



Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Boosting Female Founders Initiative – Round 2

Opening date:	8 March 2021
Closing date and time:	17:00 (5pm) Australian Eastern Standard Time on 22 April 2021 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Administering entity	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	8 March 2021
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

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1. Boosting Female Founders Initiative – Round 2

The Boosting Female Founders Initiative is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program, which contributes to the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources Outcome 1. The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)*.



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.



Stage One - Expression of Interest (EOI)

You complete and submit an EOI



We assess all EOIs

We assess all EOIs against eligibility criteria. An Independent Assessment Committee will assess applications against the EOI assessment criteria and recommend to the Program Delegate which EOIs should be invited to submit a Stage Two grant application. The Program Delegate then makes a decision on which projects can progress to Stage Two.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your EOI.



Stage Two – Grant application

Successful applicants from Stage One are invited to complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form, addressing all Stage Two eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



We assess all grant applications

An Independent Assessment Committee will assess applications against the Stage Two assessment criteria, including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and compare it to other eligible applications.



We make grant recommendations

We provide advice to the Program Delegate on the merits of each application.



Grant decisions are made

The Program Delegate decides which applications are successful.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the Boosting Female Founders Initiative

We evaluate the specific grant activity and the program as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

2. About the grant program

The Boosting Female Founders Initiative (the program) will run over five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25. The program is part of the 2018 and 2020 Women's Economic Security Statements, which help to support more Australian women into work and Australia's international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The program will provide targeted support on a co-contribution basis to female founders of startup businesses (startups) to scale their businesses into domestic and global markets. The program will also provide expert mentoring and advice to meritorious applicants.

Innovative startups play a critical role in the economy by bringing new products and services to market and driving job creation. Startups are the largest contributor to job creation in Australia.

Greater levels of entrepreneurship among women and better access to resources by women entrepreneurs can contribute to innovation, job creation, economic growth and social inclusion.

The objectives of the program are to:

- stimulate private sector investments into innovative startups led by women
- help women entrepreneurs overcome the disadvantages faced in getting access to finance and support to grow their startups
- enable female founders to scale-up, expand into domestic and global markets, and become self-sufficient
- boost the economy through increasing the diversity of startup founders.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- increased number of startups founded by women
- new products and services are brought to market by startups founded by women
- increased financial investment in startups founded by women
- women improve their earning potential through entrepreneurship
- facilitate mentor relationships to support entrepreneurial development
- increased job creation and economic growth.

2.1. About Boosting Female Founders Initiative – Round 2

These guidelines contain information for the Boosting Female Founders Initiative Round 2 grants.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

The grant opportunity will be delivered through a two-stage competitive selection process due to the expected high demand for this program. You will first submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). If successful, you will be invited to submit a Stage Two grant application. Refer to section 7 on how to apply.

As part of Round 2 of the program, meritorious applicants will also be eligible to receive expert mentoring and advice.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (the department/we) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#)¹.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the Glossary at section 14.

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

3. Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$52.2 million in grant funding for the program over five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25. For this round, an estimated \$11.6 million is available.

3.1. Grants available

The grant amount will be up to 50 per cent of the total eligible project expenditure (grant percentage), and

- the minimum grant is \$25,000
- the maximum grant is \$400,000

unless:

- your head office is located in a regional area
- your business is Indigenous-owned
- at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) is a person with a disability
- at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) has migrated to Australia as a refugee or humanitarian entrant.

If any of these apply, the grant amount will be up to 70 per cent of total eligible project expenditure and

- the minimum grant is \$25,000
- the maximum grant is \$480,000.

If you apply for a greater grant percentage, you will be required to provide evidence to support your claim.

We consider your business as located in a regional area if your head office is in a regional area as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Structure (the [mapping tool](#) developed by the Department of Health displays ASGS remoteness areas). For this grant opportunity, we consider Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote locations as regional areas.

You are responsible for the remaining eligible project expenditure plus any ineligible expenditure. Contributions to your project must be cash. You are encouraged to seek contributions from private investors and industry partners.

