



# Next Generation AI and Emerging Technologies Graduates Program Grant Round 2023-24

## Contents

Next Generation AI and Emerging Technologies Graduates Program Grant Round 2023-24 .....	1
1. Program Overview and Objectives.....	2
2. Round 2023-24 Structure and Regional Focus .....	3
3. Available Funding .....	3
4. Priority Areas .....	3
5. Eligibility criteria.....	4
6. Grant amount and grant period - All.....	5
7. Summary of Student Enrolment Types – Stipends, Allowances and Partner contributions .....	6
8. Financial contributions – All .....	6
9. Student cohorts .....	7
10. Compulsory student coursework - All .....	7
11. Diversity and Inclusion - All .....	8
12. Application limits - All.....	9
13. Assessment Criteria - All.....	9
a) Delivery of a cohort-based, multi-disciplinary, industry-focused student training program .....	9
b) Innovation, outcomes and benefit of the proposed consortium program .....	9
c) Chief Investigator(s) and Investigator(s)/capability and capacity to deliver the program .....	10
d) Feasibility and commitment to the consortium program.....	10
14. Assessment Process – All .....	11
15. Post award reporting - All .....	11
16. Content of each Report - All.....	11
17. Application Dates – All .....	12
18. How to Apply - All.....	12
Consortium Program Summary .....	12
Consortium Program Description.....	12
Investigators Summary .....	12
Diversity and Inclusion .....	12
Budget .....	13
Supporting Material .....	13
19. Stream Summary Table – key distinctions .....	14

## 1. Program Overview and Objectives

The Next Generation Graduates Program (NGGP) is leading the charge in upskilling Australia's workforce in artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies. With at least 480 generous scholarships available nation-wide, the NGGP is paving the way for the future tech specialists to revolutionise the industry.

The objectives of the NGGP are to:

- address talent shortfall in AI and emerging technologies, and grow the pipeline of home-grown, job-ready specialist talent
- foster career-ready experience and industry networks amongst eligible students and industry partners through collaborative research projects and placements
- develop the cross-cutting skills, capabilities and connections through professional development opportunities and training in complementary areas, such as ethics.

The NGGP will fund nationally competitive scholarships to attract and train the next generation of AI and emerging technologies specialists and build technology capability and skills across a range of fields. The NGGP will provide scholarships to domestic students<sup>1</sup> and is seeking applicants with qualifications in a diverse range of degrees and skills. This includes degrees with a less traditional technological focus, such as the social sciences or professional degrees, through to those with qualifications in mathematics and computational sciences.

We're working in partnership with industry and universities to grow a pipeline of home-grown, job-ready graduates to unlock the immense economic opportunity offered by artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.

Students will participate in industry-led research projects and placements to build career-ready skills. As such, the scholarships must be co-funded by an industry, government, or philanthropic organisation. Students will enrol as part of a cohort – which will allow graduates from varying backgrounds to work alongside and learn from each other in a truly-multidisciplinary environment. The NGGP will develop entrepreneurial thinking of graduates at early stage in their career progression, where cross-pollination of ideas leads to breakthrough innovation.

The intent is for the students to come into a cohort-based, industry driven, multidisciplinary environment, enabling peer-to-peer learning and 'baking-in' an entrepreneurial mindset. The themes of the cohorts will bind the students and collaborators together, making it larger than a single research project. In addition to building a cohort-based, industry driven, multidisciplinary Graduate Training Program, the NGGP will leverage the broader networks and collaborations across all partners and universities to build Australia's technology capability.

It is expected that universities and partner organisations will build a cohort by identifying a real-world challenge that has the potential for many student projects, where each student contributes to solving the real-world challenge (including from multidisciplinary perspectives) and where the sum of the student projects is greater than the parts.

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<sup>1</sup>Domestic students at the time of award, as per the Higher Education Support Act include: Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, a person entitled to stay in Australia, or to enter and stay in Australia, without any limitation as to time; or a New Zealand citizen.

To date two funding rounds have been completed with [25 programs awarded](#).

Those awarded funding will be expected to complete contracting with CSIRO within 6 months. Failure to complete contracting in a timely manner may result in the funding offer being withdrawn.

