

## **CYBER THE EARLY FOCUS OF NEW SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM**

Defence small businesses will be recruited to join the fight against cyber threats under a new industry support program being launched today.

Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price said Australian small businesses will receive funding to develop ambitious, game-changing capabilities for the Australian Defence Force.

The Defence Industry Competitive Evaluation Research Agreement (ICERA) will offer Australian small businesses significant opportunities to investigate innovative and visionary projects that will contribute to improving Defence industry's ability to support Australian Defence Force capability priorities.

Support of up to \$300,000 per proposal will be provided for projects for up to 18 months.

Minister Price said ICERA is being funded through Defence's Next Generation Technologies Fund, in a new scheme that will provide \$36 million over six years.

"Australia's strategic context is changing significantly and our defence strategy is responding to these changes," Minister Price said.

"This change is something which has been clearly highlighted in the *2020 Defence Strategic Update* that was released recently.

"Our small business sector has a more important role than ever in contributing to Defence's science and technology research priorities that support ADF capability needs.

"Which is why I welcome that the first focus of the ICERA initiative is targeting on cyber defence and cyber security."

Later rounds of ICERA are expected to focus on a range of other priority areas, including integrated intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, medical countermeasures, space, and trusted autonomous systems.

The Morrison Government is continuing to invest in Australia's growing defence industry, which is playing an essential role in our economic recovery post-COVID-19.

Successful projects may be considered for further funding or opportunities through other avenues and mechanisms.

For further information visit: [www.dst.defence.gov.au/icera](http://www.dst.defence.gov.au/icera)