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ACTIVATOR FUND:
SCALABLE DISTRIBUTED ACTIVE SENSING AND SENSEMAKING SYSTEMS

DEFENCE
INNOVATION
PARTNERSHIP

ACTIVATOR FUND INFORMATION SESSION

AGENDA

	Who	Time
Welcome and Overview of Activator Fund	Sumen Rai	1000 - 1005
Brief on key steps, eligibility requirements, application structure, selection criteria, key dates	Merril Kirk and Bez Mohammadi	1005 - 1015
Overview of Project, Strategic Context, Key Challenges	Axel Bender and Paul Gaertner	1015 - 1055
DSTG Technical Briefs on Potential Contributions	Rebecca McCallum, Mike Roberts, and Coen van Antwerpen	1055 - 1155
Potential other Defence applications	Rob Baker	1155-1200
Agriculture Use Case & Research Challenges Brief	Susan Maas	1200 - 1215
Break – catered networking		1215 - 1315
Optional after lunch session – University briefs and Q&A engagement session	Matthew Richmond to facilitate	1315 -1500

ACTIVATOR FUND

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

The Activator Fund will provide **over $4 million** to support :

- **Targeted capability building** to align South Australia's R&D ecosystem with Defence's identified priorities and build scale in targeted areas

by:

- Enabling larger-scale research, development and innovation activities that have benefit for the South Australian economy
- Leveraging existing South Australian R&D, innovation and industrial strengths
- Building new South Australian R&D, innovation and industrial strengths in areas of strategic interest
- Enabling more rapid transition of technology developments into operational Defence capabilities

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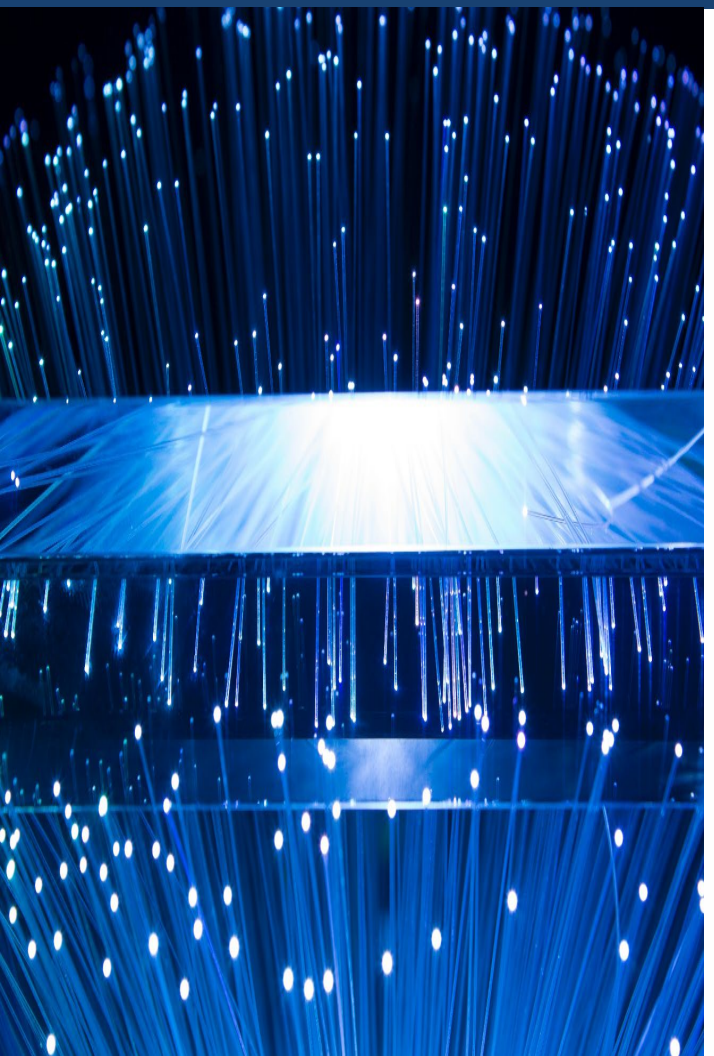
ELIGIBILITY



Up to $1.6 million available in total for this call

Eligible proposals must have a minimum of:
- One South Australian university Partner Organisation,
- One South Australia-based industry Partner Organisation and
- Australian Department of Defence involvement (ideally as a Partner Organisation).

Minimum requirements for matched funding:
- minimum 1:1 matched (cash and in-kind) funding for the funding amount that is requested from the Activator Fund ($1 Activator Fund to $1 provided by participants).

Work funded by the Activator Fund must be undertaken in South Australia. Contributions from Lead and Partner Organisations may be used to fund work outside of South Australia, but the majority of overall project effort must occur in South Australia.

The **Lead Organisation** for an Activator Fund proposal can be a South Australian public university, a South Australia-based business (with an ABN), either headquartered (ABN registered in SA) or with substantial operations in South Australia relevant to the Activator Fund theme.

Partner Organisations for an Activator Fund proposal can be Australian Government agencies, South Australian Government agencies, Australian universities, Publicly Funded Research Organisations, Australian industry – startups, SMEs and large companies, overseas government, research and industry organisations.

