

Department of Climate Change,  
Energy, the Environment and Water

# Low Carbon Product Manufacturing



Project development stream  
supplementary guidance

February 2024





## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Published by NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water  
[dceew.nsw.gov.au](http://dceew.nsw.gov.au)

Low Carbon Product Manufacturing, project development stream supplementary guidance

First published: February 2024

ISBN: 978-1-923132-55-9

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# Contents

<u>1.</u>	<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
1.1	Purpose of this guidance	4
1.2	Further guidance	4
<u>2.</u>	<u>Commercial readiness index guidance</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>3.</u>	<u>Eligibility and merit criteria guidance</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>4.</u>	<u>Assessment process</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>5.</u>	<u>Funding agreement</u>	<u>17</u>
5.1	Overview	17
5.2	Funding offer	17
5.3	Monitoring project progress	17
5.4	Publishing and sharing project information	18
<u>6.</u>	<u>Terms and conditions</u>	<u>19</u>
6.1	Commencement and authority for the guidelines	19
6.2	Limitations	19
6.3	Confidentiality and disclosure of information	20
6.4	Complaints	20
6.5	Conflicts of interest	21
6.6	Evaluation	21
6.7	Grant acknowledgement	22
6.8	Discretion of the Department	22
6.9	Privacy	22

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of this guidance

This guidance document is supplementary to the [Low Carbon Product Manufacturing \(LCPM\) project development stream funding guidelines](#). It provides the following important information to help applicants:

- determine the commercial readiness of the low carbon product they want to manufacture
- understand what information they are required to provide in their application to meet the eligibility and merit criteria outlined in the [LCPM project development stream funding guidelines](#)
- understand the assessment process
- understand the general terms and conditions.

This guidance must be read in conjunction with the [LCPM project development stream funding guidelines](#) and information published on our [website](#).

## 1.2 Further guidance

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be published on our [website](#). Specific questions related to an individual applicant's proposal will not be published.

A question and answer (Q&A) session will be held to provide an overview of each grant. A recording of the session, questions and answers will be published on the relevant grant webpage.



## 2. Commercial readiness index guidance

The commercial readiness index (CRI) is a tool to assess the commercial readiness of a technology project. The project development stream requires the proposed project to support a financial investment decision in relation to the commercial scale manufacture of low carbon products, this is equivalent to a minimum CRI index of 3. Figure 1 identifies the required CRI range for the low carbon products that will be funded by the project development stream.

Figure 1 CRI requirements for the project development stream

CRI	
6	Bankable Asset Class
5	Market competition Driving widespread development
4	Multiple Commercial Applications
3	Commercial Scale Up
2	Commercial Trial, small scale
1	Hypothetical Commercial Proposition

Scope of Low Carbon Product Manufacturing project development stream technologies is CRI 3-6

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The CRI index extends from the stage where there is research to prove that the technology is feasible (CRI 1) in the field to when the technology or application is being commercially deployed and has become a bankable asset class (CRI 6).

There are 2 components to the CRI: the status summary and the detailed indicators. The status summary correlates to the current status in the market and does not require each of the individual indicators to be at the same level. The detailed indicators are used to reflect the commercialisation process along key dimensions.

Table 1 identifies the status summary (blue component of the CRI) and detailed indicators (purple component of the CRI). See ARENA’s Commercial Readiness Index for further information.

Table 1 CRI – status summary and indicators

	Status summary level					
Indicators	Bankable Asset Class	Market competition Driving widespread development	Multiple Commercial Applications	Commercial Scale Up	Commercial Trial, small scale	Hypothetical Commercial Proposition
Regulatory environment						
Stakeholder acceptance						
Technical performance						
Financial performance – costs						
Financial proposition – revenue						
Industry supply chain & skills						
Market opportunities						
Company maturity						
	6	5	4	3	2	1

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Table 2 describes the status summary at each level.

