

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR HBIS GRANT FUNDING 2023

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Opening date: **Monday 29 May 2023**

Closing date: **Monday 3 July 2023**

EOIs must be submitted to ICSS in **WORD FORMAT** to admin-icss@uq.edu.au
by COB on **Monday 3 July 2023**.

EOIs submitted after the deadline or with undefined format will not be accepted.
EOI proposal does not fill with requirements of ICSS pre-defined format may be refused.

BACKGROUND

- HBIS-UQ Innovation Centre for Sustainable Steel (ICSS) was established on 17 March 2017 at the University of Queensland, funded by HBIS Group Co. Ltd.
- HBIS will provide funding of around \$1M annually to support the research and development projects of interest to HBIS on a competitive basis, managed by ICSS.
- ICSS seeks high quality research projects through an enduring collaboration between UQ and HBIS to support HBIS' middle and longer term, strategic and sustainable development.

RESEARCH PRIORITY FIELDS

The priority fields for projects expected to be commenced in end of 2023 are:

1. Development of low-carbon and hydrogen metallurgical technologies
 - low-cost hydrogen production technology
 - Mechanism of hydrogen-rich gas-based shaft furnace reduction of iron oxide
 - Industrial scale modelling and numerical simulation of material flow and energy flow of hydrogen metallurgical processes
 - Fundamental understanding and key technology to address the problems of heat balance and gas utilization efficiency in hydrogen metallurgical processes
2. Intelligent and automatic iron and steel metallurgical process, especially the associated intelligent algorithm and sensor technologies
 - On-line real-time temperature measurement of high-temperature molten metal

- On-line composition analysis of raw materials such as ore, coke, sinter, etc
 - Rapid analysis of multicomponent slag composition
 - Three-dimensional characterization of steel internal defects
 - High precision Non-destructive testing (NDT) equipment for internal defects of steel
3. Development of advanced metal materials and associated manufacturing technologies
 - Development of novel controllable thermal reaction technology by modifying vanadium oxides for high quality V-Al and vanadium alloys
 - Additive and green manufacturing technologies
 4. Utilisation of low-grade and waste resources (e.g., low-grade ore, slag and CO₂)
 5. Advanced energy saving and environment improvement technology for steel industry

RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

EOI submissions to ICSS need to follow the ICSS prescribed format (issued separately). The selection process comprises that:

1. The EOIs will be assessed and ranked by the HBIS Technical Experts Committee (TEC) consisting of HBIS appointed experts, and then the highly ranked projects will be invited to submit full proposals via ICSS for due diligence examination and evaluation processes; and
2. If the project proposal is selected, the scope and budget need to be agreed by HBIS and recommended by ICSS to the Centre Board for funding as an approved project.

Projects will be funded over successive three years, and it is expected starting end of 2023.

The primary or lead (first-named) Chief Investigator (CI) must be researchers employed by UQ. The researcher from other institution rather than UQ may be the Associate Investigator(s) (AIs). Proposals must be submitted by primary/lead CI, which should include Partner Investigator(s) (PIs) from HBIS. Please check the eligibility requirements with ICSS if unsure about eligibility for EOI submission.

BUDGET OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

- A summary of project budget is required in EOI.
- The maximum amount of funding support available from HBIS for an individual research project is \$150,000AUD per year, if approved.
- The funding must be applied in accordance with the project budgets for the purpose of carrying out the project.

- The funding must NOT be applied to the purchase or upgrade of capital equipment without prior written approval of the Centre Board.
- The budget should consider the indirect costs subject to the university policy, and suggest using the UQ Costing and Pricing Tool, which is a requirement of UQ PPL 4.10.02.
- CI's salary costs are allowed to be costed in the budgets if required.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROJECT

HBIS will provide project funding towards meeting the costs of approved projects. Participating institutions (Faculty/School/Institute) may make cash or (more commonly) in-kind contributions towards the total cost of the project. The in-kind can be estimated based on principles of the Australian Research Council (ARC) projects and should be indicated in the Budget in the EOI.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of project proposals is undertaken by the HBIS Technical Experts Committee (TEC). The Centre will take into account of TEC's assessment and make recommendations to the Board through the procedure as follows:

- consider if a project proposal satisfies the eligibility criteria set out in the HBIS Funding Guidelines 2023;
- identify and consider any other matters that may influence the recommendation that a project is not be approved for funding;
- seek expert external assessment (under conditions of confidentiality) if this is considered being necessary;
- rank each project proposal relative to others based on the proposal quality, responses to those assessment criteria, and TEC assessment reports; and
- prepare funding recommendations including assessments and recommendations regarding the amount of funding to be made available for the project.

