



Australian Government
Department of Industry

Business

business.gov.au
13 28 46
Delivered by AusIndustry™



Customer Information Guide

Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme

Business Solutions 2014

October 2014

Closing date and time **12 November 2014 – 11.59pm** Australian Eastern Daylight Savings
Time

Contents

1	Programme overview	4
2	Programme objective	4
3	2014 theme – Business Solutions	4
4	Grant amount and grant period	4
5	Before applying	4
6	Who can apply?	5
7	Eligibility requirements	5
8	Partnership applications	6
9	Delivery of Services	6
10	Key Performance Indicators	7
11	The five business solutions streams	7
11.1	Funding avenues and financial analysis	7
11.2	Building your business	8
11.3	Making the most of your talent and team	8
11.4	Management capabilities	8
11.5	Digital engagement implementation	8
12	Eligible Expenditure	9
13	How to apply	9
13.1	Online application form	9
13.2	The Australian Business Account facility	9
13.3	Late applications	9
13.4	Supporting documents	9
13.5	Difficulties with the online application form	10
14	The Merit Criteria	10
14.1	Merit Criterion 1	10
14.2	Merit Criterion 2	10
14.3	Merit Criterion 3	11
15	Assessing your application	11
16	Final decision	12
17	If your application is successful	12
17.1	Funding agreement	12
17.2	Public announcement	13
17.3	How the grant will be paid	13
17.4	Tax obligations	13
17.5	Reporting	13
17.6	Resources, branding and marketing	14
17.7	Project variations	14
17.8	Monitoring and evaluation	14

18 Other things you should know	15
18.1 Conflicts of interest declarations	15
18.2 Confidentiality.....	15
18.3 Use and disclosure of personal information.....	16
18.4 Freedom of information	16
18.5 Feedback – Complaints, compliments and suggestions	16
Appendix A. Definition of key terms	18
Appendix B. Guidelines on eligible expenditure	20
How eligible expenditure is verified	20
Labour expenditure	20
Contract/consultant expenditure.....	21
Other eligible expenditure	21
Appendix C. Guidelines on ineligible expenditure	23

1 Programme overview

The Australian Government is committed to improving the capacity of established not-for-profit small business advisory service providers to provide low cost small business advisory and information services. Funding of up to \$6 million per year over three years has been allocated to support the delivery of these services.

Funding under the Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme (the Programme) will be provided to eligible, established not-for-profit small business advisory service providers.

2 Programme objective

The objective of the Programme is to improve the capacity of established, not-for-profit small business advisory service providers to deliver low cost small business advisory and information services.

3 2014 theme – Business Solutions

The 2014 competitive, merit based funding round will focus on the theme of 'Business Solutions'.

The round will focus on five business solution streams:

1. Funding avenues and financial analysis
2. Building your business
3. Making the most of your talent and team
4. Management capabilities
5. Digital engagement implementation

The 2014 funding round aims to improve the accessibility, volume and quality of low cost business advisory services across the five business solution streams. Further details are outlined in Section 11 of this Customer Information Guide.

4 Grant amount and grant period

The Australian Government is providing up to \$6 million per year, over 3 years for the Business Solutions 2014 Programme round.

Individual grants of up to \$200,000 per year will be provided to eligible, established not-for-profit small business advisory service providers over three years. This is up to \$600,000 in total, excluding GST.

The level of grant funding does not limit expenditure on the specified project. You are encouraged to provide other cash or in-kind contributions to the project through your own or other sources.

Funding is intended to **supplement** and not replace existing funding arrangements from other sources. Activities funded under the proposed project are to be additional to 'business as usual' activities of your organisation.

5 Before applying

Before completing an application, please read all other relevant documents relating to the Programme.

The relevant programme documentation includes:

- factsheet
- Customer Information Guide
- Frequently Asked Questions
- sample Funding Agreement.

All relevant Programme documents are available:

- on business.gov.au
- by contacting the single business service contact centre on 13 28 46. The single business service contact centre is open from 8am to 8pm Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time.

6 Who can apply?

The Programme is open to established, not-for-profit small business advisory service providers such as Registered Business Organisations. A Registered Business Organisation is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation that provides low cost services to small businesses to help them achieve productivity and/or competitiveness and can include organisations such as:

- Business Enterprise Centres
- Chambers of Commerce
- Industry Associations.

