DiscoveryHUB DeepTech Pre-Accelerator Application Guide

Use this guide to help you fill in your application. The guide covers eligibility, IP, selection criteria, and gives further detail to each question in the application form.

Apply by filling in and submitting the online application form. This is the only way your application will be reviewed. This guide is a resource to help you complete it, not to replace it. Before you apply, check that you meet all four eligibility criteria. In particular, the program is designed to support technologies developed from RMIT research and intellectual property, rather than general business ideas.

Before you start, be aware that the form can't be saved. If you close it or your browser times out, your answers will be lost.

We recommend drafting your answers in a separate document outside of the application form (such as a Word document). When you are ready to submit your application in full, paste your answers into the online form and submit in one sitting.

Overview

DiscoveryHUB helps RMIT Researchers and HDR students translate research into real-world impact. It is open to researchers from across the University, from DeepTech and engineering to the social, behavioural and design sciences. It is delivered by RMIT Activator in partnership with Research Partnerships & Translation (RP&T). DiscoveryHUB is supported by Innovation Victoria. This first intake is open to research from any discipline.

You don't need a business plan, a registered company or a background in business to apply. Most teams who apply won't have spoken to potential users yet, and that's expected. We're looking for RMIT technologies with real-world potential, and the researchers behind them who are ready to explore a pathway beyond the lab.

At a glance

What it is	A two-day Bootcamp to test the commercial potential for your research, followed by a 12-week pre-accelerator for teams who want to test whether their research could become a startup. Upon graduating the pre-accelerator program, teams will move into the 12-month Activator residency, starting July 2027.
This intake	Multi-disciplinary: open to research from any discipline
Places	About 40 participants in Bootcamp; 15 project places in the pre-accelerator
Cost	Free for participants
Funded by	Innovation Victoria and RMIT University
Who it's for	RMIT Researchers and HDR students with a research-derived technology, method or intervention
Time Commitment	All in-person Bootcamp sessions (8 & 10 February, 9:30am–4:30 pm), then approximately 8 hours a week for 12 weeks, including a weekly in-person session on Tuesdays, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
Where	In-person at RMIT Activator, Melbourne Campus
How to apply	Online application form: **Link here** Applications close on Sunday 24 January 2027, 11:59pm AEDT
Program Dates	**Starts:** Monday 8 March 2027 **Ends:** Friday 4 June 2027
Questions	hello.activator@rmit.edu.au

Pathways to impact

There is no single route from research to real-world use. Which route fits depends on your technology, its stage, the market and what you want from it. The main pathways are:

Pathway	What it means	Often suits
New venture (spinout)	A new company is formed to develop the technology and take it to market.	Platform technologies, or markets where no existing player has the incentive to develop it.
Licensing	An established company takes the technology to market under licence, usually for fees or royalties.	Technologies that slot into an existing product line or distribution channel.
Industry partnership	You develop the technology further with a partner who brings capability, capital or access.	Technologies needing scale-up, regulatory work or infrastructure you can't build alone.
Continued translational research	Further development through translational funding, clinical pathways, standards or policy work.	Technologies that need more evidence before any commercial route is viable.
Open dissemination	The technology is released for public benefit rather than commercial return.	Public-good technologies where adoption matters more than capture.

How this program approaches the pathways to impact

Bootcamp doesn't assume a new venture is the answer. It helps you establish who the users are, how big the opportunity is, what the barriers to adoption are, and what it would take to reach a pilot. Those are the same questions whichever pathway you end up on, and working through them is what tells you which one fits.

The pre-accelerator program centres on venture building. The coaching, the sessions and the milestones all work on the assumption that you are testing whether a company can be built, so a place in the cohort calls for at least a strong hypothesis that a new venture is the right route.

Once you are in the program, finding that a venture is not viable is a success, not a failure. Reaching that answer with evidence — faster and with less expense than you would have on your own — is exactly the kind of result the program exists to produce. Is this program right for you?

This program is suited to people with a specific technology, method or invention and an interest in exploring how to translate it into real-world impact – through a new venture, a licence, a partnership or another pathway. While you don't need to have a business idea or be committed to starting a venture to apply, the program's next stage focuses on exploring whether a venture is the right pathway.

