

Nucleic Acid Therapeutics Initiative (NATi)

Call for Proposals

Information Deck

About NATi

The Nucleic Acid Therapeutics Initiative (NATi) is a National Platform with the mission to build Singapore up as the regional hub and model of excellence for research and clinical translation, and commercialisation of nucleic acid therapeutics (NAT) with built-in preparedness and resilience against future epidemics.

VISION

- Singapore as the **regional hub and model of excellence** for research and clinical translation, and commercialisation of NAT with built-in preparedness and resilience against future epidemics

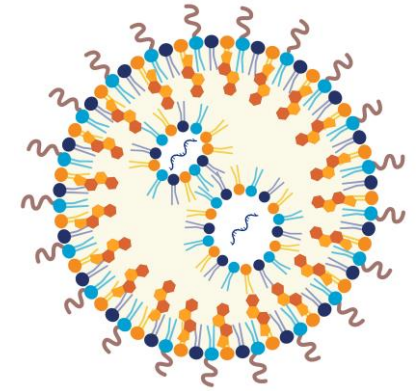
MISSION

- **Nexus** to connect RNA researchers and clinicians with industry partners
- **Accelerator** for building and piecing key capabilities across the ecosystem to debottleneck translation and commercialisation of RNA assets while strengthening resilience
- **Translational platform** to invest and steward public research funding to enable the above

Two Translational Thrusts of NATi

NAT X (Thrust 1)

- NATi aims to develop novel chemistries, payload design and delivery systems to improve safety and efficacy.
- **Priorities:** Novel chemistry; improved stability; cell/tissue targeting
- **Guiding Principles:** Outcomes must be clinically meaningful and economically feasible without significant IP encumbrance. Regulatory hurdles should be identified upfront.



RNA Foundry (Thrust 2)

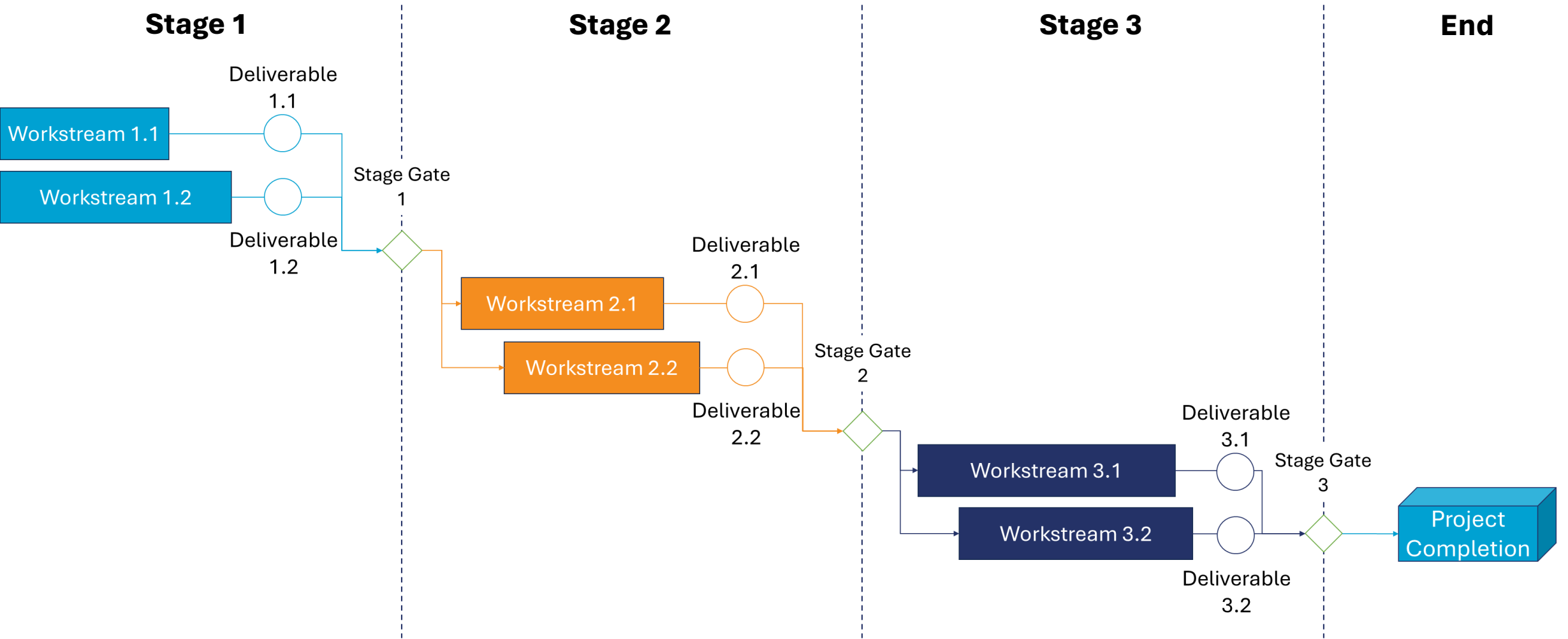
- NATi aims to establish physical capabilities to testbed new processes, enable end-to-end manufacturing, provide quality materials for animal studies and debottleneck translation.
- NATi also aims to develop new unit operations to improve techno-economics or quality control.
- **Priorities:** GLP quality; adaptability across RNA modalities; automation
- **Guiding Principles:** Build-versus-buy decision must be substantiated. Outcomes must be economically feasible without significant IP encumbrance. Regulatory hurdles should be identified upfront.