Established, not-for-profit small business advisory service providers are expected to:

- have a demonstrated history of providing small business advisory services to small businesses for some years
- be well connected with the business community in the region proposed to be serviced by the project
- be well connected to other relevant organisations, information sources and government agencies
- be organisationally stable
- be financially viable
- employ sufficient experienced staff to provide services across all five of the business solutions streams across the entire region to be serviced by the project.

7 Eligibility requirements

You must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- you must be a constitutional corporation, that is:
 - a business conducted by a corporation within the meaning of [s51\(xx\) of the Australian Constitution](#)¹, or
 - a business whose operations are entirely carried out in a Territory.

The definition of a constitutional corporation for the purposes of section 51(xx) of the Australian Constitution is in Appendix A.

- In addition, at the time of submitting an application for funding, you must also meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

¹ http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/coaca430/s51.html

- be a not-for-profit organisation,
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN), and
- be a Registered Business Organisation.

8 Partnership applications

Applications from groups of organisations (referred to as 'partnership applications') are encouraged.

Partnerships enable expert collaboration that can address specific areas of need, such as geographical or specific business advisory skills, which meet the five business solutions streams.

Examples of organisations forming a partnership could be:

- one not-for-profit organisation partnering with one or more for-profit organisations or specialist advisory service providers or an industry association, or
- a group of not-for-profit organisations working together to service a region, or
- a not-for-profit organisation physically removed from a region partnering with on the ground organisations to deliver both online and face to face services into a region.

A partnership application can only apply for funding of up to \$200,000 per year over three years. This is up to \$600,000 over the three year funding period, excluding GST.

The Programme requires that one organisation **must** identify as the 'lead organisation' and must meet all the eligibility criteria. The lead organisation must submit the application on behalf of the partnership.

All other members of the partnership **must** be constitutional corporations.

The lead organisation in a partnership application will be responsible for the conduct and management of the entire project. They will be responsible for completing all progress and financial reporting required by the Commonwealth. Lead organisations will be expected to formalise the partnership arrangements of the group in an appropriate manner (e.g. by letter of agreement signed by all parties) and to provide evidence of this to the Commonwealth.

Costs of formalising partnership arrangements can be considered as eligible expenditure as part of the 5% of the project budget permitted to be allocated to 'operational and minor infrastructure and other costs'. For more information see Appendix B.

9 Delivery of Services

The Programme will provide funding to the eligible not-for-profit small business advisory service providers assessed as most able to improve the accessibility, volume and quality of their low cost business advisory services within their defined geographical region. Services are to be provided by small business advisory service providers to enterprising people who have a business idea, have the intention to develop the idea and start a new small business or have purchased an existing small business or who operate a small business.

Funded projects are expected to support a range of service delivery mechanisms including:

- one-on-one tailored business advisory services
- face-to-face meetings
- virtual/online meetings
- small group training for up to 10 people at a time
- access to mentoring networks in the defined geographical region of the project.

Funded projects are expected to service a defined region consisting of a group of Local Government Areas and to be able to provide services to all areas within this region. You will be required to define the region in the application form and must be able to explain how you have determined which Local Government Areas are included in your region and to support this with evidence of need and demand.

You will be required to cater to the need and demand for Programme services among enterprising people in your defined region, so an ability to deliver innovative and flexible services, including mobile delivery, is encouraged. Funded service providers may also be required to implement and maintain the use of business diagnostic/analytical tools (e.g. Business Health Checks) to help tailor business advisory services to the needs of enterprising people.

In order to ensure a nationally integrated programme, funded service providers will be required to collaborate, network, share learnings and cross-refer clients to improve the effectiveness of the Programme. Funded service providers will also be required to regularly provide feedback to the Australian Government on key issues and/or concerns raised by small businesses.

Funded service providers are also expected to work with and through the Department of Industry's single business service, including acceptance of referrals from the single business service contact centre and if applicable, to refer clients to other Australian Government programmes.

10 Key Performance Indicators

AusIndustry will set key performance indicators (KPIs) for each project funded under the Programme. Service providers will need to demonstrate they have improved the accessibility, volume and quality of low cost small business advisory services provided to enterprising people in the defined geographical region of the project.

