STARTUP**WA**

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24

GREENTECH ROUNDTABLE
REPORT

Powering Change. What's Missing in GreenTech Startup Support?
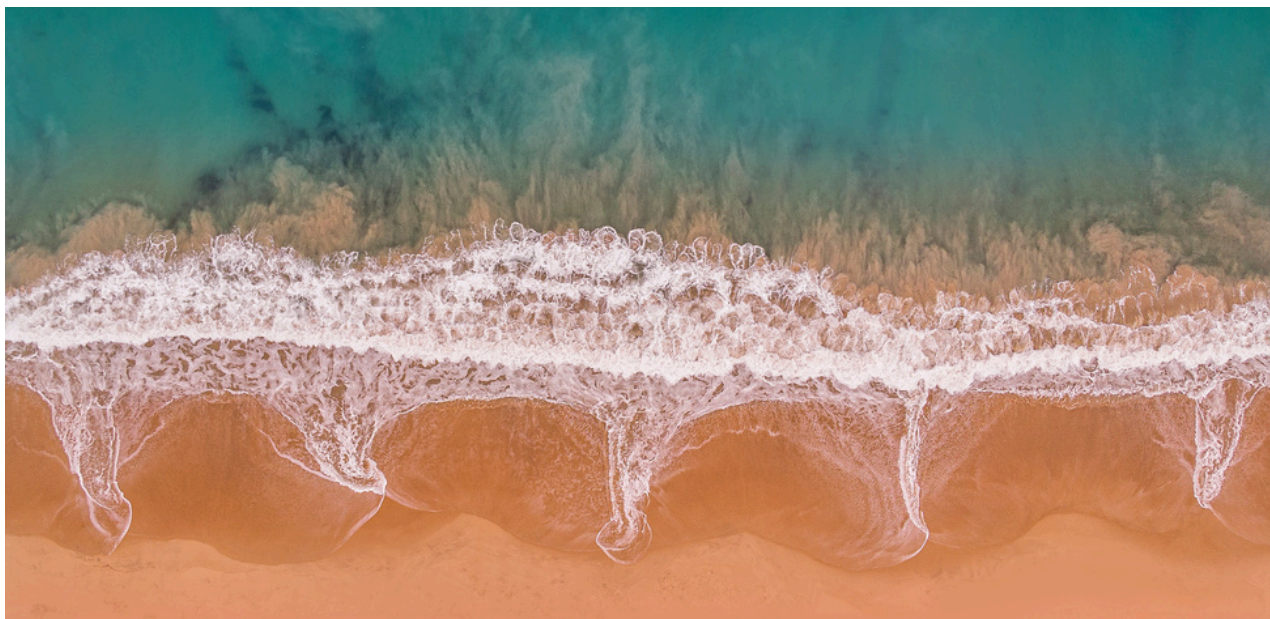
1. Acknowledgement of Country

StartupWA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures and to elders, past and present.

2. Background

Western Australia is a global energy and resource powerhouse. The energy transition represents a monumental opportunity to redeploy talent, assets and infrastructure toward a decarbonised future. With the state's economic health largely tied to fluctuations in the iron ore market, diversifying into new sectors is crucial for long-term stability. The shift towards clean energy and decarbonisation offers a unique chance to build a more resilient and varied economic base, playing to our natural economic and geographical advantages. It is imperative that we grasp this opportunity while we still can.

Startups will play a crucial role in accelerating decarbonisation and the energy transition. For the purposes of this report, we define a GreenTech startup as an early-stage venture that develops innovative technologies or business models to drive environmental sustainability. These startups span infrastructure and

assets (including energy generation or storage), deep tech (scientific or engineering innovations), soft tech (digital innovation), and consulting services. Despite their potential, these early-stage ventures face significant challenges.

Since StartupWA's inception in 2015, the focus within the ecosystem has shifted from fast-scaling software startups to include deep tech ventures requiring substantial scientific and technological investment, often in emerging or less regulated markets. This shift underscores the growing need for tailored support to help GreenTech startups overcome their unique obstacles. Many existing startup support organisations are not fully equipped to meet the specific needs of GreenTech ventures, leaving them to navigate these challenges with limited resources.

WA's government is proactively responding to this opportunity. It has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 through the Climate Change Bill 2023, which mandates statutory emissions reduction targets. Additionally, the government is investing in innovation hubs like the WA GreenTech Innovation Hub at Curtin University, CORE Innovation Hub, Australian Automation and Robotics Precinct (AARP) and exploring partnerships with global leaders like Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Founders Factory and MIT REAP (Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program). These initiatives are designed to harness WA's strengths and drive the state's transition to a more diversified and sustainable economy.

