Innovate to Grow: Digital Technologies & Artificial Intelligence

Applications are open for a free 8-week program for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with innovative solutions or ideas that use digital technologies or artificial intelligence.

Build your R&D idea

SMEs play a key role in growing Australia's innovation capability, but having the right support is critical to success.

Our free online 8-week program will help to build your skills and networks so you can learn how to advance your idea with R&D.

Apply today

Applications close: 1 June 2025

Program starts: 26 June 2025

csiro.au/digitechAI

Australia's National Science Agency

Key program outcomes

Personalised support to refine your idea: We'll step you through the process of turning your idea into a viable research project.

Confidential feedback: All submissions through the program portal will receive prompt expert feedback.

Mentor: You will be paired with an R&D coach from CSIRO or a university to help connect you with a relevant specialist.

Build your network: You will build key contacts in your sector, including researchers and other SMEs.

Key program outputs include how to:
- Create a strong research question for your idea
- Assess the value of your innovation
- Work out your collaboration options
- Compose a high impact R&D business case
- Prepare a funding application.

Commitment and course outline

Preparing for the program (3–4 hours)
Onboarding session, pre-workshop videos and reading materials.

Week 1 (Starts on 26 June 2025)
Workshop (4 hours)
Guest speakers from CSIRO, sector experts and SMEs who will provide tips and information on topics such as trends and opportunities, innovation experience and funding. You will also meet your fellow participants and mentor.

Weeks 2–8
Self-paced innovation program (2–3 hours per week)
Participants explore opportunities to grow their business through innovation and research.

Fortnightly virtual webinars for participant networking and guest speakers.

Who can attend

Participants based and operating in Australia who are working on digital technologies or artificial intelligence solutions. This can be in any of the following sub-sectors:
- Artificial Intelligence, including
  - Computer vision
  - Machine learning
  - ChatGPT / large language models
  - Natural language processing
- Digital manufacturing
- Quantum computing
- Cybersecurity
- Robotics and autonomous systems
- Other

Selection criteria (essential):
- A business based and operating in Australia that is registered with an ABN and ACN/ICN
- A business classified as small to medium (<200 employees)
- An R&D idea to work on throughout the program related to digital technologies or artificial intelligence

Please note: Australian subsidiary companies of foreign entities are not eligible. Researchers working at universities can apply as a mentor but not a participant.

Other considerations:
- A strong alignment to the program objectives
- A clear desire to investigate doing a R&D project

'The concepts and structure are well-suited for many SMEs, and I would recommend the program to colleagues within the target audience. Moving forward, I am actively pursuing my R&D plan within my business. Additionally, I am collaborating with my mentor on a new R&D project opportunity that was announced during the program.'

– Luis Elneser, Lurra Systems

CSIRO Innovate to Grow is delivered using Practera's online ed-tech platform and facilitation services.