KPIs may include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- the number of low cost business advisory services delivered to enterprising people, additional to 'business as usual' activities
- measurement of changes to business confidence and/or knowledge of enterprising people assisted (for example, by requiring completion of 'entry' and 'exit' surveys on the services provided). KPIs may be structured around the number of surveys completed, in addition to the changes in confidence and/or knowledge levels
- the number of business diagnostics completed and the percentage of business recommendations from these diagnostics that the provider worked to resolve as part of the customised/tailored service provided.

11 The five business solutions streams

Within each of the five business solutions streams, there are a number of eligible activities as outlined below.

11.1 Funding avenues and financial analysis

The service provider must provide:

- independent information and guidance on available banking and finance products, how to present finance bids, effective cash flow management processes and financial data interpretation and referrals to accounting advice.

11.2 Building your business

The service provider must provide:

- diagnostic assessment of current business operations, followed by business planning advice that meets identified needs
- assistance in preparing marketing plans on promotional opportunities and advertising options
- guidance on entering new markets and the feasibility of new business ideas, including exporting products or services
- referrals to other providers that have specific experience in a given industry or business proposition.

11.3 Making the most of your talent and team

The service provider must provide:

- guidance on human resource strategies, including recruitment, employment and occupational health and safety (OH&S) requirements
- advisory service meetings and networking opportunities
- talent recruitment and retention tools
- training programmes to inform enterprising people about significant new regulations and/or relevant Australian Government business initiatives.

11.4 Management capabilities

The service provider must provide:

- assistance with creating, reviewing and implementing business plans, assessing and improving supply-chain management, succession planning and creating security over leased premises or intellectual property
- assistance to access appropriate legal advice, including on licencing, retail tenancy, intellectual property and credit management.

11.5 Digital engagement implementation

The service provider must provide:

- advice and assistance on e-commerce take-up
- advice and assistance with information technology and broadband services issues
- advice on adopting technology concepts to assist with marketing, managing and growing ideas.

You must outline how you will deliver each of the five business solution streams and are encouraged to consider how you might deliver services to audiences such as small business intenders, women, Indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and home-based small and micro businesses.

You will need to demonstrate that your business model for the delivery of services is:

- **relevant** – that is, it provides low cost business advisory services to contribute to maximising the productivity and/or competitiveness of participating enterprising people,
- **practical** – that is, oriented towards action learning for participating enterprising people to build business skills and/or firm capability, and may include mentoring,
- **flexible** – delivered in a manner that suits the participating enterprising people, and

- **focused** – improves the business and/or financial management skills of the participating enterprising people.

12 Eligible Expenditure

Grant funding will only be provided for eligible expenditure on an approved project.

Project expenditure is only eligible if it is incurred between the project start and completion dates.

You may start your project from the date that we notify you that your application is successful. However, we are not responsible for any expenditure by you until a funding agreement is in place. If you choose to start your project before a funding agreement is executed, you do so at your own risk and expense.

- For guidelines on eligible expenditure, see Appendix B.
- For a list of ineligible expenditure, see Appendix C.

13 How to apply

You can only submit an application for Business Solutions 2014 during the funding round. The opening and closing dates for the round are published on business.gov.au.

13.1 Online application form

Applications for funding **must** be submitted online and **must** be submitted by the specified closing date and time. All information required for assessment must be provided by the specified closing date and time.

The online application form can be found at business.gov.au

When you submit your online application, you will be provided with a receipt number and a link to a page where you can enter your email address to receive an acknowledgement email which will include a pdf copy of your completed application.

13.2 The Australian Business Account facility

It is recommended that you set up an [Australian Business Account](https://account.business.gov.au/)² (ABA) prior to, or as part of, completing your application. The ABA will enable you to pre-fill business information into your application. This may save time if you are preparing multiple applications. Once created, an ABA is able to be used for other business interactions with government.

13.3 Late applications

Late applications will not be accepted, except where the late lodgement is proven to be due to issues in the control of the Australian Government, for example, failure or outage of the Department's information technology platforms.

13.4 Supporting documents

Applications must be final and complete when submitted and address all questions and all aspects of the merit criteria. It will not be possible to incorporate any new material or to make any significant

² <https://account.business.gov.au/>

changes to the application after submission. We may, in seeking clarification about aspects of an application, allow minor corrections to be made.

Applicants should be aware that some questions and a number of attachments are mandatory and you will not be able to submit the application form without completing or attaching them. The attachments provide important supporting evidence of claims made in the application. The attachments required are detailed in the application form.

