



Venture Exchange Program: Future Food 2.0 Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some questions about the Venture Exchange Program. If you have a question that is not addressed below, please email your question to vep@csiro.au.

ELIGIBILITY/SUITABILITY

Who is eligible and who is not eligible to apply to the Venture Exchange Program?

To be eligible for the Program, your company must meet the eligibility outlined in the Program Guidelines. The Program is also NOT suitable for companies who are not considering expanding into Singapore or Australia.

What industries are most suited to the Program?

Startups and SMEs with innovative technology and solutions within or for the agrifood sector are welcome to apply, as long as they meet the eligibility criteria.

Do I need IP?

Yes, we expect selected startups and SMEs will hold intellectual property, be that protected or held as trade secrets, or hold the rights to commercialise a technology/solution in or for the agrifood sector.

Our solution is licensed from a company abroad. Can we still apply?

That depends on your licensing agreement. Program participants should either own, or be otherwise entitled to commercialise IP in respect of the technology or solution.

Our company is already exporting our technology to another country (other than Singapore / Australia). Can we still apply?

The Venture Exchange Program has been specifically designed to support startups and SMEs with limited experience in international market entry. Before applying, please consider whether the Program Activities and curriculum, designed to support those without international markets experience, will be beneficial to you.

Our solution is already commercialised in Australia. Can we apply for the Program to explore potential expansion into Singapore?

Yes. If you also meet all eligibility criteria, we welcome your application.

Is there a minimum TRL to apply?

We anticipate competitively selected companies will have solutions at TRL3+.

Can Software as a Service (SaaS) apply?

Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria and have innovative technology and solutions within or for the agrifood sector.

Are universities eligible to apply?

No, the Venture Exchange Program is designed to help startups and SMEs engage with the respective ecosystem to identify research and commercial collaboration opportunities and familiarise themselves with market needs.

Can we make a joint application with another startup?

We do not accept joint applications. If there are multiple startup/SMEs who meet all the eligibility criteria, each company is welcome to apply as stand-alone application/s.

While we are hoping to grow in the near future, we currently only have one person in our company. Can we still apply?

We require that successfully selected startups and SMEs nominate two personnel who can share the Program participation/activities. As part of the application we ask you about how the team will manage business operations when one or more members of the team are undertaking Program Activities, including domestic and international travel.

How does my company apply for the Venture Exchange Program?

You will submit an expression of interest (EOI), and provide all the information requested, and address all the eligibility and selection criteria. We will then assess your eligible EOIs and compare it to other eligible EOIs. Should your EOI be selected for an **evaluation discussion**, you will speak with an **assessor** to further elaborate on your EOI and assessment criteria.

PARTICIPATION/SUPPORT

How many companies will be selected to join the Venture Exchange Program?

A total of 6 to 10 companies will be selected. With a small cohort we aim to enable quality interactions and outcomes.

What is the time commitment per week for the Program?

It is recommended that a total of 3-5 hours per week be set aside to undertake the learning. This does not include in-person Program Activities which will require travel and immersive learning within/to Australia and within/to Singapore.

Where in Australia will Singaporean companies familiarise themselves with market needs? The appetite and opportunity varies from one State/Territory to another.

Singaporean companies will be supported to meet and network with industry, innovation and other connections most relevant to their solution. Depending on the solution, this might mean certain States are more relevant for them to focus on than others. The Australian market and States present much opportunity but also much variance of need/s – we will support companies to focus on the region, sector or similar that is most relevant to them.

Will there be any support for IP securing and product commercialisation?

Yes, the Program curriculum includes topics, material and mentoring on IP strategies and commercialisation strategies. You will be provided with learning material and the opportunity to seek general advice on these topics from our domain experts.

Can more than one co-founder or manager from our company attend the online learning and face-to-face Program Activities delivered in the home and/or target countries?

Yes. The Venture Exchange Program respects the often time-poor nature of startups and SMEs and encourages collaboration within each company, across the cohort and the broader ecosystem. Companies must nominate two people from the company, such as co-founders or executives, to participate in aspects of the Program, but only one person needs to participate in each Activity (session, workshop, travel) at a time. There are obvious benefits in having more than one participant maximise the learnings and share the workload required to meet all Program milestones. Bear in mind that the Program will only support the funding (flight and accommodation) of one participant from each company and any travel expenses incurred by additional participants in both the home and target country will need to be met by the company.

What is the role of the Program Facilitator, and the Expert-in-Residence?

The Program Facilitator and the Expert-in-Residence (EIR) are vital roles in the Program acting in a strategic advisor and coaching capacity for the Program participants. With strong cross-border and entrepreneurial experience, and a deep understanding of the startup and SME landscape, the Program Facilitator and EIR provide valuable guidance, insights and opportunities to all participants in the Program. Participants will engage regularly with both throughout the Program period.

TRAVEL

When and for how long will participants be required to travel?

There will be two travel opportunities funded for one participant from each company: once in the home country, and once to the target country. While most of the Program is delivered virtually, the opportunity to connect in person with participating startups/SMEs and from the alternate country enables valuable peer-to-peer learning and growth of your network.

Both travel opportunities will see you take part in a curated program of site visits, immersive learning and workshops, and networking with industry, academia, research institutions, innovation catalysts and government representatives.

Who funds the travel components?

A travel allowance will be provided to fund reasonable transport and accommodation costs for one participant per company to attend both travel components.

What if I can't travel during the nominated dates?

If you can't attend one of the Program travel events the other/alternate Nominated Participant from your company (co-founder, CEO, CTO, COO, for example) should attend. Ideally, the Participant best suited to the modules of learning/travel experiences at hand should participate. All companies selected for the Program must have at least one person at any given time taking part in each aspect of the Program, including travel, learning events and mentoring.