



NATIONAL  
ENERGY RESOURCES  
AUSTRALIA

Creating connections for growth

# Expression of Interest for Clean Technology Projects for the Energy Resources Sector

Submissions close on 31 August 2017



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NERA – National Energy Resources Australia



Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Innovation and Science

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NERA (National Energy Resources Australia) is seeking to provide funding to projects that demonstrate the integration of clean technology solutions with the energy resources sector (oil, gas, uranium and coal extraction and processing operations) with the objective of improving energy efficiency, productivity and sustainability within that sector.

Projects can include solutions for renewable energy, hybrid energy, smart grid, energy storage, energy efficiency, water treatment, waste management, air quality and resource efficiency.

NERA is an industry-led, not-for-profit initiative, which aims, through a national focus, to improve competitiveness, collaboration and productivity by focusing on reducing costs, directing research to industry needs, improving work skills, facilitating partnerships and reducing regulatory burden. NERA supports the Australian energy resources sector to identify and deliver projects and activities to enhance the sector’s innovation, competitiveness and productivity.

If effective well-developed solutions are highlighted and promoted, then the outcome of the process could be that the industry will reduce its cost structures, increase its productivity and help drive a more innovative and sustainable future.

<p><b>NERA is seeking projects that are:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being developed by an Australian registered company.</li> <li>• Ready for construction/implementation or already commenced.</li> <li>• Ready to provide benefits to oil, gas and/or coal producers.</li> <li>• Innovative and demonstrate how similar projects could be deployed more widely in the industry.</li> <li>• Potentially ready to be exported to global markets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shortlisted projects will receive one or more of the following benefits:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate the projects as shortlisted submissions of the NERA Clean Technology EOI.</li> <li>• The project and its outcomes will be promoted widely through the industry utilising NERA’s networks.</li> <li>• Assistance in the promotion of the project to potential public and private funders.</li> <li>• Introduction of additional potential industry parties into the project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Successful applicants will also receive:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional promotion as winners of the NERA EOI process.</li> <li>• An opportunity to receive NERA matched funding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples of projects that might be of interest include:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid power generation</li> <li>• Off-grid renewable and storage</li> <li>• Demand management/smart grid</li> <li>• Alternative transport fuels</li> <li>• Data management and control</li> <li>• Wastewater treatment</li> <li>• Resource efficiency</li> <li>• Processing efficiency</li> </ul>

If you have a proven technology (even if not yet proven in Australia) and a well progressed clean technology project to be delivered in the oil, gas or coal industries, then this is for you.

Submit a brief EOI in the format below by 31 August 2017 to [eo@nera.org.au](mailto:eo@nera.org.au) to be considered.

## Expression of interest require format

(please use the Clean Tech EOI template on the NERA website)

<b>1</b>	<b>Project overview</b> (200 words)	Including company eligibility details.
<b>2</b>	<b>Technology overview</b> (200 words)	Including technology risk and comparable demonstration projects globally.
<b>3</b>	<b>Level of innovation</b> (100 words)	Why is the project innovative in the Australian Energy Resources Sector?
<b>4</b>	<b>Project development</b> (200 words)	Provide details of project progress to date and proposed schedule for financial close and project implementation.
<b>5</b>	<b>Commercial overview</b> (200 words)	Details of capital costs, eligibility for matched NERA funding and commercial benefits for your energy resources sector client and more widely across the industry. Potential for export of the solution to global markets.
<b>6</b>	<b>Project proponent</b> (200 words)	Details of the project proponent, its financial capacity and proposed project financing model.

## EOI assessment framework

The proposed assessment criteria for the EOI is as follows:

	<b>Technology</b>	Largely proven with low technology risk.
	<b>Innovation</b>	An Australian first even if well demonstrated internationally.
	<b>Project</b>	Project well developed and able to move towards financial close within 6 months.
	<b>Commercial</b>	Commercial benefits to energy resources sector companies and industry more widely. Eligibility for matched funding from NERA (see Clean Tech EOI Guidelines on NERA website for details). Export potential.
	<b>Proponent</b>	Financial, technical and project delivery capacity of project proponent.

The entries will each be assessed by a NERA judging panel with each criteria being initially rated as detailed in the table below and then discussed and assessed by industry experts.

