



Minister for Innovation and
Tourism Industry Development and
Minister for Cross River Rail

Our Ref: CTS 32576/19
Your Ref: A512847

6 JAN 2020

Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 3155-19, tabled in Parliament on 27 November 2019, in relation to the Advance Queensland Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR).

This program was designed to procure cutting-edge solutions to issues identified by the Queensland Government. Since 2016, nine challenges were raised under SBIR, ranging from developing new solutions to help students with disabilities in remote Queensland to access learning support, through to boosting coral abundance on the Great Barrier Reef.

The Queensland Government seeks the best solutions to solve these problems and to help create jobs and industries for the future.

Weighting was applied to applicants who could demonstrate additional benefits to Queensland - such as creating local employment opportunities. As this was a procurement process, Australia's free trade obligations preclude the Queensland Government from excluding interstate or large companies from applying. All applications to the SBIR program were assessed by an evaluation panel, including independent commercial assessors and probity advisors.

While no further SBIR challenges are being issued at this point in time, Queensland is still seeing the benefits of the program.

For example, Wavelength Reef Cruises, a Port Douglas-based tourism operator, has been working with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) to develop and refine their innovative Coralclip. The Coralclip provides a significantly quicker and easier way to plant coral onto the Great Barrier Reef, and can be used to plant corals grown in a nursery or to restore and re-attach corals broken by storms and cyclones.

After successfully demonstrating the technical feasibility of their solution, Wavelength Reef Cruises and UTS are now working with five other tourism operators in Port Douglas, Cairns and Townsville to continue to trial the Coralclip on the Great Barrier Reef. This project was jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments.

Yours sincerely

HON KATE JONES MP
Minister for Innovation and
Tourism Industry Development and
Minister for Cross River Rail