

# GIVVIC

## FARM SAFETY CHALLENGE

Program Guidelines





## OVERVIEW OF CIVVIC LABS

Run by LaunchVic – Victoria’s startup agency - CivVic Labs invites aspiring and early-stage founders to work on innovation challenges identified by government.

Through a six-week bootcamp experience, entrepreneurs will learn from industry experts and test their startup ideas with policy makers and Victorian citizens, supported by \$15,000 equity-free funding.

At the end of the experience, two teams will secure a further \$35,000 funding to bring their prototype to life.

Since 2018, the program has helped more than 50 startups connect with government, co-design with real end users, and develop businesses ready to launch to market.

CivVic Labs is a proven program for generating commercial ready startups, with alumni startups raising nearly \$20 million in investment capital since the program’s inception.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGE

For this challenge, Agriculture Victoria is seeking solutions from Victoria’s startup ecosystem to help keep people on Victorian farms safer.

The agriculture sector in Victoria faces safety challenges that require innovative solutions. Despite advancements in technology and safety measures in other industries, farming remains one of the most high-risk occupations in the state.

There are several alarming statistics that underscore the urgency of improving safety on farms:

- Farms make up 14% of all workplace fatalities, despite employing only 2% of working Victorians;
- Between 2021-2023, there were 24 fatalities and in 2024, there have been 5 fatalities to date;
- In the past two decades, over 260 people have lost their lives due to tractor-related incidents on Australian farms;
- The agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry accounts for approximately 60% of WorkSafe Victoria injury claims from full time employees in Victoria; and
- Victorian farms alone see an average of 700 hospital admissions annually, with recent trends showing an increase to 844 admissions in 2017-2018 – equivalent to two serious injuries per day.

Additionally, according to [Injury Atlas Victoria](#)<sup>1</sup>, the agriculture injury burden is felt disproportionately in rural Victoria.

The scope of this challenge extends beyond just farmers. It encompasses a diverse group at risk, including farm workers, family members, visitors, children, contractors, and even nearby communities.

Key risks, to people working on farms and these other groups, continue to revolve around:

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<sup>1</sup> An online tool that shows injury rate as a proportion of population



- Heavy machinery use;
- Animal Handling;
- Working long hours and/or in isolation;
- Electrical Safety; and
- Exposure to severe weather events.

The ability to make safe decisions on the farm is also closely linked to strong mental health in the face of situational distress. Stress, anxiety, and fatigue can impair judgment, leading to mistakes that could result in severe injuries and fatalities.

Despite the availability of state-of-the-art safety technologies in other industries, there has been a lag in adoption and interest for the agricultural industry.

For these reasons and many more, Agriculture Victoria is seeking commercial solutions from innovators and startups to help solve the challenges related to helping keep people safe on Victorian farms.

For startups, this challenge offers the opportunity to work with Agriculture Victoria and a range of relevant stakeholders to have an impact on the lives of Victorian farmers, while building a solution with global scale.

Participants in this challenge are encouraged to consider how potential solutions fit within the [hierarchy of control](#) and what this means for the genuine impact of the proposed solutions.

## THE PROGRAM & CHALLENGE STATEMENT

### How might technology make farming safer?

We are seeking solutions from Victorian startups to reduce the physical and/or mental health risks on farms. Solutions may look to focus on:

- Addressing risks associated with powered plant and machinery or animal handling;
- Managing risks associated with working in isolation and/or fatigue;
- Addressing risks associated with manual labour and/or repetitive tasks;
- Improving workforce management, inductions, and training requirements for people working on farms;
- Reporting of incidents or issues more effectively; or
- Any other technology that results in an increase in safety on farm.

Your solution will look to improve safety, health and wellbeing on farms across Victoria, and increase productivity and efficiency across the agriculture industry.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

LaunchVic is seeking to admit 10 startups or startup entrepreneurs to the program. There is no fee for participation. Rather, participant teams will receive \$15,000 equity-free funding on completion of the program.



The program is structured to cover topics such as lean startup, co-design, and hypothesis testing, delivered by startup experts. The program is designed to assist innovators in their solution design in the following ways:

- Access to world-class mentors and a cohort of top innovators to build a solution alongside;
- Access to community and stakeholder experts, with specific knowledge of agriculture industry, policy, and customer base; and
- The potential of promotional support from Agriculture Victoria and LaunchVic highlighting innovative startup solutions.

At the conclusion of the program, a judging panel will select two startups to receive \$35,000 in equity-free seed funding to further develop their solution.

Successful applicants are expected to attend the program in person for seven days of programming over 6 weeks, the Pitch Day and Showcase Event (see Program Schedule) as well as commit to additional work outside of sessions to progress their ideas.

CivVic Labs is the perfect sandbox for aspiring or early-stage founders to build and test new ideas. All participants will be either idea stage or early-stage (see below definition) to ensure their journey is with like-minded entrepreneurs. We're looking for ambitious founders who recognise the value of CivVic Labs to help accelerate their startup journey.