You cannot use funding from other Commonwealth government grants to fund the balance of project expenditure not covered by the grant. You may use funding from other State, Territory and local government grants, to fund a maximum of 10 per cent of the balance of project expenditure.

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

3.2. Project period

The maximum project period is 24 months.

We may extend this period under exceptional circumstances. You must complete your project by 30 April 2024.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must:

- be a female founded (majority owned and led by women) startup as defined in the Glossary at section 14
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following entities:

- an entity incorporated in Australia
- a partnership
- a sole trader.

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications where you:

- provide a signed declaration, on the template provided, that your startup is female founded (majority owned and led by women)
- certify that your startup will remain majority owned and led by women for the duration of the grant (this will be a requirement of the grant agreement)
- (Where you are applying for a greater than 50 per cent grant percentage) provide evidence to support your claims that you are any of the following (see section 7.1):
 - your head office is located in a regional area
 - your business is an Indigenous business or at least one of your founding team members is an Indigenous Australian
 - at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) is a person with a disability
 - at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) has migrated to Australia as a refugee or humanitarian entrant
- (Stage Two applications only) provide evidence to support your source of funding (e.g. letter from contributor/s confirming funding amount)
- (Stage Two applications only) provide a pitch deck (PDF power point presentation max 10 slides) and/or link to a video pitch from your CEO (no longer than 5 mins) supporting your response to the assessment criteria
- include all mandatory attachments.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation not included in section 4.1
- an unincorporated association
- a Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government body (including government business enterprises).

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must support your female founded (majority owned and led by women) startup to scale into domestic and/or global markets.

Eligible activities can include, but are not limited to:

- developing software and apps
- launching and scaling products
- product development and marketing
- purchase of equipment to enable growth
- expansion to other markets
- access to independent management (for example C-suite, advisory board)
- access to relevant professional development

We may also approve other activities.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

- For guidance on eligible expenditure, see Appendix A.
- For guidance on ineligible expenditure, see Appendix B.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is an AusIndustry manager within the department with responsibility for the program), makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

You may elect to commence your project from the date we notify you that your application is eligible and complete. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

6. Assessment Criteria

6.1. Expression of interest (Stage One)

The application form to submit an EOI will ask you a series of questions about your startup business and your product, process or service.

You must also address the following assessment criteria in your EOI. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion. The amount of detail you provide in your EOI should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form displays size limits for answers. We will only invite applications that score at least 50 per cent against all assessment criteria to submit an application under Stage Two.

If invited to submit an application under Stage Two you will be asked to provide more detailed responses and also to provide evidence to support your answers.

6.1.1. EOI Stage One Assessment criterion 1

How a grant will help you to scale-up, expand into domestic and global markets, and become self-sufficient (40 points)

Tell us:

- a. how grant funding will assist in removing barriers and help you to grow your startup
- b. what growth looks like for your business (e.g. in terms of revenue, employees, etc.)
- c. how ready your product or service is to take to market (expected Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 or above).

6.1.2. EOI Stage One Assessment criterion 2

Your capacity, capability and resources to grow (30 points)

Tell us:

- a. about you and your team
- b. if you have received any investment from external sources (including how much and the funding source). If not, why not?
- c. if you receive any non-financial assistance (e.g. mentoring, access to networks, advice or other guidance, etc.) If not, why not?

6.1.3. EOI Stage One Assessment criterion 3

The impact of grant funding (30 points)

Tell us:

- a. how much grant funding you require and how you propose to fund your contribution
- b. how the grant will help you to leverage additional partnerships or support from other organisations.

6.2. Grant application Stage Two

If invited to submit an application under Stage Two, you must address the following assessment criteria in your grant application. These require more detail than provided in your EOI and you will be asked to provide evidence to support your answers. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form displays size limits for answers. You will also be required to provide a pitch deck (PDF PowerPoint presentation max 10 slides) and/or link to a video pitch from your CEO (no longer than 5 mins) to support your responses to the assessment criteria.