The Australian federal government is also supporting GreenTech startups through programs like the Clean Energy Innovation Fund, which provides capital to help scale clean energy technologies. Additionally, government initiatives like R&D tax incentives and grants from agencies such as ARENA (Australian Renewable Energy Agency) offer financial backing to foster innovation in sustainable technology. The Safeguard Mechanism also plays a role by setting emissions limits for large industrial emitters, creating financial incentives for investment in low-emission technologies, which drives demand for GreenTech solutions.

3. Executive Summary

The StartupWA GreenTech Roundtable was held to explore how to better support startups working to drive the decarbonisation of Western Australia's mining and energy sectors. The event brought together 38 participants from diverse sectors, including founders, government officials, and business leaders from energy and resources industries. The discussion highlighted key challenges and opportunities, offering insights and recommendations to help GreenTech startups overcome obstacles and realise their potential.

This event was supported by Carbon Transition Pathways, specialist energy transition consultancy dedicated to assisting energy-intensive industries in hard-to-abate sectors. It was sponsored by Grant Thornton Australia, a leading independent advisory firm that helps clients navigate the complexities of ESG (environmental, social, and corporate governance) and sustainability.

Key findings included:

Talent acquisition and retention

GreenTech startups in Western Australia face significant challenges in attracting and retaining talent due to financial constraints, competition from established industries, and a lack of awareness about career opportunities in the sector. Participants emphasised the need for better financial incentives, targeted education, and stronger industry branding to attract top talent. There is also a need to promote a culture of risk-taking and innovation within the state to encourage more individuals to consider careers in GreenTech startups.

Funding and investment barriers

Limited access to local funding and a risk-averse investment culture in WA are major barriers for GreenTech startups seeking to scale. The majority of investment tends to come from outside WA, highlighting the need for stronger local support systems. The group recommended developing more robust financial support mechanisms, such as increased government grants, public-private partnerships, and enhanced venture capital presence, to help startups move beyond the pilot stage and achieve sustainable growth.

Regulatory and market challenges

Participants identified regulatory compliance and market readiness as significant hurdles for scaling GreenTech innovations. A key insight was that startups should engage with innovation functions within larger organisations rather than procurement functions, as innovation teams generally have a higher risk appetite. Additionally, startups focusing on technology development should target projects that are still in the planning phase, rather than those in deployment, which prioritise budget, schedule, and minimising risk. Participants agreed that industry would benefit by being more transparent about their upcoming challenges and needs, giving startups the opportunity to align their development efforts with future projects.

Government's role in fostering innovation

The Roundtable highlighted the crucial role of government in supporting GreenTech startups through policy initiatives and regulatory reforms. Recommendations included offering tax incentives for collaborative projects, supporting innovation hubs, and reducing red tape for startup operations. Participants also called for a clear definition of the roles that large companies should play in supporting the GreenTech ecosystem, including partnerships, acquisitions, and direct investment in startups.

Strategies for enhancing collaboration

Improved collaboration frameworks between startups, corporates, SMEs, and government are essential for fostering innovation and driving scale. Pilot projects were highlighted as a key opportunity, with shared funding and resources enabling the piloting phase in a low-risk environment. By enhancing collaboration and leveraging the government's support, startups can gain access to the resources, expertise, and markets needed to accelerate growth and improve the speed and success of technology validation.

4. Table of Contents

5. About StartupWA

StartupWA is a not-for-profit, representative organisation which promotes the growing startup sector in Western Australia. It seeks to accelerate the growth of the Western Australian startup ecosystem so that it is an internationally recognised, leading hub for early-stage technology and innovation companies.

6. Methodology

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http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/design-principles

The GreenTech Roundtable utilised the World Cafe Methodology, a tried-and-tested framework previously employed by StartupWA for its Summit Series in 2021, the METS Industry Roundtable in 2022, and the Safe Spaces Roundtable in 2024. Celebrated for its effectiveness and adaptability in facilitating large group discussions, this methodology is built on design principles that foster collaborative conversation, active engagement, and the exploration of actionable outcomes.

7. Meeting Design

The GreenTech Roundtable, held at Grant Thornton Australia in Perth on Wednesday 14 August 2024, was structured around two main segments:

01 —— Questions and Powerful Conversations.

