



Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Innovation and Science

**Business**

business.gov.au  
**13 28 46**  
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## Customer Information Guide

# Entrepreneurs' Programme - Business Growth Grants

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**Disclaimer**

Business Management services are undertaken by Business Advisers and Facilitators employed by Industry Partners. Using the information you supply, the Adviser or Facilitator will make recommendations to you to improve your business. If you're eligible, your business may choose to address these areas with the assistance of a Business Growth Grant.

Business Management relies upon information you provide and may include the views of other parties in providing this service. As such, the Commonwealth, its Contractors and their Specified Personnel are unable to guarantee the accuracy, completeness and relevance of services for your purposes. You should therefore satisfy yourself that the Business Management Service is appropriate for your business needs before taking any action.

The Commonwealth, its Contractors and their Specified Personnel excludes all liability to the maximum extent permitted by law for any loss, damage, cost or expense suffered or incurred arising from the use of, or reliance upon, Business Management or any actions taken by your business in addressing issues or implementing recommendations identified as part of Business Management activities, complementary services or otherwise provided separately by a Business Adviser or Facilitator.

# 1 Purpose of this guide

This Customer Information Guide (guide) explains the Business Growth Grant element of the Entrepreneurs' Programme and sets out the rules for receiving services and grants under this element.

You should read this guide in conjunction with the Entrepreneurs' Programme Guidelines and any related documents. Please read this guide carefully before you start filling out an application form.

## 2 Programme overview

The Entrepreneurs' Programme (the programme) assists small and medium businesses in targeted growth sectors to improve business capability. Practical support for businesses, researchers and entrepreneurs includes: advice from professionals with relevant private sector experience, networking opportunities, and co-funded grants.

The programme has four elements:

- Business Management
- Innovation Connections
- Accelerating Commercialisation
- Incubator Support

The primary focus of the programme is on providing access to the best advice and networks to help businesses solve problems, rather than focusing on financial assistance.

### 2.1 Business Management overview

Business Management encourages and assists small and medium businesses to improve their capabilities, extend their networks and take advantage of growth opportunities. The following are Business Management Activities:

- **Business Evaluations** – a range of services initially comprising an evaluation by a Business Adviser to tailor the service to the participant's needs, based on the participant's capacity, commitment and need to undertake significant improvements.
- **Business Growth Services** – a range of services that support a participant, over an extended engagement, to achieve growth through strategic business improvements and connections.
- **Supply Chain Facilitation** – a range of services delivered to a participant to facilitate access to supply chain opportunities.
- **Tourism Partnerships** – services delivered to a group or consortium of businesses, in the Tourism sector, to facilitate and encourage joint activities for the benefit of the group or consortium.

For further information on Business Management Activities refer to [business.gov.au/ep](https://business.gov.au/ep) or call the contact centre on 13 28 46.

## 3 Business Growth Grant

Following your Business Management Activity, you may be eligible for a Business Growth Grant. The Business Growth Grant helps you to implement an action item from your Business Evaluation

Action Plan, Growth Plan, Supplier Improvement Plan or Tourism Partnership Plan that will embed additional capability in your business. Your Business Adviser or Facilitator can assist you to identify and scope an appropriate activity and support you in approaching the market for a quote.

The grant reimburses businesses, after completion of the project, for 50% of an agreed total project value up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST).

### 3.1 Who can apply for a Business Growth Grant?

You may be able to apply for a Business Growth Grant if you meet all of the following conditions:

- you are applying for a Business Growth Grant within:
  - a) six months of receipt of a Business Evaluation Action Plan, Supplier Improvement Plan or Tourism Partnership Plan; or
  - b) within 24 months of receipt of a Growth Plan, unless otherwise agreed by the Programme Delegate, an employee of the department who has been authorised by the Minister to administer the programme. Additional time may be granted where agreed by the Programme Delegate and where a business can demonstrate substantial activity undertaken to implement the recommendations in the report plan.
- you are able to fund (excluding in-kind contributions) the total value of the project costs before being reimbursed for the grant;
- you submit a complete application, as defined in section 3.2;
- your proposed project is an eligible activity, as defined in section 3.3;
- there is no conflict of interest. A conflict is a related party such as engaging an external provider with common shareholdings or directorship with the customer, individuals, employees or immediate family (grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses or children); and
- your proposed project has not commenced.

