

CSIR MANUFACTURING CLUSTER

Light EV Localisation & Industry Capability

Expression of Interest (EOI) for South African industry partners

Stage 1 Closes: Saturday, 8 Aug 2026

THE OPPORTUNITY

South Africa has a clear opportunity to build a competitive local production base for light electric vehicles (Light EVs) suited for African operating conditions, including:

- Last-mile delivery
- Township and peri-urban mobility
- Campus and precinct transport
- Municipal and public services
- Tourism and hospitality
- Agriculture and farm logistics
- Security and surveillance
- Mining and industrial site transport

As this industry emerges, the CSIR is focused on supporting the development of a local value chain for Light EVs – and this is dependent on participation from capable South African organisations.

The CSIR Future Production: Manufacturing Cluster is engaging industry to identify and enable the capabilities required to realise this opportunity. The CSIR has developed a basic Light EV platform testbed. This platform is not a final product. It is a foundation for industry development, collaboration and localisation.

POSITIONING OF THIS INITIATIVE

This initiative is focused on:

- enabling and strengthening local industry participation, and
- supporting localisation, industrialisation and supplier development

It does not seek to compete with existing manufacturers, but rather to identify and partner with capable organisations across the value chain.

WHO SHOULD RESPOND

This EOI is intended for organisations with demonstrable manufacturing, engineering, testing or industrial capability, including:

- Component and subsystem manufacturers
- Contract manufacturers and assemblers
- Design, Engineering, and industrialisation firms
- Testing, certification and homologation providers
- Supply-chain, localisation and smart manufacturing organisations

Organisations do not need full vehicle capability – partial or specialised capabilities are highly relevant.

WHAT THIS EOI IS – AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This EOI is:	This EOI is not:
• A capability identification and mapping exercise • A structured mechanism to identify credible industry partners • The first step in building a Light EV capability base and localisation value chain	• A procurement process, tender, RFQ or RFP • A commitment to funding, contracting or commercial engagement

Further engagement will take place through appropriate structured processes, where applicable.

WHY PARTICIPATE

Organisations that respond will:

- Showcase their capabilities and experience to the CSIR
- Be included in a curated Light EV capability database
- Be well-positioned for consideration in future structured engagements, including:
 - technical reviews
 - pilot builds and development programmes
 - RFIs and potential procurement processes (where applicable)
- Contribute to shaping local supplier development and localisation initiatives

Participation signals serious intent to engage in emerging Light EV value chains in South Africa.

SUBSYSTEM AREAS OF INTEREST

Respondents will be asked to indicate capability in one or more of the following areas:

Subsystem Area	What it Covers
Propulsion and Electrical Systems	Electric motors, controllers, power electronics, battery systems, BMS, charging interfaces and vehicle electrical architecture.
Chassis and Vehicle Systems	Chassis and frame fabrication, suspension, steering, braking, drivetrain, wheels and structural support systems.
Body and Application Systems	Body panels, cabin systems, cargo and utility solutions, lighting and application-specific vehicle integration.

EOI PROCESS

A structured two-stage approach will be followed:

Stage 1 – Pre-Qualification	Stage 2 – Detailed Engagement	Shortlisting & Engagement
(Online Form ±15 minutes) All interested organisations complete a structured submission covering: • company profile • manufacturing and engineering capabilities • subsystem expertise • certifications and standards • relevant experience and references	(Shortlisted only ±30–45 minutes) Shortlisted organisations will participate in a deeper assessment, including: • detailed capability validation • infrastructure and production readiness • quality systems and certifications • project and customer references	Submissions will be evaluated by the CSIR to: • identify credible and capable suppliers • map strengths across subsystem categories • prioritise organisations for further technical engagement Non-shortlisted respondents remain in a general capability register.

IMPORTANT EXPECTATIONS

Respondents will be expected to substantiate their capabilities, for example through:

- past project or customer references
- production scale (prototype, pilot or commercial)
- certifications, standards or quality systems

Preference will be given to organisations with demonstrable industrial or commercial capability.

HOW TO SUBMIT

All submissions must be completed via Microsoft Forms by 8 Aug 2026.

- Only online submissions will be considered
- Provision is made for uploading relevant company information

Stage 1 submission link:

[Expression of Interest Light EV Localisation & Industry Capability – Fill in form](#)

ENQUIRIES

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DISCLAIMER

This EOI does not constitute:

- an offer
- a tender
- a procurement process
- any contractual commitment

Submission does not guarantee inclusion in any programme or future engagement.

The CSIR reserves the right to amend or withdraw this EOI at any time.

POPIA NOTICE

All information submitted will be processed in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) for:

- capability identification & mapping
- programme engagement

Information will not be shared without consent.