Participants engaged in table discussions to explore three 'How might we' questions, focusing on identifying barriers and actions. Each table's responses were documented.

02 —— Emerging Themes and Deeper Insights.

Table facilitators presented summaries of their discussions to the entire group, followed by a collective discussion to deepen insights.

Due to time constraints, the group did not develop detailed recommendations during the event. Instead, insights and ideas from the table and group discussions were provided to subject matter experts, who helped formulate recommendations.

8. Participants

The GreenTech Roundtable was thoughtfully curated to create a safe, inclusive space where all participants felt welcomed and comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences openly. To ensure diverse representation, StartupWA also implemented an Expression of Interest (EoI) process, inviting members and supporters of the startup and innovation ecosystem to join the event. The Roundtable brought together a diverse group of participants, including founders, university students, government officials, policy advisors, corporate representatives from the energy and mining sectors, university delegates, and leaders from the Western Australian startup ecosystem, representing a wide range of demographics. To ensure regional representation and accommodate those with work or family commitments, the event offered online participation. A total of 38 people contributed to the Roundtable discussion, with 29 stakeholders attending in person and another 9 joining online. The complete list of participants is available in Appendix A.

In total	In person	Online
38	29	9

9. Questions and Powerful Conversations

Three key questions were crafted for the GreenTech Roundtable:

1. People

How might we effectively attract, develop, and retain top talent for GreenTech startups in Western Australia?

2. Capital

How might we unlock opportunities for GreenTech startups within Western Australia to attract funding and generate revenue to scale their ventures?

3. Government

How might the Government play a pivotal role in fostering and scaling GreenTech startups in Western Australia?

Participants were divided into five pre-assigned small groups - four in-person at the venue and one online - to discuss the barriers and actions related to each of these questions. After the small group discussions, all attendees reconvened to share the key themes and insights identified by their respective groups.

10. Discussion Capture

10.1. Question 1 - How might we effectively attract, develop and retain top talent for GreenTech startups in Western Australia?

Area	Discussion Capture
Barriers:	
Talent Availability and Competition	- High-paying jobs in resource industries discourage talent from considering lower-paying startup roles. - Limited access to seed capital and venture funding hinders startups' ability to scale and attract talent. - Limited local talent requires companies to look to the East Coast or internationally for skilled workers. - WA's geographic remoteness limits access to talent and makes it harder to attract candidates from other regions. - A lack of clear career pathways in GreenTech leads graduates to prefer corporate roles. - Limited awareness of opportunities to work in startups or SMEs reduces interest in these roles (85% of Australians work in SMEs).
Cultural and Mindset Barriers	- WA's comfortable job market discourages risk-taking, reducing interest in startups. - A strong focus on the resources sector and ASX listings creates a cultural barrier, with many individuals preferring established industries over nascent sectors like GreenTech.

	• Challenges in building in-person startup culture and scaling remote operations can limit talent retention and company growth.
Perception and Image Challenges	• Insufficient signals from government and industry that GreenTech is a priority. • WA isn't recognised as a GreenTech hub, reducing its attractiveness to talent. • The mining industry's perceived dominance and influence can deter talent interested in sustainability. As an extractive industry, mining inherently has environmental impacts and high profile ESG challenges have contributed to negative perceptions. However, mining also offers high-paying jobs, is increasingly driven by technology and data, and plays a critical role in providing the metals and minerals essential for the global transition to clean energy. While many mining companies are working to integrate sustainability into their operations, shifting perceptions about the industry remains crucial for attracting GreenTech talent to WA.

Actions:

Attracting and Retaining Talent	• Promote entrepreneurial education to cultivate interest in GreenTech opportunities and startups. • Develop and communicate clear career pathways and targets for graduates to guide them into roles within the GreenTech sector. • Develop and support programs that promote lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling. Programs could be led by universities, government innovation hubs, TAFE or industry. Could include mentoring, coaching, and internship opportunities.

- Implement policies that make it easier for international talent to work in WA, including more accessible visas and competitive salaries. Offer targeted incentives for niche skills to attract talent to startups.
- Implement measures to de-risk employment in startups, similar to Germany's approach, making it more attractive for professionals to join. Examples include wage subsidies for startup employees (Gründerzuschuss) and tax-advantaged stock options (eg: deferring taxes on stock options through the Fund Location Act 2021).
- Encourage flexible rosters in industries like mining to allow employees to pursue side hustles or startup opportunities alongside their primary job.
- Incentivise startups to establish a physical presence near key industries (e.g., mining in Pilbara) to attract and develop future workforce outside of the metro area.