## 2. Round 2023-24 Structure and Regional Focus

### Structure

The Round will be structured with two streams:

- **Regional Stream (AI & Emerging Technologies)**
- **General Stream (AI & Emerging Technologies)**

### Regional focus

The NGGP aims to help students unlock their full potential and shape the future of AI and emerging technologies, with the understanding that diversity in thought and backgrounds is crucial for innovation. Of the 25 consortia programs successfully awarded through the first two rounds of the NGGP there has only been minimal regional university (as per Section 5) involvement.

We believe that students should have access to NGGP scholarships, no matter where they live. Therefore, in addition to the overarching program aims articulated above, this newly established Regional Stream seeks to:

- support participation of regional universities and their students in the NGGP,
- encourage collaboration between industry, other partner organisations and universities, including regional universities,
- contribute to regional priorities.

## 3. Available Funding

The NGGP will provide up to a total of \$15.5 million in student stipends and allowances from 2024-2029 with up to a further \$5.5 million expected to be committed by industry partners.

- **Regional Stream** - is set to allocate up to \$8 million  
NB: As part of our commitment to a regional focus, priority will be given to Regional Stream applications that successfully meet the criteria. If funds are not fully allocated, leftover funds may be redistributed to the General Stream.
- **General Stream** - is set to allocate \$7.5 million

## 4. Priority Areas

- **General Stream**

Critical Technologies are technologies that can have high impact on Australian's national interests, including our: economic prosperity, national security, and social cohesion.<sup>i</sup>

The Australian Government has identified a [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest](#)<sup>ii</sup> detailing the specific fields the government is focusing on, including for example autonomous systems and robotics,

biotechnologies, artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing. NB: In addition to the List, there are examples of technologies and applications. These examples are not exhaustive.<sup>iii</sup>

Consortium programs can also align with [National Reconstruction Fund](#) priority funding areas.<sup>iv</sup>

Australia can build a more resilient, inclusive, fair, and healthy society by applying critical technologies to significant national challenges.<sup>v</sup>

Applications must describe the impact of the proposed consortium<sup>2</sup> program including, how the consortium program will address national challenges.

- **Regional Stream**

Building a better future for all Australians by enabling a productive, resilient, and sustainable economy, enriched by science and technology, includes supporting the growth of innovative and competitive regions.<sup>vi</sup>

Through the Regional Stream, the NGGP is seeking to support participation of regional universities and their students; along with regional priorities.

Regional Stream applications will need to describe **either** how the consortium program will address national challenges (see above) **or** how the consortium program will address regional priorities.

## 5. Eligibility criteria

- **General Stream**

Bids to this process are made through the form of an eligible consortium – to be eligible, a consortium’s program application must include:

- at least two Australian Degree-conferring organisations offering degrees at AQF Level 8-10 (i.e. Australian universities) as part of the consortium to allow for broader collaboration and the ability to bring in a more diverse pool of students
- at least one financially contributing partner (as per contributions outlined in Table 2) who must be external to the universities
- at least one partner organisation external to the universities with dedicated resources to supervise student placements (can be the same as the financially contributing partner)
- international partner organisations to be considered on case-by-case basis.

- **Regional Stream**

Bids to this process are made through the form of an eligible consortium – to be eligible, a consortium’s program application must include:

- at least two Australian Degree-conferring organisations offering degrees at AQF Level 8-10 (i.e. Australian universities) as part of the consortium to allow for broader collaboration and the ability to bring in a more diverse pool of students. **At least one Australian university in the consortium must be an eligible regional university (as listed below)**
- **at least one Chief Investigator from an eligible regional university**

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<sup>2</sup> Consortium program has been used to refer to the programs submitted by consortia in the application process etc. This terminology will be used moving forward to limit confusion with the Next Generation Graduates Program.

- at least one financially contributing partner (as per contributions outlined in Table 2) who must be external to the universities
- at least one partner organisation external to the universities with dedicated resources to supervise student placements (can be the same as the financially contributing partner)
- international partner organisations to be considered on case-by-case basis.