The maximum size for each attachment is 2Mb. Where possible attachments such as letters of support or financial statements should be condensed into a single document as only twenty (20) attachments are able to be uploaded to the form.

13.5 Difficulties with the online application form

If you experience difficulties completing and/or submitting an application online, you should contact the single business service contact centre immediately by phoning **13 28 46 before** the closing date and time. The single business service contact centre is open from 8am to 8pm Australian Eastern Daylight Savings Time.

Any information you provide in an application considered intentionally misleading or inaccurate will be investigated.

14 The Merit Criteria

In addition to providing background information on your organisation and comprehensively describing the proposed project, including key activities/outputs and proposed use of grant funds, to be competitive, you must fully address each merit criterion in your application. The prompts listed beneath each merit criterion indicate how you might demonstrate merit. All merit criteria are weighted equally.

14.1 Merit Criterion 1

The extent to which the application demonstrates that there is a particular unmet need and/or demand for the proposed service and/or project in the area/sector within which it is intended to be conducted.

In addressing this criterion, you will need to demonstrate:

- the need that the project is seeking to address in the defined region
- the demand that the project is seeking to address in the defined region
- how the project relates to or fits into existing small business services in the defined region
- how the project will fill a gap in current services available in the defined region.

14.2 Merit Criterion 2

The extent to which the proposed service and/or projects will meet stated objectives and the level of risk to that success, including how risks will be addressed.

In addressing this criterion, you will need to demonstrate:

- your ability and past track record in the delivery of high quality, low cost business advisory services to enterprising people and provide two independent referees who can comment on your delivery of services
- your pricing structure and how you define or determine 'low cost' advisory services for the purpose of the proposed project

- details of Commonwealth or State government funding received for projects delivering services to enterprising people over the last three years
- how you currently deliver services under the five Business Solutions streams
- the capacity and capability of key personnel, to deliver services in the defined region and provide CVs of key personnel
- how you will ensure accessibility of the services to all enterprising people in the defined region
- your connections within the local community and provide evidence of how you have worked collaboratively with other organisations in the defined region and provide relevant letters of support from the community
- how you will ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of services to enterprising people by maintaining and updating the knowledge of personnel in your organisation
- the availability of sufficient resources (e.g. facilities, equipment, other cash or in-kind funding for overheads and suitably qualified personnel) to deliver quality services
- your organisations financial situation - outlining a summary of financial position at the end of the last completed financial year and sources of funding for business as usual activities and provide the financial statements for the last three completed financial years
- how this funding does not replace funding received from other sources and is providing for additionality of services
- how you will utilise current managerial, administrative and other support from the organisation to support delivery of the project
- how the governance structure of your organisation will support the appropriate management of the project
- completion of a risk management table.

14.3 Merit Criterion 3

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the proposed service and/or project represents value for money for the Commonwealth.

In addressing this criterion, you will need to:

- outline the projected outcomes (benefits or effects) of the project for the selected region
- outline how you will evaluate or measure the outcomes
- explain how the delivery of this high quality, low cost business advisory service represents value for money for the Australian Government.

Note: You must provide specific evidence to substantiate your information or claims where requested. Evidence required may include statistics, financial statements and/or evidence of appropriate corporate governance (e.g. active board oversight of the project and its activities, separation of duties).

15 Assessing your application

All applications will be assessed by AusIndustry within the Department of Industry.

The process is outlined below.

Stage 1: Organisation eligibility – if an organisation (or the lead organisation) meets all eligibility criteria in Section A and B of the application form, the application will proceed to Stage 2 merit criteria assessment.

If an application **does not** meet the eligibility criteria in Section A and B of the application form and is deemed ineligible, you will be advised in writing and your application will not be assessed further.

Stage 2: Merit criteria assessment - if your application is eligible, it will then be assessed against each of the three (3) merit criterion.

During the assessment process, AusIndustry reserves the right to:

- contact you in relation to your application,
- seek additional expertise, including external assessors, in evaluating the merits of the application,
- seek additional references from internal and external sources, and
- verify information from external sources.

We will undertake a due diligence process on applicants likely to be recommended for funding to the Minister for Small Business. Background checks of recommended applicants may include financial viability, checks for qualifications and past professional conduct.