It may not be the right time if you:

- Have a business idea rather than a research-derived advance. RMIT Activator runs other programs that may suit you better — see rmit.edu.au/partner/hubs/activator
- Don't yet have a specific invention, method or research result to build on
- Are working on IP owned by an external organisation — another university, institute or employer
- Can't commit 8 hours a week, or can't attend Bootcamp
- Are looking for research funding rather than support to translate a technology

What you'll get if your application is successful

- Entry into a 12-week pre-accelerator for teams who want to test if their research could become a startup
- A clear pathway and a handover to RP&T for teams whose route is licensing, partnership or further translation
- A dedicated coach with lived entrepreneurial experience matched to your team
- 12 months of ongoing support through the Activator's Residency Program from July 2027, including co-working space, masterclasses and mentorship.
- Opportunity for equity-free grant funding to support venture-building activities
- AI enablement: guidance on exploring, applying and scaling AI responsibly

Eligibility

To apply, your team must meet all four criteria below. Eligibility is checked on a pass/fail basis, separately from the assessment of your application (see 'What we look for').

Criterion	You're eligible if…
1. RMIT affiliation	The lead applicant from your team must be RMIT-affiliated* and committed to attending at least 80% of the program: *Current HDR candidates (PhD or Masters by research) and current Academic Staff
2. A research-derived advance	Your application is built on new scientific discoveries, research or advanced engineering, and on IP that would be hard to reproduce without your research. This is what DiscoveryHUB means by DeepTech: it's about the technology or method you're developing, not the industry you work in. This program is for innovations that rest on a specific research-derived advance, where getting it to work in the real world is still a substantive part of the challenge. That advance might be technical, but it might equally be a method, a model, a protocol or an instrument. What matters is that there is a defensible body of work behind it, not that it involves hardware. **A useful test:** could someone with general industry knowledge reproduce this without your research? If not, you are likely in scope. **Examples from science and engineering:** advanced materials, biotechnology and medtech, photonics, robotics and automation, novel manufacturing processes, energy and climate technologies, quantum, advanced computing and AI methods with a novel technical core. **Examples from social, behavioural and design research:** a validated behavioural intervention or program model; a psychometric or diagnostic instrument; a clinical or therapeutic protocol; a digital mental health tool built on tested principles; an assessment, training or education methodology with evidence behind it; a measurement framework or index; a decision-support or policy model; a design method or participatory process developed and tested through research. **Generally, out of scope:** innovations where the novelty sits in the business model, the service design or the application of well-established knowledge, with no specific research-derived advance underneath. Activator has other programs better suited to you — see rmit.edu.au/partner/hubs/activator
3. IP that RMIT and your team can act on	The IP behind your application must **be owned by RMIT** The program is not open to IP owned by an individual or an external party. That includes another university, a research institute, a current or former employer, or any other organisation outside RMIT. See The technology and IP on page 4.
4. Availability	At least one core team member can attend all Bootcamp sessions in person (8 & 10 February 2027), and you or your team can commit approximately 8 hours a week for 12 weeks. To graduate the program, you will need to attend the program in full and take part in the end-of-program showcase event**.**

Not sure whether you're eligible? Contact hello.activator@rmit.edu.au before you apply.

Application process and key dates

Stage	What happens	What you need to do	Date
1. Online application	You tell us about your technology, your team and what you want your research to achieve.	Complete the online form.	Closes 24 January 2027, 11:59pm
2. Application review	A panel from Activator and RP&T checks eligibility and readiness, reading your application alongside your NOD where you have one. This stage is about fit, not competition. R&I also reviews the IP position.	Nothing. We'll email you the outcome, and R&I will contact you if your IP needs clarifying.	Outcome by 29 January 2027
3. Bootcamp	Workshops to explore use cases, users, market/impact opportunity, barriers to adoption and the route to a pilot — and establish a preliminary assessment of which translation pathway fits your technology.	Attend all sessions. The work you do here forms your Bootcamp submission.	8 & 10 February 2027
4. Bootcamp submission	Teams pursuing a new venture finalise their submission using the work from Bootcamp. Teams on another pathway are referred to RP&T instead.	Make your submission. Confirm supervisor, PI or employer approval and time allowances if you need them.	Due 21 February 2027, 11:59pm
5. Selection and offers	The panel selects the venture-building cohort. It's a competitive process: only 15 projects will be selected.	Accept your offer if successful and confirm your commitment.	Offers by 26 February 2027
6. Coach–founder matching	A speed-matching session where you meet with program coaches.	Attend the session.	TBC, between 2–4 March 2027
7. Program starts	You're paired with your coach and the program begins.	Get started!	8 March 2027

