



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science

Business

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Customer Information Guide

Entrepreneurs' Programme - Business Evaluation

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Contents

1 Purpose of this guide	4
2 Programme overview	4
2.1 Business Management overview	4
3 Business Evaluations	5
3.1 Who can apply for a Business Evaluation?	5
3.2 How to apply for a Business Evaluation	6
3.3 How your application will be assessed	7
3.4 If your application is successful	7
3.5 If your application is unsuccessful	7
4 Business Growth Grant	7
5 Other things you should know	7
5.1 Conflicts of interest	7
5.2 How we manage conflicts of interest	8
5.3 Use and disclosure of information	8
5.4 Protection of information	8
5.5 Confidential and Personal information.....	9
5.6 When we may reveal or use Confidential and Personal Information.....	9
5.7 Disclosure of information where authorised or required by law.....	9
5.8 Protection of information by Business Advisers and Business Facilitators	10
5.9 Freedom of information.....	10
5.10 Information storage.....	10
6 Public announcement	10
7 Feedback	11
Appendix A. Definition of Sectors	12
Appendix B. Glossary	13

Disclaimer

Business Management services are undertaken by Business Advisers and Facilitators employed by Industry Partners. Using the information you supply, the Adviser or Facilitator will make recommendations to you to improve your business. If you're eligible, your business may choose to address these areas with the assistance of a Business Growth Grant.

Business Management relies upon information you provide and may include the views of other parties in providing this service. As such, the Commonwealth, its Contractors and their Specified Personnel are unable to guarantee the accuracy, completeness and relevance of services for your purposes. You should therefore satisfy yourself that the Business Management Service is appropriate for your business needs before taking any action.

The Commonwealth, its Contractors and their Specified Personnel excludes all liability to the maximum extent permitted by law for any loss, damage, cost or expense suffered or incurred arising from the use of, or reliance upon, Business Management or any actions taken by your business in addressing issues or implementing recommendations identified as part of Business Management activities, complementary services or otherwise provided separately by a Business Adviser or Facilitator.

1 Purpose of this guide

This Customer Information Guide (the Guide) explains the Business Evaluation element of the Entrepreneurs' Programme and sets out the rules for receiving services and grants under this element.

You should read this Guide in conjunction with the Programme Guidelines and any related documents. Please read this Guide carefully before you start filling out an application form.

Definitions for italicised terms can be found in the [Glossary](#) and are consistent with those in the Programme Guidelines.

2 Programme overview

The Entrepreneurs' Programme objective is to drive business growth and competitiveness by supporting business improvement and innovation connections in targeted Growth Sectors and the commercialisation of novel products, processes and services. The Programme has three elements:

- Business Management
- Research Connections
- Accelerating Commercialisation.

The primary focus of the Programme is on providing access to the best advice and networks to help businesses solve problems, rather than focusing on financial assistance.

2.1 Business Management overview

Business Management encourages and assists small and medium businesses to improve their capabilities, extend their networks and take advantage of growth opportunities.

Applicants may apply for one or more of the following Business Management Activities:

- **Business Evaluations** – a range of Services initially comprising an evaluation by a Business Adviser to tailor the Service to the participants needs, based on the participant's capacity, commitment and need to undertake significant improvements.
- **Growth Services** – a range of Services that support a participant, over an extended engagement, to achieve growth through strategic business improvements and connections. A Business Adviser conducts initial growth opportunity and capability analysis, develops a tailored and agreed Growth Plan, provides access to specialist Business Advisers and Business Facilitators, and brokers connections to experts and providers to assist the business to capitalise on its growth opportunities.
- **Supply Chain Facilitation** – a range of Services delivered to a participant to facilitate access to supply chain opportunities in the Growth Sectors. Participants may attend Customer Connections events or undertake a Supplier Improvement Plan to improve their capability in meeting supply requirements.
- **Business Growth Grants** – small, co funded grants to engage external expertise to assist businesses with implementing improvements recommended through a Business Evaluation, Supply Chain Facilitation or a Business Growth Service.
- For further information on Business Management Activities refer to business.gov.au or call the contact centre on 13 28 46.

3 Business Evaluations

A Business Evaluation is an analysis of the eligible business carried out on-site by skilled and experienced Business Advisers. As a result of the service the business may receive one or more of the following:

- business improvement advice and referrals;
- a detailed analysis of the business by a Business Adviser and recommendations for improvement presented in a Business Evaluation Action Plan; and
- support for implementation of the Business Evaluation Action Plan with the assistance of a Business Adviser.

A Business Evaluation is a facilitated service provided at no direct cost to your business.

