

Executive Summary

- **Industry Growth Program (Federal)** – *Funding: \$100,000–\$5,000,000* (matched up to 50%); *Deadline: Open (continuous)* – apply any time; *Focus: Commercialisation & growth projects* in priority sectors (e.g. resource value-adding, renewables, enabling technologies) ¹ ². EMEW could seek support to **scale and commercialise** its innovative recycling/critical-minerals technology under this program.
- **International Partnerships Critical Minerals Program (Federal)** – *Funding: \$2–\$20 million* (50% co-funding); *Deadline: Ongoing* (open for ~2 years, assessed in rounds ~every 4 months) ³ ⁴; *Focus: Critical minerals processing projects with international partners*. Supports projects building end-to-end critical mineral supply chains with allied countries. EMEW (with its NSW e-waste plant) can partner with an overseas entity to **develop or scale technology for recovering critical metals**, leveraging this grant ⁵ ⁶ (e.g. a pilot facility or commercialisation of EMEW's AI-enabled recycling process).
- **Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRC-P) Grants (Federal)** – *Funding: \$100,000–\$3,000,000* (matched) over up to 3 years ⁷; *Deadline: Round 19 expected H1 2026* (Round 18 closed Oct 2025; rounds ~biannual) ⁸; *Focus: Collaborative R&D projects* led by industry, involving at least 2 industry partners and 1 research partner. Ideal for developing new technology (e.g. **AI-driven recycling techniques or critical-material recovery processes**) with research support. EMEW could lead a CRC-P with a university (for AI or metallurgy R&D) and industry partners (e.g. mining or e-waste firms) to advance its process, with up to ~\$3M grant funding ⁹ ⁸.
- **Export Market Development Grants (EMDG, Austrade)** – *Funding: \$20k–\$80k per year* (tiered, up to 2 years) ¹⁰; *Deadline: Annual Rounds* (Round 4 for FY25–27 is **closed**; next round likely mid-2026). *Focus: Export marketing & promotion cost reimbursement* for Australian SMEs. Provides matched grants to support activities like overseas marketing visits, trade shows, or promotional materials. EMEW (HQ in Victoria) can use EMDG to **fund export market development** as it looks to sell its recycling/AI technology or products abroad ¹¹ ¹². (Note: While the funding per year is smaller than \$1M, this program directly supports export-related growth.)

Note: In addition to the above, EMEW should monitor state-level grants in recycling and manufacturing. For example, Victoria's Circular Economy Recycling Modernisation Fund (recent rounds up to \$250k–\$1M for recycling infrastructure) and similar NSW waste and circular economy grants have provided funding for e-waste and plastics recycling projects. These programs – often co-funded by the federal Recycling Modernisation Fund – periodically open calls that could support expansions or upgrades to EMEW's facilities (e.g. new processing equipment). While such state grants are typically smaller or currently closed, future rounds or new initiatives may emerge ¹³ ¹⁴.

Industry Growth Program (IGP)

Background: The Industry Growth Program is a federal initiative under AusIndustry to help innovative SMEs **commercialise novel products/processes and scale up** their business. It replaced the former Accelerating Commercialisation program, aligning with the government's *National Reconstruction Fund* priority areas ¹⁵ ¹⁶. EMEW fits well under the "**value-add in resources**" and "**enabling capabilities**" categories (since its recycling and AI-driven metal recovery technology adds value to critical mineral supply chains).

IGP offers an **Advisory Service** and subsequent **competitive grants**. After receiving guidance from an IGP adviser, eligible companies can apply for **matched funding grants** in two streams: **\$50k-\$250k** for early-stage commercialization, or **\$100k-\$5M** for larger commercialisation and growth projects ¹. Grants fund up to 50% of project costs. There is *no fixed deadline* – applications are rolling, assessed on merit, so EMEW can apply when ready ¹⁷ ¹⁸.

Use Case for EMEW: Through IGP, EMEW could seek a multi-million dollar grant (e.g. \$1-5M range) to **scale its electrowinning (emeew) recycling technology** or build out a larger commercial plant. Funding could support plant expansion, equipment, or piloting AI-enabled process improvements, with EMEW matching the grant amount. The program's focus on growth and manufacturing capability building suits EMEW's goals of commercialising its novel recycling process and expanding within Australia and to global markets.