How to prepare and apply

- Check whether you satisfy the four eligibility criteria.
- **If you have lodged a NOD**, you can use that same information to respond to questions in section four of the application form. If there have been changes since lodging your NOD, there is space in section four to include further detail about this. You'll also need your RMIT IPC reference number.
- **If you haven't lodged a NOD**, please complete section four anyway. They are short, and the guide shows what each one is looking for.
- If you're a current HDR candidate or staff member, let your supervisor or manager know you're applying. Formal approval isn't needed until Stage 4, but early conversations make that step easier.
- Check your availability for all key dates: Bootcamp, the coach–founder matching session, and program sessions and milestones.
- Read the application questions below and draft your answers in a separate document (the online form cannot be saved).
- **Submit your application form before 24 January 2027, 11:59pm.**

Tips for a strong application

- **Lead with the problem, not the technology,** and be as specific as possible. For example, "hospitals" is vague; "ICU nurses managing sepsis risk" is specific. Write for a non-expert and avoid jargon — the panel includes people from outside your field.
- If your technology could solve more than one problem, tell us the one you think is most promising. Bootcamp will help you explore the others
- **Be honest about what you don't know.** Uncertainty is expected. Bootcamp exists to work through it.
- **Avoid writing confidential information in your answers.** We don't need the technical detail of how your technology works. If you're unsure, check with RP&T.

What we look for

We assess applications at two points, and each asks something different of you.

Stage 2: Application review

This review makes sure teams are eligible and ready for Bootcamp. Bootcamp has places for about 40 participants. Each team member who attends counts as one participant. We are not choosing the most promising ideas at this stage. Applications are assessed on:

Criterion	What we're looking for	Where in the form
Eligibility	Meets all four eligibility criteria. Pass/fail	Sections 1,2,3 and 5
A research-derived advance	Built on new scientific discoveries, research and advanced engineering, including method or intervention, with IP that would be hard to reproduce without your research	Sections 3 and 4
Clarity	You can explain the potential application of your technology in plain language	Section 4
Drive	Genuine motivation to see the technology used in the world and the time to commit. This carries the most weight.	Section 5
Team readiness	The right people are involved, and anyone whose support you need knows you're applying	Section 2

Applications may not progress if the technology falls outside the program's scope, or if answers show little effort (for example, very brief or generic responses).

The IP position is reviewed separately by RP&T and is not a scored criterion. An unresolved IP question may delay a team rather than exclude them.

Stage 5: Selection and offer

The program that follows Bootcamp is where teams test whether their research could be used as the basis for a startup. The pre-accelerator has 15 places.

Your Bootcamp submission is assessed on five equally weighted criteria (20% each):

- **Opportunity:** You have identified a clear use case and the specific user and customer who needs it, and used secondary research and available data to show there is genuine demand.
- **The case for a venture:** Your business model shows how a new venture could create value in the market you've chosen to focus on and gives an evidence-based case for why a startup is the best way to get your research used. You don't need certainty, just a case worth testing.
- **Pathway to adoption:** What stands in the way of your proposed startup, such as technical, regulatory, cost or time challenges, and a realistic first step towards pilot.
- **Impact**: The difference your research could make if it succeeds. Show who benefits, roughly at what scale, and how you'd measure its effectiveness.
- **Team and commitment:** The capacity and time to do the work, with any necessary approvals and endorsement in place.

Application questions

Everyone answers the same questions about what the technology is, what makes it different and what stage it has reached. There is no wrong answer, and your answer does not affect your chances of a place.

The form has six sections and may take around 10-20mins. Required questions are marked with an asterisk (*). Word limits are maximums, not targets. Please ensure that the person completing this application form is the lead applicant.

Tip: Copy these questions into a separate document and draft your answers there. The form can't be saved.