Financial Incentives and Support

- Raise awareness about incentives that can help GreenTech startups reduce costs and support skill development. For example, the R&D Tax Incentive and state and federal grants, such as the Accelerating Commercialisation program. Although WA doesn't have formal "enterprise zones," companies can still benefit from targeted initiatives, such as regional development areas or concessional loans through the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF), which supports businesses in northern regions. Programs through Development WA also offer potential support in key strategic locations across the state.
- Implement specific taxes on industries like coal to reinvest in GreenTech talent attraction and retention.
- Introduce programs similar to HECS loans for entrepreneurs to reduce financial risk for mid-career professionals joining startups.

	• Provide government support for the professional development costs of startup staff, and require skill development as a condition for grants.
Branding and Marketing Western Australia	• Promote champions or role models within the GreenTech industry • Strengthen WA's branding as a GreenTech powerhouse to attract talent, both locally and internationally. • Build high-profile GreenTech startup brands in WA, similar to the early days of Fortescue Future Industries (FFI) to create a compelling narrative around the sector.

10.2. Question 2 - How might we unlock opportunities for GreenTech startups within Western Australia to attract funding and generate revenue to scale their ventures?

Area	Discussion Capture
Barriers:	
Funding Challenges	• Startups often seek funding from the East Coast or overseas due to limited local funding. • WA-based capital has a low risk appetite, especially for DeepTech, which requires significant investment. • DeepTech startups face funding challenges, particularly in scaling beyond the pilot stage. • Large companies exhibit a low risk appetite, making them hesitant to partner with startups, which hinders startups from gaining the traction they need.

- GreenTech startups looking to scale their innovations must grasp the complexities of First-Of-A-Kind (FOAK) project funding. While there's support available for early-stage startups and established technologieslike wind or solar, there is a significant funding gap when it comes to the "growth stage" - the critical step from having a working prototype to developing a commercially viable product.

Opportunity to Grow Capability and Support

- Startups may have innovative ideas, but they often lack the readiness to sell.
- Innovation hubs are often hamstrung by lack of funding at the outset, setting them up for failure. They need more seed funding in early stages to help develop critical mass and sustainable revenue and funding.
- Startups not servicing the mining sector face significant challenges, as this sector dominates the local economy.

Procurement and Partnership Challenges

- Larger companies generally separate the innovation function from the procurement function. The latter is focused on mature products and risk minimisation whilst innovation is about scanning and nurturing, and accepts a higher level of risk. Startups need to target the right function in the organisation.
- Participants highlighted several policies and regulations that deter collaboration. For instance, large Tier 1 organisations work with pre-approved vendors, which makes it nearly impossible for startups to break through.
- Participants echoed the concern that startups are often unable to access procurement opportunities because they are not visible to large organisations. The procurement processes themselves are rigid and risk-averse.

- A cultural shift is required where companies openly acknowledge problems they cannot solve alone, providing opportunities for startups to offer solutions. There was strong agreement that larger companies need to create open innovation environments and be more transparent about challenges they cannot solve alone, providing startups with clearer opportunities.
- Participants noted that incumbents are often more open about collaboration and seeking new ideas to long-term problems (eg decarbonising, reducing water usage, use of waste products).
- Large-scale projects go through development phases and in the latter phases there is laser focus on schedule, cost and reducing risk. This is generally not the time to be introducing an innovative idea. Are startups targeting the right problems and putting forward their ideas at the right time? Startups should be thinking about what projects are currently in concept or order-of-magnitude stage. What are the challenges and needs of those projects?

Actions:

Enhanced Funding and Investment Strategies	• Establish a comprehensive investment strategy that supports startups from micro-seed stages to full-scale ventures. The funding landscape is fragmented and can be hard to navigate. We can better support GreenTech ventures to access the correct type of funding at the right growth stage.

- Encourage large corporations (particularly in the mining sector) to create new startups by introducing tax incentives that promote the spin-out of new ventures. These policies would offer tax breaks or credits when large companies transfer innovative projects or technologies into independent startups. The twist is that these corporations would retain the option to reacquire the startup if it proves successful, allowing them to benefit from reduced risk during the initial growth phase while still maintaining a potential return on investment. This approach could fuel innovation by leveraging the expertise and resources of large corporations while fostering agility and entrepreneurial culture in the newly created startups. It would also open pathways for startups to grow more quickly with the backing of an established player.
- Introduce point systems or voucher arrangements in procurement processes that favour local suppliers and startups.

