



Australian Government
Department of Defence
Science and Technology

Research Network for Undersea Decision Superiority
**Second Call for Expressions of Interest:
2020 Research Project Funding Guidelines**



Background

Defence Science and Technology Group (DST), as part of the Future Submarine Program Science and Technology Plan, and in association with university partners, has established a research initiative to build world class research capability in Australian partner universities and leverage the significant skills, expertise, networks and infrastructure of Australia's research base for sovereign benefit.

The ability of submariners to function well as individuals and within a team in a challenging information environment has been identified as an area of focus for research to improve future capability. These challenges are not unique to the undersea domain.

This initiative, the Research Network for Undersea Decision Superiority (the 'Network'), focuses on the human element and provides a mechanism to fund and oversee research projects that will grow Australia's medium to long term research capability and capacity in the human sciences.

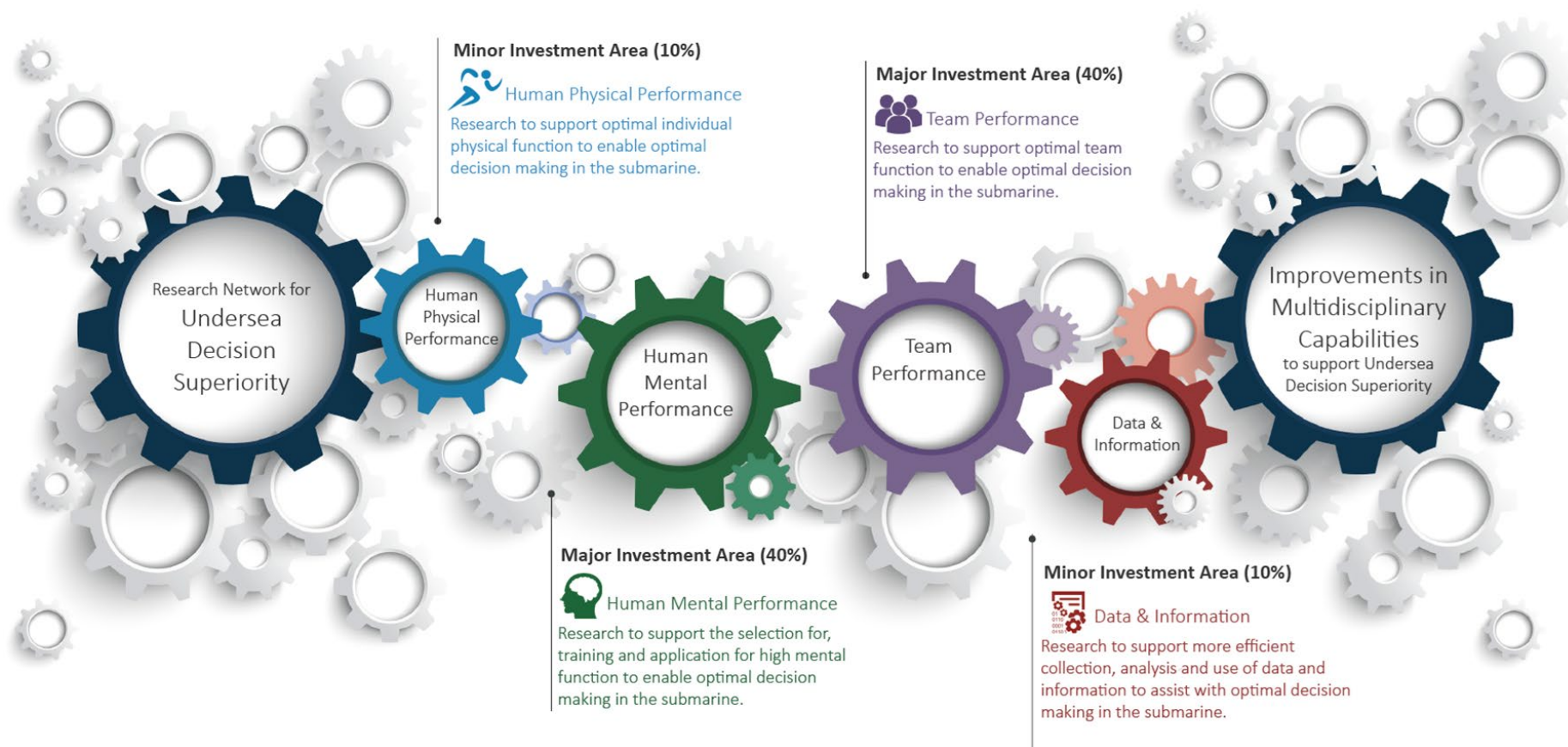
Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis to Member universities to undertake research projects that contribute to the Network's research objectives. There is no guarantee that any project application will be approved or fully funded.