Table 2 CRI descriptions

Level	Summary
1	<b>Hypothetical commercial proposition:</b> technically ready – commercially untested and unproven. Commercial proposition driven by technology advocates with little or no evidence of verifiable technical or financial data to substantiate claims.
2	<b>Commercial trial:</b> small-scale, first-of-a-kind project funded by equity and government support. Commercial proposition backed by evidence of verifiable data typically not in the public domain.
3	<b>Commercial scale-up</b> occurring driven by specific policy and emerging debt finance. Commercial proposition driven by technology proponents and market segment participants. Publicly discoverable data driving emerging interest from finance and regulatory sectors.
4	<b>Multiple commercial applications</b> becoming evident locally, although still subsidised. Verifiable data on technical and financial performance in the public domain driving interest from a variety of debt and equity sources, however still requiring government support. Regulatory challenges are being addressed in multiple jurisdictions.
5	<b>Market competition</b> driving widespread deployment in the context of long-term policy settings. Competition emerging across all areas of the supply chain with commoditisation of key components and financial products occurring.
6	<b>‘Bankable’ grade asset class</b> driven by same criteria as other mature energy technologies. Considered as a ‘Bankable’ grade asset class with known standards and performance expectations. Market and technology risks not driving investment decisions. Proponent capability, pricing and other typical market forces driving uptake.

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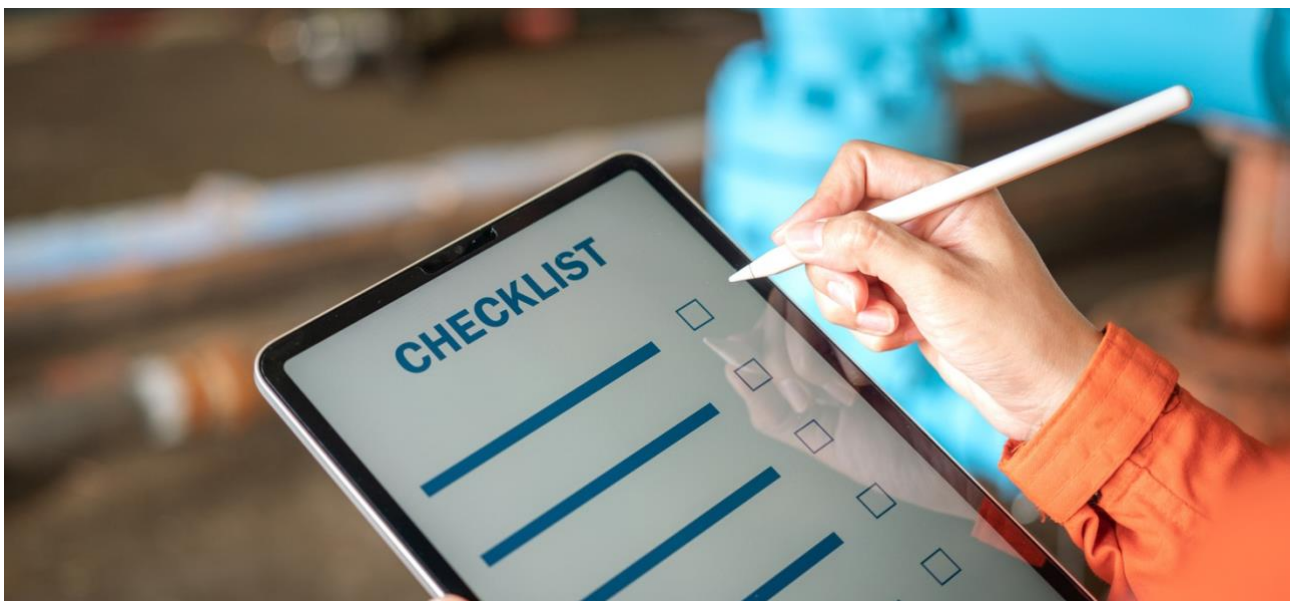


Table 3 provides a description for each indicator.

Table 3 Indicator descriptions

Indicators	Summary of indicators
Regulatory environment	The maturity of the planning, permitting and standards relating to the technology.
Stakeholder acceptance	The maturity of the process for evidence-based stakeholder consultation linked to renewable energy integration into the energy markets.
Technical performance	The availability of discoverable technical performance information.
Financial proposition – costs	The availability of robust, competitive financial information linked to capital and operating costs and forecast revenues allowing investors to take increasing levels of future market and project risk.
Financial proposition – revenue	
Industry supply chain and skills	The development of a competitive and efficient industry product and skills supply chain required to support a commercially viable sector.
Market Opportunities	The development from a hypothetical commercial plan to the demonstration of a viable market (local and/or overseas) via competitive channels to market and sustainable business models.
Company maturity	The development of the sector to include established companies with strong credit ratings and established performance records.