### 3.2 How to apply for a Business Growth Grant

To apply for a Business Growth Grant, you must complete the online Business Growth Grant Application Form at [business.gov.au/bgg](https://business.gov.au/bgg).

A complete application for a Business Growth Grant:

- provides all the information specified in the application form;
- must be completed by an authorised representative within your business;
- includes at least 1 quote from an external consultancy.

Quotes must detail:

- what services the consultant will provide, including a breakdown of key activities;
- time frame for service delivery;
- how much the services will cost (exc. GST); and
- travel expenses, if applicable, of up to \$1000 exc. GST for metropolitan areas and up to \$2000 exc. GST for a business operating in 'Remote Australia' (as defined in the Entrepreneurs' Programme Guidelines).

Fact sheets, templates, and quick guides which provide assistance on approaching consultants and assessing quotes are available on [business.gov.au/bgg](https://business.gov.au/bgg).

### 3.3 Eligible Activities

An eligible activity must meet all of the below:

- links to an area of need as defined in the recommendations of your Business Evaluation Action Plan, Growth Plan, Supplier Improvement Plan or Tourism Partnership Plan;
- will embed new capability in your business;
- engages services external to your business; and
- is not an ineligible activity.

An ineligible activity is:

- an ordinary operating expense of your business, e.g. accounting fees, office expenses,
- the purchase of capital goods including software;
  - exceptions:
    - the first year of new subscription software/ cloud based services is eligible
    - software tailored to the needs of the business and associated implementation costs are eligible
- any activity that involves expenditure on advertising, printing and placement costs, trade shows or costs associated with visiting domestic and international markets;
- the costs associated with renewing or re-certification of an existing industry certification;
- any work in registering domestic or international patents and intellectual property;
- litigation, legal compliance, tax compliance, estate planning or government fees;
- any training that is not tailored for the business, including training where other businesses are in attendance;
  - exception: leadership courses which are less than 12 months in duration and that do not result in a tertiary or TAFE qualification are eligible
- any activity that is receiving other financial assistance obtained from any Local, State, Territory or Commonwealth government or any 'in kind' contributions external to the business; and
- any activity that involves the project management of subcontractors.

### 3.4 How your application will be assessed

The Programme Delegate will decide if an application is eligible under the Entrepreneurs' Programme Guidelines. Subject to available funding, applicants that meet all the eligibility criteria will be approved by the Programme Delegate.

If programme funding is not available, information will be published on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) to advise that Business Growth Grants is closed to new applications.

Your application may not be accepted, or you may be asked to provide more information, if:

- the proposal is not in line with your Business Management Activity recommendations;
- there are concerns about the quality of the proposed consultant or project;
- there are concerns a conflict of interest exists;
- the activities are ineligible;
- the proposed project does not represent value for money (ideally, you should source 2 quotes to establish value for money); or
- the proposed project is substantially the same as a previously approved, ineligible or unsuccessful application.

If you have any questions about your application:

- talk to your Business Adviser or Business Facilitator;
- call the contact centre on 13 28 46; or
- contact us through the [“Email us” form](#) on the [business.gov.au/bgg](http://business.gov.au/bgg) website.

You will be contacted by email with a response within 15 working days of submitting an application.

## **3.5 If your application is successful**

### **3.5.1 Grant Agreement**

If your application is successful, you must enter into a Grant Agreement with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (the department), acting on behalf of the Commonwealth. A [sample Grant Agreement](#) is available on [business.gov.au/bgg](http://business.gov.au/bgg).

You will have 21 days from the date of offer to sign and return the Grant Agreement. Once the Grant Agreement has been executed by the department, a copy will be returned to you for your records. The offer may be withdrawn if the Grant Agreement is not executed within this time.

You must not commence, or pay for the project, in part or full until a Grant Agreement is signed by both parties. Your approved Grant Agreement will state approved project timeframes. This will be up to a maximum of 12 months.