## Assessment score guide

		Score					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment criteria	 Technology		Technology risk is High		Technology risk is Moderate		Largely proven and technology risk is low
	 Innovation		Not innovative in Australian market		Moderately innovative in Australian market		An Australian first even if well demonstrated internationally
	 Project		Project not at all developed and has no chance of delivery soon		Project partially developed and able to move forwards fairly quickly		Project well developed and able to move towards financial close in 1H18 and to construction/implementation during 2H18
	 Commercial		No real commercial benefits to energy resource companies; Not eligible for NERA funding; No export potential		Moderate commercial benefits to energy resource companies; Possibly eligible for NERA funding; Some export potential		Strong commercial benefits to energy resource companies; Eligible for matched funding from NERA; Significant export potential
	 Proponent		Very limited financial, technical or project delivery capacity of project proponent		Moderate financial, technical or project delivery capacity of project proponent		Robust financial, technical or project delivery capacity of project proponent

## NERA project funding and EOI approval process

- Eligible projects may be funded if a cash contribution is greater than or matched by industry partners. For example, if NERA provides project funding of \$100,000, industry will fund a minimum of \$100,000 cash towards the project.
- Project Funding can be between \$50,000 (noting that the total project budget must be above \$100,000) and \$3 million in any financial year. The Project Fund does not provide funding for any project with a total budget below \$100,000.
- Should your project proposal meet the judging and selection criteria it will be taken through the NERA approval process. Further details on the NERA project fund, NERA guidelines for preparing the EOI and the Clean Technology EOI template can be found on NERA's website at [www.nera.org.au/Article?Action=View&Article\\_id=60](http://www.nera.org.au/Article?Action=View&Article_id=60)



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# GUIDELINES FOR THE NERA PROJECT FUND AND PREPARING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

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# 1 Introduction

National Energy Resources Australia (NERA) has been established to maximise the value to the Australian economy by having an energy resources sector that is globally competitive, sustainable, innovative and diverse. Through a national focus, NERA's role is to grow collaboration and innovation to assist the energy resources sector manage cost structures and productivity, direct research to industry needs, deliver the future work skills required and promote fit-for-purpose regulation.

NERA enables growth in the Australian energy resources sector through identifying industry-led opportunities, innovation, knowledge-sharing and commercialisation of research and innovation.

NERA's role is to bring stakeholders together and identify, develop, connect, facilitate and support collaborative projects to maximise the value of Australia's energy resources sector.

## 2 What is the Project Fund?

The Project Fund has been established to support collaborative projects by providing matching funding to industry-led projects which address one or more of the knowledge priorities identified in the NERA Sector Competitiveness Plan as outlined in table 1. Further details on the Sector Competitiveness Plan, the knowledge priorities and initiatives can be found at [www.nera.org.au](http://www.nera.org.au).

## 3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Proposed projects must be linked to one or more of the knowledge priorities. Projects must demonstrate clear commercialisation applications, pathways and implementation timeframes. Project Funds are not intended to support discovery or basic research.
- b) Proposed projects need to be undertaken in collaboration with other parties, whether from research, industry or other areas.
- c) Proposed project duration must be less than two years.
- d) Participants must have access to, or ownership of, the intellectual property (IP) necessary to conduct the Project should it be required.

**Table 1: Sector knowledge priorities**

	<b>Knowledge Priority</b>	<b>Focus areas</b>
<b>Capability and leadership</b>	<b>1. Work skills for the future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated operations of the future</li> <li>• Workforce capability</li> <li>• Project management skills</li> </ul>
	<b>2. Enabling effective collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross company collaboration</li> <li>• Intergenerational and interdisciplinary engagement</li> <li>• Industry and applied research collaboration</li> </ul>
	<b>3. Understanding Australia's resource base</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a greater understanding of prospective basin geology across the minerals and energy sectors</li> </ul>
	<b>4. Social licence to operate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social benefits</li> <li>• Infrastructure closure and rehabilitation</li> <li>• Water management</li> <li>• Tailings management</li> </ul>
<b>Business and operating models, technology and services</b>	<b>5. Unlocking future resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated geological information</li> <li>• Cross industry collaboration</li> <li>• Maximising ageing assets</li> <li>• Environmental science collaboration</li> </ul>
	<b>6. New markets, new technologies, new business models</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian trade agreements</li> <li>• Develop international technology partnerships</li> <li>• Commercialisation of operational technological developments</li> <li>• Carbon capture and storage (CCS)</li> <li>• Low emissions technologies</li> <li>• LNG as a fuel</li> <li>• Hybrid technologies</li> <li>• Adapting to the changing energy mix</li> </ul>
	<b>7. Commercialisation of research and development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living labs</li> <li>• Understanding and developing commercialisation pathways</li> </ul>
	<b>8. Efficient operations and maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operating models for remote operations</li> <li>• Data, digitisation and predictive analytics</li> <li>• Robotics, sensors and automation</li> <li>• Develop a greater understanding of decommissioning techniques</li> </ul>
<b>Regulatory environment</b>	<b>9. Regulatory framework optimisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging sensible regulatory frameworks to allow ongoing exploration</li> <li>• Harmonisation of standards</li> <li>• Industrial relations and workplace reform</li> <li>• Resource management reform and review of the existing permitting systems</li> </ul>