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# 3. Eligibility and merit criteria guidance

Applicants will be required to provide information to demonstrate how they meet eligibility and merit criteria for the stream. Table 4 provides guidance to assist applicants respond to the eligibility and merit criteria.

Table 4 Eligibility and merit criteria guidance

Eligibility criteria 1: Applicant		
	Description	Evidence required
1.1	The lead applicant must hold or be willing to obtain an Australian Business Number (ABN) prior to entering into a funding agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABN, or</li> <li>• indication of willingness to obtain an ABN prior to entering into a funding agreement.</li> </ul>
1.2	The applicant must be or will become an entity prior to entering into a funding agreement as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a company incorporated in Australia</li> <li>• a company limited by guarantee</li> <li>• an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust</li> <li>• an incorporated association, or a co-operative</li> <li>• an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entity type of your organisation, or</li> <li>• willingness to become one of the listed entity types prior to entering into a funding agreement.</li> </ul>
1.3	The lead applicant must hold or will attain all insurances required by law including \$10 million public liability insurance and workers compensation prior to entering into a funding agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates of currency for each insurance policy, or</li> <li>• commitment to obtain certificates of currency for each insurance policy prior to entering into a funding agreement.</li> </ul>

Eligibility criteria 1: Applicant		
	Description	Evidence required
1.4	The lead applicant must not subject to any insolvency event including the subject of an order or resolution for winding up or dissolution (other than for the purposes of reconstruction or amalgamation) or the appointment of a receiver, liquidator, administrator or similar.	Declaration
1.5	The lead applicant must not be listed on the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) sanctions list.	Check carried out by the Department.
1.6	The lead applicant must disclose any legal proceedings or investigations that would adversely and materially affect the execution or outcomes of the project and/or that may adversely impact the reputation of the NSW Government.	Declaration of any proceedings that could affect the project or the reputation of the NSW Government.
1.7	The lead applicant must disclose all Australian Government and/or Australian state, territory grants applied for in relation to the project including history of grant funding over the last 5 years (including both successful and unsuccessful applications).	Details of grant funding the applicant has applied for and/or received over the last 5 years.

Eligibility criteria 1: Applicant		
	Description	Evidence required
1.8	The lead applicant must identify joint applicants if it applies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint applicant details and role in the project.</li> <li>• A letter signed by each organisation involved in the grant to show their support. Each letter of support should include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— details of the joint applicant</li> <li>— an overview of how the joint applicant will work with the lead applicant and any other joint applicants (if applicable) to successfully complete the project</li> <li>— an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the partner organisation will bring to the project</li> <li>— the roles and responsibilities of the joint applicant and the resources they will contribute (if applicable)</li> <li>— the amount and source of any financial contribution to the project (if applicable)</li> <li>— endorsement by an executive of each joint applicant committing to participation in the proposed project</li> <li>— details of a nominated contact (management level).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1.9	The lead applicant must materially comply with all: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obligations under employment contracts, industrial agreements and awards</li> <li>• codes of conduct and practice relevant to conditions of service and to the relations between the applicants and the employees employed by the applicant</li> <li>• applicable Workplace Health and Safety legislation.</li> </ul>	Declaration

Eligibility criteria 2: Project		
	Description	Evidence required
2.1	<p>The project will help reach a financial investment decision FID to build a commercial scale manufacturing facility for low carbon products in NSW. The products include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building materials including cement, steel, aluminium and cross laminated timber (structural)</li> <li>• green chemicals such as ammonia and methanol</li> <li>• biofuels derived from biomass (plant or algae material or animal waste) including sustainable aviation fuel</li> <li>• power fuels produced with renewable energy including hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives</li> <li>• inputs needed for agricultural production including fertilisers.</li> <li>• The proposed low carbon product must have demonstrably lower lifetime emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e) versus equivalent conventional products that are currently dominant in the market (merit criterion 2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declaration.</li> <li>• Description of the product.</li> <li>• Evidence to demonstrate the product is ready for commercial scale manufacturing (merit criterion 1.1.).</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>The project relates to at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• front-end engineering design (FEED)</li> <li>• product carbon footprint assessment</li> <li>• product compliance and certification to scale manufacturing</li> <li>• manufacturing facility development approval.</li> </ul>	Selection of project type in the application form.
2.3	The project will be completed within 18 months of funding agreement execution.	Declaration.