### **3.5.2 How the grant will be paid**

The grant will be paid following the completion of a project. The grant will only reimburse costs, as agreed upfront, that are directly related to the implementation of recommendations.

Your Business Growth Grant will be paid once you have:

- completed the project within agreed project timeframes;
- paid all project costs within agreement timeframes; and
- submitted claim documentation to the department including a Business Growth Grant Declaration Form, invoices and proof of payment to the consultant.

### **3.5.3 Project Variations**

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a project variation, including:

- changing project consultants;
- changing project milestones;
- extending the timeframe for completing the project; and
- an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST).

Variation to a Funding Agreement will only be considered by the Programme Delegate if it:

- is consistent with the objectives of the programme;
- can be accommodated within available programme funding;
- is in writing; and
- is received by the department before the Grant Agreement completion date. Variation requests will not be considered if they are received after the Grant Agreement completion date because the Agreement has expired.

If your variation request is not approved you will receive notification outlining why it was not considered appropriate.

## 3.6 Tax Obligations

Grants are subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Grant payments are increased to compensate for GST payments. Grants are treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations. We do not provide advice on tax.

# 4 Other things you should know

## 4.1 Conflicts of interest

The department maintains procedures for managing conflicts of interest for staff within the department, technical experts and other third parties involved in the management, assessment and evaluation of the programme, applications and the delivery of activities. Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with these procedures. A conflict of interest can arise in situations where a person has an interest or relationship, whether real, perceived or potential, that conflicts with a duty they hold or where they have a role that conflicts with another role. For example, a conflict of interest can exist if there is a conflict between:

- a person's duties, roles and responsibilities under the programme; and
- their private interests (where these interests could inappropriately influence the way they manage the programme).

A real (or actual) conflict of interest exists when a person's private interests or their programme duties, roles and responsibilities **could** improperly influence how they manage, assess and evaluate the programme.

An apparent (or perceived) conflict of interest exists where it **appears or is perceived** by a third party that someone's private interests or their programme duties, roles and responsibilities could improperly influence how they manage, assess and evaluate the programme, even if a real or actual conflict has not, or cannot, be established.

A potential conflict of interest exists when someone has a private interest and an actual conflict of interest **could** arise if they make any decisions related to the programme.

If your proposed consultant is a related party such as a company with common shareholdings or directorship with the customer, individuals, employees or immediate family, a conflict of interest exists. Such a conflict will not allow a Business Growth Grant application to be approved.

## 4.2 How we manage conflicts of interest

The department's procedures for managing conflicts of interests by its employees are in accordance with the requirements of the APS Code of Conduct (section 13(7) of the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*), the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*. Our conflict of interest policy is published on the department's [website](#).

Industry Partners, Business Advisers and Business Facilitators must identify to the department any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest they believe will or may arise during the delivery of the programme and, where a conflict is identified, specify how that conflict will be addressed and monitored to ensure it does not compromise the outcomes desired of the programme.

If the Minister cannot make a decision under the programme without a conflict of interest arising, the Parliamentary Secretary will become the final decision maker.

### 4.3 Use and disclosure of information

Unless the information provided to the department is Personal Information or Confidential Information the department may disclose the information to any person for any purpose directly related to the activities and functions of the Australian Government, including but not limited to the purpose of:

- announcing the awarding of grants (where applicable)
- improving the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of this or other Commonwealth programmes
- conducting research within the department or another Commonwealth agency.

### 4.4 Protection of information

The use and disclosure of information provided to the department and Advisers is regulated by the relevant provisions and penalties of the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*, the Public Service Regulations, the *Archives Act 1983 (Cth)*, the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)*, the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)* and general law.

### 4.5 Confidential and Personal information

The department will treat your information as 'Confidential Information' if the information is clearly identified as confidential and the information has the necessary quality of confidence (that is, it must be significant information which is private and not already in the public domain). Information that is, or becomes public knowledge (other than by breach of any confidentiality obligation) will not be considered to be Confidential Information.