Guidelines: See the business.gov.au **Industry Growth Program** guidelines ¹ ¹⁶ for eligibility and application details. (*URL: business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/industry-growth-program*)

International Partnerships Critical Minerals Program

Background: This is a federal grant program launched under Australia's Critical Minerals Strategy 2023-2030 to **develop mid-stage critical minerals projects in partnership with allied countries** ¹⁹ ²⁰. It aims to build **resilient, on-shore critical mineral processing capacity** and integrate Australian projects into global supply chains for critical minerals (like lithium, rare earths, cobalt, etc.) ²¹. Total funding is \$40M over ~2 years.

Key features: **Grants from \$2 million up to \$20 million**, covering up to 50% of eligible project costs ³. An **international partner** is required (could be a foreign company, government body, or investor), and the project should align with bilateral agreements on critical minerals ⁶. The program is **open now** and will accept applications on a rolling basis until funds are exhausted; assessments occur in batches roughly every four months (e.g. the first cut-off was March 2024) ²² ²³. Projects must be in the **post-exploration to pre-production** stage – such as pilot plants, processing facility scale-ups, or commercialization of new extraction technology ²⁴ ²⁵ – and involve critical minerals on Australia's defined list.

Use Case for EMEW: EMEW (with its NSW plant operated with Sircel) could leverage this program to **expand its e-waste metal recovery project as a critical minerals supply initiative**. For instance, recovering rare earths, copper, or other critical metals from electronic waste aligns with onshore critical mineral processing. EMEW would need an international partner – e.g. a technology co-developer or an offtake partner from a country with which Australia has a critical minerals MOU. A successful application could fund up to 50% of a project such as building a **demonstration plant for critical metal extraction from e-waste** or scaling EMEW's AI-enabled processing technology, with a grant perhaps in the \$2-5M range (within program limits). This would accelerate commercialisation while fostering an

international supply chain link (for example, supplying critical materials to an overseas manufacturer)

5 6 .

Guidelines: Refer to the **Grant Opportunity Guidelines – International Partnerships in Critical Minerals** on business.gov.au for full details (eligibility, criteria, partner requirements) 3 22 . (URL: business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/international-partnerships-in-critical-minerals)

Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRC-P) Grants

Background: CRC-P grants are part of the Commonwealth's Cooperative Research Centres program, supporting **short-term, industry-led collaborative research**. Each CRC-P brings together at least **two industry partners (including one SME lead) and one research organisation** to tackle a specific innovation challenge and develop a new product, service or process 26 27 . Projects can run for up to 3 years. The grant provides **matched funding between \$100,000 and \$3 million** (i.e. the consortium must at least match the grant in cash/in-kind) 7 .

These grants are **competitive and offered in rounds** (typically two rounds per year in recent years). Round 18 (2025) has just concluded (applications closed 7 Oct 2025) and **Round 19 is expected to open in the first half of 2026** 28 , with funding starting mid-2026. The timeline suggests EMEW could prepare for a Round 19 submission. CRC-P funding prioritizes projects that address industry problems and align with government priorities (which currently include areas like critical minerals, recycling, AI/automation, etc., as indicated by recent inclusion of "*robotics and automation*" as a priority in Round 18 29 .

Use Case for EMEW: A CRC-P would allow EMEW to **partner with researchers (e.g. a university or CSIRO) and other companies** to advance an innovative aspect of its technology. For example, EMEW might lead a CRC-P to develop an **AI-enhanced sorting system for e-waste** or to optimize the chemical process for metal extraction from recycled materials. A university could provide R&D on AI algorithms or metallurgical processes, and another industry partner (e.g. a mining or electronics manufacturer) could contribute expertise or pilot facilities. The grant could provide up to \$3M to the project 9 , which falls in EMEW's target range, and would require matching contributions from the partners. This is an attractive avenue for *R&D and prototyping* work that de-risks the technology before full commercial rollout.

