1. **What is the Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme?**

The Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme is the Australian Government’s flagship initiative for business competitiveness and productivity at the firm level. It forms part of the Australian Government’s new industry policy outlined in the Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda. This Agenda is a business-focused element of the Australian Government’s broader Economic Action Strategy and brings together and builds upon other economic reforms to make the most of Australia’s strengths and business opportunities.

The Programme uses quality facilitators and advisers, drawn from industry, to ensure businesses get the advice and support they need to improve their competitiveness and productivity.

The primary focus is on providing access to the best advice and networks to solve their problems rather than focusing on financial assistance.

The Programme replaces a multitude of competing small grants and entitlements with a new streamlined approach to government support delivered by AusIndustry’s new Single Business Service Initiative.

Practical support for businesses, researchers and entrepreneurs includes: advice from people with relevant private sector experience, co-funded grants to commercialise new products, processes and services, funding to take advantage of growth opportunities, and connection and collaboration opportunities.

2. **What are the different elements of Entrepreneurs Infrastructure Programme?**

The Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme has three elements:

- Business Management, providing support for business improvement and growth;
- Research Connections, helping small and medium businesses collaborate with the research sector to develop new ideas with commercial potential; and
- Accelerating Commercialisation, helping entrepreneurs, researchers, start-ups and businesses address key challenges in the commercialisation pathway of bringing novel products, processes and services to the market.

3. **How does the program fit with other Government initiatives?**

The Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme forms part of the Australian Government’s new industry policy outlined in the Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda.

This Agenda is a business-focused element of the Australian Government’s broader Economic Action Strategy which brings together and builds upon other economic reforms to make the most of Australia’s strengths and business opportunities.

The Programme gives effect to a new policy direction to provide strategic support to small and medium businesses, bringing together researchers and business to develop and commercialise new ideas and to equip small and medium businesses with the management
and business skills needed to lead change and expansion.

4. Who can apply to the Programme?

Eligibility requirements vary across each of the different elements of the Programme.

To be eligible for Business Management and Research Connections advisory services, applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- be a business incorporated in Australia under the Corporations Act 2001, that is non tax-exempt and is registered for GST, with trading activities that:
  - form a sufficiently significant proportion of its overall activities as to merit it being described as a trading corporation; or
  - are a substantial and not merely peripheral activity of the corporation.
- be a small to medium sized business operating in one of the following Sectors (listed from a – f below); or else demonstrate commitment to, and the skills, capability, intellectual property or expertise to operate in, one or more of the sectors listed in a - e in the future:
  a) Advanced Manufacturing
  b) Food and Agribusiness
  c) Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals
  d) Mining Equipment, Technology and Services
  e) Oil, Gas and Energy Resources
  f) Enabling Technologies and Services of the sectors listed in a – e above.
- have operated in Australia and filed Business Activity Statements showing ongoing trading for at least three consecutive years
- have an annual turnover or operating expenditure in the current, or one of the two previous, financial years within the following thresholds:
  - between $1.5 million and $100 million or;
  - between $750,000 and $100 million for applicants from Remote Australia;
- be Solvent
- not be named by the Affirmative Action Agency as an organisation that has not complied with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth).

For clarity, the following are not eligible to apply for Business Management and Research Connections:

- Individuals, partnerships and trusts (however an incorporated trustee with trading activities that
  - form a sufficiently significant proportion of its overall activities as to merit it being described as a trading corporation; or
  - are a substantial and not merely peripheral activity of the corporation. may apply on behalf of a trust).
- Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies and bodies (including government business enterprises).

Additional eligibility and merit criteria may apply for specific services and different eligibility criteria apply for grant funding.

Further detail is provided in the Customer Information Guides for specific Programme services, which can be found at business.gov.au.

To be eligible for an Accelerating Commercialisation, applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be either:
  - a business incorporated in Australia under the Corporations Act 2001, that is non tax-exempt and is registered for GST, with trading activities that:
    - form a sufficiently significant proportion of its overall activities as to merit it being described as a trading corporation,
    - or are a substantial and not merely peripheral activity of the corporation;
  - An individual, researcher, partnership or unincorporated trustee who agrees to form a non-tax exempt company incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 before signing a funding agreement; or
  - A Commercialisation Office or an Eligible Partner Entity incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 that is registered for GST with trading activities that:
    - form a sufficiently significant proportion of its overall activities as to merit it being described as a trading corporation,
    - or are a substantial and not merely peripheral activity of the corporation;
  - Have a combined annual turnover (and of each related body corporate if any) of less than $20 million for each of the
three years prior to lodgement of the application, except where the applicant is controlled by a Publicly Funded Research Organisation, in which case the turnover of the applicant in isolation must be less than $20 million for each of the three years prior to the lodgement of the application.

