



Powerfuels
including Hydrogen
Network
DECARB HUB

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CAUTION



Powerfuels including Hydrogen Network

Seed Grant Guidelines

Round 1 - 2023



DECARB
HUB New South Wales
Decarbonisation
Innovation Hub

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About the Network

The **Powerfuels Including Hydrogen Network (PFHN)** is a network within the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub (Hub). Funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, partner universities, and government agencies, the Hub aims to bring together stakeholders to support the NSW Government's emissions reduction targets and reach zero emissions by 2050.

The mission of PHFN is to accelerate the industrial translation of mature and emerging Power-to-X (P2X) technologies and build expertise to address challenges faced by clean fuels and chemicals across their value chains. Through providing design, techno-economic analysis, research and engineering services as well as targeted funding support, the PHFN aims to support the de-risking of powerfuels projects, increasing NSW's P2X capability and fostering collaboration between industry, government and academia.

About the Seed Grant

PFHN Seed Grant Program (Seed Grant) has been established to provide an impetus for technological innovation at network partners, in the pursuit of developing solutions for the widespread deployment of powerfuel economy in the State of NSW. The seed funding is aimed at technology research, development, and demonstration projects at universities and research institutions that typically face challenges in securing funding within competitive schemes run by NSW and the Commonwealth Government.

The **Seed Grant** is administered by the University of New South Wales Sydney (UNSW) on behalf of PFHN, to support P2X technology commercialisation. **PFHN Seed Grants** of between \$50,000 and \$100,000 (GST exclusive) are available per project, to be supported by 1:1 cash contribution from industry partner/s. Projects will run for a maximum period of 12 months following the execution of contracts. Seed Grants are intended to translate power fuels technologies to higher TRL, bridging the gap in funding for research and commercial potential.

The **Seed Grant** will encourage collaborative projects through a defined pathway with genuine impact to support the technology becoming viable for commercial ventures.

Important Dates:

Round 1 Applications open	9:59 am AEDT on Friday 15 December 2023
Round 1 Applications close	9:59 am AEDT on Monday 11 March 2024
Round 1 Application assessment	Q2 2024
Round 1 Projects contracting	Q2 2024
Round 1 Projects commerce	Q3 2024
Round 1 Projects complete	Q3 2025

Note: The timeline is indicative and subject to change.



Applicant Eligibility

Seed Grant proposals **must** meet each of the following eligibility criteria:

- **Lead applicant organisation** must:
 - Be an existing university or government agency that is a Partner of the PFHN (see list in Appendix 1)
 - Hold and comply with all necessary authorisations that are material to the conduct of the business of the applicant(s).
- **Project proposal** must:
 - Involve participation by at least one industry partner (i.e. industry, community or government organisation) having an operational footprint in NSW.
 - Attract matching 1:1 cash co-investment from industry partner organisations. Contributions should be at least equal to the requested funding amount from the Seed Grant.
 - Involve the development of a powerful technology project currently classified at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3–6.

The lead applicant organisation will administer the funding awarded by the Seed Grants and lead collaboration on the project. The proposals are strongly encouraged to involve multiple PFHN partners (see list in Appendix 1) as research partners. The proposals may include other Australian and international universities as research partners, but no funds may be spent for research activity outside of NSW and by a non-partner organisation of PFHN (see list in Appendix 1).

Assessments will not be undertaken on proposals that do not meet the aforementioned eligibility requirements. Late proposals will not be considered except where the PFHN is satisfied that the integrity and competitiveness of the program has not been compromised.

Project Expenditure Eligibility

Eligible expenditures and activities are:

- Direct salary costs for staff specifically employed for the proposed project (including part-time work on the proposed project by staff also involved in other tasks);
- Salary on-costs consistent with partner university policies;
- Equipment, software, materials and consumables specifically related to the project;
- Domestic travel costs that are specifically related to the project;
- Scholarships for Higher Degree Research students and undergraduate thesis students working on the project.

Ineligible expenditures and activities are:

- Salary costs of industry partners;
- Indirect and other costs incurred that are not related strictly, explicitly and demonstrably to the delivery of the project;
- Overseas travel expenses;
- Activity or administration support outside of NSW.

The 1:1 industry co-investment funds **must be**:



- Cash funds, transferrable to the lead applicant (in-kind support will be considered **in addition to** matching cash contribution).
- From the industry partner only (PFHN partner funds will not be considered 'industry contributed').
- New funding, specific to the project in the proposal (not re-allocation from other grant funding including awarded Commonwealth / State Grant).