A skilled and experienced Business Adviser will:

- come to your business premises to gather information about your business;
- undertake further research and analyse the information off-site; and
- based on findings and analysis, prepare a tailored Business Evaluation Action Plan outlining the ways your business can improve its skills, become more competitive, and take advantage of growth opportunities.

Please note that the extent of the engagement may vary proportionately to the size and complexity of your business. To receive a Business Evaluation Action Plan the applicant will need to demonstrate its capacity, commitment and need for the full evaluation engagement.

When you are ready to implement the recommended improvements, the Business Adviser will coach and mentor you over a twelve month period from the delivery of the final Business Evaluation Action Plan to prioritise and implement the recommendations contained in it. Each stage of the Business Evaluation Action Plan will depend on the resources available to help implement each improvement.

3.1 Who can apply for a Business Evaluation?

To be eligible for a Business Evaluation, applicants must meet each of the following eligibility criteria:

- be a business incorporated in Australia under the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*, 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.
- satisfy one of the following:
 - be operating in one or more of the Growth Sectors detailed in Appendix A:
 - Advanced Manufacturing;
 - Food and Agribusiness;
 - Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals;
 - Mining Equipment, Technology and Services; and
 - Oil, Gas and Energy Resources;
 - demonstrate they are committed to, and have the skills, capability, intellectual property or expertise to operate in, one or more of the Growth Sectors in the future; or
 - provide Enabling Technologies and Services to one or more of the Growth Sectors; or

- be a Tourism business in Northern Australia.
- have an annual turnover or operating expenditure within the current financial year, 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* or *Northern Australia*; and
- be solvent;
- have operated in Australia and filed business activity statements showing ongoing trading in at least three consecutive years.

Applicants may still be eligible if their business structure, ownership or Australian Company Number has changed within the three consecutive year period. In this case, the applicant would need to satisfy the Programme Delegate, an employee of the Department who has been authorised by the Minister to administer the Programme, that the business activity statements are for the same business. This could include proving evidence that, during this period, the business:

- carried out essentially the same business activities
- had essentially the same management staff
- was operating from the same locations
- was using essentially the same assets in deriving its revenue.
- not be named by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency as an organisation that has not complied with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)*.
- not have previously received a Business Evaluation Report, Business Evaluation Action Plan or a Business Review Report in the last five years.

You are **not** eligible to apply if you are:

- an individual
- a partnership
- a trust (however, an incorporated trustee that meets the trading activity requirements above may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a Commonwealth, State or Local Government agency or body (including government business enterprises)
- listed on the current Workplace Gender Equality Agency [list of non-compliant organisations](#).

3.2 How to apply for a Business Evaluation

To apply for a Business Evaluation, you must complete the online Business Evaluation Application Form at business.gov.au.

You can apply for a Business Evaluation at any time during the life of the Programme.

The application must be completed by an authorised representative of your business, such as your business's:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Director
- Chair of the Board
- President
- Authorised manager.

Applications that are deemed to be for a business or project that is substantially the same as a previously ineligible or unsuccessful application may be rejected.

3.3 How your application will be assessed

The Programme Delegate will decide if an application is eligible under the Programme Guidelines. Subject to available funding, applicants that meet all the eligibility criteria will be approved by the Programme Delegate.

You will be contacted by email with a response within four working days of submitting a complete application.

Where appropriate and where your business meets the eligibility criteria, you may be recommended to receive an alternative Entrepreneurs' Programme service. In this case, you may not have to submit a separate application form.

3.4 If your application is successful

When your application is approved, you will be assigned a Business Adviser who will work with you to complete your Business Evaluation.

The Business Adviser will contact you to arrange a time to start the service.

The Business Evaluation should be completed within six months from date of approval. Your business should:

- provide access to the business information and key personnel that the Business Adviser needs to meet with to complete their analysis;
- work with the Business Adviser to develop the Business Evaluation Action Plan; and
- support the recommendations in the Business Evaluation Action Plan and implement as many as possible.

All Business Evaluations analyse key financial information for three full financial years, because this often provides a powerful insight into business performance. You will need to provide profit and loss statements and balance sheets. The financial statements must have enough accurate information for the Business Adviser to conduct detailed financial analysis.

3.5 If your application is unsuccessful

If you are not approved for a Business Evaluation you will receive notification outlining why your application was not successful.

4 Business Growth Grant

You may be eligible for a Business Growth Grant to fund activities directly related to the implementation of recommendations identified in your Business Evaluation Action Plan. A Business Growth Grant reimburses a participating business for up to half of the cost of engaging a consultant (up to a maximum of \$20,000). For further information, see the [Business Growth Grant Customer Information Guide](#) at business.gov.au

5 Other things you should know

5.1 Conflicts of interest

The Department maintains procedures for managing conflicts of interest for staff within the Department, technical experts and other third parties involved in the management, assessment and

evaluation of the Programme, applications and the delivery of activities. Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with these procedures. A conflict of interest can arise in situations where a person has an interest or relationship, whether real, perceived or potential, that conflicts with a duty they hold or where they have a role that conflicts with another role. For example, a conflict of interest can exist if there is a conflict between:

- a person's duties, roles and responsibilities under the Programme; and
- their private interests (where these interests could inappropriately influence the way they manage the Programme).