Highlights of NATi

1. We are committed to accelerating the translation of NAT assets, increasing their commercial potential and improving clinical outcomes.
2. The NATi Coordinating Office will launch a series of thematic calls for proposals with defined problem statements to accelerate Singapore's development of NAT. Information sessions will be held periodically.
3. The NATi Coordinating Office will proactively provide guidance for business development.
 - a. Industry engagement will be coordinated with all relevant parties, such as the Institution IEOs, TTOs, economic agencies and investors.
 - b. Industry needs will be incorporated into problem statements.
 - c. Regular symposia and other events will be organised for networking and insight sharing.
4. The NATi Coordinating Office will proactively provide guidance for project management.
 - a. Projects will be stage-gated with clear milestones and deliverables for continued funding.
 - b. Lead Investigators will be supported through monthly update meetings.
 - c. Meetings will be organised to make go/no-go decisions at each stage gate.

Example of Stage-Gated Project Management



Eligibility

1. The Lead Investigator and Co-Investigators as defined in Grant Terms and Conditions should:
 - a. Hold a primary appointment in a Singapore publicly funded research institution or an Institute of Higher Learning (IHL). The Lead Investigator must hold a primary appointment of at least 0.7 FTE in Singapore.
 - b. Lead a laboratory or research programme which carries out research in Singapore
 - c. Possess track record of leadership ability in coordinating research programmes and providing mentorship to research teams as well as having productive research outcomes. A track record in securing IRS will be advantageous.

2. Collaborators as defined in Grant Terms and Conditions are not eligible to receive NATi funding.
 - a. Companies can participate in NATi projects only as collaborators

3. Exceptions to the above eligibility criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please submit a request to the NATi Coordinating Office at least 7 days before the closing date of the call for proposals.

Important Notes

1. Applicants must use the latest version of the proposal template which can be downloaded from the website.
2. Submissions should clearly state milestones and deliverables. Industry collaborations are strongly encouraged to demonstrate research alignment with industry needs.
3. Applicants shall comply with grant terms and conditions, including prevailing regulations.
4. All researchers and research institutions shall follow and apply the National IP Protocol principles and framework.

Industry Alignment

Collaboration with industry is strongly encouraged to demonstrate research alignment with industry needs.

This should be supported with documentation, including but not limited to:

1. A ready-to-sign research collaboration agreement (RCA) with an industry partner
2. Letter(s) of support from industry partner(s) ideally with clearly defined conditions for cash commitment
3. A practical industry engagement plan to generate industry R&D spending

Applicants may propose other forms of documentation for review by the NATi Coordinating Office.

The NATi Coordinating Office can provide business development support. Please consult the NATi Coordinating Office early when engaging companies.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Relevance to NATi
2. Potential for commercial adoption
3. Scientific quality and innovativeness
4. Experience and expertise of the team
5. Effectiveness of project management
6. Appropriateness of the requested budget
7. Strength of intellectual property (IP) strategy
8. International competitiveness

Application and Evaluation Process



Submission

Lead Investigator submits proposal to enquiry@nati.sg by deadline.

Deadlines will be communicated in every thematic call.

Review

Lead Investigator may be invited to present.

Outcome of review will be communicated to the Lead Investigator within 3 – 4 months of proposal submission.

Award

After final budget review, successful applicants will be issued In-Principle Approval and subsequently a Letter of Award.

For enquiries, please contact:
enquiry@nati.sg