We will only award funding to applications that score at least 50 per cent against all assessment criteria, as these represent best value for money.

6.2.1. Stage Two Assessment criterion 1

How grant funding will help you to overcome disadvantages to scale up, expand into domestic and global markets and become self-sufficient (40 points)

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. how grant funding will be used to support and grow your startup
- b. how grant funding will enable your startup to develop, scale-up, and expand into domestic and global markets
- c. how grant funding will assist in removing challenges and barriers faced by you, as a woman, in growing your startup.

6.2.2. Stage Two Assessment criterion 2

Your capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (30 points)

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. your and/or your team's qualifications, experience or track record in startups and managing large or complex projects
- b. your business plan, including:
 - your revenue model
 - your addressable market and profile of your ideal customers
 - your customer acquisition strategy
 - your company's organisational structure
 - the rationale and scope of the project or activity for which you are requesting funding
 - project timeframes and budget
 - budget
 - risks
 - expected outcomes
 - how you will measure the success of the project

- c. your plan to finance growth. What is your plan to seek additional or follow on investment, or to build a sustainable self-funding business?

6.2.3. Stage Two Assessment criterion 3

The impact of grant funding (30 points)

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. your need for funding, i.e. the extent that you need this grant to achieve your projected growth (you must have a genuine need for funding)
- b. how your project leverages additional partnerships or support from other organisations
- c. the benefits to Australia, your region and/or community from your project.

7. How to apply

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

To apply, you must:

- complete the online Stage One EOI form and if successful the Stage Two application form on business.gov.au
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application. You should retain a copy of your application for your own records.

Applications must contain sufficient information to undertake eligibility checks and assessments.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth)². If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you are unable to submit an application online, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

7.1. Attachments to the application

7.1.1. EOI attachments

You must provide the following documents with your EOI:

- signed declaration that your startup is female founded (majority owned and led by women).

² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00245>

Where applicable, you must provide one of the following documents with your EOI to support your claim for a higher grant percentage:

- an Indigenous Business Direct (Supply Nation) registration to confirm you are an Indigenous business
- a letter from an incorporated Indigenous organisation confirming the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage of at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders)
- evidence that at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) is a person with a disability which:
 - is recent
 - is completed by a treating health practitioner who is relevant to your primary disability
 - confirms the impact of your disability.
- evidence that at least one of your founding team members (owners and leaders) has migrated to Australia as a refugee or humanitarian entrant including a current or previous:
 - Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202)
 - Protection visa (subclass 866)
 - Refugee visas (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204)
 - Temporary Protection visa (subclass 785)
 - Safe Haven Enterprise visa (subclass 790)
 - or equivalent past visa classes.

7.1.2. Stage Two attachments

Provide the following documents with your Stage Two application:

- evidence to support your source of funding (e.g. letter from contributor/s or investor/s confirming funding amount)
- pitch deck (PDF PowerPoint presentation max 10 slides) and/or link to a video pitch from your CEO (no longer than 5 mins) to support your response to the assessment criteria
- business financial documents including your most current profit and loss, balance sheet and cash flow statements
- business plan, including revenue model, customer acquisition and company/management structure, scope, implementation methodology, timeframes, budget, risks and how you will measure the success of the project
- trust deed (where applicable).

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.2. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project from November 2021.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of EOI (Stage One)	8 weeks
Outcomes of EOI process	2 weeks
Preparation and submission of grant application (Stage Two)	6 weeks
Assessment of applications (Stage Two)	8 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	up to 4 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	November 2021
End date of grant commitment	30 June 2024

8. The grant selection process

An Independent Assessment Committee (the Committee) comprised of independent experts will assess EOI and stage two applications. The Committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts.

8.1. Stage One expressions of interest

You first submit an EOI. We review your EOI against eligibility criteria. We provide all eligible applications to the Committee.