The proposal quality will be evaluated by the assessment criteria as shown below, and the Value-for-Money may take into account by HBIS in the evaluation of project proposals.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Weight
(a) The extent to which the proposed research is innovative and strategically aligned with HBIS' interest	25%
(b) The extent to which the project is proposed with a solid theoretical and technical base	25%

(c) The extent to which the application is well planned with clear milestones and will deliver clear and achievable outcomes	30%
(d) The relevance and quality of the track record of the Project Leaders and team members	20%

The outcomes of EOIs assessment may be announced in early August 2023. The selected EOIs will be invited for submitting a full project proposal.

POST-SELECTION FEEDBACK

Unsuccessful applicants for project funding may seek feedback from ICSS management. Detailed scoring information will NOT be provided. ICSS may provide qualitative feedback on why a project proposal was not successful in terms of major assessment bands (position relative to other applications).

Unsuccessful applicants may re-submit their proposals in subsequent funding calls.

POST-PROJECT

ICSS' intent is to publish end of project summaries from the research in the form of non-technical summaries of the project results for public release.

A *Project Report* at different stages of the project life is required from project Chief Investigators. Confidential information that forms part of the *Project Report* may be attached as a separate confidential annex. Any such confidential information will remain confidential to recipients.

All publications arising from this program will require for approval by the Centre prior to submission for publication.

PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Ownership

Applicants acknowledge that physical title in all project applications (EOI, Project Proposals and approved Projects) become the property of the Centre once lodged. ICSS may copy, amend, extract or otherwise deal with all or any part of a submission for the purpose of conducting the processes associated with project selection including preparation, evaluation or execution processes and any other of its management processes.

Innovative research ideas that may be contained within an EOI or Project Proposal remain the property of the applicants unless the project is approved, and the submission of a proposal does not entitle the Centre or any recipient of the proposal via the assessment process to have any rights to exploit the content of such proposal.

Acknowledgment and disclaimer

ICSS, its officers, employees, advisors and agents:

- make no express or implied representation or warranty as to the currency, reliability or completeness of the information contained in the calls;
- make no express or implied representation or warranty that any estimate or forecast will be achieved or that any statement as to future matters will prove correct; and
- to the extent permitted by law, expressly disclaim all liability arising from the project application process (including, without limitation, due to information contained in or omitted from calls for project proposals, or otherwise provided to an applicant).

It is the responsibility of applicants to obtain all information necessary or convenient for the preparation of their submissions. In lodging a submission, each applicant acknowledges that it has not relied on any express or implied statement, representation or warranty as to the truth, accuracy or completeness of the information contained in a call for project proposal submissions, or otherwise provided to an applicant by the ICSS.

Applicant's costs

All expenses and costs incurred by an applicant in connection with a project application submission, including (without limitation) preparing and lodging a submission, providing the ICSS with further information, attending interviews and participating in any subsequent negotiations, are the sole responsibility of the applicants.

No contract

Nothing in a Call for EOI proposals submission or the lodgement of a submission in response to it can be construed to give rise to any contract or associated obligations or rights, whether express or implied. No contract will be created until a formal written contract is executed between the relevant parties and the applicant.

Reservation of ICSS' rights

The ICSS Centre reserves the right, at any time:

- to alter, amend or vary a project proposal call and the process outlined in a project proposal call;

- if the ICSS considers that it is in the public interest to do so, to suspend or terminate a project proposal process or any part of it;
- to require additional information or clarification from any applicant or anyone else, or provide additional information or clarification to any applicant or anyone else;
- to negotiate or not negotiate with any one or more applicants, and discontinue negotiations at any time;
- to allow, or not allow, the successful applicant to enter into the proposed contract in the name of a different legal entity from that which provided a response to the call for project proposals;
- to select and negotiate with more than one applicant; and
- to add to, alter, delete or exclude any of the requirements to be provided by the preferred applicant under the call for project proposals.

For the avoidance of doubt, the ICSS may exercise its rights under this clause and elsewhere in a Call for Project Proposals at any time and in its absolute discretion.

AMENDMENTS TO THIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

This EOI Funding Proposal Guidelines may be amended by ICSS from time to time, subject to HBIS approval.