# **DSC Collaborative Research Funding Assessment Criteria (revised June 2020)**

## Overview

In general, proposals that are relevant to a potential Defence or National Security Sponsor, encourage collaboration across universities, industry and Defence and are Multidisciplinary are supported. Funding is awarded on a competitive basis subject to prioritisation and available funding. Prioritisation is determined by the extent to which the proposal:

1. Provides a catalyst for further development to mature a policy, procedure, solution or technology into service within Defence;
2. Connects SMEs to research and expertise in order to strengthen SME participation in Defence business;
3. Establishes opportunities for defence-related research collaboration across Government, Universities and Industry;
4. Supports capacity building in research areas where Defence has an interest; or
5. Generates solutions that can be shared or made available across University and Industry partners.

Applications are screened by the DSC to ensure they are complete, compliant with details such as a legal entity etc., and provide sufficient detail to describe or explain the proposal and how it might benefit Defence.

With the exception of “In Scope”, all criteria are assessed with a score between 1 and 10 and have equal weight. Note that the example scores are provided for reference and that numbers in the range 1-10 can be used to indicate the assessment. The “In Scope” criterion determines eligibility and so must be satisfied by applicants.

### Scope of the Grants

The DSC Collaborative Research Grants are to support research for either

1. The development of
   1. Technology,
   2. Techniques and Processes or
   3. Systems, including methods of system integration

that will lead to some tangible outcome of relevance to Defence. Note that this is not product development per se but rather for the solution of problems encountered in the development of processes, products or services of value to Defence or

1. The conduct of collaborative research by a multidisciplinary team addressing a problem or technology requirement of interest to Defence.

## Attributes

Funding under the DSC Collaborative Research Grants scheme is made available in order to further the objectives of the DSC. In order that an assessment of applications can be made consistent with these objectives, a list of the attributes desired in research has been developed. The attributes were developed in consultation with the DSC advisory board and the DSC research working group.

Research supported by DSC Collaborative Research Grants will

1. **Have a working relationship with Defence.**
2. **Be in scope.** As defined above.
3. **Have collaboration across WA Universities, Government and Industry.**
4. **Have a contribution in cash or in-kind**. Up to a level matching the request in the application. Valuation of in-kind contribution should be in accordance with the method in the Defence Science Partnership Deed.
5. **Consider the feasibility of completion.** (This relates to the administration of the research and is management risk rather than the risk associated with the project itself.)
6. **Have collaboration across multiple disciplines.**
7. **Achieve significant impact in relation to positioning for other funding opportunities or to objectives of importance to the state for the level of funds invested.**

Further interpretation of the attributes and how these are assessed is presented in the discussion of each selection criteria.

## Selection Criteria

### In Scope

**(This criterion addresses attributes 1 and 2)**

In the context of this selection criteria the statement “Of value or interest to Defence” means that the research and development is aligned to the themes for the DSC Collaboration Research Grants as announced and includes either direct Defence participation or endorsement of the value to Defence by at least an O6[[1]](#footnote-1) Defence Force Member or equivalent Defence staff member. Submissions that do not include either direct Defence participation or Defence endorsement will be assessed against this criterion by a panel selected by the Defence Science Centre.

***Applications are assessed to be in scope or out of scope. Applications out of scope are not progressed further.***

### Collaboration

**(This criterion addresses attribute 3)**

The highest score is assigned to applications that show wide collaboration across the three sectors including Government (including Defence), more than one member University, and an Industry or end-user partner. Note that participants must be active members of the research team to be considered as contributing to the collaboration. Letters of support or transactional arrangements do not indicate collaboration.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Level | Examples |
| 0 | Low | The research team has participants from only one sector (Government, Universities, Industry). |
| 5 | Good | The research team includes participants from at least two sectors: Government, member Universities and/or Industry. |
| 10 | Excellent | The research team has wide engagement across all three sectors including DST or another relevant Government organisation, more than one member University and Industry. |

### Co-contribution

**(This criterion addresses attribute 4)**

This criterion is used to indicate the level of importance attached to the research by the proposer. Note that only co-contribution (cash or in-kind) up to the requested funding amount is considered under the selection criteria. This is in order to avoid potential bias resulting from participants with greater financial means. Valuation of in-kind contribution should be in accordance with the method in the Defence Science Partnership Deed.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Level | Examples |
| 0 | Low | The applicants make no co-contribution. |
| 5 | Good | Co-contribution of 50% the requested funding by some of the participant organisations. |
| 10 | Excellent | Co-contribution of 100% the requested funding by multiple participant organisations. |

### Feasibility of completion

**(This criterion addresses attribute 5)**

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood of successful completion of the research. It is to assess management risk of the project. Assessment should take into consideration the experience of the principle investigator (or mitigating factors included in the research plan), requirements for resources, specialist equipment or other requirements that may impact the ability of the research to be successfully conducted. For example, a research plan requiring access to Defence personnel would score lower but this could be mitigated by having a contingency plan for the possibility that personnel are not available. The need to recruit students or research staff could be mitigated by demonstrated experience obtaining resources and conducting similar research.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Level | Examples |
| 0 | Low | |  | | --- | | Requires access to Defence personnel or platforms without a mitigation plan or  requires recruitment of staff or students without evidence of previous success. | |
| 5 | Good | |  | | --- | | Principle Investigator has some research experience or there is evidence of sound mitigation plans in place for management of the research. | |
| 10 | Excellent | |  | | --- | | Principle Investigator and others on the research team have demonstrated experience in delivering research in this area. | |

### Interdisciplinary

**(This criterion addresses attribute 6)**

This criterion assesses the multidisciplinary nature of the research team. Teams that bring together diverse skills will score higher on this attribute. When assessing diversity of disciplines the Divisions (two digit Field of Research codes[[2]](#footnote-2)) as defined in Chapter 3 of ANZSRC 1297.0, 2008 or its replacement should be considered. A team of researchers drawn from different divisions is considered more diverse than one from a single division. Note that when considering industry participants judgement should be used to consider their level of contribution and the expertise they bring to the project.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Level | Examples |
| 0 | Low | |  | | --- | | All members of the research team are from a single group (four digit FOR code) | |
| 5 | Good | |  | | --- | | All members of the research team are from a single research division (two digit FOR code). | |
| 10 | Excellent | |  | | --- | | The research team comprises members from more than one division (two digit FOR code). | |

### Impact

**(This criterion addresses attribute 7)**

This criterion assesses the outcomes resulting from investment in the project. Items considered here are objectives of particular importance to Western Australia and access to additional funding opportunities.

This criterion has no suggested levels; it is assessed relative to other applications. As with all selection criteria, assessors should base their assessment on the response of the applicant to the selection criteria and their judgement regarding the feasibility of the claims made by the applicant. Assessment must have particular regard to the credibility of the need and extent of potential benefits from the proposed research, science or technology or related activities; and the relevance[[3]](#footnote-3) and additional value they deliver to Western Australia.

***Applications are assessed in relation to one another to produce a score for this criterion.***

1. That is CAPT, COL, GPCAPT for Defence Force officers, an S&T 7 for DSTG staff or EL2 otherwise. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/6BB427AB9696C225CA2574180004463E> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. i.e. the science focuses on areas of strategic importance to Western Australia and is relevant to our priorities of increased employment opportunities and diversity of the economy. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)