The Committee will assess your EOI against the EOI assessment criteria outlined at section 6.1 and compare it to other eligible EOIs before recommending which projects should be invited to apply for a grant to the Program Delegate. The Program Delegate then makes a decision on which EOIs will proceed to Stage Two. The Program Delegate's decision is final.

If your EOI is successful, you will be invited to submit a Stage Two grant application.

8.2. Stage Two grant application

You submit a Stage Two grant application. The Committee will assess that application against the Stage Two assessment criteria at section 6.2 and compare it to other invited applications.

The Committee will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, the Committee will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the strength of your application against the relative value of the grant sought.

The Committee will recommend which projects to fund to the Program Delegate.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate decides which grants to approve taking into account the application assessment, the recommendations of the Committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Program Delegate will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us. You can submit a new application for the same (or similar) project in any future funding rounds. You should include new or more information to address the weaknesses that prevented your previous application from being successful. If a new application is substantially the same as a previous ineligible or unsuccessful application, we may refuse to consider it for assessment.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under the program, you cannot receive other grants for this project from other Commonwealth programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Program Delegate.

10.2. Project specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children.

10.3. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any financial contribution provided by you or a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

10.4. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities³.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

11. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guideline 2017* unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on [business.gov.au](#). This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

³ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](#)

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

12.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds
- contributions of participants directly related to the project.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- include evidence of expenditure
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

12.2.2. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

12.2.3. Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

12.3. Independent audits

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

12.4. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.5. Grant agreement variations

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

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum time period
- changing project activities.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the project grant agreement end date. We can provide you with a variation request template.

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

12.6. Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant opportunity to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your applications and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

12.7. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.’

If you erect signage in relation to the project, the signage must contain an acknowledgement of the grant.

13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

13.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the [Australian Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#)⁴ of the [Public Service Act 1999](#) (Cth)⁵. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

⁴ https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057/Html/Text#_Toc535831236

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057>

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)⁶ on the department's website.

13.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 13.2.1, or
- personal information as per 13.2.3,

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

13.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

13.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to the Committee and our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or
- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

13.2.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (APPs)⁷ and the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth)⁸. This includes letting you know:

⁶ https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect

⁷ <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles/>

⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00237>

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the Committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁹ on the department's website for more information on:

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

13.2.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (Cth) (FOI Act)¹⁰.

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

13.3. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division
AusIndustry
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources

⁹ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

¹⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00366>

GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)¹¹ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

¹¹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
AusIndustry	The division of the same name within the department.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
The Committee (Independent Assessment Committee)	The Independent Assessment Committee established by the Program Delegate to consider and assess eligible applications and make recommendations for funding under the program.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2
Eligible expenditure guidance	The guidance that is provided at Appendix A.
Female founded (majority owned and led by women) startup	A startup that is at least 51 per cent owned and led by women (as per the Australian Business Register (ABR), the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and/or organisational records) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sole trader registration • partnership agreement • equity, beneficiaries or shares • officeholders / trustees.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding.
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.

Term	Definition
Indigenous business	A business that is registered with Indigenous Business Direct (Supply Nation).
Minister	The Minister for Industry, Science and Technology.
Non-income-tax-exempt	Not exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 ¹² (Cth) or under Division 1AB of Part III of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936 ¹³ (Cth).
Owners and Leaders	Individuals who manage the business operations of an organisation from a senior position, for example a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). These individuals are also legal proprietors of the business, including shareholders or owners of business assets.
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) ¹⁴ which is:</p> <p>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the information or opinion is true or not; and • whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Person with a disability	<p>A person with a disability that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments; and b) is permanent or likely to be permanent; and c) results in— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, learning or mobility; and (ii) the need for continuing support services. <p>As per the Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth).¹⁵</p>
Program Delegate	An AusIndustry manager within the department with responsibility for the program.
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.