## Eligibility criteria

**2: Project**

	Description	Evidence required
2.4	The project development stream has a minimum cash contribution of at least 50% of the total project cost from non-NSW Government sources (for example applicant, collaborators, private or other public organisations). Higher cash contributions will be viewed favourably. In-kind (non-financial) contributions are not counted towards a contribution of 50% of the total project costs.	Declaration.
2.5	The project would not occur at all or in the same timeframe without government support.	Description for why grant funding is needed to deliver the project.

## Merit criteria

**1. Purpose and capability to deliver**

	Description	Evidence required
1.1	The lead applicant can demonstrate a need and justification for the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed description of the scope of the development activity.</li> <li>• Description of how the project will support reaching a financial investment decision to establish a manufacturing facility in NSW.</li> <li>• Description of the next steps after project is deemed successful.</li> <li>• Demonstration of the commercial readiness of the product/project.</li> </ul>

## Merit criteria

## 1. Purpose and capability to deliver

	Description	Evidence required
1.2	The lead applicant can demonstrate readiness to commence and complete the project within 18 months of the execution of the funding agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gantt chart or plan that includes the project's key activities, milestones, deliverables, and their timelines.</li> <li>• An overview of project risks, associated risk ratings and risk likelihoods, and strategies to mitigate them. This will be considered as the risk management plan.</li> <li>• Project governance plan outlining:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the organisational structure</li> <li>— the governance for the project, including key members in the executive, management, and operational roles, along with their roles and responsibilities for the proposed project.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If a project governance plan is not available, the applicant will need to outline the roles and responsibilities in the application form as well as provide an organisational chart. Together this will be considered as the governance plan.</li> </ul>
1.3	Lead applicant can demonstrate experience and capability to deliver the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of names, role descriptions of any external consultants or external subject matter experts engaged for the project.</li> <li>• Details of the lead applicant's and any joint applicants' experience in delivering projects similar in scope to the proposed project.</li> <li>• CVs for key project delivery personnel, external project managers, consultants, and subject matter experts involved in project delivery.</li> </ul>

## Merit criteria

**2. Strategic significance**

	Description	Evidence required
2.1	The emission reduction potential (CO <sub>2</sub> e) of the proposed product compared to conventional products or materials with similar functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimates of emissions reduction potential of the proposed product compared to a reference conventional product of similar function including the methodology used for calculating the reduction potential.</li> <li>Supporting evidence.</li> </ul>