RN-UDS Member Universities

- Charles Darwin University
- Curtin University (Network Agent)
- Edith Cowan University (Founding Member)
- Flinders University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University
- Monash University
- Murdoch University
- Queensland University of Technology
- University of Melbourne
- University of Queensland
- University of New South Wales
- University of South Australia
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Tasmania
- University of Western Australia (Founding Member)
- Victoria University

Areas of Interest

Expressions of interest and research proposals will be expected to demonstrate alignment with at least one of the investment areas identified in the Network Strategic Investment Plan (summary below). Please note research funding principles on pages 10-12.



EOI Focus: Early-to-Mid Career Researchers

The Network's second call for expressions of interest for project proposals is focussed on early-to-mid career researchers (EMCRs) in any of the four themes of the Strategic Investment Plan.

- EMCRs are typically emerging researchers within their first 10 years of academic or other research-related employment.
- The Network recognises that EMCRs don't have as many opportunities to access significant research project funds in their own right, due to track record (usually demonstrated by a body of high impact publications) being a dominant criteria of most research grants or investments.
- Advancing promising EMCRs and promoting enhanced opportunities for diverse career pathways is aligned to the Network's stated objective of building Australia's sovereign research capability and capacity in the human sciences.
- Focussing on EMCRs may help identify promising new research talent.
- This call may also provide an opportunity for EMCRs to develop relationships with DST/Defence early in their career, and build research habits responsive to Defence needs.

Eligibility

- Academics from Members of the RN-UDS are able to apply for project funding opportunities presented by the Network.
- The lead investigator must be employed by and undertake the project at an Australian university which has signed, or executed a Deed of Accession to, the RN-UDS Network Agreement. (A list of Members is provided on page 3).
- Early-to-mid career researchers (EMCRs) are invited to be lead investigators. For the purposes of this call, EMCRs are defined as being up to 10 years post-doctorate.
- Co-investigators or collaborators can be drawn from the same university, other Network Members or any other Australian university which has executed the Defence Science Partnering Deed (DSPD).
- Co-investigators or collaborators do not have to be EMCRs. More senior academics are encouraged to work with EMCR colleagues to mitigate risk.
- Co-contributions will be considered favourably in the assessment criteria. Applications must demonstrate the ability to at least match (in cash or in-kind) the level of funds requested.

Eligibility

- Projects can be based in any discipline that is of relevance to the Network's research areas of interest. A wide range of scientific disciplines could have the ability to contribute, ranging from exercise physiologists, ergonomists, workplace psychologists, nutritionists and biomedical scientists to integration engineers, human factors researchers and others.
- Research projects do not have to be specifically related to Defence or the Future Submarine Program.
- Projects must involve fundamental research and must not have any security implications.
- Multidisciplinary proposals are encouraged.
- Successful projects will be invited to negotiate and enter into a Schedule 3 Research Agreement, a Schedule 4 Bilateral Collaborative Project Agreement or a Schedule 5 Multi-Party Collaborative Project Agreement with DST under the Defence Science Partnering Deed (DSPD).
- All students participating in projects must be Australian citizens and must enter into a Schedule 17 Student Participation and IP Deed, and as required, Schedule 16 Scholarship (Project-Based) Funding Agreement under the DSPD.

Funds Available

Up to \$2 million per annum will be available to the Network for suitable projects, administration and other Network activities.

Project selection will be subject to the acceptance of Network funding recommendations by DST.

The request for funds must detail the entire project's budget, not just the first year's budget.

A maximum of \$250,000 will be allocated per project.

Successful research proposals will be funded by DST further to negotiation of an appropriate agreement under the DSPD.

2020 Second Project Call Timeframe

Date	Milestone
3 February 2020	2 nd call for Project Expressions of Interest (EOIs) opens
6 March 2020	Deadline for EOI submission
April 2020	EOI evaluation completed Shortlisted applicants invited to submit proposals
May 2020	Deadline for proposal submission
June 2020	Approved projects invited to negotiate an appropriate agreement with DST
July 2020	Execution of agreement and project commencement

Research Funding Principles

The Network is seeking fundamental and applied research aligned with the Strategic Investment Plan that can demonstrate how it will develop Australia's national research capacity and capability, provide research training, and produce opportunities to further build Australia's sovereign knowledge base.

