The Academy

Frequently Asked Questions

Delivered by

Sydney Biomedical Accelerator

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

NSW GOVERNMENT Sydney Local Health District

PROTO AXIOM

1. I cannot access the application form

Applications are made through SurveyMonkey Apply (SM Apply), a grants management system used by University of Sydney's Research Portfolio for administering various internal funding schemes. Access depends on your affiliation:

- **University staff:** log in with your University SSO (no new account needed), select *View Programs* and choose *The Academy, delivered by SBA and Proto Axiom*.

- **SLHD and other non-University applicants:** contact the *Program Lead* for The Academy to have an application opened. Access instructions will then be sent to you.

2. Where can I find the Program Guidelines?

The Program Guidelines – Overview and an application form template are available on the Academy program website. The full Program Guidelines can be downloaded from within the application form; please read them in full once you start your application.

3. Can the project lead also be the Academy Fellow?

The ideal Fellow needs focus to drive the venture while building entrepreneurial skills through immersion with Proto Axiom, so we expect most Fellows to be at postdoctoral level or equivalent. Strong cases outside these parameters will be considered, and student-led projects can apply with the student as both project lead and Fellow.

4. Do I need approval to apply?

You need to let your Head of School or department (or relevant delegate) and the commercialisation office (depending on your affiliation) know that you're applying. We'll work with shortlisted applicants to get formal endorsement before any award. If you're a student applying as both project lead and Fellow, you'll also need your supervisor's endorsement when you apply.

5. What do "investment-grade criteria" mean, and what TRL does my project need to be at?

There's no fixed bar. We look at your project the way an investor would: how novel the science is, how big the commercial opportunity is, and whether the Fellow is ready to drive it. We don't use TRLs, as they don't map well to the points where life sciences ventures actually become investable. The full selection criteria are in the Program Guidelines.

6. What does the one day a week with Proto Axiom involve?

Fellows spend about a day a week (0.2 FTE, averaged across the year) inside Proto Axiom's venture and investment team. There's no set curriculum. It's shaped around your venture and what you need to learn, and might mean sitting in on due diligence, joining portfolio company meetings or helping a portfolio company day to day.

7. What can the project funding be used for?

It covers the direct costs of the technical and commercial de-risking work you agree with the Venture Committee. Up to 20% can go to salary if the project lead matches it dollar for dollar from their own funds, so the de-risking budget stays whole. The Committee needs to approve this before award. The full list of eligible costs is in the Program Guidelines.

8. What is expected of me in exchange for participation?

We take no equity (the funding is non-dilutive), your IP ownership doesn't change, and you're under no obligation to form a spinout or take anyone's investment. What we do ask is that you commit to the full 12 months, including the Fellow's day a week with Proto Axiom and an investor-guided de-risking agenda.