A note on confidentiality

Keep your answers non-confidential. Describe what your technology does and why it matters, rather than the technical detail of how it works. Public disclosure before IP protection is in place can affect whether an invention can be patented, so if you are unsure, contact ip.commercialisation@rmit.edu.au before you apply.

Section 1: Lead applicant details

1. First name*

2. Surname*

3. Preferred name

4. Email*

5. Mobile*

6. Which state is your primary residence? *

The program is funded by Innovation Victoria and is mainly for people who live in Victoria, so we need this for eligibility and reporting.

7. Which option best describes your current connection to RMIT?*

- HDR candidate (PhD or Masters by research)
- Staff (academic)

8. How did you hear about the program?*

Select from a list.

The following questions help us track our progress in supporting underrepresented researchers and innovators in the RMIT community. Responses are optional and confidential, are not shared with the review panel, and are used only for program evaluation and improvement. If you're offered a place, we'll ask whether you consent to these answers also being shared with innovation Victoria, which funds the program, for reporting purposes.

9. Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Yes / No / Prefer not to say

10. Which gender do you identify with?

Woman / Man / Non-binary / Prefer to self-describe / Prefer not to say

11. Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?

Yes / No / Prefer not to say

Section 2: Your team

This section is about who wants to take part in the program. If your technology arose from research, that may be a smaller group than everyone who contributed to it.

1. Which other team members are applying with you? Please provide the full name, role and RMIT affiliation (if any) for each person. Please also give the state and postcode where each person is located.

Solo applicants are welcome. Not everyone who contributed to the technology needs to take part.

2. Do all contributors to the technology know that you're applying?*

We ask because taking part can affect everyone involved. This isn't a formal approval step.

Yes / Not yet / I'm the only contributor

3. Name of your Principal Investigator (PI), supervisor or manager (if applicable).

4. Are they aware that you're applying?*

Formal approval isn't required until the Bootcamp submission stage.

Yes / Not yet

Section 3: The technology and IP

1. Which Academic College does your technology belong under?*

If it spans more than one College, select the one it sits with most closely.

- College of Business and Law
- College of Design and Social Context
- College of Vocational Education
- STEM College
- Not applicable — the technology was developed outside RMIT

2. What is the name or working title of your technology?*

3. Which best describes what you want to translate?*

See "Eligibility" in this guide for examples of each. If you select the fourth option, you'll be asked a follow-up.

- A technology or device grounded in science or engineering
- A method, intervention, protocol or instrument developed through research
- A model, framework or methodology with an evidence base behind it
- An application of existing knowledge or technology in a new setting
- Not sure

4. Has a Notification of IP Disclosure (NOD) been submitted to RP&T for this technology?*

If you need to lodge one, contact ip.commercialisation@rmit.edu.au. You can still apply while it's in progress.

Yes / In progress / No

5. What is your RMIT IPC reference number?

Only shown if your NOD is lodged or in progress. If you don't have the number, give us the title of your disclosure and roughly when you lodged it.

6. Who else has contributed to developing the technology?* (100 words max)

Include collaborators and co-inventors and whether or not they are applying with you.

7. Have you filed, or do you plan to file, any patents or other IP protection?*

Not all research-derived work is patentable, and that's fine. RP&T can advise on what protection applies to yours.

Already filed / Planning to file / No / Not sure

Section 4: Technology and opportunity details

These questions mirror key sections of the Notification of IP Disclosure (NOD) form. If you have lodged a NOD, you can copy your answers straight across. If you haven't, answer them from scratch — they are short, and each one says what we're looking for.

1. If you have submitted a NOD, has anything changed since your submission?*

Tick "yes" if new results, new conversations or a change in direction mean your answers here differ from what you lodged. Updating them is encouraged, not a problem.

- No — my answers below match my NOD
- Yes — I've updated my answers below
- Not applicable — I haven't lodged a NOD

2. If yes, briefly, what has changed?* (60 words max)

Shown only if you selected "yes". One or two lines is plenty — the panel reads your application alongside your NOD.

3. What has been developed, what does it do, and how does it do it?* (100 words max)

Mirrors the NOD Technology Outline. One non-technical sentence per point is enough.

***What we're looking for:** A clear, jargon-free explanation. If someone outside your discipline can understand it, you've nailed it.*

4. Which technology area best describes it?*

Mirrors the NOD. Select the single main category.