For Round 2023-24 the list of **eligible regional universities**, headquartered or based in regional Australia, includes:

- CQUniversity Australia, headquartered in Rockhampton, Queensland
- Charles Sturt University, headquartered in Bathurst, New South Wales
- Federation University, headquartered in Ballarat, Victoria
- Southern Cross University, headquartered in Lismore, New South Wales
- University of New England, headquartered in Armidale, New South Wales
- University of Southern Queensland, headquartered in Toowoomba, Queensland
- University of the Sunshine Coast, headquartered in Sippy Downs in the Sunshine Coast Region, Queensland
- Charles Darwin University, headquartered in Darwin, Northern Territory
- James Cook University, headquartered in Townsville, Queensland and
- University of Tasmania, headquartered in Hobart, Tasmania.<sup>3</sup>

## 6. Grant amount and grant period - All

Maximum total Grant funding available per consortium program application (refer to eligibility criteria above), as calculated by the Budget template (Section 18) provided cannot exceed:

NGGP – Regional Stream / General Stream	Grant Contribution
Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Graduates	\$1,250,000.00 <sup>4</sup>
Next Generation Emerging Technologies Graduates	\$1,250,000.00 <sup>4</sup>

**Table 1 Maximum Grant contribution per application**

Eligible expenditure includes student stipends and allowances as per Table 2 below.

Grant funding in Table 1 **excludes** the required partner contribution as per Table 2.

Funding duration is from 2024 to 2029.

<sup>3</sup> The list of 10 eligible regional universities for Round 2023-24 was decided upon following careful consideration of a variety of information and reputable sources including the [Regional and remote higher education: a quick guide – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au)

<sup>4</sup> Increase in CSIRO Grant opportunity is to allow for indexation in MPhil and PhD scholarships, this has been addressed in contracts of previously awarded programs.

Funding during the consortium program will be subject to ongoing review based on student recruitment rates and progression. Programs which are unable to recruit students will have their funds level reviewed and potentially withdrawn.

### 7. Summary of Student Enrolment Types – Stipends, Allowances and Partner contributions

Enrolment type	PhD	Master of Philosophy	Masters (RTP Qualified Program) <sup>5</sup>	Honours and Coursework Masters <sup>6</sup>
<b>Research Duration</b>	3.5 years	2 years	1 year	1 year
<b>Partner placement</b>	6 months	3 months	20 days	6 days
<b>Stipend rate (p.a.)<sup>7</sup></b>	\$41,650.00	\$41,650.00	\$30,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Training (p.a.)</b>	\$5,000.00 <sup>8</sup>	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Travel (total)</b>	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	N/A	N/A
<b>Thesis allowance (total)</b>	\$840.00	\$420.00	N/A	N/A
<b>Partner contribution (total)</b>	\$60,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$13,300.00	\$7,500.00
<b>CSIRO contribution (total)</b>	\$110,405.32	\$62,053.00	\$21,700.00	\$7,500.00

Table 2 Summary of Student enrolment types - stipends, allowances, and required partner contributions.

**Participation Support Funding** may be made available to support students with some of the costs of caring, accessibility and mobility needs to access the NGGP activities, events and exchanges, or to support students who have Indigenous cultural responsibilities. Funding will be subject to review of individual circumstances and annual limits.

### 8. Financial contributions – All

- Financial contribution amounts can be found in Table 2.
- Financial contributions cannot be sourced from Commonwealth grant funding.

<sup>5</sup> Masters Programs at AQF9 where the second-year research component qualifies for an RTP

<sup>6</sup> One EFTSL research project similar to honours that is part of a coursework masters degree

<sup>7</sup> 2% Indexation will be applied to stipends for Master of Philosophy and PhD students to be covered by CSIRO contribution, each Financial Year.

<sup>8</sup> PhD Training allowance is \$5,000 per year for three years only.

- Partner(s) must be willing to provide a non-binding in principle letter of support (including proposed financial contribution) for the consortium program.
- Funding may be provided by universities on behalf of Small Businesses and Start-up companies under the following circumstances.
  - Small Business means an Australian-owned and managed organisation which has fewer than twenty full-time employees who reside in Australia. The business must have a staff member who is based in Australia capable of providing the required student supervision.
  - Start-up means a company that is commercialising research and development (R&D) activities and has an average annual revenue over the previous two years of income that does not exceed \$5 million per year. The start-up must have a majority of its employees (by number) and assets (by value) inside Australia. The business must have a staff member who is based in Australia capable of providing the required student supervision.
  - Data61/CSIRO may require more information as to the proposed funding and placement arrangements in order to make a determination on the application.