¹² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00381>

¹³ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00401>

¹⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00237>

¹⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00387>

Term	Definition
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.
Regional	Locations listed in as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote in the mapping tool .
Scalable	The startup can grow quickly and has the potential to address large national and international markets.
Startup	An early stage, innovative or disruptive business that is scalable and working on a new or novel product, service or has a different business model.
Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	<p>Technology readiness levels are a method for estimating the maturity of technologies during the acquisition or development phase of a program. Examples of the TRL stages are:</p> <p>TRL 1 – Basic principles observed and reported e.g. paper study of a technology’s basic properties.</p> <p>TRL 2 – Formulation of technology concept and/or application e.g. basic analytical studies.</p> <p>TRL 3 – Concepts of the technology are proven e.g. active research and development to validate separate elements of the technology.</p> <p>TRL 4 – Technology validation in laboratory or test environment e.g. components are integrated to establish that they work together.</p> <p>TRL 5 – Technology validation in a simulated environment e.g. all components are integrated for testing in a simulated environment.</p> <p>TRL 6 – Prototype demonstration in a real-world environment e.g. prototype represents a near desired configuration, alpha or pre-minimum viable product.</p> <p>TRL 7 – Prototype demonstration in a customer environment e.g. minimum viable product or beta demonstrates operational feasibility.</p> <p>TRL 8 – Product or process qualified through tests and demonstration e.g. the technology is validated by end users.</p> <p>TRL 9 – Technology is proven successful e.g. application of the technology in its final form and under real-life conditions.</p>

Appendix A. Eligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on the eligibility of expenditure.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred by you within the project period
- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you to undertake required project audit activities
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

A.1 How we verify eligible expenditure

If your application is successful, we will ask you to verify the project budget that you provided in your application when we negotiate your grant agreement. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

The grant agreement will include details of the evidence you may need to provide when you achieve certain milestones in your project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure.

If requested, you will need to provide the agreed evidence along with your progress reports.

You must keep payment records of all eligible expenditure, and be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. At any time, we may ask you to provide records of the expenditure you have paid. If you do not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

At the end of the project, you may be required to provide an independent financial audit of all eligible expenditure from the project.

A.2 Labour expenditure

Eligible labour expenditure for the grant covers the direct labour costs of employees you directly employ on the core elements of the project. We consider a person an employee when you pay them a regular salary or wage, out of which you make regular tax instalment deductions.

Labour expenditure for leadership, administrative or project management tasks is not eligible. We only consider labour expenditure for leadership or administrative staff (such as CEOs, CFOs, accountants and lawyers) as eligible expenditure where they are directly completing eligible project activities.

Eligible salary expenditure includes an employee's total remuneration package as stated on their Pay As You Go (PAYG) Annual Payment Summary submitted to the ATO. We consider salary-sacrificed superannuation contributions as part of an employee's salary package if the amount is more than what the Superannuation Guarantee requires.

The maximum salary for an employee, director or shareholder, including packaged components that you can claim through the grant is \$175,000 per financial year.

For periods of the project that do not make a full financial year, you must reduce the maximum salary amount you claim proportionally.

You can only claim eligible salary costs when an employee is working directly on agreed project activities during the agreed project period.

A.3 Labour on-costs and administrative overhead

You may increase eligible salary costs by an additional 30 per cent allowance to cover on-costs such as employer paid superannuation, payroll tax, workers compensation insurance, and overheads such as office rent and the provision of computers.

You should calculate eligible salary costs using the formula below:

$$\text{Eligible salary costs} = \text{Annual salary package} \times \frac{\text{Weeks spent on project}}{52 \text{ weeks}} \times \text{percentage of time spent on project}$$

You cannot calculate labour costs by estimating the employee's worth. If you have not exchanged money (either by cash or bank transactions) we will not consider the cost eligible.

Evidence you will need to provide can include:

- details of all personnel working on the project, including name, title, function, time spent on the project and salary
- ATO payment summaries, pay slips and employment contracts.

A.4 Contract expenditure

Eligible contract expenditure is the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract others to do. These can include contracting:

- another organisation
- an individual who is not an employee, but engaged under a separate contract.

