

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2015-16 Additional Budget Estimates
11 February 2016

AGENCY: CSIRO

TOPIC: Accelerator program

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Carr

QUESTION No.: AI-160

The NISA announcement included just over \$20 million for an accelerator program.

- a. Is this the AcceleratiON program?
- b. Will the \$20 million in funding be supplemented with internal CSIRO funding? If so, how much?
- c. Will this accelerator have a single geographic base or be more of a network?
- d. Dr Marshall’s all-staff email refers a number of times to “deep-tech” companies and innovation. What is meant by this?
- e. Start-ups are quite different depending on the sector – for example, tech start-ups need far less capital than a manufacturing or biotech start-up; biotechs face a very long proof of concept and regulatory timeframe before they can be fully commercialised.
 - i. Will the CSIRO accelerator be focused on a particular sector?
 - ii. If not, how will it provide expertise and support across the range of commercialisation activities that might arise from CSIRO research?

ANSWER

- a. Yes.
- b. The \$5 million per annum of funding to be provided to CSIRO under NISA will be used for the expansion of the programme to include other publicly funded research organisations. CSIRO separately will continue to support its accelerator programme for proposals from the CSIRO catchment.
- c. The delivery plan for this initiative is currently under development. It is likely that the accelerator will have a base office and work as a network, however the network may include a few geographical nodes.
- d. This term refers to innovations (and associated companies) that are based on a true technological innovation or scientific discovery, for example in the fields of material science, life sciences, physical sciences, energy and clean tech.
- e.
 - i. No. The CSIRO accelerator is cross-sectoral.
 - ii. The CSIRO accelerator includes activities that are relevant to commercial activity across sectors (e.g. the “Lean Launchpad” training; mentoring). It also covers sector-and discipline-specific requirements for information, advice and mentoring by accessing sector experts on a case by case basis through networks, including Entrepreneurs in Residence and Innovation Mentors.