Potential Bid for Round 26

PROSPECTUS

Next-Gen Visitor Economy COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE

Supercharging a sustainable visitor economy through AI and smart technologies.

www.visitoreconomycrc.com.au

Redesigning Australia's visitor economy for the next generation of consumers and businesses, building stronger businesses and communities and competitive destinations.

As the world's attention turns to Australia in the lead-up to the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop AI and digital technologies to transform Australia's visitor economy to be a world leader in innovative, digitally enhanced tourism and travel experiences and destinations.

What is a CRC?

The Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Program was established by the Australian Government in 1990 to support industry-led, medium to long-term research collaborations to help solve industry-identified problems.

"As international travel reaches full recovery, the challenge focuses on using AI to improve personalized services, streamline operations, and elevate customer engagement, delivering scalable solutions that bring measurable results"

(United Nations Tourism)

Read report here

The Opportunity

There are critical industry problems for the visitor economy that require collaborative research and development (R&D) solutions, including:

Next-Gen tourism competitiveness

Improving the quality and sustainability of our visitor services and experiences is critical to successfully compete in future visitor markets, moving beyond post-pandemic recovery and achieving the Australian Government's THRIVE 2030 target to growing the industry from $166 to $230 billion by 2030. In an increasingly competitive international market, attracting international visitors and delivering high-quality, good value domestic holidays requires innovative approaches and technologies that enhance existing offerings and create new, engaging experiences.

Next-Gen tourism productivity & profitability

Developing and deploying advances in AI and other digital technologies enable a step-change in industry productivity and value creation. Approximately 95% of tourism businesses in Australia are small businesses. Better data for timely decision-making and technology innovations can help SMEs compete more effectively and reduce the cost of doing business.

Australia's visitor economy

2.9% of Australia's GDP

Worth $78 billion

1 in 7 businesses

355,600 tourism-related businesses

1 in 23 jobs

Directly employs over 600,000 people

AI and automation is expected to generate up to

$600 billion a year

towards Australia's GDP by 2030.

Next-Gen tourism sustainability

Global consumer markets are increasingly seeking more responsible and sustainable travel options that tourism businesses in Australia aspire to deliver. To meet this demand, innovative technologies are required to facilitate low-carbon travel, support experiences with regenerative outcomes, and connect the visitor economy with nature restoration and community initiatives.

Next-Gen tourism dispersal to the regions

Australia's visitor economy is vital to its regional areas, driving job creation and economic development. By 2023, Australia's target is that 40% of visitor spending will occur in regional Australia. Achieving this requires innovative approaches that enable visitor dispersal to these areas, improving the capacity of communities to host tourists, and maximise the economic and social benefits. Creating quality jobs and fostering sustainable growth is central to securing the long-term future of the industry.

Next-Gen tourism workforce

Developing an AI-augmented and digitally skilled workforce requires innovative solutions not only to train, but also to attract, retain and manage talent is a persistent challenge for the industry. This issue is particularly pronounced in regional Australia, where difficulties in building a robust workforce hinder the ability to service current and future growth in visitor demand.

We aim to build Next-Gen solutions to tackle these issues and promote a more sustainable, productive and competitive future for Australia's visitor economy.

Our vision

The Next Gen Visitor Economy CRC will seek to lead the transformation of the visitor economy by pioneering cutting-edge technologies, innovative business models, and sustainable practices that deliver unparalleled visitor experiences, drive productivity and competitiveness, and foster resilient, regenerative destinations for future generations.

Our mission

To harness the power of AI, innovative technologies, and collaboration to develop world-leading visitor experiences and destinations.

The Next Gen Visitor Economy CRC will:

- Uncover what consumers want next drawing from the vast amounts of data to enable businesses to anticipate opportunities and invest in the next generation of visitor experiences.
- Co-design breakthrough AI and other technologies that optimise business operations and planning, improving tourism workforce opportunities, productivity, and service quality of visitor experiences and destinations.
- Drive the creation of sustainable and resilient visitor destinations by designing and deploying cutting-edge technologies, supporting regenerative tourism initiatives, monitoring environmental and community well-being, and empowering regional and First Nations-led development.

Through our work, we aim to drive regional development and celebrate and empower First Nations.

The opportunity

The next round of the CRC program is expected to close in early 2025. We are keen to discuss opportunities for **you** to become a partner in the Next-Gen Visitor Economy CRC to achieve your R&D outcomes and future business strategy.