Strengthening Relationships and Collaboration	- Corporate investors play a pivotal role in determining which startups and technologies thrive and expand. They can ease challenges for startups by offering access to internal research and design, global markets and supply chains, manufacturing facilities, and experience across the energy sector. - Promote the adoption of a venture client model where large companies act as early customers, offering both funding and market validation. (See article in Harvard Business Review 2024). Having startups and companies work together to validate and de-risk ideas can accelerate development. This can also provide insights for companies into scalability of ideas and generate new ideas and thinking for future projects.

- Collaborate with universities on joint projects to access non-dilutive project funding (via research grants).
- Organise events where industry and government communicate their challenges ("reverse pitch") and startups can propose solutions, creating a marketplace for ideas and partnerships. These events can be helpful in focusing the effort of startups, creates networking for further understanding, and open the eyes of industry to the innovation in their own backyard.

Risk Mitigation and Validation

- Develop strategies to mitigate the perceived risks for large companies when partnering with startups, such as phased procurement models or government-backed guarantees.
- Work with industry to understand how technology risk can identified and reduced through the development and deployment phases. Piloting in non-mission critical areas with robust evaluation of performance is critical to validating technology and getting it accepted for use on a larger scale.
- Encourage validation of projects on a smaller scale before scaling up to reduce risk and increase the likelihood of success.

Improving Innovation Infrastructure

- Establish and invest in research and development facilities to support innovation within the GreenTech sector.
- Build and support infrastructure that fosters innovation, such as incubators, accelerators, and co-working spaces tailored to GreenTech startups.

10.3. Question 3 - How might the Government play a pivotal role in fostering and scaling GreenTech startups in Western Australia?

Area	Discussion Capture
Barriers:	
Gaps in the Ecosystem	• Government entities can be a mission-critical partner in a startup's development and go-to-market efforts. • The need for physical spaces where businesses can operate, especially in remote areas, highlights the necessity for supporting infrastructure like housing, childcare, healthcare, and education. • Growing "energy literacy" across the ecosystem is essential, as low energy literacy limits the ability of entrepreneurs and investors to fully grasp the challenges and opportunities in the sector. This can result in missed opportunities, poor decision-making, and difficulties in scaling solutions. In such an environment, GreenTech startups may struggle to communicate their value, secure funding, and build the partnerships needed to drive meaningful change. • There is also an opportunity to help foster an "export mentality" for GreenTech startups to encourage founders to scale globally, driving economic growth, diversification and job creation.
Opportunity to Review Existing Policies	• Survey responses indicate that current state policies lack solid targets, particularly in the decarbonisation space, which discourages SMEs from implementing change. • Participants noted the low level of R&D expenditure in WA, which is far below OECD averages and the state's aspirational target.

- Policies for innovation and research, while well-intentioned, often fall short in practice due to risk aversion and bureaucratic norms that emphasise process over results. Issues related to obtaining funding and grants, including the perceived slow release of funds, question the effectiveness of current government support.
- Concerns about monopolistic behaviors from state-owned corporations and policies that fail to keep up with the pace of innovation in emerging industries like new fuels and carbon capture storage (CCS).
- Participants emphasised that procurement and OHS policies, as well as slow-moving regulations, need to be reformed to promote a more collaborative innovation ecosystem.
- Payroll tax identified as a barrier, with a need for concessions specifically tailored for startups to alleviate financial pressure.

Actions:

Creating Collaborative GreenTech Hubs and Clusters	- Establish GreenTech hubs or regional clusters that foster collaboration, share resources, and create synergies among startups. Feedback loops about best practice, what is working and what isn't, gaps and barriers, can feed back into policy. - Showcase Western Australian innovation in international markets to attract investment. Promote local success stories. - Speed up the release of grant funds and simplify processes and regulations to reduce barriers for startups - Facilitate talent transition into Western Australia through supportive visa, and policy frameworks.

