



Tips for submitting a strong JMI Policy Challenge Grant application

March 2025



About the JMI Policy Challenge Grant program

The JMI Policy Challenge Grant supports applied public policy research and aims to tackle the biggest public policy challenges facing NSW. It is a grant for academics focused on generating solutions to complex policy issues. Successful applicants are supported by JMI throughout their grant project. These tips advise applicants on how to submit a strong application.

- **1. Be clear about how your project relates to one or more of the 2025 themes.**
 - Outline the public policy challenge your research aims to address. The policy challenge should be clearly explained and be directly relevant to one of the policy themes for 2025.
 - Demonstrate that the NSW Government is concerned about this issue or explain how it fits within the Government's wider policy agenda. Provide evidence of NSW Government interest by citing speeches, strategies, manifesto (or other) commitments or relevant Parliamentary reports.
 - Alternatively you can provide evidence that demonstrates NSW Govt should be doing more on a specific issue e.g. by flagging actions and policy in other states/countries where NSW is lagging in responding to a specific challenge.
 - Consider whether you can obtain letters of support from relevant NSW Government connections (or other key stakeholders) that demonstrate the importance and relevance of this policy area.
 - Be succinct in how you evidence policymaker interest in the policy area. Avoid uploading lengthy reports/ documents that the judging panel will not have time to review. For example, if your project links to electric vehicle adoption, you could (i) highlight the NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy, (ii) cite 1-2 key commitments from that strategy and (iii) state the Minns [Government committed significant funds](#) to EV adoption in the 2023-24 budget. This approach would demonstrate interest in the policy area and would be preferable to simply uploading the NSW EV Strategy to your application. See JMI's [guide on evidencing policymaker interest](#) for more advice on including strong evidence in your application.



- **2. Be clear about the project design and its proposed timeframes.**
 - Start with your research questions and outline each stage chronologically e.g., Stage 1: Ethics approval and literature review, Stage 2: Data collection, Stage 3: Wider stakeholder engagement (e.g., interviews, focus groups) Stage 4: Write up and dissemination of key findings.
 - Explain the approach you are taking to the project and why your research-insights will provide a robust basis for new policy solutions. For example, describe the strength of the past research the project will help translate, or the reasons why a particular method you will use will help lead to good practical outcomes.
 - Give indicative timings for each project stage.
 - Use visual aids e.g. a Gantt chart to show your project activities and upload in PDF form.
 - Be realistic about your project design. JMI Policy Challenge Grant projects must be completed within two years – be clear you will meet this requirement.

- **3. Highlight the potential public policy impact of your project.**
 - Outline how your research will help the NSW Government tackle a specific policy challenge.
 - Demonstrate how the project aligns with NSW Government policy priorities.
 - Explain the intended impact of your proposed work. Will it help identify interventions that work? Will it catalyse action on a policy challenge? Will it improve practice?
 - Outline how the people of NSW could benefit from the research insights. Who will implement the project outcomes? What outcomes may improve?



- **4. Be clear about which part(s) of NSW Government will be interested in your project.**
 - Highlight which NSW Government departments your research is relevant to (Don't worry if you don't have an existing relationship, JMI can support you to make the right connections).
 - Outline how you intend to engage with policymakers during the research.
 - Describe clearly how you plan to communicate your findings. Who needs to know about your research and what steps will be taken to communicate your findings to the right people within NSW Government and beyond?
 - Who will you showcase your research to in order to maximise its public policy impact?

- **5. Summarise your team's expertise including policy expertise and experience.**
 - Summarise your team's expertise – demonstrate they have the necessary skills, experience, and expertise to deliver the project as planned.
 - Highlight the policy/ social impact of any previous research.
 - Highlight any previous research outputs that your team have contributed to which are relevant to your proposed research.
 - Highlight where team members are involved in committees, taskforces, professional bodies, organisations etc relevant to the policy challenge being explored e.g., Associate Professor X is a member of the NSW Government's Expert Housing Advisory Group. Professor Y was a member of the steering group of the First Nations Clean Energy Council between 2018 and 2021.

- **6. Make your application easy to read and understand.**
 - Avoid jargon. Your application will be read by people with diverse backgrounds who may not be experts in your area of research.



- Use plain English. Useful tips can be found in the Australian Government's [Style Manual](#) or via the [Plain English Campaign](#).
- Keep abbreviations and acronyms to a minimum – define them when they're first used.
- Avoid lengthy sentences or blocks of text which can be hard to follow. Where appropriate, use subheadings, dot points etc to present information clearly.
- Give your project a title that is specific and concise.