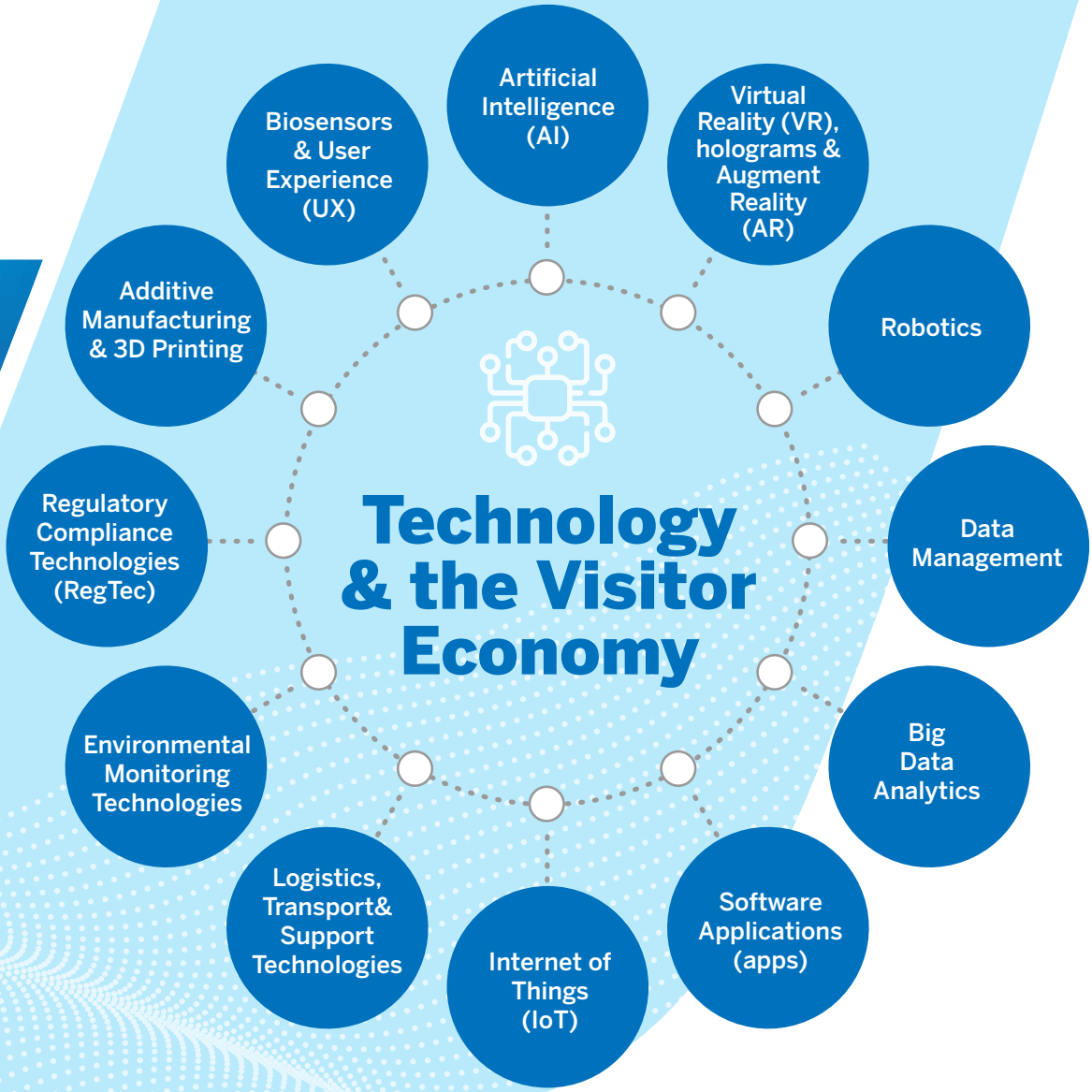
Get up to 50% of eligible project costs for a medium-to-long-term R&D collaboration.

Benefits of participating

This is a unique opportunity to be part of an ambitious research program that leverages Commonwealth funding over 7 years.