## Merit criteria

**3. Value for money**

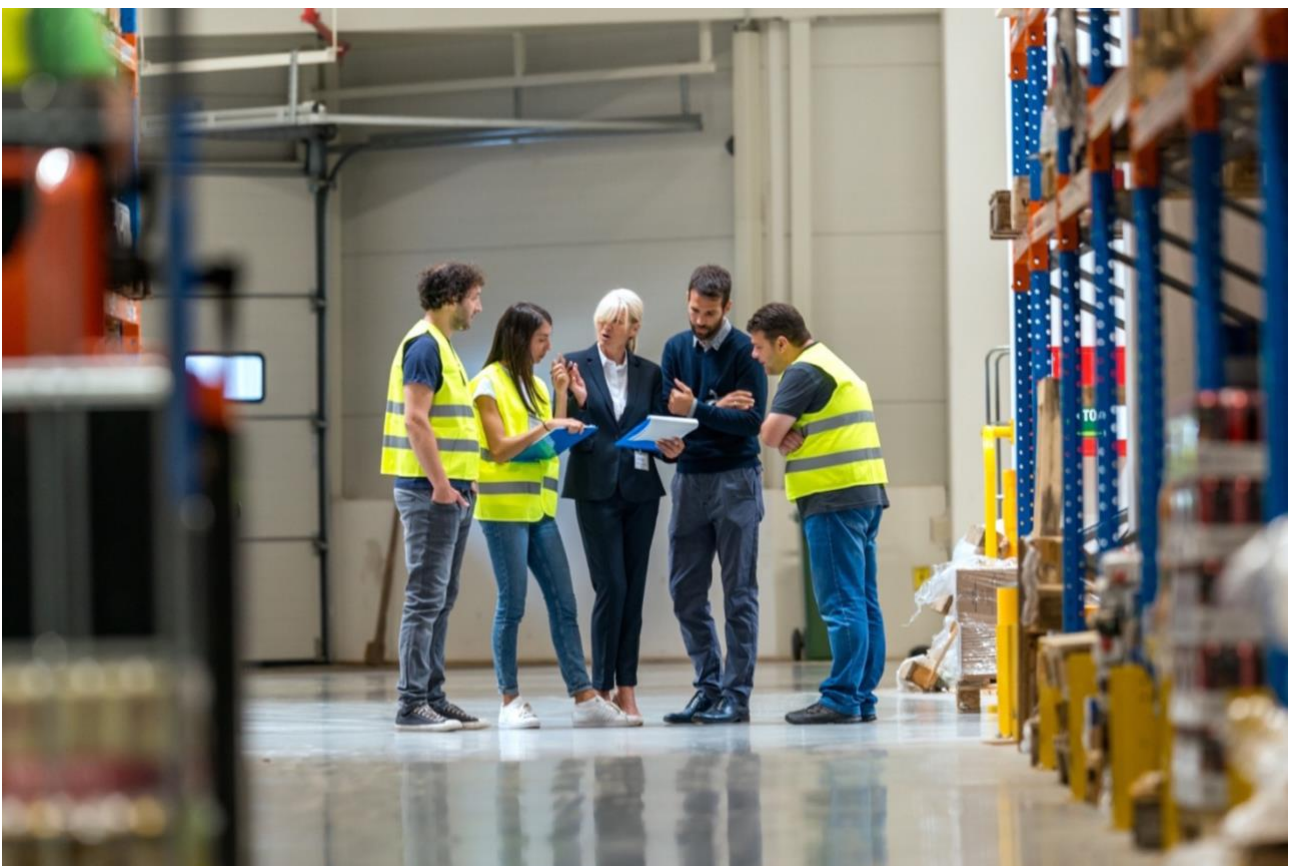
	Description	Evidence required
3.1	The cost effectiveness of the proposed budget for the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project budget.</li> <li>Evidence to support the budget such as quotes.</li> </ul>
3.2	The total value of the applicant's cash contributions (including contributions from other non-NSW government sources) as a percentage of the total project cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of activities which will be funded from the NSW Government and their relative contribution from other sources such as cash, debt, investor equity, etc.</li> <li>Note: Contributions from non-NSW Government sources should constitute a minimum of 50% of the total project cost. In-kind (non-financial) contributions are not eligible.</li> </ul>

## 4. Assessment process

The application assessment consists of 4 steps:

- **Eligibility assessment:** compliance check of the applications against eligibility criteria (pass/fail). Ineligible applications will not be considered for further assessment.
- **Merit criteria assessment:** assessment of eligible applications against the detailed application merit criteria. Applications will be scored in a competitive, merit-based process and will be recommended for funding accordingly.
- **Decision making:** the appropriate delegate of the Department will make the final determination on the outcome of the merit assessment and approve the proposals suitable for funding.
- **Due diligence:** the Department will undertake due diligence on proposals recommended for funding. Due diligence will involve a comprehensive check of any risks (project, legal, financial, reputational, etc) identified during the eligibility and merit assessments. If requested by the Department, the applicant must provide unqualified audit report for company's financial statements (trading, profit & loss statements, and balance sheets) for 2 continuous years.

During the assessment process, the Department may ask applicants to provide additional information to assist in the assessment process. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the assessment process. The Department may request a meeting with an applicant to assist the assessment process or as part of due diligence.





# 5. Funding agreement

## 5.1 Overview

Successful applicants from the application process must enter into a funding agreement with the Department to receive grant funding. This agreement will detail the applicants' and any other relevant parties' obligations in relation to the project.

A template funding agreement, representing the terms the Department considers appropriate, will be made available via [SmartyGrants](#).

The Department does not encourage departures from the funding agreement template. However, where the applicant cannot accept the terms of the funding agreement template in its current form, you may use the provided departures table in the template to clearly set out and qualify the reasons for your requested departure. For the project development stream, any departures need to be addressed as part of the application process. The Department may or may not accept these departures at our discretion.

