation that contributes to the research project.

participants	all named participants on an application (i.e. CIs and PIs); and all unnamed researchers and personnel such as postdoctoral research associates and postgraduate researchers working on a project. All individuals who would be named in publications or would otherwise link their association with the Government funded project must comply with the eligibility criteria (Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents or New Zealand Special Category Visa).
participating organisation	An organisation that is not a Sponsoring Organisation
Partner Investigator (PI)	a named participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Partner Investigator under these Grant Guidelines.
Postdoctoral Research Associate	a postdoctoral research associate funded by the Commonwealth through the Administering Organisation, who will be employed on the project.
Postgraduate Researcher	a postgraduate research student funded by the Commonwealth through the Administering Organisation, who will undertake a HDR qualification through the project.
Preprint or comparable resource	A preprint or comparable resource is a scholarly output that is uploaded by the authors to a recognised publicly accessible archive, repository, or pre-print service (such as, but not limited to, arXiv, bioRxiv, medRxiv, ChemRxiv, Peer J Preprints, Zenodo, GitHub, PsyArXiv and publicly available university or government repositories etc.). This will include a range of materials that have been subjected to varying degrees of peer review from none to light and full review. Ideally, a preprint or comparable resource should have a unique identifier or a DOI (digital object identifier). Any citation of a preprint or comparable resource should be explicitly identified as such and listed in the references with a DOI, URL or equivalent, version number and/or date of access, as applicable.
project	an application approved by the ONI Delegate to receive funding.
project activity period	the period during which a project is receiving funding according to the original Grant Offer, or has any carryover funds approved by ONI or by the ARC on behalf of ONI, or has received an approved variation to the project's end date. During this period, the project is known as an active project.
project end date	the expected date that the project activity is complete, and by which date all grant funding will or has been spent.
Project Leader	the named participant from the Administering Organisation who is the first-named CI on an application.
recipient	an individual or organisation who has received grant funding from the ONI or an Australian National Intelligence Community Entity.

research	for the purposes of these Grant Guidelines, the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development comprising "creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge" OECD (2015), *Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development* (p.378).
research infrastructure	the assets, facilities, services, and coordinated access to major national and/or international research facilities or consortia which directly support research in higher education organisations and more broadly, and which maintain the capacity of researchers to undertake excellent research and deliver innovative outcomes.
Research Office	a business unit within an Eligible Sponsoring Organisation that is responsible for contact with ONI regarding applications and projects.
research output	all products (including Preprints or comparable resources) of a research project that meet the definition of research.
Selection Advisory Committee (SAC)	a group of experts from academia and the NIC that assess applications and provide a shortlist of meritorious applications.
selection criteria	the eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
SmartyGrants	the grants management platform used to administer and manage the NIEA application process.
SME	Subject Matter Expert
Special Condition	a condition specified in a Grant Offer which governs the use of the funding provided by ONI.
Sponsoring Entity	the entity that funds the grant. ONI or NIC agency or Commonwealth Entity or FVEYs International Partner.
Sponsoring Organisation	an Eligible Organisation which supports the grant application and which will be responsible for the administration of the grant if the application is approved for funding.
technical workshop services	the specialised construction and maintenance activities carried out by a technician, often within a dedicated facility for working with materials such as wood, glass, metal, plastics or electronics.

travel costs	the domestic and international economy travel costs associated with the project, including to foster and strengthen collaboration between researchers in Australia and overseas.
You	The Lead Chief Investigator for the application.
value for money	'value for relevant money' is a judgement based on the application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources determined from a variety of considerations: merit of the application, risk, cost and expected contribution to outcome achievement.
Variation of Grant Agreement (Variation)	a request submitted to agree to a change in the Grant Agreement.