The following principles apply to Network investment decisions:

- **Unclassified research.** Research projects should address a problem of significance with the aim to increase the body of relevant knowledge rather than respond to specific problems.
- **Investment is subject to Advisory Board recommendations and DST approval.** Submissions will be assessed and ranked against agreed criteria by a Research Advisory Committee (RAC). All Network research investment recommendations will be subject to the approval of the Network Advisory Board and DST.
- **Alignment with Network Strategic Investment Plan.** The Strategic Investment Plan sets out the research strategy for the Network. All EOIs and proposals are be expected to demonstrate alignment with the Plan.

Research Funding Principles

- **Advancement in Australia's sovereign research capability and capacity.** Central to the Strategic Investment Plan is the objective of achieving improvement in Australia's ongoing research capability and capacity in a manner that is most efficient for the research funds expended. The Network encourages projects that will develop national research capacity and capability and therefore promote effective collaboration and research training.
- **Open call for Expressions of Interest from Network Member universities.** It is recognised that preparing full proposals requires considerable investment in resources and time and therefore, in the first instance, brief and concise Expressions of Interest will be solicited. The highest ranked EOIs will be shortlisted and a full proposal invited from shortlisted applicants. Feedback to applicants of shortlisted EOIs may comprise suggestions such as to include or exclude certain objectives, to restructure the project, to adjust the funding requirements, to consider or build on results of previous projects, to consider collaborating with other organisations or disciplines, or to combine similar or complementary EOIs. For strategic or budget reasons, the Network may also request the full proposal to be submitted at a later date.

Research Funding Principles

- **Proposals by invitation only.** Full proposals are to be submitted by invitation only based on shortlisted EOIs. Unsolicited proposals will not be considered.
- **Payment on milestones and deliverables.** Project funding will be provided in a phased or gated manner strictly to acceptable milestone and deliverable progress. Agreed milestones and deliverables will be incorporated into a schedule to the relevant research agreement based on those included in the proposal.

Project Guidelines

Research Network Funding†

Lead Investigator

Aligning with the fundamental aim of the Network to grow Australia's sovereign research capability and capacity, the lead investigator must be an early-to-mid career researcher (EMCR) employed by a Network Member. For the purposes of this call, EMCRs are defined as up to 10 years post-doctorate.

Research focus

Research projects do not have to be specifically related to Defence or the Future Submarine Program.

Projects must involve fundamental research and must not have any security implications.

Research using military personnel or systems is often challenging to execute. In the first instance researchers should aim to examine problems in analogue circumstances e.g. using demographically matched experimental groups.

Proposals involving military personnel and equipment must include contingency provision against the possibility that these may not be available.

†Based on DSPD. Note DSPD conditions take priority in case of conflict.

Project Guidelines

Research Network Funding†

Funding Limits	<p>The maximum funding request is \$250,000 over a maximum of 3 years. The funding request must cover the entire project budget.</p> <p>There is no minimum funding limit.</p>
Project length	<p>Maximum of 3 years. Funding will be provided in 1 year increments with the option to extend the project in a stage-gated manner, subject to annual review. The funds will be paid in instalments, on signing of a project agreement and acceptance of each milestone and deliverable until the final report.</p>
Co-contribution	<p>Applications must demonstrate the ability to match or exceed (in cash or in-kind) the level of funds requested.</p> <p>Both cash and in-kind contributions will be assessed favourably.</p>

†Based on DSPD. Note DSPD conditions take priority in case of conflict.

Project Guidelines

Research Network Funding†

Eligible cash expenditure	<p>Personnel: Salaries & fellowships (plus direct on-costs) and student scholarships or stipends. Calculated as per the Standard Rate for research salaries applied in the DSPD (representing on-costs and non-salary costs). [(Direct Salary Costs + Direct Salary On-costs) x 1.40] + (Non-Salary Costs x 1.15)].</p> <p>Facilities: University infrastructure costs, services, access to equipment and facilities.</p> <p>Materials/Consumables: Direct research costs including materials, consumables, and operational expenses.</p> <p>Travel: Domestic and international travel costs for directly related fieldwork, necessary collaboration activities, and conferences.</p> <p>Other: Directly related, justifiable costs not considered above.</p>
Ineligible cash expenditure	<p>Activities already funded by other Australian Government schemes.</p> <p>Capital works, minor or major equipment or infrastructure.</p> <p>Basic facilities (accommodation, library, IT, telecommunications).</p>

†Based on DSPD. Note DSPD conditions take priority in case of conflict.