## 4 Project Funding Criteria

- a) Project Funding can be between \$50,000 (noting that the total project budget must be above \$100,000) and \$3 million in any financial year. The Project Fund does not provide funding for any project with a total budget below \$100,000. However, NERA may be able to support these initiatives by way of the NERA Innovation Voucher Program or through operational seed funding.
- b) Project participants must contribute cash at least equal to the project funding provided by NERA, either individually or collectively. For example, if NERA provides a financial contribution of \$100,000, the project participants collectively must provide financial contributions of at least \$100,000.
- c) In-kind contributions can be made by participants but will not be included in determining the cash contribution of participants.
- d) Contributions from other government agencies do not count towards the matched funding contribution required by participants, and must also be matched with at least equal cash contributions. For example, if NERA provides project funds of \$100,000 and other government contributions to that project are \$50,000, the threshold cash contribution required from the project participants is \$150,000.
- e) Projects Funds may be used for activities directly related to the project, for example equipment testing, software, laboratory disposables, equipment directly related to the activities in the project, materials, travel and accommodation for field activities in Australia. Project Funds can be used for capital works where the works are directly related to the project.
- f) Project Funds cannot be used to reimburse parties for in-kind contributions or to pay indirect costs of the Project. Project funds cannot be used for international travel, salaries for international personnel or students or any overseas activities, unless the parties can demonstrate to NERA's satisfaction that the activities are directly related to the project.
- g) Reporting on the use of Project Funds and the cash contribution of participants will be required.
- h) NERA Project Funding will be payable by instalments as agreed with NERA and will link to agreed milestones. The terms and conditions of the funding and timing of instalments will be set out in a contract (Project Funding Agreement) between the project participants and NERA. NERA reserves the right to terminate Project Funding to the project if agreed milestones are not met.

## 5 Selection Process

- a) NERA may seek Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Project Funding from time to time or make available on its website the EOI guide and template for industry to submit proposals throughout the year.
- b) EOIs will be evaluated by NERA, who may seek specialist expertise if required. NERA may discuss EOIs with applicants for the purposes of clarification and development.
- c) Shortlisted EOIs may proceed to a more detailed project proposal stage.
- d) The project proposal will be evaluated by NERA, who will seek guidance from the NERA Programme Development Committee (PDC). The PDC has full discretion to recommend approval to the NERA Board, request modifications to the project proposal or decline funding.
- e) The NERA Board has the final approval on whether the project will be funded with evaluation based on available funds, eligibility and alignment with NERA's areas of priority.

## 6 Award of Funding and Reporting

- a) Successful applicants will be required to enter a Project Funding Agreement with NERA before being entitled to payments. Projects will not commence until such agreements are in place. Failure to enter into an agreement within 60 days may result in the funding offer being withdrawn by NERA.
- b) The Project Funding Agreement will include full details of the project including scope, milestones, deliverables, funding, governance and oversight arrangements, and reporting requirements.
- c) Within 14 days of funding being awarded, NERA will provide details of projects which it funds on its website, but not including confidential information. Information to be published includes:
  - A description of the project and an overview of how the project meets NERA's strategic priorities and the objectives of the Project Fund;
  - A list of project participants; and
  - Details of funding for the project, namely total NERA funding, and total industry co-contributions for the project.
- d) A monthly status report on the project is to be provided to NERA as outlined in the Project Funding Agreement.
- e) On project completion, a report is to be submitted to NERA which describes project learnings and outcomes.

## 7 Submission of EOIs

- a) Please email your response to [EOI@nera.org.au](mailto:EOI@nera.org.au) once completed or by the closing date for the relevant EOI round.
- b) If you become aware of an error in the EOI (excluding clerical errors which would have no bearing on the evaluation of the EOI) NERA should be promptly notified of the error.
- c) NERA will not disclose EOI contents and EOI information, except:
  - as required by law;
  - for the purpose of investigations by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission or other government authorities having relevant jurisdiction;
  - to external consultants and advisers who may be engaged to assist with the EOI process.

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*No legal relationship will be created between NERA and any successful applicant unless a binding Project Funding Agreement is executed by both parties.*

*NERA reserves the right, in its absolute discretion at any time, to vary or extend any time or date specified for an EOI round, and can amend these guidelines and EOI terms and conditions. These guidelines do not form any legal arrangement between NERA and any other party.*