All contractors must have a written contract prior to starting any project work—for example, a formal agreement, letter or purchase order which specifies:

- the nature of the work they perform
- the applicable fees, charges and other costs payable.

Invoices from contractors must contain:

- a detailed description of the nature of the work
- the hours and hourly rates involved
- any specific plant expenses paid.

Invoices must directly relate to the agreed project, and the work must qualify as an eligible expense. The costs must also be reasonable and appropriate for the activities performed.

We will require evidence of contractor expenditure that may include:

- an exchange of letters (including email) setting out the terms and conditions of the proposed contract work
- purchase orders
- supply agreements
- invoices and payment documents.

You must ensure all project contractors keep a record of the costs of their work on the project. We may require you to provide a contractor's records of their costs of doing project work. If you cannot provide these records, the relevant contract expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

A.5 Travel and overseas expenditure

Eligible travel and overseas expenditure may include:

- domestic travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct agreed project and collaboration activities in Australia
- overseas travel limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required in cases where the overseas travel is material to the conduct of the project in Australia.

Eligible air transportation is limited to the economy class fare for each sector travelled; where non-economy class air transport is used only the equivalent of an economy fare for that sector is eligible expenditure. Where non-economy class air transport is used, the grantee will require evidence showing what an economy airfare costs at the time of travel.

We will consider value for money when determining whether the cost of overseas expenditure is eligible. This may depend on

- the proportion of total grant funding that you will spend on overseas expenditure
- the proportion of the service providers' total fee that will be spent on overseas expenditure
- how the overseas expenditure is likely to aid the project in meeting the program objectives.

Overseas travel must be at an economy rate and you must demonstrate you cannot access the service, or an equivalent service in Australia.

Eligible overseas activities expenditure is generally limited to 10 per cent of total eligible expenditure.

A.6 Other eligible expenditure

Other eligible expenditures for the project may include:

- costs of acquiring technology including servers or machines to support scalability of your business
- reasonable fitout expenditure directly related to the project
- staff training that directly supports the achievement of project outcomes
- financial auditing of project expenditure
- costs you incur in order to obtain planning, environmental or other regulatory approvals during the project period. However, associated fees paid to the Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments are not eligible
- contingency costs up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the eligible project costs. Note that we make payments based on actual costs incurred.

Other specific expenditures may be eligible as determined by the Program Delegate.

Evidence you need to supply can include supplier contracts, purchase orders, invoices and supplier confirmation of payments.

Appendix B. Ineligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on what we consider ineligible expenditure.

The Program Delegate may impose limitations or exclude expenditure, or further include some ineligible expenditure listed in these guidelines in a grant agreement or otherwise by notice to you.

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- research not directly supporting eligible activities
- activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources
- costs incurred prior to us notifying you that the application is eligible and complete
- financing costs, including interest
- capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers (excluding servers), printers or photocopiers and the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories
- costs involved in the purchase or upgrade/hire of software (including user licences) and ICT hardware (unless it directly relates to the project)
- costs such as rental, renovations and utilities
- non-project-related staff training and development costs
- insurance costs (the participants must effect and maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage for any liability arising as a result of its participation in funded activities)
- debt financing
- costs related to obtaining resources used on the project, including interest on loans, job advertising and recruiting, and contract negotiations
- depreciation of plant and equipment beyond the life of the project
- maintenance costs
- costs of purchasing, leasing, depreciation of, or development of land
- opportunity costs relating to any production losses due to allocating resources to the agreed grant project
- routine operational expenses, including communications, accommodation, office computing facilities, printing and stationery, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges
- costs related to preparing the grant application, preparing any project reports (except costs of independent audit reports we require) and preparing any project variation requests
- travel or overseas costs that exceed 10 per cent of total project costs except where otherwise approved by the Program Delegate.

This list is not exhaustive and applies only to the expenditure of the grant funds. Other costs may be ineligible where we decide that they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the project or that they are contrary to the objective of the program.

You must ensure you have adequate funds to meet the costs of any ineligible expenditure associated with the project.