- Have a novel product, process or service to be commercialised and traded to customers external to the state or territory of your principal place of business
- Have ownership, access to, or the beneficial use of any intellectual property that is the subject of, or is necessary to carry out an eligible project
- If applying for grant funding, must also demonstrate the ability to fund at least 50 per cent of the eligible expenditure of the eligible project; and
- not be named by the Affirmative Action Agency as an organisation that has not complied with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth).

Applicants do not need to operate within one of the Growth Sectors of the Entrepreneurs’ Infrastructure Programme to be eligible to apply for Accelerating Commercialisation.

For clarity, the following are not eligible to apply for Accelerating Commercialisation:

- Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies and bodies (including government business enterprises).

In addition to satisfying eligibility requirements, applications will need to address specific merit criteria to be competitive. Further detail is provided in the Accelerating Commercialisation Customer Information Guide which can be found at business.gov.au.

5. Why are you prioritising services being provided to five Growth and enabling Sectors?

The following five Growth Sectors have been publicly identified as areas of opportunity for Australia in research undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics, IBISWorld and McKinsey:

- Advanced Manufacturing;
- Food and Agribusiness;
- Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals;
- Mining Equipment, Technology and Services; and
- Oil, Gas and Energy Resources;

These sectors are in fields where Australia either enjoys a comparative advantage, is currently internationally competitive, is likely to have an opportunity to exploit favourable global market developments, or has a significant impact on the Australian economy.

This sectoral approach has been chosen to enable targeted and strategic investment, prioritising limited government resources to remove impediments in areas of Australia’s competitive strengths.

6. What businesses are included under Advanced Manufacturing?

This includes businesses that adopt innovative technologies or business practices to improve or develop manufactured products, processes or services. This includes the adoption of improvements or innovations across any of a range of manufacturing steps, such as concept, research and development, design, production, logistics, marketing and after-sales services, in order to achieve high-value products, services or business outcomes, including improved responses to market demands.

This also includes businesses that supply integral services, technologies or inputs to the manufacturing processes of businesses described above.

7. What businesses are included under Food and Agribusiness?

This includes businesses that transform raw materials or ingredients into food or beverages, or supply integral services, technologies or inputs for food or beverage production.

This also includes businesses that provide integral services, technologies or inputs to support primary production of food and beverages.

8. What businesses are included under Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals?

This includes businesses that develop or produce therapeutic, medical or pharmaceutical products or technologies, including complementary medicines.

This also includes businesses that provide integral services, technologies or inputs to the development and production of therapeutic,
medical or pharmaceutical products or technologies.

This definition excludes businesses that are hospitals, medical and other health care services, residential care services, social assistance services and retailers of medical and pharmaceutical goods, except where they can demonstrate they also substantially undertake the above activities.

9. What businesses are included under Mining Equipment, Technology and Services?

This includes businesses in mineral exploration, extraction and mining supply chains, including businesses that provide integral services, technologies and equipment for mining and minerals extraction.

10. What businesses are included under Oil, Gas and Energy Resources?

This includes businesses engaged in the exploration, development and extraction of energy and fuels from oil, gas, coal and uranium.

This also includes businesses that provide integral services, technologies and equipment for use in oil, gas and energy resource sectors.

11. What businesses are included under Enabling Technologies and Services?

This includes businesses that provide enabling or supporting technologies, inputs or services to drive business growth or improve business competitiveness in one or more of the five Growth Sectors.

Enabling technologies and sectors underpinning the five Growth Sectors include: freight and logistics; infrastructure related construction and services; information and communications technologies; digital technologies; and professional services.

Outside of these key enabling technologies and sectors, this definition also includes other businesses that enable or support one of the five Growth Sectors through a direct commercial relationship, but excludes routine business operational activities such as legal advice, financial accounting/bookkeeping services, catering and insurance.

12. Will you treat the information that my business provides to the Programme confidentially?

All information obtained is treated in accordance with the confidentiality guidance set out in the programme Customer Information Guides and the Programme Guidelines.

We'll treat the information you give us confidentially if it meets all of the four conditions below:

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

We may reveal confidential information:

- to the Programme Advisory Committee and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the Programme effectively
- to employees and contractors of our Department, so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programmes and activities
- to other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in programme reports and consultations
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also reveal confidential information if:

- we are required or allowed by law to reveal it
- you agree to the information being revealed before we reveal it, or
- the confidential information has been made public by someone other than us.

13. How do I provide feedback?

We encourage you to give us feedback on our services and our programmes. Your feedback will help us (the Department of Industry) to improve our services.

Read our Customer Service Charter Customer Service Charter to find out more about our commitment to service delivery.
If you have feedback about any decisions we have made about your application, please complete the Feedback Form available at business.gov.au at business.gov.au.

You are also entitled to lodge a complaint with the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

14. Need more information?

Further answers to frequently asked questions regarding specific Programme services and grants are separately available.

For more information, visit business.gov.au or call 13 28 46. More in depth face-to-face assistance is also available from AusIndustry's national network.