## 9. Student cohorts

It is expected that universities and partner organisations will build a cohort by identifying a real-world challenge that has the potential for many student projects, where each student contributes to solving the real-world challenge (including from multidisciplinary perspectives) and where the sum of the student projects is greater than the parts.

When enrolling through a cohort, the students are bound to collaborate with each other and to utilise peer-to-peer learning, expanding on their different backgrounds and experience to provide richer research environment.

Applications must include the number of students in each cohort and their proposed levels. The expected cohort minimum may be from a combination of levels or from one level e.g., all Honours students. Consortia programs are encouraged to consider utilising the NGGP to build pipelines of students – i.e., include Honours and Masters students who could later be recruited into PhD.

- **General Stream**

A cohort of students is a group of students, an expected minimum of 10, who are working on related projects that tackle a real-world challenge.

- **Regional Stream**

A cohort of students is a group of students, an expected minimum of 10, who are working on related projects that tackle a real-world challenge. Consortia programs for the Regional Stream should plan for **at least 20%** of the proposed student cohort to be enrolled at the relevant, eligible *regional university* (as per Section 5).

## 10. Compulsory student coursework - All

Students will engage with a national cohort of peers from diverse disciplines. This cohort-driven learning approach fosters critical thinking, develops cross-cutting skills, and encourages collaborative solutions.

The coursework component of the NGGP is designed to introduce future graduates to the key concepts that will be useful during their study and aims to cover a breadth of concepts and domains by developing knowledge and practical skills.

The coursework is structured around these seven units of study:

All Students undertake the Core Units (delivered in six week blocks bi-annually)

- Data Centric Engineering (Core)
- Ethics, Innovation and User-Centred Design (Core)

MPhil and PhD students will undertake two of the additional units (delivered in six week blocks bi-annually)

- Probabilistic Machine Learning (Artificial Intelligence)
- Deep Learning (Artificial Intelligence)
- Cyber Security and Data Privacy (Emerging Technologies)
- IoT and Blockchain (Emerging Technologies)
- Quantum Technologies (Quantum)

Students must register and complete the coursework component of the NGGP within the **first 12 months** of receipt of a scholarship. Further information about coursework will be available via [Next Generation Graduates Scholarship Program - CSIRO](#).

### **11. Diversity and Inclusion - All**

- Definition of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Principles:
  - Diversity means differing views, backgrounds and experiences which contribute to innovative problem solving.
  - An inclusive leadership style means creating an open and fair culture where all participants feel respected, safe and empowered to contribute. Together with an inclusive leadership style, diversity of thought can contribute to innovative problem solving.
  - Consider your university's SAGE action plan, Reconciliation Action Plan and other diversity, inclusion, belonging and equity initiatives and how the research project may contribute.
- Applicants should consider:
  - inclusion of a diverse mix of Chief Investigators, Investigators and Partners who will be involved in supervision of the students. Applicants are encouraged to include Early Career Researcher participation, to ensure diversity in the leadership and the projects.
  - a multi-disciplinary program of work, including how the proposed consortium program will enable students from a diverse range of degree programs and skillsets to participate
  - how the participants intend to recruit students from a diverse range of demographic backgrounds (for example, women, mature age students, people with a disability, Indigenous Australians, people from regional, rural and remote Australia and those with diverse professional and academic backgrounds [such as with non-ICT qualifications])
  - diversity, inclusion and belonging within the broader consortium program

Applications must answer the following questions regarding their approach to diversity and inclusion across the consortium program and within student cohorts.



- How will D&I principles be implemented across the proposed consortium program? (300 words maximum)
- How is diversity, inclusion and belonging embedded in the research program to foster a culture of innovation and improve the adoption, adaptation, development and deployment of AI or emerging technologies? (300 words maximum)
- How does the consortium program plan to recruit a diverse cohort of students? Please provide a detailed plan, including risk management (350 words maximum)
- How is the consortium program structured to include a diverse mix of investigators (including designated people from partner organisations)? (300 words maximum)  
[Diversity dimensions](#) may include, but are not limited to: cultural diversity, carer status, disability status, and gender identity.

## 12. Application limits - All

### Organisations

- There is no limit on the number of applications that an individual university or partner organisation may participate in.
- An individual university or partner organisation may participate in applications to both the Regional Stream and the General Stream.

