

Advancing
Small Business
Queensland

Small Business Digital
Grants Program
Application Guidelines

Queensland

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Small Business Digital Grants Program

Application guidelines 2018–19 Round 5

The Small Business Digital Grants Program provides small businesses with access to digital technologies and services to enable them to work smarter, engage with the global economy, and make the most of online business opportunities arising from digital disruption.

These guidelines contain essential information on the program including eligibility, how to apply and your obligations as an applicant.

You should read these guidelines before completing an application.

About the program

The Queensland Government, through the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, has made these grants available to help eligible businesses be in a stronger position to respond to competition and grow into globally competitive businesses through utilising new technologies. The objectives of the program are to:

- assist small businesses to access the latest digital technologies to increase their productivity and competitiveness
- enable small businesses to employ more staff and grow to medium-size businesses
- provide access to training to allow small businesses to use new technologies more effectively
- generate improved business confidence and increase business sustainability
- enable regional small businesses to expand their market reach through an online presence
- assist small businesses to work smarter, be more innovative and work fewer hours
- create an environment that makes it easier to do business.

How much can you apply for and what can it be used for?

Matched funding of up to \$10 000 (excluding GST) may be provided to eligible businesses for the purchase of hardware, software and services – such as digital coaching. The **minimum grant funding amount is \$1 000**. The business must show how the digital technology or service purchased and adopted will enhance the digital capabilities of their business and help them to be more competitive and employ more staff.

The digital technology or service must fall under one of four identified priority areas:

- content development (web pages, mobile apps, visual and audio media etc.)
- receiving payments or selling online
- specialised digital technology or software (business specific)
- digital planning, digital marketing strategy development, and digital training

Who can apply?

All small businesses with a Queensland based headquarters can apply. The business must show how the digital technology or service purchased will enhance the digital capabilities of the business and help them to be more competitive.

What are the eligibility criteria?

To be eligible for this grant, the business must:

- have fewer than 20 employees at the time of applying for the grant
- have an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- have a Queensland headquarters
- have a turnover of \$2 million or less for the last financial year
- not be insolvent or have owners/directors that are an undischarged bankrupt.

Only one application will be accepted from an individual ABN or a financial beneficiary of a business for consideration under each round.

Successful applicants cannot reapply for funding under this grant program in future rounds.

Unsuccessful applicants can submit a new application in subsequent rounds of the program.

What won't be funded?

There are a range of activities that will not be funded under this program:

- projects with a total cost less than \$2 000 will not be funded, as the minimum grant funding amount that can be provided is \$1 000
- travel costs for any party
- services delivered in-kind (funding will only cover services paid for via a financial transaction)
- fees for services provided by related parties (such as companies with common shareholdings or directorship with the applicant, and employees or immediate family of the applicant)
- franchise fees or related costs
- direct-selling businesses (where sales of another business' goods or services are made in the customer's home, work or other meeting place through methods such as party plan and network marketing)
- maintenance of existing digital technologies
- website hosting as a stand-alone cost. Website hosting will be covered up to 12 months if it is part of a new website build or upgrade but it is not eligible as a stand-alone cost
- purchase of non-project related assets such as stock
- salaries
- general business operating costs (including bookkeeping/accounting and tax returns)
- paid advertising campaigns e.g. Google AdWords, Facebook advertising or similar expenses. The grant can cover the development of an online marketing plan but not the actual advertising cost
- retrospective payments for expenses incurred prior to grant funding approval date or work already undertaken.

When must the project be completed?

All projects approved for funding **must be completed within three months of the date of approval**. You must advise the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training of any variations to the project dates. If these timeframes are not met, the offer of funding may be withdrawn.

When and how can you apply?

Applications open 6 September 2018 and close 8 October 2018. You can lodge an application online at www.business.qld.gov.au/digital.

What should you include in your application?

Your application must include:

- a detailed quote for the digital technology or service for which you are seeking funding
- a clear outline of how the digital technology or service will enhance the digital capabilities of the business and make the business more competitive
- details of the impact the digital technology or service will have on the business, for example revenue growth, cost savings, time savings, employment outcomes
- a declaration of employee head count
- confirmation and breakdown of your matched financial contribution.

