

Frequently Asked Questions for Industry Alignment Fund – Pre-Positioning Programme (IAF-PP)

| S/N | Question | Response |
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| APPLICATION | | |
| 1. | What is the process for research performers to submit IAF-PP proposals? | <p>Research Performers keen on applying for IAF-PP funding may submit proposals directly to the Implementing Agency (IA) for consideration via IAF-PP_HBMS@hq.a-star.edu.sg or IAF-PP_MTC@hq.a-star.edu.sg; or through their host institution's Office of Research.</p> <p>Proposals need to be endorsed by the Host Institution Director of Research (HI DOR). Proposals are accepted throughout the year.</p> |
| 2. | Can one IAF-PP project have 2 lead PIs with complementary skill sets? | Although rare, it is not impossible. However, for administrative reasons, it will be better for one of the PIs to take the lead. |
| 3. | What sort of documents are required to demonstrate commitment of industry at point of application? Are letters of commitment required at the point of application? | <p>Applicants are required to include at least 1 letter of support from potential industry collaborators and/or VCs in their LOI submission and at least 3 letters of support from potential industry collaborators and/or VCs in their Full Proposal. Letters of support from industry should address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the work scope is differentiated, how it compares with international efforts • How the company may use the outcomes from the project • What forms of formal collaboration will the company enter with the programme, if successful • What milestones the company would like to see next • Company's potential cash/in-kind contribution (strongly recommended to include) |
| 4. | [For A*STAR RIs] Is endorsement from RI EDs necessary for IAF-PP applications that originate from A*STAR RIs? | Yes, RI EDs will need to endorse the Letter of Intent (LOI). Applicants should also obtain the relevant Council's support for the LOI. Both the RI ED's endorsement and Council's support on the LOI must be provided in the submission. |
| ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA | | |
| 5. | One of the eligibility criteria for the competitive grants is the track records of PIs. Will researchers who have not worked independently as a PI before be disadvantaged in this regard? | IAF-PP proposals are usually put together by several research groups aggregating their expertise and capabilities to address a certain scientific problem. Researchers can participate by contributing his/her individual expertise. |
| 6. | Programmes are expected to lead to industry participation within 3-5 years. Can you elaborate on this requirement? | <p>The maximum duration of IAF-PP projects should not exceed 5 years (60 months). Programmes should possess the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of programme to Domain strategic objectives and ability to deliver RIE2025 outcomes |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-positioning for value creation and value capture in Singapore • Potential to attract corporate R&D spending and investment (e.g. joint or corporate lab, co-development of project, creation of jobs) • Differentiation and competitiveness at an international level |
| ASSESSMENT | | |
| 7. | What are the evaluation criteria for IAF-PP proposals that the IAF-PP Review Panel is looking out for? | <p>Strategic alignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key programme objectives and proposed milestones are aligned with national priorities and outcomes of RIE2025, in order to achieve industry development (i.e. grow existing industry activities or attract new industry sector) and economic value capture for Singapore. <p>Technology soundness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies deployed are novel, innovative, and with the potential to be transformative; that exploit Singapore's unique and existing strengths; and have the potential to generate economic outcomes within a 3 to 5-year time frame. <p>Composition of performers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage on and integrate existing strengths and capabilities across various Singapore publicly-funded research and/or tertiary institutions to a create Singapore R&D proposition that is differentiated and globally competitive. |
| 8. | The website states that the IAF-PP Review Panel convenes quarterly. Is there an indication as to the dates of the review meetings? | Actual dates of the panel reviews will not be released, but the HHP and MTC IAF-PP application are open throughout the year. All applications will be collated by A*STAR as the implementation agency, and submitted to the HHP or MTC IAF-PP Review Panel for consideration. |
| 9. | What is the role of the IAF-PP SOC? | The IAF-PP SOC endorses programmes seeking IAF-PP funding, including the associated programme budgets and KPIs. |
| PROJECT BUDGET | | |
| 10. | What is the indirect cost (overhead) of IAF-PP? | The indirect cost is 30% of the Direct cost awarded. Overheads are included in computation of the IRS gearing ratio. |
| 11. | What is the minimum and maximum funding amount? | <p>The MTC IAF-PP should have a minimum budget request of \$5M (including 30% overheads).</p> <p>There are no specific minimum and maximum funding amounts for a programme under the HHP IAF-PP. However, applicants are advised to budget their projects sensibly.</p> |
| 12. | Can money flow to international collaborators? | No. RIE2025 grants are intended to fund public sector research conducted in Singapore. International collaborators can participate in the research but they will not receive any funding. |
| 13. | Can overseas universities participate in an IAF-PP project? If funds cannot flow to these overseas universities, there will not be any incentive for them to be part of the project. | RIE2025 funds are intended to support public sector researchers in conducting research in Singapore. Given this, local PIs are free to partner overseas universities but the research funding cannot flow to the overseas partners. To overcome this, PIs could consider a consortia model in which international collaborators source for their own funding but the outcomes are shared by all parties involved. |

| INDUSTRY COLLABORATION | | |
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| 14. | For IAF-PP, must the industry partner be based in Singapore? | No. But if they don't have a presence that can benefit from or commercialise technology that we develop with them, then the value capture would be difficult to realise. For potential partners that do not have a presence, there will need to be a case for how the collaboration or project could potentially result in economic outcomes, such as jobs and investments in Singapore. |
| 15. | When and how are industry R&D Spending (IRS) clocked? | <p>IRS commitment by the company, whether in cash or in qualifying in-kind contributions, should be reflected in the agreements signed between the company and the relevant performer(s) during the duration of the IAF-PP programme.</p> <p>For HHP IAF-PP Proposals, the projected IRS spending (cash and/or in-kind) ratio needs to be at least 1(Grant Funding):0.4(Industry).</p> <p>For MTC IAF-PP Proposals, the projected IRS spending (cash and/or in-kind) ratio needs to be at least 1(Grant Funding):0.5(Industry).</p> |
| 16. | What is the follow on funding for HHP IAF-PP proposals? | The target follow on funding should be at least 1(Grant Funding): 0.2 (amount of third party funding, public or private, raised by spinoffs). |
| OTHERS | | |
| 17. | What are the purposes of grant calls and public workshops? | Public workshops will only be organised when necessary, purpose of which are to pull together relevant researchers and encourage cross talks, which could hopefully culminate in collaborations. Grant calls would also be launched for thematic areas when necessary. These will be announced to the research community via the A*STAR website or through email blasts beforehand. |
| 18. | If a project results in a technology that can be productised and sold, but the benefits are accrued to an overseas manufacturer, will the project be supported? | Unlikely, unless this is a local company. Either way, there needs to be a case for how there will be value captured in Singapore from the project. |
| 19. | What is the typical IP arrangement with companies for an IAF-PP funded project? | The usual IP arrangements such as ownership will stand (e.g., SDSO, JDJO). If companies are paying significantly for the project, they will typically expect an option for an exclusive license. Performers must take reference from the National IP Protocol. |