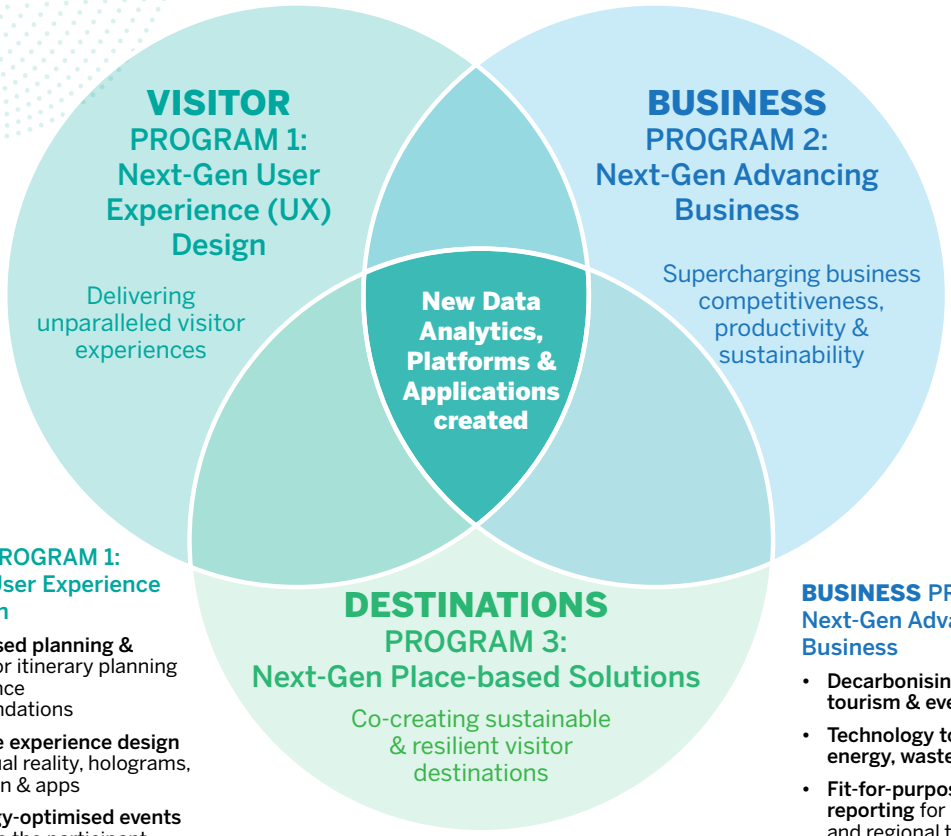
As a partner, you will gain first priority access to cutting-edge data & knowledge to help you forecast, grow & innovate. Other benefits include:

- Contribute to building a more profitable, resilient, digitally-advanced, low-carbon visitor economy.
- Access an extra 50% of funding for your project & university expertise and resources to help you achieve your R&D goals.
- Claim tax rebate on qualifying cash contributions under the R&D Tax Incentive Program.
- Collaborate with a national network of university experts & other industry partners to solve the most critical challenges.
- Build your staff & leadership team's digital literacy through the education & training program.
- Tap into the PhD program to advance your goals & create the next generation of tourism thought-leaders.
- Create a legacy from the 2032 Brisbane Olympic & Paralympic Games.



Next-Gen Visitor Economy CRC Research Programs

In collaboration with partner businesses, industry, government and university levels, supercharging a sustainable visitor economy through AI and smart technologies, developed via the below program projects.



VISITOR PROGRAM 1: Next-Gen User Experience (UX) Design

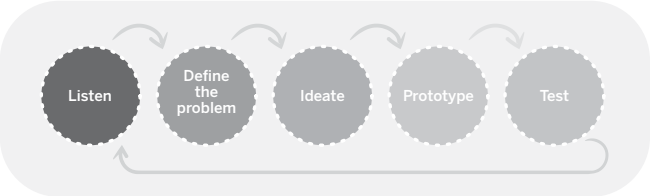
- **AI-optimised planning & booking** for itinerary planning & experience recommendations
- **Immersive experience design** using virtual reality, holograms, automation & apps
- **Technology-optimised events** to enhance the participant experience & improve environmental & social sustainability
- **Visitor safety technology** to improve visitor marine & beach safety
- **First Nations experience development** to tell our national story & experience Australia through a First Nations lens

DESTINATION PROGRAM 3: Next-Gen Place-based Solutions

- **Regional dispersal technology solutions** to optimise & manage visitor density
- **Technology-enabled wayfinding,** digital twins & place making
- **In-destination visitor servicing** & next-gen visitor information centres
- **Brand tracker & benchmarking**
- **Visitor & community sentiment tracker**
- **Visitor economy indicators** for regions & businesses
- **Economic tailwinds:** Capturing the total value of business event visitors

BUSINESS PROGRAM 2: Next-Gen Advancing Business

- **Decarbonising transport, tourism & events**
- **Technology to reduce energy, waste & water**
- **Fit-for-purpose ESG reporting** for businesses and regional tourism organisations
- **Workforce technology solutions**
- **Technology adoption** in family & Indigenous businesses
- **SMART solutions to optimise efficiencies** to facilitate the visitor experience (e.g. airport) & automate operations



KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Education & Training Program

- Industry translation epicentres
- Technology upskilling for business
- Market diversification training
- Training materials for TAFE and Universities
- First Nations pathways
- PhD program
- Annual Partner Bootcamps

How to get involved

The Griffith Institute for Tourism is currently seeking in-principle support from business, industry association, and government partners to potentially establish a CRC from 2026 to 2033.

To discuss how you could participate, please contact:

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