A real (or actual) conflict of interest exists when a person's private interests or their programme duties, roles and responsibilities **could** improperly influence how they manage, assess and evaluate the Programme.

An apparent (or perceived) conflict of interest exists where it **appears or is perceived** by a third party that someone's private interests or their Programme duties, roles and responsibilities could improperly influence how they manage, assess and evaluate the Programme, even if a real or actual conflict has not, or cannot, be established.

A potential conflict of interest exists when someone has a private interest and an actual conflict of interest **could** arise if they make any decisions related to the Programme.

5.2 How we manage conflicts of interest

The Department's procedures for managing conflicts of interests by its employees are in accordance with the requirements of the APS Code of Conduct (section 13(7) of the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*), the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*. Our conflict of interest policy is published on the Department's [website](#).

Industry Partners, Business Advisers and Business Facilitators must identify to the Department any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest they believe will or may arise during the delivery of the Programme and, where a conflict is identified, specify how that conflict will be addressed and monitored to ensure it does not compromise the outcomes desired of the Programme.

If the Minister cannot make a decision under the programme without a conflict of interest arising, the Parliamentary Secretary will become the final decision maker.

5.3 Use and disclosure of information

Unless the information provided to the Department is Personal Information or Confidential Information the Department may disclose the information to any person for any purpose directly related to the activities and functions of the Australian Government, including but not limited to the purpose of:

- announcing the awarding of grants (where applicable)
- improving the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of this or other Commonwealth programmes
- conducting research within the Department or another Commonwealth agency.

5.4 Protection of information

The use and disclosure of information provided to the Department and Business Advisers is regulated by the relevant provisions and penalties of the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*, the *Public Service Regulations*, the *Archives Act 1983 (Cth)*, the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)*, the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)* and general law.

5.5 Confidential and Personal information

The Department will treat your information as 'Confidential Information' if the information is clearly identified as confidential and the information has the necessary quality of confidence (that is, it must be significant information which is private and not already in the public domain).

Information that is, or becomes public knowledge (other than by breach of any confidentiality obligation) will not be considered to be Confidential Information.

The Department is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (**APPs**) outlined in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. The APPs regulate how the Department may collect, use, disclose and store Personal Information.

'Personal Information' under the *Privacy Act 1988* means information or an opinion (whether true or false) about a natural person who is reasonably identifiable.

Please read our [Privacy Policy](#) on the Department's website for more information on:

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

5.6 When we may reveal or use Confidential and Personal Information

Unless the Department obtains your consent, the Department will not disclose your Confidential or Personal Information other than to:

- the Minister, the Parliamentary Secretary, and their Office
- other Commonwealth Ministers
- Industry Growth Centres
- Industry Partners, Business Advisers, Business Facilitators, Research Facilitators and Commercialisation Advisers
- other Commonwealth, State or Territory government departments and agencies
- technical, financial, economic, and/or industry experts (including auditors)
- Departmental contractors

for the purposes of:

- administering the Programme and any related purposes, including programme and policy evaluation and development
- Departmental research, analysis, monitoring and evaluation
- reporting and consultation with other Commonwealth, State or Territory government agencies
- reviewing applications to provide technical or financial advice on a contract basis
- referring you to Industry Growth Centres
- sectoral analysis by Industry Growth Centres

5.7 Disclosure of information where authorised or required by law

From time to time the Department may be authorised or required by law to disclose information (including Personal Information and Confidential Information) to other persons, including but not limited to:

- a Commonwealth Minister and Ministerial Office
- a House or a Committee of the Parliament of Australia

- the Auditor-General under the *Auditor-General Act 1997 (Cth)*
- the Australian Information Commissioner under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)* (FOI Act)
- the Commonwealth Ombudsman under the *Ombudsman Act 1976 (Cth)*
- the Privacy Commissioner under the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.

5.8 Protection of information by Business Advisers and Facilitators

Business Advisers and Facilitators are employed by Industry Partners and are not employees or agents of the Commonwealth. However, Industry Partners are bound by agreements with the Commonwealth that require the Industry Partners to:

- keep (and ensure Business Advisers and Facilitators keep) your Confidential or Personal Information confidential
- not disclose (and ensure Business Advisers and Facilitators do not disclose) Confidential or Personal Information to any parties other than the Commonwealth, as required by law or as strictly necessary in connection with legal proceedings, or with your consent
- not do any act or engage in any practice that would breach an APP and comply with the APPs as if it were an 'agency' under the Privacy Act 1988
- use Personal and Confidential Information provided by the Department only for the purposes of performing its obligations under the agreement with the Commonwealth (and to ensure Business Advisers and Facilitators do the same).