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SCALABLE DISTRIBUTED ACTIVE SENSING AND SENSEMAKING SYSTEMS

This theme will focus on the development of innovative distributed sensing and sense making capabilities to support improved early warning, situational understanding, and predictive analysis to inform appropriate actions. The challenge will focus on improvements to information architectures, edge computing, data fusion, and modelling and simulation, as well as integration, while employing currently available sensors (or those of high technology maturity), platforms and network capabilities. The challenge use case is the protection of large, fixed infrastructure and the potential impacts from a chemical hazard through a distributed active sensing and control system that can be expanded to include many sensor nodes. Key aims are to provide near real time situational awareness updates and to reduce human intervention through autonomous data collection and fusion.

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ACTIVATOR PROCESS

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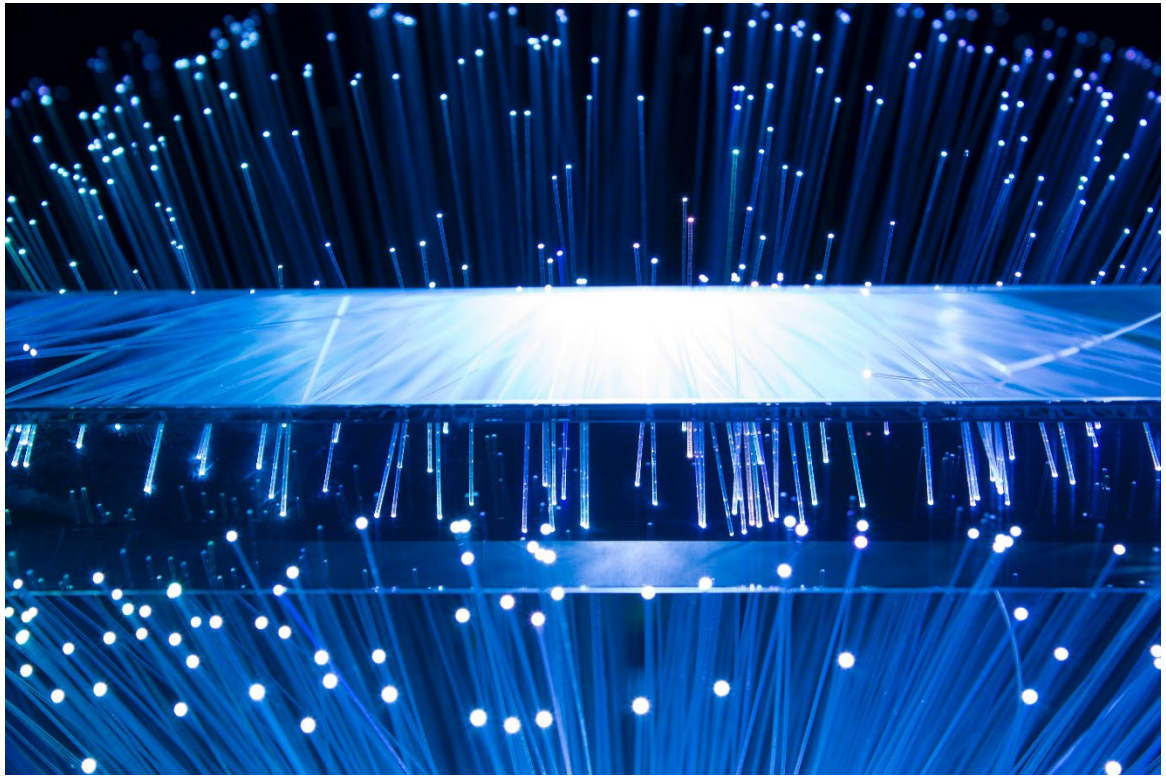
PROBITY

DIP and DSTG staff members that have been involved in the design of the call will also be involved in assessment of the applications. However, an independent team will facilitate the co-design process with DSTG, including negotiation of potential DSTG contributions.

The assessment process will involve multiple members from both DefenceSA and DSTG, as well as seek advice from key military experts. Initial assessments will be conducted individually with no communication between assessors, prior to coming together to reach consensus.

KEY DATES



Co-design period
28 June 2024 – 15 August 2024

Application portal opened on
25 June 2024

Deadline for applications
15 August 2024

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Defence desirability – How well does the proposal align with Defence priorities? Is there a clear and direct application to Defence? Does the proposal have applications in other sectors?