### Investigators

An individual investigator (Chief Investigator or Investigator) may be named on no more than three applications (including previously awarded) across all rounds of funding. Consideration should be given to capacity to deliver if more than one application is successful.

## 13. Assessment Criteria - All

Consortium program applications should rank highly against all four of the following assessment criteria:

### a) Delivery of a cohort-based, multi-disciplinary, industry-focused student training program **30%**

Demonstrate:

- innovation in the cohort model with student cohort focused around real-world challenges with students collaborating and complementing each other, not just a loose collection of projects
- experience in developing, running or being part of a cohort-based, multi-disciplinary or industry focused student training program
- conceptual/theoretical framework is genuinely integrated, cross-disciplinary, innovative and original.

### b) Innovation, outcomes and benefit of the proposed consortium program **30%**

Describe:

- the impact of the proposed program including:
  - how the program will address 'Priority Areas' as outlined in Section 4. above
    - **General Stream** - Applications must describe how the consortium program will address national challenges.
    - **Regional Stream** - Applications need to describe **either** how the consortium program will address national challenges **or** how the consortium program will address regional priorities.

- the contribution to the partner organisation's strategic goals:
  - how the proposed program fulfills partner organisational needs such as enhancing innovation potential, creating unique market opportunities, strengthening organisational competitiveness or growth
- the commercial, cultural and socio-economical benefits to enable Australia to build a more resilient, inclusive, fair, and healthy society
- the novelty of the proposed program including contributions to the intended fields:
  - How will the aims, concepts, methodologies or outcomes drive industry/ government sector growth, productivity and competitiveness?
  - Deliver fresh cross-cutting capabilities directly into Australian industry and future digital environments. Provide guided engagement in student-led, problem-based, collaborative and intensive research projects.

c) Chief Investigator(s)<sup>9</sup> and Investigator(s)<sup>10</sup>/capability and capacity to deliver the program **20%**

Describe the:

- demonstrated quality of the proposed team including:
  - evidence of experience in and capacity to provide effective supervision, support and mentoring for graduate research candidates over the life of the consortium program
  - evidence of experience in managing distributed and/or collaborative industrial and end user focussed research
- time and capacity of the team (including the partner organisation/s) to undertake and manage the proposed research.

d) Feasibility and commitment to the consortium program **20%**

Describe the:

- appropriateness of the design of the program to ensure the projects can be completed within the proposed budget and timeframe (including identified risks and mitigation strategies);
- proposed student recruitment strategy including demonstrated ability to attract high calibre domestic students at proposed levels;

**Regional Stream applications** should outline their plan for at least 20% of the proposed student cohort to be enrolled at the relevant, eligible *regional university*

- proposed level of collaboration to support the research program, including national and regional networks and linkages;
- financial (cash and in-kind) commitment by each university and partner organisation(s)

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<sup>9</sup> Chief Investigators (maximum of 6 per consortium program) will commit a minimum of 0.05FTE of their time and take responsibility for the overall research program and intend on providing supervision for one or more students within the program. **Regional Stream applications** should include at least one CI from an eligible *regional university* per consortium program.

<sup>10</sup> Investigators (maximum of 20 including the CIs per consortium program) will commit to providing support for the program and form part of student supervisory teams. Investigators include designated people from partner organisations.

(including industry, government or other) to ensure completion of the program; and

- availability of and access to the necessary facilities required to support the proposed research (physical, technical, access to infrastructure, etc).

We encourage applications to consider opportunities and pathways for connection to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and communities in their proposals.

If a project involves research pertaining to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities describe:

- the strategies for enabling collaboration with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities (for example, dialogue/collaboration with an Indigenous cultural mentor, co development of research programs with Indigenous communities and/or Indigenous-led research);
- any existing or developing, supportive and high-quality relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- any personal affiliations with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities that can facilitate the proposed research.

#### **14. Assessment Process – All**

Assessment of proposals will be conducted by a panel, including staff from CSIRO and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, with decisions made according to the criteria above. No funding will be granted unless a Data61/CSIRO Agreement has been entered into between the successful Applicants and Data61/CSIRO within a specified timeframe, further information regarding agreements and payment schedules is available upon request.

#### **15. Post award reporting - All**

Successful consortium programs will be required to report to the NGGP team within Data61.

