APPLICATION GUIDE FOR
YOUNG INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH GRANTS
(MANUFACTURING, TRADE AND CONNECTIVITY DOMAIN)

OVERVIEW

1.   Under the Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) 2025, the Manufacturing, Trade and Connectivity (MTC) domain aims to strengthen Singapore's positioning as a manufacturing hub and a Global-Asia node for technology, innovation, and enterprise by further enhancing our manufacturing capabilities and cross-domain technologies that will seed growth in adjacent sectors. Details on the MTC domain's strategies and goals can be found at https://file.go.gov.sg/rie-2025-handbook.pdf

2.   The MTC **Individual Research Grants (IRG)** aims to support novel and fresh R&D investigator-led ideas. Meanwhile, the **Young Individual Research Grants** (YIRG) is a sub-category of grants aims at grooming young researchers[1] in conducting independent research. Proposals are solicited through a ground-up mechanism across the research ecosystem and A*STAR has been appointed as the Implementing Agency for the MTC IRG and YIRG.

LAUNCH OF GRANT CALL

3. The 2025 grant call for the MTC IRG YIRG Funding Initiative will only be open to MTC YIRG applicants and there is application quota imposed to each institute.

4.   The 2025 MTC YIRG grant call will open on **5 May 2025** and close on **16 June 2025, 11.59 pm (Singapore Standard Time)**. Results are expected to be announced towards the end of Jan 2026

5.   The grant calls are open to all locally funded public sector research performers including the Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs - including universities and polytechnics), A*STAR Research Institutes (ARES), and non-defense-related public sector agencies (e.g., Ministries, Statutory Boards). Industry and non-local research performers can participate as collaborators but will not be eligible for any funding.

   a) **Application quota**: Up to 15 MTC YIRG applications can be submitted from NUS, NTU and ARES and up to 2 applications for all other institutes, research/healthcare groups.

6.   Proposals can focus on any research areas that fall under the MTC Domain Focus Areas identified for RIE2025 (refer to *MTC Domain Focus Areas – Current as of 27 Sep 2024*).

7.   Selection of successful proposals will be based on, but not limited to, the following evaluation criteria:

   a) The track record of the PI
   b) The novelty, intellectual and innovative merit of the proposal
   c) The competitive and comparative advantage of the proposal
   d) Potential scientific/technical impact based on the proposed deliverables
   e) The feasibility of implementing the proposed methodology and execution of the chosen approach

8.   Notwithstanding the above criteria, the evaluation panel reserves the right to make a final decision based on other strategic considerations.

9.   Each applicant is only allowed to submit one application as a Principal Investigator (PI) for the YIRG. Only one Lead PI is allowed per application. Applicants should not have any outstanding reports for all national grants currently or previously held.

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[1] "Young Researchers" are defined as researchers with up to 7 years of post-doctoral experience.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

10.   Applicants are generally required to fulfil the following criteria **at the point of application**:

	YIRG
Max. funding quantum[2]	Typically up to $325k per project (inclusive of 30% indirect costs) over 3 years. Applicants are advised to budget their projects prudently.
Age	Any age
Academic qualification	PhD (not more than 7 years post-PhD)
Employment	Holds a primary appointment of at least 75% in a local publicly funded institution and salaried by the institution.
Past funding received	PI of an on-going MTC/AME IRG or MTC/AME YIRG project will not be eligible.
Mentorship support	Applicants are required to work with a mentor for guidance in their research. Applicants' current supervisor can be the mentor for the proposal but not a Team PI, Co-I or Collaborator. Applicants must indicate how the proposed area of work would be distinct from their current supervisors' existing research.

11.   In addition to the above criteria, applicants should not have any outstanding report from previous A*STAR grants, NMRC grants, and other national grants.
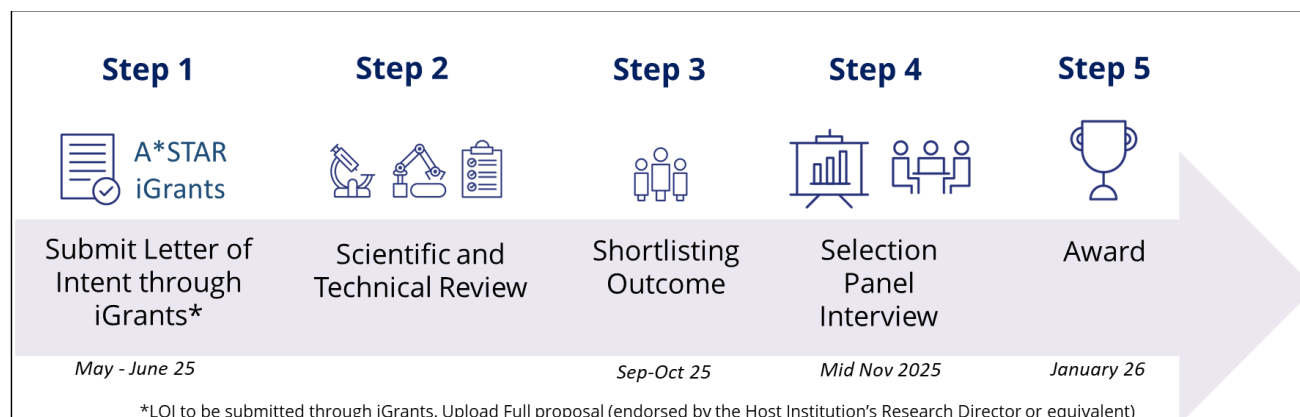

REVIEW PROCESS

12.   All proposals will be subject to scientific and technical review. Shortlisted applicants may be invited to present their proposals to a panel of reviewers. The entire review process is expected to take up to 6 months from the grant call closing date. As the decisions are final, we are unable to consider any appeals.

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[2] The funding supports eligible costs related to manpower, equipment, consumables, and travel, subject to A*STAR's terms and conditions. It also supports indirect costs (IRC) capped at 30% of direct costs.

GRANT CALL TIMELINE

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Submit Letter of Intent through iGrants*	Scientific and Technical Review	Shortlisting Outcome	Selection Panel Interview	Award
May - June 25		*Sep-Oct 25*	*Mid Nov 2025*	*January 26*

*LOI to be submitted through iGrants. Upload Full proposal (endorsed by the Host Institution's Research Director or equivalent)

13.　　Indicative Timeline:

Stage 1: Proposal Submission	
Opening of grant call on iGrants	5 May 2025
Deadline for submission on iGrants	16 June 2025
Shortlisting Outcome	Sep-October 2025
Stage 2: Presentation (For shortlisted applicants only)	
Deadline for submission of presentation deck	September-October 2025
Presentation to Review Panel	Mid Nov 2025
Grant Award	January 2026

APPLICATION PROCESS

14.　　All applications should be submitted through the A*STAR's Grant Application and Grant Evaluation system (iGrants) (https://igrants-app.a-star.edu.sg/) by **16 June 2025, 11.59 pm (Singapore Standard Time)**. Late and incomplete submissions will not be accepted.

15.　　The following completed document (using the requisite template) should be uploaded to the relevant sections in iGrants:
　　　a) Full proposal

16.　　Each proposal must be endorsed by the Host Institution's Research Director or equivalent prior to submission. This is to ensure that there is organisational support for the PI to participate in the grant call.

　　　a) ORE*s to submit the list of eligible proposals by grant call closure date for verification

17.　　For any clarification, please contact the Implementing Agency, A*STAR, at IRG_MTC@hq.a-star.edu.sg.