- Advanced materials
- Biomedical devices and diagnostics
- Computing and big data solutions
- Design and arts
- Energy and sustainability
- Formulation technologies

- Manufacturing technologies
- Mental health
- Sensors, devices and optoelectronics
- Therapeutics
- UAVs and robotics
- Vaccine and drug delivery platforms
- Water and environmental
- Other (please describe)

5. List up to five keywords related to your technology.*

Mirrors the NOD.

6. What societal or industry problem does your technology address, and in what way?* (150 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Part 2.1.

***What we're looking for:** A specific problem and a specific group of people or organisations affected by it. You don't need market data.*

7. How does your technology address that problem?* (100 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Part 2.1.

8. In what way is this solution unique?* (150 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Part 2.1. Keep your answer non-confidential — describe what it achieves rather than how it works in technical detail.

***What we're looking for:** A sense of what is genuinely new, and why that difference matters to someone using it.*

9. Has the problem or need been validated by external stakeholders? If so, who gave feedback and what did they say? (100 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Part 2.1. For example: potential users, industry partners, clinicians, government or community organisations.

***What we're looking for:** This isn't required. If you have had conversations, tell us what surprised you or changed your thinking.*

10. What Technology Readiness Level (TRL) is the technology at?*

Mirrors the NOD, Part 2.2.

- TRL 1–3 — Basic principles observed and/or initial proof-of-concept formulated or demonstrated
- TRL 4–5 — Technology validation in lab and/or relevant environment complete
- TRL 6–7 — Technology or prototype system demonstrated in an operational or industrially relevant environment
- Not sure

***What we're looking for:** Your starting point, so we can build a balanced cohort. Early-stage technologies are welcome.*

11. Who do you see as the end users of your technology, and what advantage does it give them over current solutions?* (150 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Part 3.1.

***What we're looking for:** A specific user group. "Hospitals" is vague; "ICU nurses managing sepsis risk" is specific.*

12. Are you aware of any barriers to adoption, including any regulatory approval or policy change that would be needed?* (100 words max)

Mirrors the NOD, Parts 4.1 and 4.3.

***What we're looking for:** Awareness of what stands in the way. Bootcamp works through this in depth, so a partial answer is fine.*

13. What are the current funding sources for this research?* (60 words max)

Mirrors the NOD. Include the Workday PRJ number or TRIM CON contract number where you have one. Include NA if there is no funding.

14. Has the technology been publicly disclosed, or is a disclosure planned?*

Mirrors the NOD, Part 1. Includes publications, conference presentations, theses, pitches, media and public demonstrations. If you select anything other than "No", RP&T will follow up with you separately. Public disclosure before IP protection is in place can affect whether an invention can be patented.

Yes, already disclosed / Yes, a disclosure is planned / No / Not sure

15. Does AI play a role in your technology, or could it play a role in how you develop it? (60 words max)

Optional. For example, AI might be part of the technology itself, or a tool you use to analyse data or speed up development.

Section 5: Motivation and commitment

This is the part we can't learn from anywhere else.

1. What impact do you want this technology to have in the world, and why now?* (150 words max)

***What we're looking for:** Genuine motivation, and a sense of what getting it out of the lab would mean to you. This is the most important answer in your application.*

2. What would you most like to get out of the program?* (100 words max)

***What we're looking for:** What you're hoping to learn or resolve. It also helps us shape Bootcamp around the cohort.*

3. Which pathway are you currently leaning towards? See "Pathways to impact" in this guide.*

Your answer doesn't commit you to anything and doesn't affect your chances of a place.

- Starting a company (Startup or spinout)
- Licensing to an established company
- An industry partnership or collaborative development
- Continued translational research
- I genuinely don't know yet, and want to work it out

***What we're looking for:** There is no preferred answer here, including "don't know". It tells us how to shape Bootcamp around the cohort.*

4. If Bootcamp showed that a startup could work for your research, how would you feel about exploring it further?*

The pre-accelerator that follows Bootcamp is where teams test whether a startup could work, so it helps us to know. An honest answer is more useful to us than an enthusiastic one.