If you will be using a consultant to deliver a service, a project proposal and quote from the consultant must be submitted with your application and should include:

- the services the consultant will provide, including a breakdown of key activities
- delivery timeframes – up to three months (proposals over three months will not be funded)
- consultant/service delivery costs
- the names of the key people who will undertake the project work.

How will applications be assessed?

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, applications will be prioritised on:

- the impact the digital technology or service will have on the business (measured by revenue growth, increase in gross profit, time savings, employment outcomes)
- the extent to which the digital technology or service will enhance the digital capabilities of the business to make the business more competitive
- the potential and likelihood the activity will deliver jobs growth
- value for money.

What's the process?

A. Online application

Applicants are required to complete an application form online and attach the required documentation (quote/proposal from supplier and/or service provider).

B. Eligibility check

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training reviews all applications against the key eligibility criteria and provides the assessment panel with the applications that meet the key eligibility criteria.

C. Assessment panel

An assessment panel considers all eligible applications and provides recommendations to the delegate for approval. The delegate then considers the applications and recommendations, as well as the available funding.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training may give consideration to ensuring successful applications are equitably distributed across the state and industry sectors, and to recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

D. Applicants notified of outcome

All applicants will receive formal notification of the outcome of the application as soon as possible following appropriate assessments. Successful applicants will receive an approval letter advising the delegate has approved the application. The letter will also reiterate the terms and conditions of funding.

Successful applicants will then have **three months from the date of the approval letter to complete the project**. The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training may withdraw the offer if the project is not completed within this timeframe.

Applicants must not begin the project or pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation that the project has been approved.

After approval, successful applicants must pay for the approved service/s **in full**.

E. Acquittal

On completion of the project, successful applicants will be reimbursed for 50 per cent of the total project cost, up to the approved grant funding amount. To do this the applicant must complete and submit an acquittal report through SmartyGrants, issue a valid tax invoice to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and submit copies of supplier invoices and proof of purchase for the total project cost.

The acquittal report is a simple online document providing information on the success and outcomes of the project to date, the activities undertaken and the learnings.

Businesses will be surveyed six months after the completion of the project.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training will carry out random audits on a sample of applications to ensure the information provided is true and correct. Where it is found that false or misleading information has been provided, penalties may apply, including refunding of some or all of the grant funding.

Application timeframes

The tables below summarise the important dates and timeframes in the application process.

Dates	
6 September 2018	Applications open
8 October 2018	Applications close at 5pm

Key Timing
Application lodged at least three months prior to proposed project start date.
An approval letter will be issued to successful applicants once applications have been assessed and approved.
Project must be completed within three months of approval letter being issued.
Successful applicants must acquit projects within four months of approval letter being issued.

Funding Payment Timeframes
<p>On completion A single payment will be made directly to the applicant's business bank account upon acceptance of a final acquittal report and a valid tax invoice to the department.</p> <p>The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training processes invoices and acquittal documentation in order of receipt and endeavours to pay grant funding within 4 weeks of receipt of compliant acquittal documentation.</p>
<p>NOTE: Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of payment for all products and services purchased as part of this grant.</p>

Feedback

Please note, the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training cannot provide feedback on individual applications.

Complaints about the outcome of an application will be dealt with according to [Department of Employment, Small Business and Training's complaints management policy](#).

Frequently asked questions

What do I need to do if I receive a grant?

You must:

- enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
- purchase the product/s or service/s in full as per the funding agreement
- deliver the project as per the funding agreement
- complete a final acquittal within one month of the project completion date
- complete a follow-up survey six months after the grant has been acquitted.

When will funding be available and how will payments be made?

If your application is successful, funding will be provided once you complete the project. The applicant will be reimbursed 50 per cent of the total project cost, up to the approved grant funding amount. To do this, the participating business must complete and submit an acquittal report through SmartyGrants, issue a valid tax invoice to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and submit copies of supplier invoice/s and proof of purchase. The funding will be paid directly to the applicant.