| Pilot Projects and Knowledge Sharing | • Support pilot projects to demonstrate the viability of new technologies in the GreenTech sector. Design programs that help industry and startups understand and de-risk new technologies in a low-risk environment. Piloting can be resource-intensive, and this is where collaboration between startups, industry, and government is essential. By offering targeted funding and resources for pilot projects, the government can help accelerate the testing and validation of innovative technologies, ultimately speeding up their path to commercialisation and widespread adoption.
• The government should facilitate the sharing of lessons learned from other industries to provide startups with valuable insights and strategies for success. For example, South Australia's carbon-neutral wine industry, led by Barossa Australia, offers a model for decarbonising supply chains. This initiative was driven by increasing demand from UK and European markets, where retailers are pressuring companies to reduce their carbon footprint and label products accordingly. By highlighting such case studies, the government can inspire and guide startups in other sectors to adopt sustainable practices and meet global market expectations. |
|---|---|
| Encouraging Local Procurement | • Encourage the government to act as the first customer for startups, thereby validating their business models and providing early revenue. This also includes using government influence to incentivise local procurement by SMEs and corporates.
• Implement local content requirements tied to grants and revenue incentives, ensuring that government spending benefits local businesses. Promote transparency and competition through initiatives like leaderboards showing local spending. |

11. Recommendations

11.1 Quick Wins (6-24 months)

01 **Develop a talent attraction and retention strategy**

Create targeted campaigns and partnerships with local schools and universities to raise awareness of GreenTech career opportunities among students and graduates. Develop clear career pathways and offer internships and mentoring programs to engage young talent early. Implement incentives to support startups in offering competitive salaries and benefits packages.

02 **Streamline access to government grants and funding**

Simplify the application process and speed up the disbursement of existing government grants to provide timely financial support to startups. Introduce a "fast-track" grant process for startups demonstrating significant innovation or potential impact in the GreenTech sector. Address the gap between early-stage funding and the much larger second round of capital (~AU$10-100 million) that startups need to scale successfully.

03 **Enhance collaboration between startups & corporates**

Organise regular industry "reverse pitch" events where large companies present their challenges and invite startups to propose solutions. Encourage corporates to act as venture clients, providing not only funding but also market validation by becoming early adopters of GreenTech solutions. Encourage large companies to foster open innovation practices by sharing upcoming projects and challenges with startups. This will allow startups to orient themselves toward future opportunities and mitigate the risks associated with projects already in deployment, which are typically too risk-averse to accommodate unproven technologies.

04   Implement tax incentives for GreenTech investments

Offer targeted tax incentives for investments in GreenTech startups, such as enhanced R&D tax credits and tax breaks for companies purchasing or partnering with startups.

05   Promote Western Australia as a GreenTech Hub

Develop a marketing and branding campaign to position Western Australia as a leading hub for GreenTech innovation. Highlight successful case studies and create a digital platform showcasing local startups, available investment opportunities, and government support initiatives.

11.2. Future-Forward Strategies (2-5 years)

01   Establish a GreenTech Innovation Fund

Create a dedicated GreenTech venture capital fund, backed by both government and private sector contributions, to provide significant capital to startups at various stages, particularly those at the growth and scale-up phases. This fund should focus on high-risk, high-reward investments that could drive substantial impact in decarbonisation and energy transition.

02   Develop a public-private GreenTech Accelerator

Launch a public-private partnership accelerator program specifically for GreenTech startups. This program could provide seed funding, mentorship, and access to specialised resources (e.g., labs, testing facilities). In exchange, participants could commit to specific sustainability outcomes and potential collaboration with state-owned enterprises.

03   Implement a GreenTech Talent Visa Scheme

Create a specialised visa program to attract international GreenTech talent to Western Australia. This program could offer streamlined visa processing and competitive relocation packages to fill skill gaps and foster a diverse talent pool within the GreenTech sector.

04   Create a Decarbonisation Sandbox for Startups

Establish a regulatory sandbox where GreenTech startups can test new technologies and business models in a controlled, supportive environment. This would reduce regulatory barriers and allow for rapid iteration and scaling of innovative solutions with close oversight and support from relevant regulatory bodies.

05   Redefine industry roles and responsibilities for GreenTech development

Mandate large mining and energy companies to contribute to the GreenTech ecosystem through partnerships, acquisitions, or direct investments in startups. This could be part of broader ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) commitments, with specific metrics to track engagement and impact.

12. Acknowledgement

StartupWA extends its gratitude to Grant Thornton and CarbonTP for their collaboration on the GreenTech Roundtable and the production of this report, with special thanks to Grant Thornton for sponsoring the venue. We also acknowledge the support from the New Industries Fund through the X-TEND WA grants program, which made the Roundtable and report launch possible.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the following individuals for volunteering their time to organise, run the event, and contribute to the creation of this report:
- Jason Balchand,
- James Binhle,
- Lacey Filipich,
- Stephanie Harrington,
- Jo Hawkins, and
- Josh Van Ross.

