

Communique

Chief Scientist's Government Lead Scientist / Research Network

Meeting of 28 January 2026

The Government Lead Scientist / Researcher Network convened its inaugural meeting on 28 January 2026. The meeting was chaired by the Chief Scientist of Western Australia, Professor Sharath Sriram.

Representatives from key government science, research, and innovation agencies across WA attended, marking the start of a coordinated effort to strengthen cross-government scientific collaboration and visibility.

Purpose of the Network

The Chair outlined the Network's overarching aims:

- To enhance visibility of WA Government science and its impact.
- To identify long-term scientific infrastructure needs for WA Government.
- To support capability growth across agencies.
- To improve how WA government leverages its intellectual property (IP).

The Network will also provide opportunities for member agencies to advise the Chief Scientist on opportunities for science research in WA.

Key Discussion Themes

1. Strengthening collaboration

Members highlighted the value of broadening participation to include operational scientists and establishing informal contact networks to improve knowledge sharing across agencies.

2. Intellectual property management

Meeting discussions focused on agency experiences implementing the [WA Government Intellectual Property Policy](#). Key points included:

- Benefits of focusing on IP impact as a driver for government activities and informed investment in government research.
- Challenges in joint ownership arrangements and navigating legal requirements.
- Opportunities to reduce duplication through common models and guidance.

- Opportunities to increase access to IP management and commercialisation expertise to provide support across government and universities.
- The importance of agency-based IP champions to drive implementation of the IP Policy
- Issues relating to open data accessibility and balancing openness with potential financial returns.
- The need for better guidance on Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Intellectual Property.

Members were invited to reflect on their own agency needs and provide further feedback out of session.

3. Future Priorities

The Network identified several forward-looking areas for collective focus, including:

- Raising the profile of WA Government research.
- Supporting development opportunities for WA government scientists.
- Identifying and planning for major infrastructure needs — with future forensic capability highlighted as one example.
- Enhancing IP protection, utilisation, and commercialisation pathways.

Next Steps

The Network will reconvene mid-2026, with members encouraged to contribute agenda items and continue cross-agency discussions on capability development, infrastructure priorities, and maximising the value of WA government-generated research and IP.