Where an applicant does not submit a departures table, it will be deemed for the applicant to have accepted the terms of the funding agreement template. Where an applicant does submit a departures table, the departures table will be taken as an exhaustive list of the applicant's comments on the template funding agreement.

Applicants should be aware that the Department expect the terms of an executed funding agreement to reflect the applicant's careful and diligent expectations for the project's development. For example, the applicant should ensure that there is a rigorous and realistic basis for the milestone timing, associated payment and outcomes for the project as set out in the funding agreement.

## 5.2 Funding offer

Any payment of funds is subject to the execution of a funding agreement.

Applicants who receive an offer to negotiate must keep the offer confidential until the execution of a funding agreement. Any public communication by the applicant regarding the project between the time of application submission and execution of the funding agreement can only be done with the Department's prior consent. The Department may withdraw the negotiation offer if the applicant does not comply with this requirement.

## 5.3 Monitoring project progress

Successful applicants that enter into a funding agreement with the Department will be required to provide reporting in-line with the requirements of the executed funding agreement. The Department will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports and presentations you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports. Occasionally the Department may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

Types of reports and plans required under a funding agreement may include:

- milestone report
- annual operating parameters report
- annual project report
- annual emissions abatement report
- financial reports
- final report
- risk management plan
- licensing and approvals plan
- emissions monitoring plan
- knowledge sharing plan
- other reports and plans.

## 5.4 Publishing and sharing project information

The Department may publicly announce and/or publish the following information associated with successful projects:

- name of the recipient
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded.

The Department will also share or publish information about any project when required under law.



# 6. Terms and conditions

## 6.1 Commencement and authority for the guidelines

The [LCPM project development stream funding guidelines](#) and *LCPM project development stream supplementary guidance* have been approved by the Department. Both may be varied from time to time or revoked.

The Department has the authority to award funding and execute and vary the agreements that allow the NSW Government to provide this funding.

## 6.2 Limitations

### 6.2.1 No representation, warranty or guarantee

The Department and its employees, agents and officers do not give any representation, warranty or guarantee, whether express or implied, in relation to the information contained in any materials released by the Department associated with the grant funding including their:

- completeness
- accuracy
- currency
- reliability
- the process by which they were prepared.

The Department and its employees, agents and officers do not provide any opinions regarding, legal, accounting, regulatory, taxation or any other matters. Without limiting the foregoing, nothing in the funding materials is or should be regarded as advice in relation to these matters.

Nothing in the funding materials (including without limitation, the guidelines, the supplementary guidance or the funding agreement) is or should be regarded as advice. You must satisfy yourself by undertaking your own investigations or seeking advice at your own cost.

### 6.2.2 No obligation to update

The funding materials, the information contained herein and the matters to which it relates may be amended, updated or withdrawn at any time, at the Department's discretion. However, the Department does not accept any responsibility to update, supplement or correct the materials nor to inform applicants about any matter that may affect the materials.

### 6.2.3 No liability

The Department and its employees, agents and officers expressly disclaims all liability for any loss or damage incurred by any person arising from or because of, any person's use of or reliance on any information, statement, opinion or matter (express or implied) contained in,

derived from or omitted from the materials, except for any liability which cannot be excluded as a matter of law.

### 6.2.4 Other limitations

The funding materials are not an offer, recommendation or invitation by the Department in respect of any contract or commitment and (subject to a funding agreement being fully executed) nothing in the materials will form the basis of any contract or commitment.

You must rely entirely upon your own investigations, review and analysis in relation to your assessment of whether to apply to and participate in the funding.

## 6.3 Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Unless otherwise stated, any commercial-in-confidence information provided by you as part of, or in connection with, a registration, application or negotiation process will be treated confidentially by the Department.

We may disclose commercial-in-confidence information provided by you to the following parties:

- the Minister or Minister's Department
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Department of NSW
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's staff, consultants and advisers
- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the Department to have a need or an entitlement to know that information (including any federal, state or territory agency or body), where that need or entitlement to know that information arises out of or in connection with the Department's assessment, verification or due diligence of any aspect of your application
- where authorised or required by law to be disclosed, to those parties.