- Excited — it's what I'm hoping for
- Open to it, with reservations I'd want to work through
- Unlikely — I'd want someone else to take it forward
- Not sure yet

5. Have you worked with industry, partners or end users, or explored commercialising research before? (100 words max)

No prior experience is needed to participate in the pre-accelerator program.

6. Roughly how many hours per week could your team commit, including work between sessions?*

We expect participants to commit around 8 hours per week during the program.

Less than 3 / 3–5 / 5–10 / More than 10

7. Is there anything about your circumstances we should know when considering your availability? (100 words max)

For example: full-time work, caring responsibilities, visa conditions or thesis deadlines. This won't count against you.

8. Is there anything else you would like the panel to know? (100 words max)

Section 6: Declarations

1. Declaration: Personal information and privacy*

By submitting this application, you understand and agree that RMIT is collecting personal information from you that will be used for the DiscoveryHUB Pre-accelerator application process by RMIT Activator. We use Airtable to manage the data and project. This means your information will be transmitted to and stored by Airtable on servers located outside of Australia. By completing this form, you consent to your information being collected, used and disclosed as set out in the RMIT Privacy Statement and Airtable Privacy Policy. You can request to amend your information or withdraw consent by contacting RMIT Activator at hello.activator@rmit.edu.au. If you take part in the program, RMIT will share your name, email, state and postcode, team and your program and post-program status with Innovation Victoria, which funds the program, for its reporting. Your gender and cultural identity will be shared only if you consent. Innovation Victoria may also publicise participants' involvement in the program, and we may invite you to take part in a public case study.

2. Declaration: Information is true and you have the right to disclose it*

I hereby acknowledge that all the information provided in this application is true, and that I have the right to disclose it. Any false or misleading information will result in an automatic dismissal of my application.

3. Declaration: Intellectual property*

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the IP behind this application is owned by RMIT. Where another organisation owns or co-owns it, I have disclosed this in Section 3 and understand that the position must be resolved with RP&T before the program starts. I understand that taking part in the program does not assign, transfer or grant any rights to commercialise the IP. Those rights remain governed by RMIT's Intellectual Property Policy and procedures and any agreements that apply.

4. Declaration: Bootcamp attendance*

If I progress to Bootcamp (8 & 10 February 2027), at least one team member will be able to attend all sessions in person at RMIT Activator.

5. Declaration: Program Commitment*

If I'm offered a place in the pre-accelerator, I commit to attending the program in full and taking part in the end-of-program showcase. I will also complete the program surveys and keep the RMIT Activator team updated on how my project progresses for 12 months after the program, including through the Activator Residency.

6. At RMIT, we are committed to supporting adjustments.

If you have an accessibility requirement, we would be happy to assist. Please let us know how you would like us to get in touch with you.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Eligibility

How do I know if my work is in scope?

Ask whether someone with general industry knowledge could reproduce it without your research. If not, it's likely in scope. If the innovation is in how you package or deliver well-established knowledge, it probably isn't. If you're unsure, email hello.activator@rmit.edu.au before applying — we would rather answer the question than have you rule yourself out.

I'm a social scientist, not an engineer. Is this program for me?

Yes. The program is open to research from across the University. A validated intervention, a diagnostic instrument, an assessment methodology or an evidence-based program model can all be translated, and the questions Bootcamp works through — who needs this, what stands in the way, how does it reach them — are the same whatever the discipline. The examples under Eligibility include both science and engineering and social, behavioural and design research.

Can I apply as a solo researcher?

Yes. Solo applicants are welcome. You may find it valuable to bring in team members as the program progresses.

How is this different from the LaunchHUB Pre-accelerator Program?

DiscoveryHUB is for RMIT researchers and HDR students where the question is still how best to get the technology into the world. LaunchHUB is for RMIT-affiliated founders already building an impact startup. If you're unsure which suits you, contact RMIT Activator at hello.activator@rmit.edu.au.

I don't have a business background. Can I still apply?

Yes. Most applicants have no commercial experience. The program is built to teach you what you need.

Do I have to want to start a company, and what if Bootcamp points elsewhere?

Not to apply, and not to take part in Bootcamp — "not a venture" is a legitimate answer, and reaching it with evidence is a success, not a failure. The program after Bootcamp is a venture-building program, so a place in it means pursuing a new venture. Teams on a licensing, partnership or translational-research pathway are referred to RP&T to take it forward.