Applications that meet the objectives and requirements of these guidelines and each of the merit criteria to a high degree will, at the absolute discretion of the Minister for Small Business, be considered for funding support under the Programme.

Meeting the eligibility and meeting the merit criteria to a high degree does not guarantee that an offer of funding under the Programme will be made. If more applications are received than funding available, only the most meritorious applications will be funded.

16 Final decision

The Minister for Small Business has overall responsibility for the Programme.

The Minister, having considered the advice and recommendations from the Department of Industry and The Treasury, will make the final decision on which applications will receive funding under the Programme. The Minister will decide:

- which applicants will be funded
- the level of funding offered
- the conditions of any funding offer.

All decisions are final and there will be no review of decisions.

If you are successful with an application, you will receive a written offer. An offer of funding may be subject to special conditions.

If you are unsuccessful, you will be notified in writing and have the opportunity to discuss your application with AusIndustry and receive feedback.

17 If your application is successful

17.1 Funding agreement

By lodging an application for the Programme you are agreeing to accept the terms outlined in the sample funding agreement.

If you accept the offer, you must enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Industry, acting on behalf of the Commonwealth.

You will have a specified time from the date of offer to execute a funding agreement with the Commonwealth. We may withdraw the offer if the funding agreement is not executed within this time.

We do not have to make any grant payments and are not responsible for any expenses incurred by your organisation in relation to the project until there is an executed funding agreement in place.

17.2 Public announcement

Successful projects may be publicly announced by the Minister for Small Business and may include:

- name and contact details of your small business advisory service organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded.

Details of successful projects will also be published on business.gov.au and on the Department of Industry website.

17.3 How the grant will be paid

The funding agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount to be paid including GST
- schedule of payments.

Grant funding will be paid as agreed milestones are achieved.

All interest earned on the grant funds held (as a proportion of the total interest earned on the total amount of funds in the account) must be reported on and used only for the purposes of the project. Interest will be counted as part of the payment from the Australian Government during the acquittal of funding. Any unspent funds must be returned to the Australian Government.

The maximum grant amount cannot be exceeded under any circumstances. If additional eligible expenditure is incurred, organisations must meet these costs themselves.

17.4 Tax obligations

Grants are subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Grant payments are increased to compensate for GST payments.

Grants are treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations. We do not provide advice on tax.

17.5 Reporting

You must submit regular progress and financial reports as described in the [funding agreement](#). Financial reports may require a statutory declaration regarding expenditure of funds and provision of evidence of expenditure.

You will be provided with templates for all reports.

At the commencement of the project benchmarking using a methodology provided by AusIndustry will be undertaken. Project activities will need to be additional to this level.

In order for Key Performance Indicator activity to be measured, you will be required to maintain a record of basic contact details (such as name, business name, ABN, phone number and email

address) for participating enterprising people serviced by the Programme and to provide these details if requested.

You should be aware that compliance audits **may** be conducted on the grant funding in addition to the required reports.

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

17.6 Resources, branding and marketing

We may provide you with diagnostic/analytical tools and other resources to use in the conduct of the project. Alternatively, we may prescribe minimum capabilities of any diagnostic/analytical tools that you may be required to provide/source in order to deliver your funded project.

Funded service providers will be expected to increase the public profile of the Programme through the use of specifically branded marketing and communication materials. It is expected that your marketing/communications strategy will ensure that the majority (greater than 80 per cent) of small businesses in your defined region will be aware of the Programme services available under your project.

You will be issued with Programme branding guidelines to help implement Programme branding across a variety of communication channels (such as printed collateral and websites). The branding guidelines will overview the appropriate use and placement of any Commonwealth Government logos and/or reference to the Programme. It is anticipated that the consistent use of Programme branding will ensure a consistent, professional and highly visible branding presence across Australia.

You may be provided with a generic marketing communication support package. The marketing communication resources **may** include:

- examples of how to promote the Programme online (such as a mock webpage)
- templates (such as fact sheets)
- pull-up banners for use at functions and community events.

17.7 Project variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a project variation by writing to AusIndustry.

Each variation is considered on a case by case basis. You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider the request in the context of impacts on the project outcome.

The Programme does not allow for an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds.

