

Advancing  
**Small Business**  
Queensland

Small Business Digital  
Grants Program  
Application Guidelines

Queensland

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# Small Business Digital Grants Program

## Application guidelines 2017–18 Round 4

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 Office of Small Business, 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, marketing strategy development, and training.

## Who can apply?

All Queensland-based small businesses 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 Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- have 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?

**The grant specifically aims at funding small businesses to gain access to digital technologies and services**, therefore there is a range of activities that will not be funded:

- the minimum grant funding amount is \$1 000 therefore projects with a total cost less than \$2 000 will not be funded
- 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
- 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
- travel
- 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 Office of Small Business 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 on 15 March 2018. You can lodge an application online at [www.business.qld.gov.au/digital](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/digital).

## What should you include in your application?

Applications 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
- detail 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 include:

- the services the consultant will provide, including a breakdown of key activities
- delivery timeframes
- consultant / service delivery costs
- 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?

Applications will undergo an initial eligibility and compliance check.

An assessment panel will then consider eligible applications and provide recommendations to the delegate for approval.

The delegate will consider the applications and recommendations, as well as the available funding. A decision can be expected **within eight weeks of close of applications**.

The Office of Small Business will give consideration to ensuring successful applications are equitably distributed across the state and industry sectors and to recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Once the funds for a round have been exhausted no further grants will be awarded in that round.

Successful applicants will receive an approval letter advising the delegate has approved the application including 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 Office of Small Business may withdraw the offer if the project is not completed within this timeframe.

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

The applicant must pay for the approved product/s and or service/s **in full**.

On completion of the project, the applicant 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 Office of Small Business will carry out random audits of 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 2018 dates and timeframes in the application process.

Dates	
<b>15 March 2018</b>	Applications open
<b>11 April 2018</b>	Applications close at 5pm

The dates for funding rounds are announced on [www.business.qld.gov.au/digital](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/digital).

Timeframes	
<b>3 months</b>	Number of months in which the <b>purchases must be made and project completed</b> after an approval letter is issued

<b>4 months</b>	Number of months in which the funding must be <b>acquitted</b> from the date on approval letter
<b>6 months</b>	Number of months after project completion in which the business must <b>complete a short survey</b> on the impact the project has had on the business.

#### Funding Payment Timeframes

**On completion** A single payment will be made directly to the business upon acceptance of a final acquittal report and a valid tax invoice to the department.

NOTE: Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of payment for all products and services purchased as part of this grant.

## Feedback

Please note, the Office of Small Business cannot provide feedback on individual applications.

Complaints about the outcome of an application will be dealt with according to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training complaints management policy. To view this policy, visit [www.desbt.qld.gov.au](http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au).

## 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
- submit a final acquittal report including copies of invoices and receipts within four weeks of the project's completion
- complete a follow-up survey 6 months after the grant has been acquitted.

### When will funding be available?

If your application is successful, funding will be provided once you have completed and paid for the project. The applicant will be reimbursed 50 per cent of the total project cost, up to a maximum of the amount approved, on acceptance and receipt of a copy of a valid tax invoice, copies of supplier invoices and proof of payment for the total project cost. The funding will be paid directly to the applicant. There are no progress payments.

### 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 business operating in Queensland.

### Do I have to be located in Queensland?

Yes. The business must have Queensland headquarters.

### Do I need to be registered for GST?

Yes.

If your business is not yet required to register for GST, registering with the Australian Taxation Office is optional. If you voluntarily register for GST you can also choose to report, pay and claim GST credits once a year - usually at the same time you lodge your tax return. Visit <https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/Registering-for-GST/> to find out more.

### How will payments be made?

The applicant must pay for the approved product/s and or service/s **in full**. On completion of the project, the applicant 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 payment.

### Will I be reimbursed for GST spent?

No. Grants are not subject to GST. The grant amount sought will be GST exclusive. Grant funding will not compensate for GST spent.

### What are my tax obligations?

Grants are treated as assessable income for tax purposes, unless exempted by law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your tax obligations.

### If I have problems with submitting my application?

Before contacting the Office of Small Business on 13 QGOV or SmartyGrants on (03) 9320 6888, please ensure you have answered all the mandatory questions in the application.

### Where can I get advice on applying for grants?

For information on how to find grants, apply and complete applications, and find out about business support, the Business Queensland website has a guide available at [www.business.qld.gov.au/grants](http://www.business.qld.gov.au/grants).

### Are there any other sources of funding available for businesses to increase their digital capability?

Yes, please take a look at the following programs:

<http://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/ignite-ideas-fund.aspx>

<http://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/startup-qld.aspx>

<http://advance.qld.gov.au/small-business/business-development-fund.aspx>

## Further information

For more information about the grants or advice on your application, call the Office of Small Business on **13 QGOV** (13 74 68) or email [grants@dtesb.qld.gov.au](mailto:grants@dtesb.qld.gov.au).

For the latest information on small business grants, programs, tools and services, subscribe to our Advancing Small Business Queensland newsletter by visiting [www.desbt.qld.gov.au](http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au).

## Additional information for businesses

The Queensland Government's Business Queensland website has a wealth of information on starting and running a business. Visit [www.business.qld.gov.au](http://www.business.qld.gov.au) to find out more.

You can also visit [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au), an Australian Government online resource for the Australian business community.

To find answers to your tax questions, go to [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au).

The Australian Business Licence and Information Service (ABLIS) helps you find the government licences, permits, approvals, registrations, codes of practice, standards and guidelines you need to know to meet your compliance responsibilities. Find out more by visiting [ablis.business.gov.au](http://ablis.business.gov.au).

## My checklist

- Read and understand the guidelines
- Source a quote for the products or services
- Complete the online application form
- Read and understand the terms and conditions in the application form
- Submit your application
- Wait for notification – email advising if successful or unsuccessful
- If successful, purchase the product or service
- Submit acquittal report, supplier invoices, proof of purchase and request for reimbursement

## Privacy statement

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training is collecting information to assess and coordinate grants in relation to the Small Business Digital Grants Program.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, its officers, employees, agents and subcontractors may use and disclose any of the information provided with the application to Queensland Government departments or agencies, Queensland Government bodies, non-government organisations and/or the Commonwealth, states or territories for any purpose in connection with the administration of the 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 privacy guide in relation to the treatment of personal information collected may be viewed at [www.desbt.qld.gov.au](http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au).

## 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 himself or herself 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.

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## Find out more

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