IP and disclosure

Do I need a NOD to apply?

No. If RMIT owns the IP but you haven't completed a Notification of IP Disclosure please contact the Intellectual Property and Commercialisation team at ip.commercialisation@rmit.edu.au as early as you can. You can apply while your NOD is in progress, and we'll check your disclosure status before Bootcamp.

What if I'm not sure who owns the IP or technology?

Your application won't be eligible until IP ownership is clear. Contact the Intellectual Property and Commercialisation team at ip.commercialisation@rmit.edu.au as early as you can to submit a NOD and confirm who owns it.

I did my PhD at another university. Can I apply with that research?

Not with IP that another university owns. Research done during a degree or employment at another institution is usually owned by that institution, and the program can't accept applications for research and IP not owned by RMIT.

My research isn't patentable. Does that matter?

No. Patents are one form of IP protection among several, and many translatable research outputs are protected by copyright, trademarks, confidentiality or simply by the expertise needed to deliver them well. R&I can advise on what applies to your work.

Who sees my application and my disclosure?

Your application is seen by the RMIT Activator and RMIT Research Partnerships &Translation (RP&T) review panel. Your NOD and IDD are shared with the panel only.

Will taking part affect my ability to publish?

Taking part doesn't stop you publishing. However, publicly disclosing an invention before IP protection is in place can affect whether it can be patented. Talk to RP&T before any publication, presentation or pitch that reveals how your invention works.

Time and commitment

I work full-time. Can I still take part?

Yes, if you can make the time. The program runs for 12 weeks from 8 March 2027 and expects around 8 hours a week — a 3-hour in-person workshop plus 5 or more hours of teamwork time. The weekly workshop runs during business hours (Tuesdays, 9:30am–12:30pm) at RMIT Activator, city campus. There is no session on Tuesday 30 March (Easter).

Do I need my supervisor's or manager's approval?

If you're a current HDR candidate or staff member, not to apply, but yes before you're accepted. During the Bootcamp submission stage you'll need to confirm their support and that you have time allowances approved.

Bootcamp and selection

What happens at Bootcamp?

Across two days, you'll work through use cases for your technology, identify potential users and customers, size the opportunity, and assess barriers to adoption and the pathway to a pilot. The work you produce forms the basis of your Bootcamp submission.

Do I need to attend in person?

At least one member of your team must be present at all Bootcamp sessions and must be one of the core team members.

If I'm not successful, can I apply again?

Yes. You are welcome to apply again for future cohorts.

Application process

Who can I contact with questions?

Program and eligibility questions: hello.activator@rmit.edu.au

IP, NOD and disclosure questions: ip.commercialisation@rmit.edu.au

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Commercialisation	Turning a technology into a product or service used outside the university. One form of translation, not the only one.
DeepTech	Technology built on new scientific discoveries, research or advanced engineering, with IP that is hard to reproduce. It describes the technology you're developing, not the industry it's used in.
Intellectual property (IP)	Creations of the mind, such as inventions, that can be legally protected.
Industry partnership	Developing a technology further with a partner who brings capability, capital or market access.
Licensing	Granting an existing company the right to use IP, usually in return for fees or royalties.
New venture (spinout)	A new company created to commercialise a technology.
Notification of IP Disclosure (NOD)	The form used to tell RP&T about potentially valuable IP arising from RMIT research. Required only where your technology arose from RMIT research.
Pilot	A small-scale, real-world trial of a technology with a potential user or customer.
Public disclosure	Sharing an invention publicly, such as in a publication, presentation, thesis or demonstration. Can affect patentability.
Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	A scale describing how far a technology has progressed from basic principles to proven operation. RP&T uses the bands TRL 1–3, 4–5 and 6–7.
Use case	A specific situation where a technology, method or intervention solves a problem for a particular user.
RMIT-affiliated	A current RMIT HDR candidate or Academic Staff.
RP&T	RMIT's Research Partnerships & Translation portfolio. Its Intellectual Property and Commercialisation team manages NODs, IP protection and commercialisation agreements.
Principal Investigator (PI)	The lead researcher responsible for a research project.
IPC reference number	The reference RP&T gives your NOD when you lodge it. You'll find it in RP&T's confirmation email.