The Territory Government will commit $1.05 million over seven years ($150,000 per year) to a centre that will provide cutting-edge desert research in Alice Springs, Chief Minister, Clare Martin, told Parliament today.

The Desert Knowledge Co-operative Research Centre is a key initiative of the Desert Knowledge Australia project.

"This is a significant commitment over seven years to a development that will become a key driver in the growth of Central Australia," Ms Martin said.

Ms Martin said a bid for the construction of the centre had been finalised and would be lodged with the Federal Government early next week.

She said the submission was seeking $20 million from the Federal Government. Private sponsors and other State Governments have already confirmed financial commitments of $7 million, and participating agencies from across Australia have committed staff time worth a further $64 million.

"The research centre will have its headquarters in Alice Springs and a significant proportion of the total $91 million resources will be spent there over the seven years.

"This adds up to a huge financial boost to Alice Springs and the Territory."

The Co-Operative Research Centre's role will be to produce research outcomes which improve the living conditions of people living in the desert regions, as well as developing new opportunities for employment.

"It will look for ways to better manage and take advantage of our remarkable natural environments, helping the industries that depend on these resources.

"The Centre will also address the high cost of building and maintaining infrastructure in remote areas, thereby making it more attractive for people to live out there and manage those lands for us all."