- Milestones will be provided in a stage-gate fashion and Next Generation Graduates funding will be associated with each Milestone.
- Milestone reports will be 6 monthly.
- Students receiving a NGGP Scholarship are expected to endeavour to remain in or seek work in Australia following completion of their Next Generation Scholarship; and
- Students receiving a NGGP Scholarship must commit to maintain contact with the CSIRO for up to two (2) years, for reporting and evaluation of outcomes relating to the program, universities will facilitate this.

#### **16. Content of each Report - All**

- universities must provide confirmation that the program is still supported and on track to deliver
- brief report showing student projects, enrolments, placements and other milestones
- outline of 'other activities' (e.g. BD, IP) that are tracking in parallel (to provide confidence the translation side of activities is progressing also)
- financial declaration – confirmation that intended funds have been expended and co-investment is as per the Funding Agreement
- other information as required by the Australian Government.

## 17. Application Dates – All

Round 2023-24 applications will close on **25 October 2023 at 6pm (AEDT)** for proposals intending to recruit students for intakes starting from 2024.

All application will be subject to review under appropriate legislative compliance requirements.

## 18. How to Apply - All

All applications must be submitted electronically through the [application platform](#) as follows.

**Note:** the online application submission portal will be open for applications from Monday 11 September 2023.

### Consortium Program Summary

Complete the form provided in the submission portal.

- Proposed Program Title
- Program Summary (200 words maximum, for external communications and promotional purposes)
- Objectives (one sentence per objective, 300 words maximum in total)
- Benefit and Impact Statement (300 words maximum)
- Participant Summary

### Consortium Program Description

Complete the form provided in the submission portal.

- Introduction, Background and Aims (500 words maximum)
- Assessment Criteria (a) and (b) (1,500 words maximum)
  - a. Delivery of a cohort-based, multi-disciplinary, industry-focused program
  - b. Innovation, outcomes and benefit
- Assessment Criteria (c) and (d) (1,000 words maximum)
  - c. CI(s) and Investigator(s)/capability
  - d. Feasibility and commitment
- Attachment of one-page PDF tables or figures (maximum of two)

### Investigators Summary

Complete the table provided in the submission portal, including

- name, current position, organisation, key grants (if applicable), key publications (if applicable), link to bio, contact details (email)
- list maximum of 20 Investigators including Chief Investigators (CIs). Note maximum of 6 CIs per consortium program.
- **Regional Stream** applications should include at least one CI from an eligible *regional university*, per consortium program.

### Diversity and Inclusion

Complete the form provided in the submission portal.

- How will D&I principles be implemented across the proposed program? (300 words maximum)
- How is diversity, inclusion and belonging embedded in the research project to foster a culture of innovation and improve the adoption, adaptation, development and deployment of AI or emerging technologies? (300 words maximum)
- How does the program plan to recruit a diverse cohort of students, for example, women, mature age students, people with a disability, Indigenous Australians, people from regional, rural and remote Australia and those with diverse professional and academic backgrounds (such as with non-ICT qualifications)? Please provide a detailed plan, including risk management (350 words maximum)
- How is the consortium program structured to include a diverse mix of investigators (including designated people from partner organisations)? (300 words maximum)

### Budget

A calculator is provided to assist you in budgeting.

- Proposed<sup>11</sup> student numbers at each degree level (template calculates CSIRO and minimum expected partner contribution).
- Participant contributions (cash and in-kind).
- Additional budget is recommended but not required. It can include in-kind contribution that is not Chief Investigator or Investigator time such as project/program management, post-doctoral researcher supervision and support, additional cash contribution from partners etc.
- Consideration will be given to the feasibility of the projects and additional resources that would be expected to ensure delivery of the projects.

### Supporting Material

Mandatory attachments:

- Letter of support from universities signed by relevant delegate
- Non-binding letter of in principle financial contribution from partner(s)
  - must include business letterhead with ABN and business address
  - CSIRO/Data61 staff members who are named on an application (Chief Investigator or Investigator) are **not** required to provide a letter of support.
- Non-binding letter of in principle support for student placements from partner(s)
  - must include business letterhead with ABN and business address
  - CSIRO/Data61 staff members who are named on an application (Chief Investigator or Investigator) are **not** required to provide a letter of support.