The department is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (**APPs**) outlined in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. The APPs regulate how the department may collect, use, disclose and store Personal Information. 'Personal Information' under the *Privacy Act 1988* means information or an opinion (whether true or false) about a natural person who is reasonably identifiable.

Please read our [Privacy Policy](#) on the department's website for more information on:

- what is Personal Information
- how we collect, use, store and disclose your Personal Information
- how you can access and correct your Personal Information.

### 4.6 When we may reveal or use Confidential and Personal Information

Unless the department obtains your consent, the department will not disclose your Confidential or Personal Information other than to:

- the Minister, the Parliamentary Secretary, and their Office
- other Commonwealth Ministers
- Industry Growth Centres
- Industry Partners, Business Advisers, Business Facilitators, Innovation Facilitators and Commercialisation Advisers
- other Commonwealth, State or Territory government departments and agencies
- technical, financial, economic, and/or industry experts (including auditors)
- Departmental contractors

for the purposes of:

- administering the programme and any related purposes, including programme and policy evaluation and development
- Departmental research, analysis, monitoring and evaluation
- reporting and consultation with other Commonwealth, State or Territory government agencies
- reviewing applications to provide technical or financial advice on a contract basis
- referring you to Industry Growth Centres
- sectoral analysis by Industry Growth Centres

#### 4.7 Disclosure of information where authorised or required by law

From time to time the department may be authorised or required by law to disclose information (including Personal Information and Confidential Information) to other persons, including but not limited to:

- a Commonwealth Minister and Ministerial Office
- a House or a Committee of the Parliament of Australia
- the Auditor-General under the *Auditor-General Act 1997 (Cth)*
- the Australian Information Commissioner under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)* (FOI Act)
- the Commonwealth Ombudsman under the *Ombudsman Act 1976 (Cth)*
- the Privacy Commissioner under the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

#### 4.8 Protection of information by Business Advisers and Business Facilitators

Business Advisers and Business Facilitators are employed by Industry Partners and are not employees or agents of the Commonwealth. However, Industry Partners are bound by agreements with the Commonwealth that require the Industry Partners to:

- keep (and ensure Business Advisers and Business Facilitators keep) your Confidential or Personal Information confidential
- not disclose (and ensure Business Advisers and Business Facilitators do not disclose) Confidential or Personal Information to any parties other than the Commonwealth, as required by law or as strictly necessary in connection with legal proceedings, or with your consent
- not do any act or engage in any practice that would breach an APP and comply with the APPs as if it were an 'agency' under the Privacy Act 1988
- use Personal and Confidential Information provided by the department only for the purposes of performing its obligations under the agreement with the Commonwealth (and to ensure Business Advisers and Business Facilitators do the same).
- Business Adviser and Business Facilitators independently, or the Commonwealth generally, are **not** able to enter into any privacy or non-disclosure contractual agreement produced by the customer.

#### 4.9 Freedom of information

All documents created or held by the department in relation to the programme are subject to the FOI Act. Unless information is exempt, it will be made available to the general public if requested

under the FOI Act. The department will consult with you before any documents are released under the FOI Act.

All Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are to be referred to the [FOI Coordinator](#) in the department. Decisions regarding requests for access will be made by an authorised officer in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

#### 4.10 Information storage

Any information obtained will be stored and held in accordance with the department's obligations under the *Archives Act 1983*.

## 5 Public announcement

Successful projects may be publicly announced by the Minister and/or department and details of the announcement may include:

- the name of your business
- the title of the project
- description of the project and its objectives
- the amount of grant funding awarded (where applicable).

Details of successful projects will also be published on [GrantConnect](#).

## 6 Feedback

The AusIndustry [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at [business.gov.au](#). AusIndustry uses customer satisfaction surveys to improve its business operations and service.

AusIndustry is the specialist programme delivery division within the department. It delivers a range of industry and innovation programmes and also provides the core delivery mechanisms for the single business service including governance, programme design and best practice.

If you have a complaint, call the contact centre on 13 28 46 or contact us at [business.gov.au](#). Your complaint will be referred to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint is handled, you can contact:

Head of Division  
AusIndustry – Innovation Programmes  
GPO Box 2013  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)<sup>1</sup> with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>