Appendix A

List of Attendees

- Stephen Armstrong https://www.linkedin.com/in/stephen-armstrong-3967558b/
- Jason Balchand https://www.linkedin.com/in/jasonbalchand/
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- Jo Hawkins https://www.linkedin.com/in/jo-hawkins-phd-031a1a22/
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Appendix B

Pre-event Survey

Sample Size: 27 responses

A note about objectives/ methodology

Survey results are based on a small non-representative sample of self-selected individuals. The purpose of the survey is to help narrow the scope of discussion and inform generation of "How might we…?" questions that frame problems for ideation. The survey was also a mechanism to engage StartupWA members. It will form part of a briefing pack to help Roundtable attendees get on the same page at the outset of the event. Our aim is to increase the likelihood of discussions where viable solutions and/or actionable new insights are generated during the 2-hour Roundtable Discussion. Key themes and suggestions will be collated in a report.

I. What do you see as the main obstacles to collaboration between startups and corporates/SMEs? (Select up to 3)

Results:
- Differences in risk appetite (14 mentions)
- Funding constraints (13 mentions)
- Identifying a project champion within the industry (10 mentions)
- Cultural differences (8 mentions)
- Intellectual property concerns (7 mentions)
- Regulatory barriers (5 mentions)
- Lack of communication (5 mentions)
- Regional isolation and networking opportunities (1 mention)
- Scale and alignment in working models (1 mention)
- Procurement process structures within corporates (1 mention)
- Preferred supplier network (1 mention)
- Enterprise vs. Startup sales timescale (1 mention)
- Commercialisation / Execution equity & risk allocation (1 mention)
- Lack of understanding / Inability to articulate the problem (1 mention)

II. What strategies do you believe would be most effective for corporates/SMEs to support and integrate startup innovations? (Select up to 3)

Results:
- Pilot projects and trials (14 mentions)
- Venture Studio (10 mentions)
- Direct investment and funding (10 mentions)
- Incubators and accelerators (7 mentions)
- Joint Ventures (7 mentions)
- Open innovation platforms (6 mentions)
- Mentorship programs (3 mentions)
- A commercial introduction platform / Location (1 mention)
- Venture client model (1 mention)

III. In your opinion, which specific areas offer the greatest potential for startups and SMEs/corporates to collaborate in reducing emissions?

Results:
- Collaboration and forums (4 mentions)
- Funding and investment (3 mentions)
- Emission reduction technology (2 mentions)
- Electrification and clean energy (2 mentions)
- Outsourcing and partnerships (2 mentions)
- Software and distributed energy resources (2 mentions)
- Waste management (1 mention)
- Aggregated solutions (1 mention)
- Carbon reporting tools (1 mention)
- Consortiums (1 mention)
- Regulatory and legal compliance (1 mention)
- Carbon capture (1 mention)
- Utilisation & storage (CCUS) (1 mention)
- Pilot projects and trials (1 mention)
- Scope 3 emissions and automation (1 mention)
- Standardised commercial agreements (1 mention)
- Mentorship (1 mention)
- Decision-maker engagement (1 mention)
- Decarbonisation of existing industries (1 mention)

IV. Which funding models do you think are most effective in supporting startup innovation in the decarbonisation sector? (Select up to 3)

Results:
- Government grants (20 mentions)
- Public-private partnerships (15 mentions)
- Venture capital (12 mentions)
- Corporate venture funds (11 mentions)
- Angel investors (6 mentions)
- Crowdfunding (2 mentions)
- Bootstrapped (1 mention)
- Sales funding (1 mention)
- Pilot/Vendor client arrangements (1 mention)

V. What are the biggest challenges related to scaling and implementing startup innovations within corporates/SMEs? (Select all that apply)

Results:
- Cost and financial risk (18 mentions)
- Organisational resistance (16 mentions)
- Regulatory compliance (14 mentions)
- Market acceptance (9 mentions)
- Technical integration (12 mentions)
- Access to funding and pilot projects (1 mention)
- Sunk capital (1 mention)
- Risk aversion with smaller companies (1 mention)
- Different processes and culture (1 mention)

