1. THE CHALLENGE

What inhibits 'collaboration ready' businesses from collaborating with publicly funded research organisations?

Networking and collaboration are essential to a high-performing innovation system.

Collaborative businesses, including those that work with Publicly Funded Research Organisations (PFROs, i.e. universities and research organisations like CSIRO), are three times more likely to show annual productivity growth than their non-innovative counterparts.

Research organisations also benefit from collaboration through increased income and research impact.

Despite the benefits of collaboration, most businesses do not collaborate with PFROs, with Australia falling behind other OECD countries.

The purpose of the *Create phase* research was to work with end-users to develop potential solutions to the challenges businesses face when collaborating or attempting to collaborate with research organisations.

2. CREATE

Four key **areas of opportunity** were identified to assist businesses with overcoming challenges they encounter around collaboration.

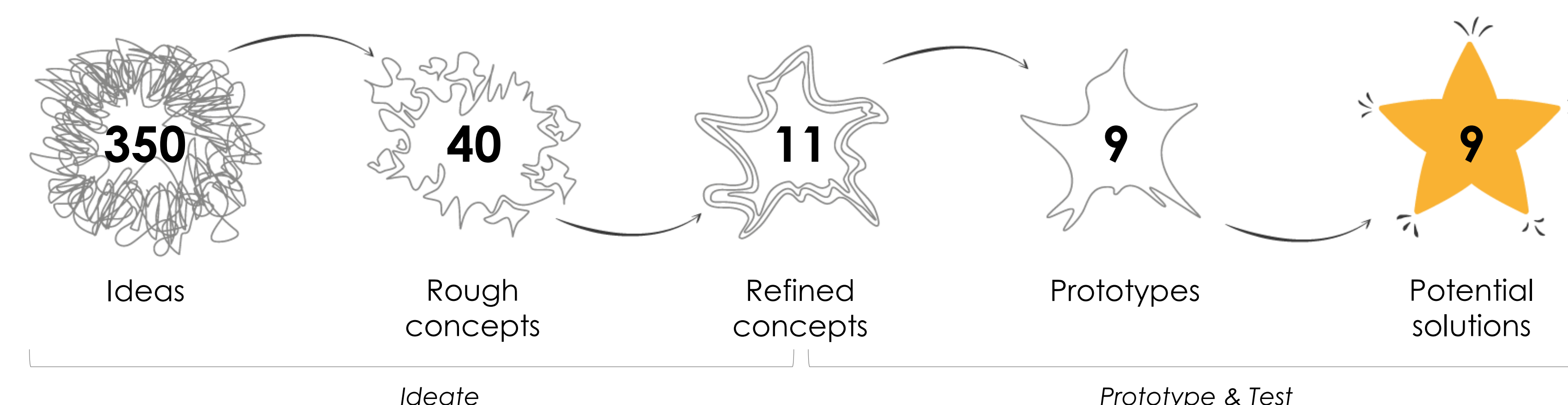The following design questions (or platforms) were used to spark ideas for solution development:

1. How might we **market*** the benefits of collaboration and government collaboration programs already available to businesses?

2. How might we **connect** businesses with research opportunities?

3. How might we provide innovation **skills** development options for businesses?

4. In what ways could we encourage businesses to **work together** with researchers to solve shared problems?

* The marketing design question was not explored in the Create phase, but was continued as a separate stream of work with the communications branch in the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.

3. ENGAGEMENT

188+ Total Participants
Including business, research & government stakeholders

81 Ideation   **97** Testing
10+ Other consultations

In: Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra & Sydney

350	40	11	9	9
Ideas	Rough concepts	Refined concepts	Prototypes	Potential solutions

Ideate   *Prototype & Test*

6 Ideation workshops: to generate ideas to the design questions, ideas were then consolidated into rough concepts that were then refined for the first phase of testing with users.

3 Concept testing workshops: refined concepts were tested with users, with level of concept desirability measured and refined into prototypes using their feedback.

14 1-on-1 Prototype interviews: prototypes were tested in interviews with individual businesses to gauge level of prototype desirability and identify further potential improvements.

3 Feasibility & viability workshops: prototypes were tested with government stakeholders to assess their potential to be implemented and alignment with policy objectives.

4. POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Following ideation, prototype development and testing, **nine potential solutions** were recommended to progress and are informing a suite of policy measures to improve business-research collaboration. They fit into three broad categories:
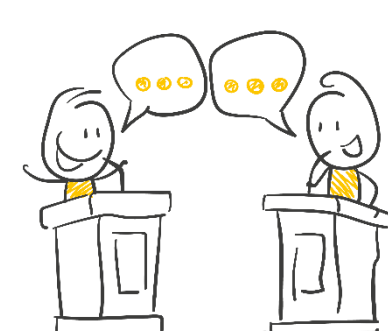
Awareness

Increases understanding of collaboration benefits, opportunities and processes.

Collaboration Pop-ups
- Raises awareness of collaboration benefits and opportunities.
- Targeted at events already attended by target businesses.
- Helps business make connections through both set-time and unstructured events.

Business Collaboration Delegations
- Short, actively facilitated and tailored to business needs.
- Building understanding between researchers and businesses.
- Targeted attendance of participants to maximise collaboration potential.
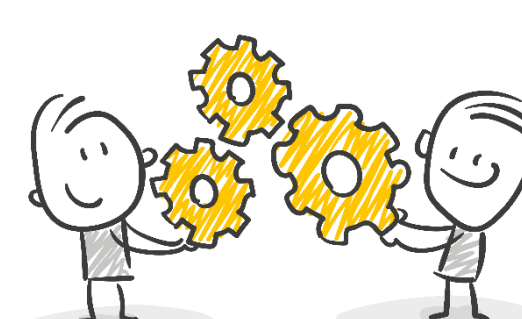
Online Collaboration Guide
- Brings together all the information needed to kick-off a collaboration.
- Helps resolve key learning and awareness difficulties.
- Low risk and minimal time investment required.

Intro Activities

Introduces businesses to lower-risk forms of collaboration and research partner identification.
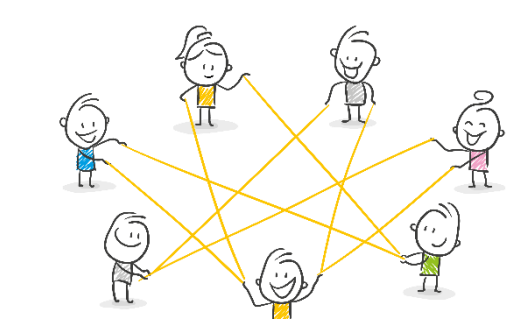
Hackathons
- Brings together businesses and researchers on collaboration focused challenges.
- Work with potential collaborators and explore opportunities.
- Participants will be targeted from similar regions and/or industry sectors.

Students in Industry
- Provides businesses access to current university research, knowledge and expertise.
- Introduces businesses to the value of collaboration with researchers to address business needs.
- Appropriate matching and no employment costs – students to receive course work credit.

Research & Business Exchange
- Researchers can see problems or opportunities not identified by business.
- Broadens researchers' understanding of industry and how they can contribute.
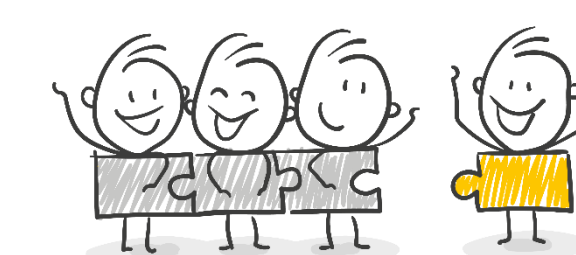- Enables a close connection before a potential collaboration.

Advisory

Support and guidance for businesses along their collaboration journey.

Collaboration Facilitators
- Advice from a person experienced in both research and business reality.
- Connecting businesses to the right research partners.
- Tailored support for businesses throughout their collaboration journey.

Collaboration Mentors
- Access to an established network of business people experienced in research collaboration.
- A trusted source of collaboration advice that is volunteer-based and independent.
- Flexible mentorship facilitated by matching and no eligibility criteria.

Technology Transfer
- Helps businesses find existing university IP to fit their business need fast.
- Offers advice and assistance to negotiate IP arrangements.
- Provides funding to help businesses adopt and implement new technology.

Australian Government
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

BizLab