Can I alter my application after funding has been allocated?

If you are unable to complete the approved project, or purchase the approved product or service, you must immediately notify the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training in writing. Any change to your project will need to be reassessed to ensure funding will still be granted. If you change your project or purchase without approval, the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training can withdraw the funding.

If I have more than one small business with a different ABN for each, can I submit an application for each business?

No. Only one application will be accepted from a financial beneficiary of a business. The applicant must not be a financial beneficiary of any other Small Business Digital Grants application. You make a declaration in the application form stating the above.

Do I have to be operating an existing business?

Yes. Your application must be for an existing operating business.

Do I have to be located in Queensland?

Yes. The business must have a Queensland headquarters. **To demonstrate this, the 'Main Business Location' of the applicant's ABN must be listed as being in Queensland** on the [Australian Business Register](#) (ABR) at the time of application. If the ABR listing for the applying business does not list Queensland as the main business location, you must provide evidence of a Queensland headquarters in writing to grants@dtesb.qld.gov.au prior to the grant round closing. Evidence of a Queensland Headquarters includes:

- a copy of the applicant's Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) Company Statement listing a Queensland address as 'principal place of business'
- or
- a letter from the applicant's accountant confirming the business has changed to a Queensland main business location.

Do I need to be registered for GST?

Yes. The business must be registered for GST at the time of application to be eligible for funding under this program.

If your business is not registered for GST visit www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/Registering-for-GST to find out more. The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training recommends you seek independent professional advice before registering for GST.

Will I be reimbursed for GST spent?

No. Grants are not subject to GST. Therefore, GST is not payable and grant funding will not compensate for any GST spent by the business. The grant amount is GST exclusive.

What are my tax obligations?

Grants are treated as assessable income for tax purposes, unless exempted by law. The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training recommends you seek independent professional advice on your tax obligations.

Further information

For more information about the grants or advice on your application, call the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training on **13 QGOV** (13 74 68) or email grants@dtesb.qld.gov.au.

Additional information for businesses

www.business.qld.gov.au has information on starting and developing businesses.

www.business.gov.au is an online government resource for the Australian business community provided by the Australian Government.

To find answers to your tax questions, go to www.ato.gov.au.

ablis.business.gov.au has information on government licences, permits, approvals, registrations, codes of practice, standards and guidelines you need to know about to meet your compliance responsibilities.

My checklist

Applicants are to ensure they have:

- read and understood the guidelines
- read and understood the terms and conditions in the application form
- completed the online application form
- uploaded a proposal and quote/s from the supplier/s
- submitted the application
- received notification of the application outcome before commencing the project

Privacy statement

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training collects information to assess and coordinate grants in relation to the Small Business Digital Grant.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, its officers, employees, agents and subcontractors may use and disclose any of the information provided within the application to Queensland Government departments or agencies, Queensland Government bodies, non-government organisations and/or the Commonwealth Government or other state or territory governments for any purpose in connection with the administration of the Queensland Small Business Digital Grants Program. Successful applications may also be the subject of media releases and disclosure as otherwise provided in the approval letter, the terms and conditions in the application, and the terms and conditions in these guidelines.

Submitted documents may be subject to disclosure under the Right to Information Act 2009, subject to the exemptions under that Act.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training's privacy guide in relation to the treatment of information collected may be viewed at www.qld.gov.au/legal/privacy.

Disclaimer

This publication has been prepared as a guide only and all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate at the time of publication. The State of Queensland accepts no responsibility and gives no warranty, guarantee or representation about the accuracy, reliability, timeliness or otherwise of the information contained within the publication. No warranties or assurances can be given about the suitability of this information for any particular purpose. The State of Queensland expressly excludes legal liability in all jurisdictions in relation to the use or reliance of any information contained in this publication. Any direct or consequential loss or damage suffered as a result of reliance on this information is the sole responsibility of the user. Persons using this information should conduct their own enquiries and rely on their own independent professional advice. This exclusion shall extend to both the user and to any other person who may suffer loss as a result of the use of material, and shall apply notwithstanding any negligence by the State of Queensland.

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