5.9 Freedom of information

All documents created or held by the Department in relation to the Programme are subject to the FOI Act. Unless information is exempt, it will be made available to the general public if requested under the FOI Act. The Department will consult with you before any documents are released under the FOI Act.

All Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are to be referred to the [FOI Coordinator](#) in the Department. Decisions regarding requests for access will be made by an authorised officer in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

5.10 Information storage

Any information obtained will be stored and held in accordance with the Department's obligations under the *Archives Act 1983*.

6 Public announcement

Successful projects may be publicly announced by the Minister and/or Department and details of the announcement may include:

- the name of your business
- the title of the project
- description of the project and its objectives
- the amount of grant funding awarded (where applicable).

Details of successful projects will also be published on the [Department of Industry, Innovation and Science](#)¹ website.

7 Feedback

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

If you have a complaint, call the contact centre on 13 28 46 or contact us at business.gov.au. Your complaint will be referred to the appropriate manager.

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

Head of Division
AusIndustry – Innovation Programmes
GPO Box 9839
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)² with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

¹ <http://www.industry.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

² <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

Appendix A. Definition of Sectors

For the purposes of the Entrepreneurs' Programme, a business will satisfy the sectoral eligibility criteria where it can demonstrate it:

- is operating in one of the five growth sectors or provides enabling technologies, inputs or services to one of the five growth sectors as defined below; or
- is committed to, and has the skills, capability, intellectual property or expertise to operate in, one or more of the five growth sectors in the future.

Sector	Description
Advanced Manufacturing	<p>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.</p> <p>Businesses that supply integral services, technologies or inputs to the manufacturing processes of businesses described above.</p>
Food and Agribusiness	<p>Businesses that undertake food or beverage production, or supply integral services or technologies to support food or beverage production.</p> <p>Businesses that provide integral services, technologies or inputs to support primary production of food and beverages.</p> <p>This definition excludes businesses that are food retailers (including restaurants and cafes) or primary producers, except where they can demonstrate they also substantially undertake the above activities.</p>
Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals	<p>Businesses that develop or produce therapeutic, medical or pharmaceutical products or technologies, including complementary medicines.</p> <p>Businesses that provide integral services, technologies or inputs to the development and production of therapeutic, medical or pharmaceutical products or technologies.</p> <p>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.</p>
Mining Equipment, Technology and Services	<p>Businesses in mineral exploration, extraction and mining supply chains, including businesses that provide integral services, technologies and equipment for mining and minerals extraction.</p>
Oil, Gas and	<p>Businesses engaged in the exploration, development and extraction</p>

Sector	Description
Energy Resources	<p>of energy and fuels from oil, gas, coal and uranium.</p> <p>Businesses that provide integral services, technologies and equipment for use in oil, gas and energy resource sectors.</p>
Enabling Technologies and Services	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Outside of these key enabling technologies and sectors, this definition 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.</p>
Tourism Businesses in Northern Australia	<p>Businesses must be located and/or have significant operations in <i>Northern Australia</i>.</p> <p>Businesses need to derive a significant portion of their revenue from visitors, and operate in tourism-related industries, including accommodation; cafes, restaurants and take away food services; clubs, pubs, taverns and bars; passenger transport; tour operator services; cultural services; sports and recreation services; and retail trade. However this does not include intermediaries that resell tickets or vouchers for tourism-related products and service.</p>

Appendix B. Glossary

The following definitions apply for the purpose of interpreting the *Programme Guidelines*. They are not intended to be a substitute for the defined terms in any *Services Agreement* or *Funding Agreement*.

Term	Definition
<i>AusIndustry</i>	The Department, through AusIndustry, delivers the single business service which includes one website (business.gov.au), one contact centre (13 28 46) and one national network of highly qualified staff that both deliver Australian Government programmes and provide expert support.
<i>Northern Australia</i>	All of the Northern Territory and those parts of Western Australia and Queensland above the Tropic of Capricorn. As defined in the <i>Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia</i> , July 2015.

Term	Definition
<i>Remote Australia</i>	As defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness Classification 2006, see the ABS Remoteness Structure for more information. This includes a map of Australia that illustrates 'Very Remote Australia', 'Remote Australia', 'Outer Regional Australia', 'Inner Regional Australia' and Major Cities of Australia. It also has a link to DoctorConnect.gov.au where an address or city can be searched for on a map that visualises where the place is located in accordance with the spectrum.