17.8 Monitoring and evaluation

You will be required to participate in a broader evaluation of the Programme, if requested to do so by the Australian Government. An evaluation will seek to identify the degree to which the Programme is meeting its objectives. As part of an evaluation, the Australian Government may survey stakeholders, including enterprising people that have been assisted as part of the Programme.

You may be required to provide names and contact numbers of the enterprising people you provide services to under the Programme to enable surveying to be conducted.

18 Other things you should know

18.1 Conflicts of interest declarations

A conflict of interest in the context of the Programme involves a conflict between the duties and responsibilities of departmental staff, technical experts and other third parties who have a role in the administration of the Programme and their private interests, where the relevant individual's private interests could improperly influence that individual's ability to impartially perform their role under the Programme. A conflict of interest may be real, apparent or potential.

An apparent (or perceived) conflict of interest exists where it appears that an individual's private interests could improperly influence an individual's ability to impartially assess an application but this is not in fact the case.

A potential conflict of interest arises where an individual has a private interest which is such that an actual conflict of interest would arise if the individual were to be involved in the assessment of an application or other decision in relation to the Programme.

The Department of Industry's procedures for managing disclosure of interest are in accordance with the requirements of the APS Code of Conduct (section 13 (7) of the Public Service Act 1999) and are published on the [Department of Industry](http://www.industry.gov.au)³ website.

18.2 Confidentiality

The use and disclosure of information provided to the Department of Industry is regulated by legislation and the common law. Without limitation, relevant legislation includes the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*, the Public Service Regulations, the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)* and the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.

Only information which satisfies **all** of the four criteria listed below will be treated by the Commonwealth as confidential information:

- a. The information is clearly identified by the Applicant as confidential and reasons for the confidentiality are provided by the Applicant.
- b. The information is commercially sensitive.
- c. The disclosure of the information would cause unreasonable detriment to the Applicant or another party.
- d. The Applicant provided the information under an understanding that it would remain confidential.

Information which does not satisfy the above requirements will not be treated as confidential.

Even if the information is confidential the Department of Industry may disclose the information as follows:

- a. to other Commonwealth employees and contractors for the purposes of administering the Programme
- b. to employees and contractors of the Department of Industry and The Treasury for the purposes of research, evaluation, monitoring and analysis of the Programme and its activities

³ <http://www.industry.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

- c. to other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies for the purposes of reporting and consultation
- d. to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- e. to the responsible Minister
- f. to a House or a Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Confidential information may also be disclosed if the Commonwealth is otherwise required or permitted by law to do so, where the consent of the applicant to the release of information is obtained prior to its disclosure, or where the information enters the public domain due to the actions of someone other than the Commonwealth.

18.3 Use and disclosure of personal information

The Department of Industry (the Department) and its staff are required to treat Personal Information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (the 'Privacy Act') as amended from time to time. The Privacy Act, among other things requires the Department to inform individuals of why their Personal Information is being collected and to whom the Department will disclose the Personal Information.

Personal Information means the same as in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

In the course of administering the Programme, the Department will collect Personal Information from applicants for the purposes of the administration of the Programme and for the purposes of research, evaluation, monitoring and analysis of the Programme and its activities.

The Department may provide Personal Information collected in the course of administering the Programme to employees and contractors of the Department of Industry and The Treasury, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors for the purposes of the administration of the Programme and for the purposes of research, evaluation, monitoring and analysis of the Programme and its activities.

The Department and/or the Minister for Small Business may announce publicly the names of successful applicants and may include this information on Departmental internet sites.

Please refer to the Department of Industry [Privacy Policy](#)⁴ for further information on how the Department collects, uses, stores and discloses applicants' personal information and the way in which an applicant can access and correct its personal information.

18.4 Freedom of information

All documents created or held by the Department of Industry with regard to the Programme are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. Unless a document falls under an exemption provision, or is conditionally exempt and it is not in the public interest to give access to the document, it will, subject to any obligations of third party consultation, be disclosed in response to a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

18.5 Feedback – Complaints, compliments and suggestions

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

⁴ <http://www.industry.gov.au/Pages/PrivacyPolicy.aspx>

If you have a complaint, compliment or suggestion you can contact us by:

- phone: 13 28 46 (within Australia only). The single business service contact centre is open Monday to Friday (8am to 8pm Australian Eastern Daylight Savings time)
- [email Us](#)
- [web Chat](#)
- website: business.gov.au.

