



Activating the Indigenous Estate in Northern Australia

Call for prospective investment partnerships

Background

The Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) is investing Commonwealth Government funds, through the Cooperative Research Centre Program, to support a transformative agenda of industry-led research collaborations, including within Traditional Owner-led business development context. This call for interested parties to co-invest with the CRCNA and research partners in Traditional Owner-led collaborations aligns with priorities identified in the Northern Australia Indigenous Development Accord (The Accord).

The Accord was developed in consultation with the Indigenous Reference Group (IRG) and provides a recommended framework to advance Indigenous economic development in Northern Australia. The Accord identified six key priorities:

1. Creating jobs, fostering labour participation, entrepreneurship and business acumen
2. Access to capital and international markets
3. Infrastructure to support Indigenous economic development
4. Activate the economic value of land, water, sea and cultural resource rights
5. Institutional arrangements which work to activate, accelerate and optimise Indigenous economic development across Northern Australia
6. Knowledge management systems and research and development to support Indigenous commercial end-users.

To date, CRCNA have contributed to projects in Indigenous aquaculture, botanicals, forestry, carbon and traditional bush foods as well as projects that seek to better define areas of the Indigenous Estate suitable for commercial development through co-mapping on country activities. Further, CRCNA have existing funding allocations in priority areas of water security and use, cotton-grain-cattle ventures and health service delivery and see the opportunity for integration between these main themes of work.

Activating, accelerating, and optimising economic development on the Indigenous Estate is a transformative agenda which contributes to Closing the Gap in education, workforce, health and socio-economic outcomes for First Nations people.

The investment envelope

The CRCNA have committed \$5 million cash and would like to partner with industry and/ or organisations to create an investment envelope to support a pan-northern Australian research program which advances the strategic priorities identified in the Accord. The program will consist of industry-led research and development to support a post-determination era focused on economically activating the Indigenous estate.



The opportunity

The CRCNA invites industry, research institutions, government departments and philanthropic proposals for collaborative investment partnerships which will deliver innovative solutions to activate the Indigenous estate and demonstrate capacity to grow and address the four priorities below.

| Priority | CRCNA seeks research and development projects that: |
|---|--|
| 1. Creating jobs, fostering labour participation, entrepreneurship and business acumen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide Indigenous business in Northern Australia tailored business support to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance market access for the products and services developed by Northern Australian Indigenous Business support businesses in navigating the regulatory environment develop skills and knowledge to manage risk and make sound commercial decisions. develop knowledge and knowledge products that can be used by Indigenous managers to inform decisions that decrease risk and optimise productivity through better strategic, operational and financial decisions. deliver training and employment pathways that ensure that the local Indigenous workforce is suitably trained for jobs that are and will be available with Indigenous businesses. increase exposure of Indigenous people to entrepreneurial environments and accelerator programs. |
| 2. Access to capital and international markets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek to raise the collective profile of Indigenous Businesses in northern Australia across international and domestic markets and within Indigenous communities expose Indigenous entrepreneurs to venture capital, angel investors, and other forms of funding investigate the application of Traditional Ecological Knowledge to enhance Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG) credentials investigate the application of a Systems of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) framework to support ESG for the purposes of increasing market access and private capital attraction identify opportunities for attracting ESG investment to broader industry develop knowledge of Indigenous businesses about available and emerging markets, access and supply chains, investment models and opportunities, strategic planning and business case development for investment. |
| 3. Activate the economic value of land, water, sea and cultural resource rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigate the percentage contribution Indigenous knowledge makes to the value of goods/services (attribution) provide R&D related to provenance and traceability of Indigenous products/services activate primary production on under-utilised areas of the Indigenous estate increase economic development through the utilisation of the Indigenous estate for commercial activities identify and investigate potential business opportunities for defined areas of the Indigenous estate across agriculture, aquaculture, botanicals, forestry, carbon, tourism etc. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigate mechanisms for Indigenous business to secure value and derive prosperity from their unique competitive advantage, being the knowledge Indigenous people and their communities hold about their country and intangible cultural assets (IP). |
| 4. Knowledge management systems and research and development to support Indigenous commercial end-users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> address data sovereignty, ownership and access issues for Indigenous businesses increase the capacity and capability for First Nations people to access, analyse and apply data to make informed decisions about their estate address development of local indicators, data analytics and GIS capabilities develop/contribute to a research roadmap that identifies the specific knowledge and knowledge products that owners and managers of Indigenous enterprise in Northern Australia require to improve their decision-making environment measuring the social and environmental outcomes of local Indigenous business traceable to investment. |

Please note: this is not an EOI for projects you would like to progress.

The expression of interest funding call for project proposals will be released separately in early June 2022 and will be available on the CRCNA [website](#). It is the CRCNA's intention to work with project proponents and identified co-investors to progress R&D collaborations which meet the aims and objectives of the CRCNA.

Investment proposal – registration of interest

The commitments made during this registration call are non-binding. The CRCNA are seeking to understand your interest in supporting project proposals which advance the strategic priorities identified above.

Please register your interest via the [online form here](#).

The deadline for investment proposal submissions is **5pm AEST Friday 1 July 2022**.

Useful definitions

Aboriginal owned business is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander- owned business has at least one owner who identifies as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. This includes businesses where there is equal ownership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons or there is Aboriginal minority (less than 50%) ownership in a business.

Aboriginal-owned and controlled business is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as one that is a majority (51%) owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons.

Further information

Requests for further information should be directed in writing to projects@crcna.com.au.