



Australian Sports
Technologies Network
Powering Sports Innovation

ASTN kicks off 2025 NRL Magic Round Tech Sprint

Queensland-based startups have the opportunity to pitch to the NRL, one of Australia's premier sports organisations, in an open innovation program facilitated by ASTN

MELBOURNE – TUESDAY, 03 DECEMBER 2024: The Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) in collaboration with National Rugby League (NRL) and Advance Queensland (AQ) is proud to announce that Queensland-based sportstech startups and small businesses can now pitch their innovative tech ideas to the NRL to solve some of their biggest challenges.

This will be a 10-week program facilitated by ASTN – the leading industry body for sports and technology innovation. Supported by the NRL and AQ - up to eight Queensland-based innovative small businesses will collaborate with NRL subject matter experts to refine and adapt their technologies to meet the needs of the NRL and its clubs.

The program supports businesses developing technologies like artificial intelligence applications to better manage fan data, virtual and augmented broadcast enhancements, and improving major event experiences through to crowd management and in-stadium experiences.

The partnership is part of a broader NRL Magic Round event agreement between the NRL and Tourism and Events Queensland for the event to be held in Brisbane from 2025-2027.

ASTN will facilitate the program, working closely with the startups and the NRL to help pilot their ideas and solutions. ASTN will also provide mentoring, investor pitch coaching, facilitate industry engagement, and offer valuable guidance to help selected businesses to scale nationally.

Successful businesses will receive \$25,000 each (excluding GST) in funding from AQ to participate in the program, which will run from February to April 2025, ending in a showcase event during the 2025 NRL Magic Round in May.

“We’re encouraging all Queensland-based startups and small businesses to apply for this unique opportunity to collaborate directly with one of Australia’s most prominent sports organisations. Businesses will gain access to industry experts, resources, market, customers and new channels that they otherwise wouldn’t have access to,” said Nikita Vogel, Queensland Manager, ASTN.

The NRL is looking to enhance seven key priority areas by piloting technology solutions and products. In return, the startups will have the opportunity to validate, test and/or integrate their solution with a key sports brand in the Australian market.

Key priorities areas for startups to address include:

- Strengthen the appeal and engagement for new audiences
- Better engage Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) fans
- Enhance the in-stadium experience
- Better enable volunteers and administrators to improve the participation experience
- Boost the accessibility and appeal of stats to drive user engagement
- Elevate the quality of the fan experience for those watching at home
- Advance performance excellence and promote long-term career health for NRL/NRLW athletes



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Queensland-based businesses with an existing technology at or beyond the minimum viable product (MVP) stage are encouraged to apply, along with businesses outside of sport technology that have the potential to tailor solutions to sport and major events. Applicants must have a product being developed in Queensland, which is at, or beyond the minimum viable product (MVP) stage.

"We've facilitated similar open innovation challenges, and we believe it's a great way to bring sportstech startups and existing organisations together to solve complex challenges. We highly encourage other sports to get involved in opportunities like this, as we've seen first-hand how it can be the perfect platform to inject innovative thinking and drive technological advancements," concluded Vogel.

Applications are now open and close at 2pm on 9 January 2025. Successful businesses would then commence the 10-week tech sprint in February 2025 with the program completed prior to NRL Magic Round event in May 2025.

For more information and to apply please visit: <https://advance.qld.gov.au/grants-and-programs/nrl-magic-round-innovation>

ENDS

Media Enquiries

For more information, or to arrange an interview with ASTN, please contact Tara Ballard on 0436 330 267 or Tara.ballard@astn.com.au

About Australian Sports Technologies Network Ltd

Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) provides leadership in the commercialisation, development, and promotion of Australian-inspired Sports Technologies. Established in 2012, ASTN is today a world-leading pioneer with over 750 organisations in its national network across the landscape of Sports Digital, Sports Research, Stadium/Venues, Media, Entertainment, eSports, Human Performance, Fan Engagement, Sports Data, Artificial Intelligence in Sports, Sports Equipment, Sports Smart Apparel and Sports Universities. For more information, please visit www.astn.com.au.

About Advance Queensland

Innovative people and businesses are an important part of Queensland's future. Advance Queensland provides support and resources to build our innovation economy, drive growth and create jobs in our regions.

<https://advance.qld.gov.au/>