All complaints, compliments or suggestions will be referred to the appropriate manager.

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

Head of Division

AusIndustry - Business Services

GPO Box 9839

CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)⁵ with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

⁵ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

Appendix A. Definition of key terms

A business is defined as those commercial activities or enterprises undertaken by an entity that has an Australian Business Number (ABN).

Business as usual is defined as those advisory services provided to small businesses either free or charged and the day to day operations of the organisation which are not funded by the Programme or any of the previous Australian Government Small Business Advisory Services Programme initiatives. These business as usual activities may be funded through other Commonwealth, State or local government grants, through fee for service, through sponsorship arrangements, by private sector organisations, or through membership fees.

Business Enterprise Centres are defined as incorporated not-for-profit bodies, which provide low cost services to small businesses as part of an existing network of business advisory service providers.

Constitutional Corporations are defined as Corporations within the meaning of s 51(xx) of the Australian Constitution. These are further defined as Foreign Corporations, and Trading or Financial Corporations formed within Australia.

A **Foreign Corporation** is a corporation formed outside Australia.

A **Financial Corporation** is a financial corporation that has already been incorporated within Australia. Financial activities include activities such as borrowing or lending money.

A **Trading Corporation** is a corporation that has already been incorporated in Australia whose trading activities make up a substantial or significant portion of their overall activities. Trading activities include the buying and selling of goods and services.

(Note: A not-for-profit organisation can be a trading corporation. If you are unsure about whether you are a Constitutional Corporation, you should seek independent legal advice before you apply for the Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme.)

Customer Information Guide are guidelines issued by the Programme Delegate relating to specific matters arising out of the administration of the Programme and are in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines.

Eligible application or proposal means an application or proposal for grant funding under the Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme that the Programme Delegate has determined is eligible for merit rating in accordance with the Programme's Guidelines.

Enterprising People are defined as a person/s who has/have a business idea and has the intention to develop the idea and start a new small business or has purchased an existing small business or who operates a small business and includes, but is not limited to, small business intenders, Indigenous, women, non-english speaking (CALD) people, home and micro business.

Execute a funding agreement means you and the Commonwealth Government have both signed the agreement.

Minister for Small Business means the Australian Government Minister who has portfolio responsibility for small business.

Programme Delegate means an employee of the Commonwealth who has been empowered by the Minister for Small Business, or who is otherwise duly authorised, to carry out the relevant function in respect of the Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme.

Project for the purposes of this application is defined as the activities proposed to be undertaken with the Programme funding, if the application is successful.

Registered Business Organisation is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation that provides low cost services to small businesses to help them achieve productivity and/or competitiveness.

Small businesses unless otherwise stated are defined as businesses having less than 20 full time (or equivalent) employees:

- **An employee** can be defined as a person that a business directly engages, controls and pays a wage for their labour, who does not have a substantial management role in the day to day operations of the business.
- **Full time work** can be defined as those employees who usually work 35 hours or more per week. Businesses with a range of employment arrangements such as casuals and part-time workers, should calculate the number of hours worked by other than full time employees and divide that total by 35. For example 3 casual employees working 12 hours per week work a total of 36 hours per week. This equates to one full time employee.

Appendix B. Guidelines on eligible expenditure

To be considered an eligible expenditure for the grant, the expenditure must:

- be incurred by the recipient of the grant
- be a direct cost of the project
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines
- have occurred within the grant period.

How eligible expenditure is verified

If your application is successful, you will be asked to reconfirm the project budget that you provided in your application when negotiating your funding agreement.

If requested, you may need to provide evidence of expenditure along with your progress or final reports. Evidence could include quotes, invoices, purchase orders or contracts with consultants, bank account statements, details of all employees working on the project, including name, title, function, time spent on the project and salary.

You must also keep records of all eligible expenditure, and must be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project and its activities. At any time, you may be asked to provide records of your paid expenditure. If these records are not provided when requested, the expense may not be accepted as eligible expenditure.

At the end of the project, you will be required to provide statutory declaration regarding the expenditure of the grant funds and any interest earned on them.

Labour expenditure

Eligible labour expenditure for the grant covers the direct labour costs of employees who are working on the agreed project. A person is considered an employee when they are paid a regular salary or wage, out of which regular tax instalment deductions are made.