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<sup>11</sup> For successful applicants the program will allow for flexibility in the eventual numbers of students at each level, understanding that recruitment of students may not align to the levels proposed.

## 19. Stream Summary Table – key distinctions

AI and Emerging Technologies	
Regional Stream	General Stream
<b>Total Funding available</b>	
(Industry contribution is in addition to this amount)	
<p>This stream is set to allocate up to \$8 million in NGGP funding to the successful applications.</p> <p>NB: As part of our commitment to a regional focus, priority will be given to Regional Stream applications that successfully meet the criteria. If funds are not fully allocated, leftover funds may be redistributed to the General Stream.</p>	<p>This stream is set to allocate \$7.5 million in NGGP funding to the successful applications.</p>
<b>Priority Areas (see Section 4)</b>	
<p>Building a better future for all Australians by enabling a productive, resilient, and sustainable economy, enriched by science and technology, includes supporting the growth of innovative and competitive regions.<sup>vii</sup></p> <p>Through the Regional Stream, the NGGP is seeking to support participation of regional universities and their students; along with regional priorities.</p> <p>Regional Stream applications will need to describe <b>either</b> how the consortium program will address national challenges <b>or</b> how the consortium program will address regional priorities.</p>	<p>The Australian Government has identified a <a href="#">List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest</a><sup>viii</sup> detailing the specific fields the government is focusing on, including for example autonomous systems and robotics, biotechnologies, artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing.</p> <p>NB: In addition to the List, there are examples of technologies and applications. These examples are not exhaustive.<sup>ix</sup> Consortium programs can also align with <a href="#">National Reconstruction Fund</a> priority funding areas.<sup>x</sup></p> <p>Australia can build a more resilient, inclusive, fair, and healthy society by applying critical technologies to significant national challenges.<sup>xi</sup></p> <p>Applications must describe the impact of the proposed consortium program i.e., how the consortium program will address national challenges.</p>
<b>Eligible consortia</b>	
<p>Must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least two Australian Degree-conferring organisations offering degrees at AQF Level 8-10 (i.e. Australian universities) as part of the consortium to allow for broader collaboration and the ability to bring in a more diverse pool of students. <b>At least one Australian university in the consortium must be an eligible regional university (as per Section 5)</b></li> <li><b>at least one CI from an eligible regional university</b></li> <li>at least one financially contributing partner (as per contributions outlined in Table 2) who must be external to the universities</li> </ul>	<p>Must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least two Australian Degree-conferring organisations offering degrees at AQF Level 8-10 (i.e. Australian universities) as part of the consortium to allow for broader collaboration and the ability to bring in a more diverse pool of students</li> <li>at least one financially contributing partner (as per contributions outlined in Table 2) who must be external to the universities</li> <li>at least one partner organisation external to the universities with dedicated resources to supervise student placements (can be the same as the financially contributing partner)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least one partner organisation external to the universities with dedicated resources to supervise student placements (can be the same as the financially contributing partner)</li> <li>international partner organisations to be considered on case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>international partner organisations to be considered on case-by-case basis.</li> </ul>
<b>Student cohort</b>	
<p>A cohort of students is a group of students, an expected minimum of 10, who are working on related projects that tackle a real-world challenge.</p> <p><b>Consortia programs for the Regional Stream should plan for at least 20% of the proposed student cohort to be enrolled at the relevant, eligible regional university (as per Section 5)</b></p>	<p>A cohort of students is a group of students, an expected minimum of 10, who are working on related projects that tackle a real-world challenge.</p>

#### Further information

Next Generation Graduates Programs

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Visit [CSIRO.au/nextgen](https://www.csiro.au/nextgen) for more information including the frequently asked questions

<sup>i</sup> [Critical Technologies Statement | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>ii</sup> [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>iii</sup> [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>iv</sup> [National Reconstruction Fund: diversifying and transforming Australia's industry and economy | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>v</sup> [Critical Technologies Statement | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>vi</sup> [Corporate plan 2022–23 | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>vii</sup> [Corporate plan 2022–23 | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>viii</sup> [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>ix</sup> [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>x</sup> [National Reconstruction Fund: diversifying and transforming Australia's industry and economy | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

<sup>xi</sup> [Critical Technologies Statement | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)