Assessment Criteria:

Proposals will be assessed against the following Assessment Criteria:

1. **Project Quality and Innovation (30%):** the proposal is unique and novel and is not a duplication of an existing grant or proposal.
2. **Alignment with Net-Zero Targets (30%):** the proposal reflects the mission of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub in supporting the NSW Government's goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2050.
3. **Partnership (15%):** the proposal demonstrates genuine collaboration between partner universities and industry.
4. **Delivery (10%):** the proposal is definitive and realistic in its goals, demonstrating a pathway to realising milestones.
5. **Translation Opportunity (15%):** the proposal demonstrates a pathway to commercialisation of the technology.

Assessment and Selection Process

The assessment and selection of funding proposals will be undertaken by an Assessment Committee (Committee).

- The members of the Committee will be eminent members of industry, research and government, valued for their expertise and understanding of Power-to-X associated technological innovations, and the pathways to commercialisation.
- The Lead of the Powerfuels including Hydrogen Network, in consultation with the Network Expert Panel membership (Panel) will appoint the Chair and members of the Committee. Should further expertise be required in the assessment of applications for funding in the Seed Grant program(s), this additional expertise will be similarly appointed, on a case-by-case, needs basis.
- The Committee is empowered by the Panel to review and assess proposals and recommend funding in accordance with the Eligibility and Assessment Criteria. The PFHN Lead, on behalf of the Panel, will consider the Committee's recommendations, and make the final decisions on whether to fund projects.
- The Committee at the discretion of the Committee Chair, may seek clarification from any applicant in relation to their application, including seeking further information on the eligibility and assessment criteria, prior to a recommendation for funding being made.
- All applicants will be informed of the outcome promptly upon the final funding decision being made as per the stipulated Application Timeline. Unsuccessful applicants will receive feedback outlining the reason(s) their proposal was not chosen for funding, and any suggestions for improvement for possible resubmission in a future Funding Call.
- Successful Seed Grant applicants will be published on the decarbhub.au website.

Reporting and Accountability

- The members of the Committee will report to the Lead of PFHN for Seed Grant related activities.
- The PFHN professional staff (business manager and project officer) will act as the Seed Grant Secretariat in providing all the administrative support to the Committee for Seed Grant.



- Members of the Committee must declare conflicts of interest matters regarding individual applications for funding under the Seed Grant. The management of conflict-of-interest declarations will be undertaken by the Committee Chair and the Secretariat.

Information on Intellectual Property

The Hub and PFHN will not hold any rights to Intellectual Property (IP), royalties or financial returns resulting from the project. IP relating to the project will be owned, as negotiated, by the university(/ies) and industry partner(s) named on the project.

The IP relating to each project will be negotiated on a project-by-project basis at the time of contract negotiation. The PFHN encourages discussion of IP expectations between partners as soon as practicable in the project planning process.

Access to background IP necessary to implement project IP will be negotiated between the owner of the project IP and the owner of the background IP on a project-by-project basis. Generally, it is agreed that owners of background IP will provide access to such background IP, subject only to the terms of access negotiated in good faith.

Project Contracting and Funding

Commencement and Funding

Funding will be paid to the lead applicant organisation for the successful application. The lead partner is responsible for managing the project which may include funding distribution to collaborating partners.

Projects are expected to commence within 30 days of contract execution (by both parties) and conclude within 12 months of execution.

Contracts and Reporting

The lead applicant organisation will be the responsible signatory on contracts.

Contracts will include agreed quarterly milestones, monitored by the PFHN through quarterly reporting.

Contracts will specify obligations that relate primarily to the recipient's accountability for the grant, including using the grant for activities occurring in NSW, the return of unspent grant funds and reporting on the use of the grant for the duration of the term. The PFHN makes no binding funding or support commitment to an applicant unless and until both parties sign the contract, including the lead applicant identified in the proposal.

A presentation of progress to PFHN will be required at the mid-point of the project.

A final report will be required no later than 2 months after project completion i.e. no later than 14 months from contract execution. A final presentation on the project will be required no later than 3 months after project completion.

Acknowledgement

The PFHN will remain actively engaged in the projects, supporting their development, identifying additional funding and partners, and providing advice.

The PFHN reserves the right to publicise funded projects for marketing and communication purposes. All proprietary information will remain confidential.

The Hub and PFHN must be acknowledged as funder in any publications or reports resulting from the project.



Privacy and Confidentiality

We treat applicants' personal information according to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).

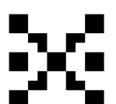
This includes letting applicants know:

- What personal information we collect
- Why we collect your personal information
- Who we give your personal information to

An applicant's personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it was collected unless an exemption applies.

Contact details

Any enquiry about the assessment process or the outcome of an application contact PFHN through: pfhn@decarbhub.au.



Appendix 1 – Partner Organisations of the Powerfuels including Hydrogen Network within the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub

Current December 2023

Powerfuels including Hydrogen Network Current Partners

- University of Sydney (USYD)
- University of Newcastle (UoN)
- University of New South Wales Sydney (UNSW)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- University of Wollongong (UoW)
- NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI)