VI. What measures can be taken to improve the scalability of startup innovations in the industry? (Select up to 3)

Results:
- Better collaboration frameworks (17 mentions)
- Increased funding and investment (15 mentions)
- Access to corporate resources and expertise (15 mentions)
- Strengthening innovation ecosystems (10 mentions)
- Enhanced regulatory support (7 mentions)
- Incentives for corporates to include more startups/SMEs in supply chain (1 mention)

- Access to innovation infrastructure (1 mention)
- Access to customers (1 mention)
- Need to understand each other (Startups and Corporates/SMEs) - (1 mention)
- Trials/Pilots (1 mention)

VII. How can policy and regulation incentivise collaboration between startups and corporates? (Select up to 3)

Results:
- Tax incentives for collaborative projects (19 mentions)
- Grants and subsidies (18 mentions)
- Creation of innovation hubs and clusters (16 mentions)
- Streamlined regulatory processes (8 mentions)
- Public recognition and awards (6 mentions)
- Forums for connection (1 mention)
- Government mechanisms to derisk procurement (1 mention)

VIII. Are there any current policies or regulations that you believe deter collaboration?

Results:
- Yes, Tier 1 organisations only work with vendors that are approved, start up and small business has zero opportunities to work with large organisations.
- Common response of IP and competitive conflict. However, multiple examples of cross-sector collaborations in the diversity space. Observation - these collaborations are human led, not dollar incentivised.
- In decarb the current state government policies are a joke and do not have any solid targets which deters SME's from implementing change. There is neither carrot nor stick, only soft photo opportunities for politicians funded by very large corporates.
- In minerals industry, investing in new tech development hinges on likelihood of deployment. Minerals industry is heavily regulated, new tech requires consideration of regulatory upgrades. Policy review/new tech integration as part of innovation ecosystem can and will enable increased uptake of innovation.

- The estimated R&D expenditure across the WA economy is approximately AU$2,751 million. Assuming that WA's Gross State Product ("GSP") is AU$320,653 million, WA's estimated R&D expenditure is only ~0.86% of WA's GSP. This is low relative to: (a) Average R&D expenditure of 3.01% (% of GDP) spent by OECD members; and (b) WA's aspirational R&D expenditure target of 3% (% of GSP) as recommended by a 2016 inquiry into technological and service innovation in Western Australia by the Parliament's Economic and Industry Standing Committee.
- While many of WA Government's grant programs for innovation, ranging between ~AU$50,000 to ~AU$500,000, assist innovators/startups to address the first funding gap, innovators/startups are challenged to raise funds for addressing the second funding gap of ~AU$10 million to ~AU$100 million.
- Government policy directs most resources to physical sciences and tangible product innovation. Limited support is available for de-risking innovation in services, business model or market adoption and growth. There is an absence of government intervention that focuses on building capabilities to de-risk market adoption and develop innovative business models. Programs currently focus primarily on technical readiness and product feasibility risk, while neglecting crucial elements of building competitive businesses.
- Government policies for innovation and research often have good ambitions which are not realised due to the culture of risk aversion that often exists within the government agencies that are tasked to implement such policies. Causes of the said organisational culture of risk aversion include "difficulties of achieving (and measuring) innovation success, bureaucratic norms that emphasize rules over results and processes over outcomes, and the asymmetric relationship between those bearing the risk involved in innovation and those garnering the reward or incentive.
- Government is loading up businesses policies that have a good intention but can make it very challenging for startups and SMEs
- Lack of price on pollution
- Public / State Owned Corporation forming industry monopolies
- ACCC deters some organisations; uncertainty creates reluctance
- Corporate procurement and OHS policies, regulations in emerging industries (i.e. new fuels and CCS) not keeping up with the pace of innovation.

- Collaboration is limited by the speed at which regulations and policies take to learn primarily. It's vital to ensure compliance, but that doesn't mean the nature surrounding learning it should be so fear-based. With almost all core learning material promoting penalties, the system is quite literally scaring innovators away. Who wants to sleep at night with a poor understanding of a system that threatens to lock you up regardless of intent. (Startups don't come with an in-house lawyer. knowing this, deference is the policies and regulations themselves until they are presented in a gentler way, particularly being that we are becoming more accepting of mental health as a society, do we really want to not invest in more gentle education for a growing gentle society?)
- The difficulty and time it takes to learn these things so as to be compliant and sleep at night without undue fear and anxiety limits participation, turning away innovators and creatives quite literally as soon as they begin. I know people who are scared to even get an ABN or file their own taxes.