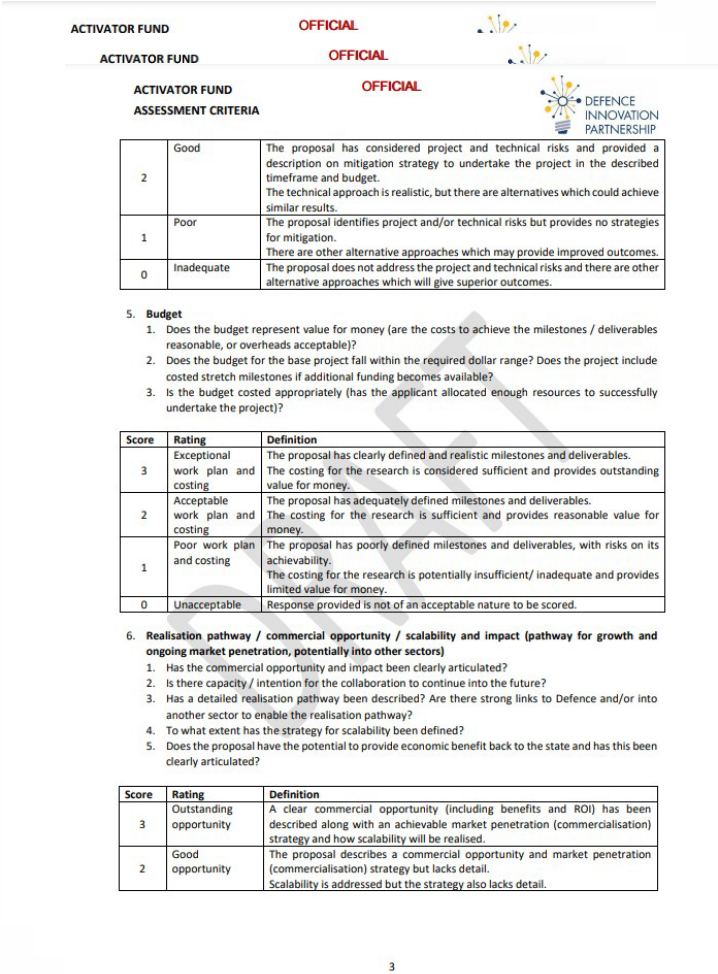
Project description – Has the proposal clearly identified the purpose, how the project will be undertaken and the desired outcomes? To what extent is the project novel and innovative?

Collaboration – Does the team have the expertise to undertake the project (minimum criteria being one South Australian university partner, one South Australian industry partner and a Department of Defence partner)?

Viability – How clear and articulated are the deliverables / milestones? Is the proposal achievable in the timeframe and within budget?

Budget – Does the budget represent value for money (are the costs to achieve the milestones / deliverables reasonable, or overheads acceptable)?

Realisation pathway – Has the commercial opportunity and impact been clearly articulated? Is there capacity / intention for the collaboration to continue into the future?



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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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2	Good	The proposal has considered project and technical risks and provided a description on mitigation strategy to undertake the project in the described timeframe and budget. The technical approach is realistic, but there are alternatives which could achieve similar results.
1	Poor	The proposal identifies project and/or technical risks but provides no strategies for mitigation. There are other alternative approaches which may provide improved outcomes.
0	Inadequate	The proposal does not address the project and technical risks and there are other alternative approaches which will give superior outcomes.

5. **Budget**
   1. Does the budget represent value for money (are the costs to achieve the milestones / deliverables reasonable, or overheads acceptable)?
   2. Does the budget for the base project fall within the required dollar range? Does the project include costed stretch milestones if additional funding becomes available?
   3. Is the budget costed appropriately (has the applicant allocated enough resources to successfully undertake the project)?

Score	Rating	Definition
3	Exceptional work plan and costing	The proposal has clearly defined and realistic milestones and deliverables. The costing for the research is considered sufficient and provides outstanding value for money.
2	Acceptable work plan and costing	The proposal has adequately defined milestones and deliverables. The costing for the research is sufficient and provides reasonable value for money.
1	Poor work plan and costing	The proposal has poorly defined milestones and deliverables, with risks on its achievability. The costing for the research is potentially insufficient/ inadequate and provides limited value for money.
0	Unacceptable	Response provided is not of an acceptable nature to be scored.

6. **Realisation pathway / commercial opportunity / scalability and impact (pathway for growth and ongoing market penetration, potentially into other sectors)**
   1. Has the commercial opportunity and impact been clearly articulated?
   2. Is there capacity / intention for the collaboration to continue into the future?
   3. Has a detailed realisation pathway been described? Are there strong links to Defence and/or into another sector to enable the realisation pathway?
   4. To what extent has the strategy for scalability been defined?
   5. Does the proposal have the potential to provide economic benefit back to the state and has this been clearly articulated?

Score	Rating	Definition
3	Outstanding opportunity	A clear commercial opportunity (including benefits and ROI) has been described along with an achievable market penetration (commercialisation) strategy and how scalability will be realised.
2	Good opportunity	The proposal describes a commercial opportunity and market penetration (commercialisation) strategy but lacks detail. Scalability is addressed but the strategy also lacks detail.

DRAFT

FAST FACTS, CRITERIA AND SAMPLE FORMS

- Assessment criteria, sample application forms and FAQs can all found on the DIP website, under the Activator page.
- The DIP team will be available to assist with general enquiries during the co-design phase.

GET IN TOUCH

- Please direct ALL initial enquiries to the DIP email below
- Include in the subject line the nature of your enquiry, e.g. "Activator – Distributed Sensing – DTSG contact" or "Activator – Distributed Sensing – funding question"
- Contacts for co-design/consultation activity: Bez Mohammadi and Dr Susannah Whitney
- Contact for DIP Activator process/grant administration: Merril Kirk

enquiries@defenceinnovationpartnership.com