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Queensland Minister for
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**THE HON JOSH
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**THE HON LEEANNE
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Queensland Minister for
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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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BIG IDEAS SHORT-LISTED TO BOOST CORAL GROWTH ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

From mass producing coral larvae farms to a biodegradable, light reflecting ‘sun shield’, six ingenious ideas have been short-listed through a \$2 million innovation challenge to boost coral abundance on the Great Barrier Reef.

Australian Minister for the Environment and Energy Josh Frydenberg, Queensland Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development Kate Jones and Queensland Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Leeanne Enoch today announced the six Australian organisations selected to kick-off feasibility testing of their coral preserving concepts.

“From an international playing field of 69 submissions and after a rigorous evaluation and selection process, we are extremely pleased with the submissions short-listed to move into the feasibility stage,” Minister Frydenberg said.

“The six concepts have the potential to deliver outstanding results for the Great Barrier Reef, building on our \$2 billion Reef 2050 Plan in this International Year of the Reef.”

The six successful submissions which will move into an eight month feasibility stage came from Southern Cross University, The University of Melbourne, Sydney Institute of Marine Science, The University of Technology Sydney, CSIRO in partnership with international marine engineering company Van Oord and engineering and environmental consultancy BMT Pty Ltd in partnership with The University of Queensland.

Minister Jones said these ideas were identified through the Advance Queensland Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) initiative and reflected the scale of the challenge.

“We have some extraordinary proposals in front of us and this step is critical in testing the feasibility of these ideas,” Minister Jones said.

“The Great Barrier Reef is Queensland’s greatest natural asset and the health of the reef is key to growing the state’s tourism industry.

“Our successful applicants are partnering with charter boat and tourism operators, Indigenous Sea Rangers and local manufacturing companies, among others, to test their innovative approaches in the real world.”

Minister Enoch said the successful submissions were not only innovative, but also diverse in nature.

“The short-listed concepts range from harvesting coral spawn slicks for release on targeted reefs, to establishing coral settlement structures designed to withstand heavy seas and cyclones, as well as new systems to reduce the exposure of corals to heat stress,” Minister Enoch said.

“We are looking for a range of solutions that will ultimately reverse the trajectory of coral decline and strengthen the health of the Great Barrier Reef – a turnaround which is critical for the survival of the planet’s greatest living wonder, and a key priority for our government.”

For more information, please visit <https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-and-startups-industry-small-business/small-business-innovation-research/boosting-coral-abundance-great-barrier-reef>.

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