Eligible salary costs are incurred only when an employee is working directly on agreed project activities during the agreed project period.

Estimated salary costs for applicant organisation staff working on the project must be calculated using the formula below:

$$\text{Estimated salary costs} = \text{Annual salary package} \times \frac{\text{Weeks spent on project in a year}}{52 \text{ weeks}} \times \frac{\text{percentage of time spent on project in a week}}{\text{week}} \times 3 \text{ years}$$

Example

Tim, a business advisor, is paid a total annual salary package of \$50,000. Tim is estimated to spend 14 weeks working on the project in a year. During this time, Tim is estimated to work on eligible project activities 60 per cent of the time. The remaining 40 per cent of Tim's time will be spent on other non-project activities. Therefore estimated salary expenditure for Tim over the course of the project is calculated as follows:

$$\$50,000 \times 14/52 \times 0.60 \times 3 = \$24,228$$

Labour costs cannot be based on an estimation of the employee's worth. If no money has been exchanged (either by cash or bank transactions) we will not consider the cost eligible.

Evidence you **may** 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, time sheets, pay slips and employment contracts.

Contract/consultant 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 who is engaged under a separate contract (that is a consultant).

All contractor/consultant project work must have a written contract prior to the work being started, for example, a formal agreement, letter or purchase order which specifies:

- the nature of the work to be performed
- the applicable fees, charges and other costs payable.

Invoices from contractors/consultants must contain:

- a detailed description of the nature of the work
- the hours and hourly rates involved.

Invoices must directly relate to the agreed project, and the work must qualify as an eligible expense as if it had been claimed directly (that is without engaging a contractor/consultant). The costs must also be reasonable and appropriate for the activities performed.

Evidence that may be required to be provided by services providers as part of progress reports may include:

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

You may be required to obtain and provide a contractor/consultant's records of its costs of doing project work. If such records are not provided when requested, the relevant contract expense may not be accepted as eligible expenditure.

Other eligible expenditure

Operational, minor infrastructure and/or other costs or expenses directly involved in the delivery of the project up to **5%** of the value of the total grant (GST exclusive) may be supported where justified.

Examples of particular items may be:

- payment of fees associated with formalising the partnership arrangements of a group of organisations submitting and partnership application
- administrative operational costs directly relating to the project
- purchase of minor infrastructure equipment relevant to the delivery of the project such as computers, laptops and phones

- branded Australian Small Business Advisory Services Programme collateral.
(Assets valued over \$2,000 must be specifically itemised in the budget.)

Activities to enhance the professional skills of the applicant organisation and the applicant's employees up to an additional **2%** of the value of the total grant (GST exclusive) may be supported.

Appendix C. Guidelines on ineligible expenditure

The table below lists a number of activities and costs that **will not** be supported by the Programme.

Activity / budget item	Reason for ineligibility
Major infrastructure costs	Funding will not support major infrastructure costs such as new buildings or renovations to buildings or vehicles.
Large scale network events	Funding will not support undertaking networking events and/or workshops for more than ten (10) people per session. By limiting attendee numbers to 10 or less face-to-face assistance is maximised and a higher calibre of interaction is achieved.
Counselling services	Funding will not support counselling. There are already services supported by the Australian Government such as <i>BeyondBlue</i> , <i>Red Cross</i> and the <i>Salvation Army</i> . Participants requiring counselling should be referred to these or similar organisations.
Technical and vocational training	Funding will not support providing technical or vocational training to participating enterprising people in relation to the conduct of their business activity.
Activities involving school students	Funding will not support activities providing vocational training, or any form of formal education for people still attending an educational institution.
Research activities and feasibility studies	Funding will not support applications that involve the conduct of research or feasibility studies.
The production of study guides or reports	Funding will not support applications which relate only to the development and publication of study guides, manuals, instructional videos/web content and/or reports or information kits. However, this does not preclude the production of publications designed to support the delivery of the project/services.
Participation at other conferences/seminars	Funding will not provide assistance for participating enterprising people or groups of participating enterprising people to attend conferences or seminars being run independently of the project covered by the funding, either in Australia or overseas. However, this does not preclude the running of project activities in conjunction with a conference or seminar in the organisation's area.
Overseas travel	Funding will not support any requests for overseas travel.
Membership fees	Funding will not support any request for payment of membership fees for the applicant organisation to any other organisation or body.