## TIMINGS

Startups must have capacity to participate in the program in-person. This includes a commitment of a minimum of seven full days (9:00am – 5:00pm), followed by a Pitch Day and Showcase Event (see Program Schedule for more details). Additional time outside of scheduled workshops will also be required to develop and refine the solution.

## DEFINITIONS

The below definitions apply to this application process.

**A Startup** is a young technology-based business that uses innovation to scale rapidly and capture market at a high velocity. Examples of technology include software/apps, artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, advanced manufacturing & robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics, augmented / virtual reality, 3D printing, advanced materials, genomics & life sciences (including Biotech & MedTech) and autonomous vehicles.

A startup that is either **Idea or Early-Stage** and must meet at least one of the following two definitions. An **Idea Stage** startup is working on an idea that has not yet been fully developed or launched in market. An **Early-Stage** startup is testing a prototype in-market, without a significant customer base or revenue.

The **Applicant** must be the Founder, though multiple participants in the same team may be accepted into the program.

**Victorian-based** means the Startup must either be a Victorian registered and headquartered company or the Applicant (in the case of a startup that has not yet registered an ABN) must be domiciled in Victoria.

## ELIGIBILITY

If you are eligible and have a startup idea aligned to the challenge, CivVic Labs can help you make it a reality. To be eligible to participate in CivVic Labs, a startup and/or startup entrepreneur must meet each of these criteria:

1. **Victorian-based;**
2. **Startup** (has a Startup Idea that is aligned to LaunchVic's definition of a Startup);
3. **Stage** (meet LaunchVic's definition of either an Idea or Early-Stage startup); and
4. **Participation** (must commit to participating in the Program, and related activities).



The startup and/or startup entrepreneur must also **Adhere to Victorian Government Policy on ESG Prohibited Activities to be eligible**. This means that the business must not be involved with:

- a. Tobacco or tobacco-related products;
- b. Cluster munitions and other controversial weapons;
- c. Thermal coal;
- d. Gambling;
- e. Logging of old growth forests;
- f. Uranium;
- g. Unregulated animal testing; or
- h. Fracking.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants will be assessed through a selection process based on the following factors.

1. **Action and Alignment:** This is a measure of how well the applicants' proposed solution responds to the challenge outlined in this document (weighted 25%);
2. **Impact:** Does the applicant have a clear understanding of the challenge and how does the proposed solution meaningfully address the challenge outlined in this document? Is it realistic and feasible? (weighted 15%);
3. **Applicant's Capability and Capacity:**
  - a) Is the applicant capable of delivering their solution (weighted 25%);
  - b) Does the applicant have the capacity to focus on their solution during the program? (weighted 10%);
4. **LaunchVic Assessment of Support:** LaunchVic will assess how much direct value might be realised through the program by the applicant. Priority will be given to applicants that are keen to participate in co-design and are open to iterating upon their solution (weighted 25%).

If an applicant is shortlisted, they will be required to participate in a 15-minute interview.

## TIMELINE

The Application Process includes an initial Expression of Interest (EOI), with applicants that complete the EOI invited to submit a full application.

Full applications will be shortlisted based on the Selection Criteria. Following the Shortlisting Process, successful applicants will be invited to participate in the program and will be required to confirm their



participation via a signed contract. Contracts must be signed and returned to LaunchVic as per the schedule outlined in the Timeline below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
5:30pm – 7:30pm, 24 October 2024	Challenge Launch Event (Public Event)
24 October 2024	Expression of Interest Open
7 November 2024	Information session and office hours for potential applicants
1:00pm, 14 November 2024	Expression of Interest Close
15 November 2024	Applicants that have completed an EOI are invited to submit an application
1:00pm, 26 November 2024	Applications Close
6 December 2024	Shortlisted applicants invited to Interview
6 December 2024	Unsuccessful applicants notified
10-12 December 2024	Interviews with Shortlisted applicants
17 December 2024	Selected applicants notified and contracted to participate in the program
17 December 2024	Unsuccessful applicants notified
5 February 2025	Program Kick Off Event (Private Event)
12 February 2025	Program Commences
19 March 2025	Program Ends
Tuesday 25 March 2025	Pitch Judging Day (Private Event)
Thursday 27 March 2025	Showcase Event (Public Event)
May 2025	2 Recipients of additional Seed funding are announced



## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Program Day's will be held in person within the Melbourne Metropolitan area.

Date	Time	Activity
Wednesday 12 February 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #1
Thursday 13 February 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #2
Wednesday 26 February 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #3
Thursday 27 February 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #4
Wednesday 5 March 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #5
Wednesday 12 March 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #6
Wednesday 19 March 2025	9:00am – 5:00pm	Program Day #7
Tuesday 25 March 2025	12:00pm – 5:00pm	Pitch Judging Day
Thursday 27 March 2025	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Showcase Event

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about expressing an interest or to apply to CivVic Labs, please visit <https://launchvic.org/programs/civvic-labs/>.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have a question regarding expression of interest form, eligibility, or anything to do with the CivVic Labs, please email [civvic@launchvic.org](mailto:civvic@launchvic.org).

Relevant questions will be posted on the LaunchVic website via the Frequently Asked Questions.