Guidelines: See the **CRC Projects Grant Guidelines** (Round 18) on business.gov.au for details on consortium requirements, merit criteria, and the application process 7 8 . (URL: business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/cooperative-research-centres-projects-crcp-grants)

Export Market Development Grants (EMDG)

Background: The EMDG scheme, administered by Austrade, is the Australian government's flagship program to **support SMEs in exporting**. It reimburses or co-funds a portion of eligible marketing and promotional expenses for businesses expanding into overseas markets 30 31 . Under the current EMDG model (since 2021), companies apply in tiers based on their export stage: - *Tier 1*: Ready to export (new exporters) - *Tier 2*: Expanding export promotion in existing markets - *Tier 3*: Expanding into **new markets** - (Plus a category for industry bodies) 32 .

Grant agreements span two years, and **maximum annual grant amounts** are ~\$20k–\$80k per year for businesses (Tier 3 being the highest up to \$80k/year) 10 . These are **matched funds**, so the firm must spend at least the equivalent amount on eligible activities 33 34 . Eligible expenditures include

overseas or domestic travel for export promotion, trade show participation, marketing materials, engaging overseas reps or distributors, IP registration for export, and more ³⁵ ³⁶.

The program operates in **annual rounds**. Round 4 (for activities in 2025–26 and 2026–27) closed in 2024, and grants were allocated on a first-come basis due to high demand ³⁷ ³⁸. EMEW would likely target Tier 3 (if already exporting to some markets and looking to enter new ones) or Tier 2, depending on its export history. The next round (Round 5) is expected likely in mid-2026 (covering FY 2027–28 onward), and EMEW should be ready to apply as soon as it opens, given the **competitive, oversubscribed nature** of the scheme ³⁹ ⁴⁰.

Use Case for EMEW: Although EMDG grants are smaller than the other opportunities, they directly support **export-related activities** – aligning with EMEW's goal of international growth. For example, EMEW could recover **50% of its costs** (up to the cap) for things like attending international mining and recycling conferences, marketing its recycling technology to foreign customers (such as critical minerals refiners or electronics manufacturers overseas), translating product materials, or setting up an overseas distribution channel. Over two years, a Tier 3 grant could provide up to ~\$160k total, which can offset a significant amount of export marketing spend for a scaling business. Importantly, EMDG is a *repeatable* support as EMEW grows its export markets.

Guidelines: Full **EMDG program guidelines** and details on how to apply are available on Austrade's website ¹¹ ¹⁰. (*URL: austrade.gov.au/ems/export-market-development-grants*) EMEW should review the eligibility criteria (e.g. turnover under \$20 million, minimum \$20k marketing spend, etc.) and be prepared to lodge its application promptly when the next round opens.

¹ ² ¹⁵ ¹⁶ ¹⁷ ¹⁸ Industry Growth Program | [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/industry-growth-program)

<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/industry-growth-program>

³ ⁵ ⁶ ¹⁹ ²⁰ ²¹ ²⁴ ²⁵ Funding for early to mid-stage critical minerals projects with international partners

<https://www.pwc.com.au/pwc-private/r-and-d-gov-incentives/grants/funding-for-early-to-mid-stage-critical-minerals-projects.html>

⁴ ²² ²³ International Partnerships in Critical Minerals | [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/international-partnerships-in-critical-minerals)

<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/international-partnerships-in-critical-minerals>

⁷ ⁸ ⁹ ²⁶ ²⁷ ²⁸ ²⁹ Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRC-P) Grants | [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/cooperative-research-centres-projects-crcp-grants)

<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/cooperative-research-centres-projects-crcp-grants>

¹⁰ ¹¹ ¹² ³⁰ ³¹ ³² Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) | [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/export-market-development-grants-emdg)

<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/export-market-development-grants-emdg>

¹³ ¹⁴ Victorian Circular Economy Recycling Modernisation Fund - BDO

<https://www.bdo.com.au/en-au/insights/tax/articles/applications-for-round-5-of-the-victorian-circular-economy-recycling-modernisation-fund-are-now-open>

³³ ³⁴ ³⁵ ³⁶ Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) eligibility criteria and grant amounts | Austrade

<https://www.austrade.gov.au/en/how-we-can-help-you/grants/export-market-development-grants/check-eligibility/criteria>

³⁷ ³⁸ ³⁹ ⁴⁰ Apply for an Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) | Austrade

<https://www.austrade.gov.au/en/how-we-can-help-you/grants/export-market-development-grants/apply>