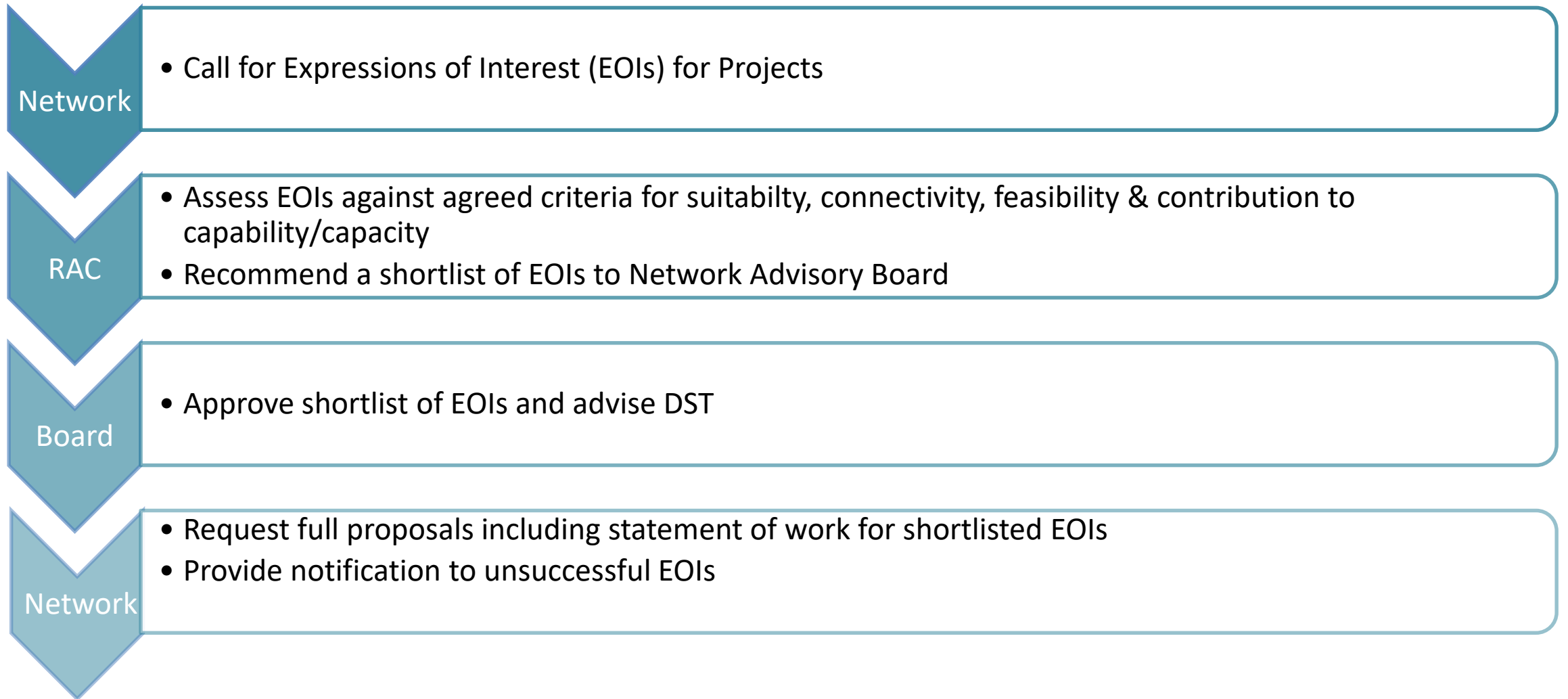
Project Guidelines

In-kind Contribution†

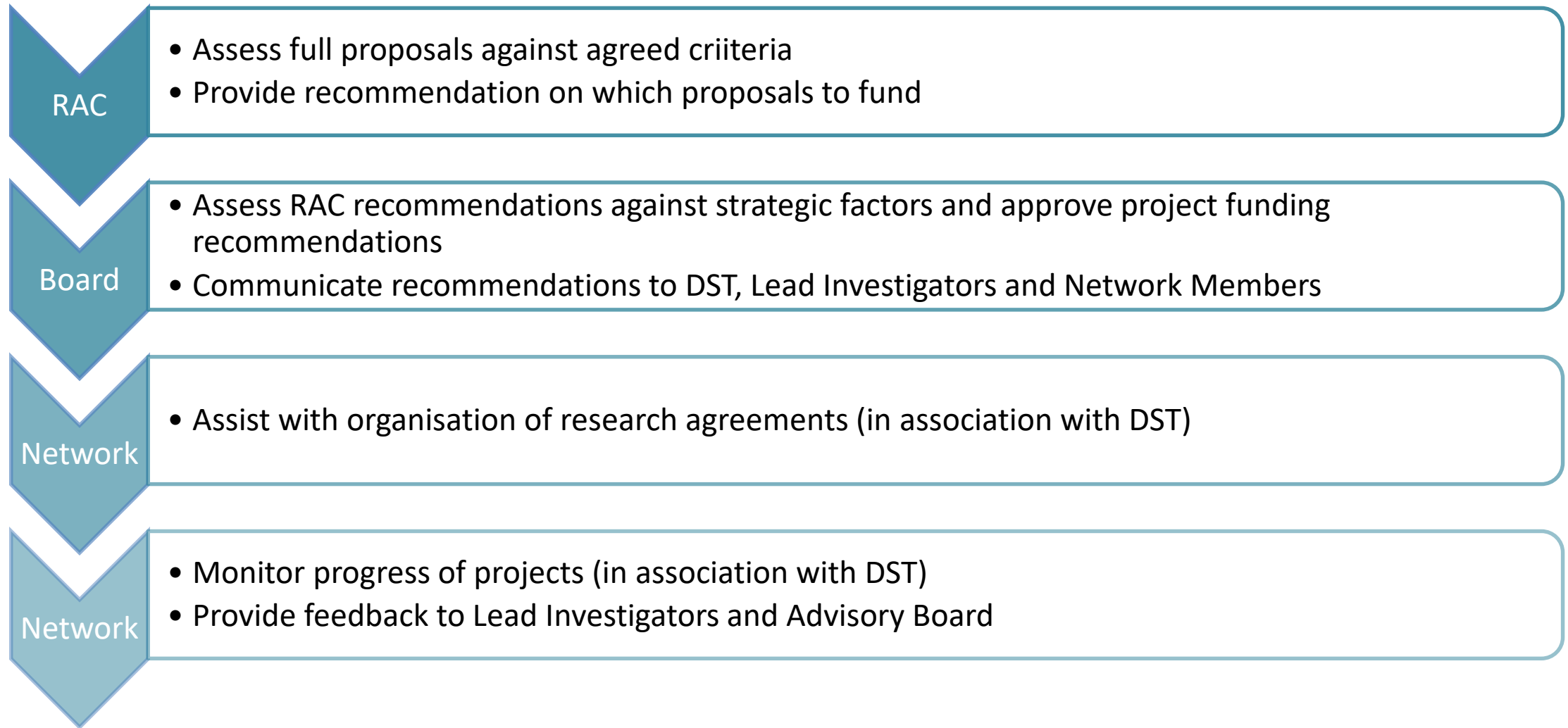
Eligible contributions	<p>Personnel: calculated as per the rates applied in the DSPD (as above) for research personnel.</p> <p>Facilities: Access to capital items or services based on proportional internal running costs and depreciation by usage.</p> <p>Indirect costs: Indirect research costs.</p>
Ineligible contributions	<p>Development costs for existing equipment, facilities, materials, or systems.</p> <p>Commercial or charge-out rates for access to facilities or services.</p>

†Based on DSPD. Note DSPD conditions take priority in case of conflict.

Assessment Process



Assessment Process



Selection Criteria

Demonstrated alignment of the research proposal with the advertised RN-UDS focus and Strategic Investment Plan are mandatory criteria.

Eligible EOIs and proposals will be evaluated by the Network's Research Advisory Committee (RAC) against four technical and strategic criteria – Suitability, Connectivity, Feasibility and Contribution to Australian Capability.

All criteria have equal weighting.

Criteria	Factors
Suitability	The degree of innovation and quality of research applied to a problem of significance Extent to which the proposal increases the knowledge base Research rather than development based
Connectivity	Extent to which the problem and solution identifies and involves an appropriate multi-disciplinary approach - <i>and/or</i> Extent to which the proposal involves Defence and/or develops cross- and inter-disciplinary relationships

Selection Criteria

Criteria	Factors
Feasibility	Extent to which the proposal is likely to meet its stated objectives i.e. through track record of research team - <i>and/or</i> Extent to which the proposal addresses and manages risk of failure to deliver research outcomes
Contribution to Australian Capability	Contribution of the proposal to the development of Australia's future research capability and capacity Level of co-contribution

An EOI or proposal may be rejected because the Network determines that it is not germane to the Strategic Investment Plan, the suggested work has been done before or the EOI or proposal is non-compliant. In these cases the application will not be subject to further process.

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