User Interface Protocol Technical Working Group Submission requirements

## Background

NatHERS is expanding to include energy performance ratings for existing homes.

[Expanding NatHERS assessments | Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS)](https://www.nathers.gov.au/expansion)

The launch of NatHERS for existing homes will, at a minimum, consist of:

* an accredited benchmark rating tool
* **a software accreditation protocol for tool developers (now called a UIP)**
* an initial pool of trained and accredited assessors
* the release of other key elements such as the Training and Skills Strategy and Assurance Strategy.

Following the initial launch of NatHERS for existing homes in mid-2025, efforts will be focused on accreditation of third-party UIs, increasing the functionality of energy rating tools, implementing the Training and Skills Strategy, and scaling up the pool of assessors.

To ensure the Benchmark Tool and NatHERS can continually improve and take advantage of technological innovation, in 2019 the Australian Government invested substantial funds, with the backing of the states and territories, in the development of a ‘cloud-based’ version of AccuRate, named AccuRate Enterprise.

Being a cloud-based tool means it is available to developers to carry out calculations on a central server using the internet thus avoiding the need to re-build the same calculations in their own software.

The existing homes Benchmark Tool will be AccuRate Enterprise (existing homes mode), following completion of field trials, final testing and committee approvals. The Benchmark Tool will be available for use by NatHERS accredited assessors to voluntarily rate homes upon launch of NatHERS for existing homes in mid-2025. It will have a UI (this built-in UI will be optimised for on-site data collection) and will generate NatHERS existing home certificates with upgrade advice.

### Proposed approach for third-party tools

NatHERS ratings for existing homes will require assessors to visit homes, collect data, input data into a third-party UI and generate a Home Energy Rating Certificate. This approach is a significant change from the current NatHERS new homes assessment process, which is completed by assessors using detailed plans and specifications.

The proposed approach for existing homes energy rating tools is to consider third-party tools accreditation to **UIs only**, with all calculations undertaken by AccuRate Enterprise (existing homes mode).

Third parties would be able to develop UIs for inputting the necessary data for a rating. All calculations to generate the ratings and certificates, including upgrade advice, will be completed in the cloud by AccuRate Enterprise and sent back to the UI.

The UIP will set out the necessary requirements for third-party UIs to undertake home energy ratings for existing homes in NatHERS.

The benefits of a UI approach are:

* it will eliminate the need for third-party interface tool providers to duplicate calculations in their tools.
* it will support consistency and comparability of ratings for all homes.
* it will improve and streamline NatHERS administration.
* It will allow innovation in the development of onsite data collection methods.

## Working Group Scope

This working group will inform the UI protocol for third-party UI providers. It will focus on a delivery model where the third-party UI will generate a NatHERS certificate and display rating results directly in the UI. Proposed areas to cover:

**Working group meeting 1**

* UI model versions
* UI accreditation provisions- minimum requirements
* UI requirements: data input functions, simplifications, data management and privacy, logging and monitoring, mandatory fields, interface design/accessibility rules.
* Accuracy requirements
* Exemptions
* NatHERS accredited UI terms and conditions
* UI input testing: methods and materials (thermal testing, appliance and systems testing)
* Certificate integration

**Working group meeting 2 (If required)**

The requirement for this meeting will be assessed on receipt of the feedback from the first meeting.

## Eligibility Criteria

The NatHERS administrator is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and interested experts to join this small working group.

The selection process to consider participants will be based on several factors to ensure that the technical working group consist of individuals or organisations that have the appropriate expertise, experience, and ability to contribute effectively to the development of the UI protocol. The following criteria will be considered:

* Technical Expertise:
	+ Demonstrated expertise in areas directly related to UI development, such as software engineering, user experience (UX) design, human-computer interaction, or protocol development.
	+ Relevant academic qualifications or certifications in fields such as computer science, design, or engineering may be advantageous.
	+ Legal, privacy, cyber security and other expertise related to the deployment of cloud solutions.
* Industry Experience:
	+ Demonstrated professional experience in the field. This includes years of experience working in relevant industries, such as software development, technology consulting, or interface design, NatHERS software development experience or extensive experience using NatHERS software in its regulatory context.
* Research and Development (if applicable):
	+ Experience in research and development, particularly in advancing new or experimental UI designs, technologies, or protocols, will be considered.
* Interest and Motivation:
	+ Participants should provide a clear and compelling statement of interest explaining why they want to be involved and how they can contribute to the project.

## Submission requirements

Please provide:

* **Statement against eligibility criteria:** outlining the reasons for the nomination against the criteria above for all applicants (no more than one page).
* **CV:** with further details of previous experience of all applicants (no more than two pages).

Your application should include the **nomination of two representatives**, if possible, the second being a proxy who can attend the meeting with prior agreement, to enable your organisation to be represented at all working group meetings. The application should include:

* **Nominations:** two representatives and their contact details
* **Declaration of interest:** as per the provisions in the [Confidentiality, Privacy and Conflict of Interest Deed](https://www.nathers.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-10/Confidentiality%20form.docx).

Documents to support the working group discussion will be provided ahead of the meeting and will include the following: draft UI protocol, Technical Note (existing homes), Software Standardisation and Thermal Specifications document, and National Calculation Method.

Please provide the following details:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organisation |  |
| Name (main participant) |  |
| Email and phone (main participant) |  |
| Name (proxy) |  |
| Email and phone (proxy) |  |
| Phone Office |  |
| Office Address |  |

## Dates

**Please submit your expression of interest by** 14 October, 2024

The proposed date of the first working group will be 1:30-4:30pm (AEST) 24 of October 2024.

## Contact information

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to us at admin@nathers.gov.au.

### Confidentiality and Disclaimer

The Commonwealth of Australia, as represented by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), is releasing this expression of interest as part of the work to support the expansion of the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) to include existing homes.

This expression of interest is a consultation activity and is not a commitment to any particular course of action. It is not a notice of, or part of, any proposed or actual tender process for the provision of any services or material for NatHERS.

All participants selected for the technical working group are required to sign a confidentiality agreement before commencing work. Any information shared during the meetings, including proprietary data, discussions, and documents, shall be treated as confidential. Participants agree not to disclose this information to any third party without prior written consent from the NatHERS administrator.

DCCEEW makes no representation and does not warrant that any information contained in this expression of interest is accurate, current or complete.

Any questions or correspondence must be directed to admin@nathers.gov.au before the Deadline for Submissions. DCCEEW reserves the right to respond, or not respond, to specific questions at its sole discretion.