If the Department discloses commercial-in-confidence information to any of the above parties, the Department will inform the party that the information is strictly confidential.

Otherwise, the Department will only disclose commercial-in-confidence information provided by you with your consent.

## 6.4 Complaints

Complaints concerning the grant funding should be emailed to [netzeromanufacturing@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:netzeromanufacturing@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Complaints will, in the first instance, be reviewed by the Department.

If the Department cannot resolve the complaint within 30 business days of receipt, the Department will escalate your complaint and provide details of the escalated officer who will advise you regarding the next steps.

If the complaint is still not resolved satisfactorily, the NSW Ombudsman can be reached for external review of the complaint.

## 6.5 Conflicts of interest

You, including advisors and consultants engaged on this project, must declare:

- any perceived or existing conflicts of interest
- or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest as part of your application.

You and your advisors may have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, if you or any of your board, management or staff:

- have a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application assessment process
- have a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict you from conducting the proposed activities fairly and independently
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because your organisation receives funding under these grants.

All applicants have obligations to report any conflict (identify an actual, apparent or perceived conflict of interest) that may arise (including during the application or assessment phase) of the project. For example, an applicant may want to engage an NSW government advisor to help it prepare its grant application.

A consultant or service provider that is currently working the Department is not automatically precluded from being engaged by a grant recipient. Factors which will be considered when determining whether you can engage a consultant or service provider include:

- the size of the organisation i.e. a large consultancy is more likely to be able to use separate teams on a project
- the nature of the work being undertaken by the consultancy i.e. similar work increases the potential for probity risks to arise
- the extent to which individuals involved had access to confidential information about the project and whether this information is to be released to the market as part of the NZM.

Decisions will be made in accordance with the Department delegations for expenditure.

If the engagement with the grant recipient is permitted, the Department project team will consider seeking assurance from the consultant or service provider that it will put appropriate processes in place to manage probity risks.

As part of ongoing reporting requirements, you are required to update any conflicts of interests, where applicable. You will be asked whether any conflicts of interest have arisen during the reporting period or if any are likely to arise. Updated declarations and confirmations are required from you when new personnel join the project or at the commencement of a new project or phase within a project.

**NOTE: You are advised to contact us if you are unsure whether something constitutes an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.**

## 6.6 Evaluation

The Department will evaluate the grant initiatives to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the funding was in achieving its objectives.

Without limiting any specific reporting or evaluation requirements set out in any funding agreement you execute with the Department. The Department may contact you up to 2 years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation. You consent to the use of your information for this purpose by:

- the Department
- NSW Treasury
- the Minister or Minister's Department
- the NSW Ombudsman and Audit Department of NSW
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, The Environment and Water's staff, consultants and advisers
- any agency or body of the NSW Government, or any other organisation or individual considered by the Department to have a need or an entitlement to know that information (including any federal, state or territory agency or body), where that need or entitlement to know that information arises out of or in connection with the purpose above.

## 6.7 Grant acknowledgement

If a successful applicant/grant recipient makes a public statement about a project funded, it is required to acknowledge the support provided by the Department.

## 6.8 Discretion of the Department

Notwithstanding anything else in these guidelines, applicants acknowledge and agree that the Department has the right (in its absolute discretion) to reject, refuse to consider or cease to assess an application, at any time, if it is of the view (in its absolute discretion) that an application is unlikely to be successful.

Applicants acknowledge and agree that the Department has the right to amend the process or reallocate funding to other applicants or projects, where it is of the view that it is needed to do so.

## 6.9 Privacy

The Department uses the information you supply to us for processing and assessing your application. While the Department do not publicly release your application as a matter of policy, the Department may be required to do so under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* or another lawful requirement.

The Department may also disclose information you supply to us for the purpose of milestone reporting, evaluating and/or auditing this grants program. If you require strict commercial and/or personal confidentiality, you should address this in your application.

More information on the [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#) is available on the website.



### For more information

For more information about the Net Zero Manufacturing Initiative grants please visit our website or contact us via the email below.

[www.energy.nsw.gov.au/net-zero-manufacturing-initiative](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/net-zero-manufacturing-initiative) |  
[netzeromanufacturing@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:netzeromanufacturing@environment.nsw.gov.au)