

Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant – Round 2

Guidelines

The guidelines contain essential information on the purpose of the second round of the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant including eligibility, how to apply and your obligations as an applicant. You must read these guidelines before completing an application.

Overview

Small businesses are vital to Queensland's economy through their contribution to the prosperity of the regions and job creation, which in turn fosters more sustainable communities. They represent around 97 per cent of all businesses and employ over 970,000 people, or 45 per cent of the private sector workforce in Queensland. As a result, any economic downturn will have a significant impact on the labour market and local communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having significant impacts on the ongoing viability of Queensland small businesses, including income, activity and supply chains.

In response, the Queensland Government has announced a **Worker Assistance Package** that aims to assist employees and businesses who have lost their jobs or income as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A key part of the *Worker Assistance Package* is the **Small Business Adaption Grant Program** (the Program), which will assist small businesses in Queensland with a payroll less than \$1.3 million who have been forced into hibernation, or those who have experienced a significant structural adjustment or forced re-pivoting of their business operations as a result of the pandemic.

The Program will be administered by the Queensland Government.

About the program

The objective of the Program is to support small businesses subject to closure or highly impacted by the COVID-19 shutdown restrictions to adapt and sustain their operations, and build resilience.

The Program aims to see small and micro businesses:

- prepare for the safe resumption of trading in the post COVID-19 recovery;
- continue to meet operating costs;
- access digital technologies to rebuild business operations and transition to a new way of doing business;
- respond to online opportunities, where possible, to sustain employment and maintain potential for longer-term growth;
- upskill and reskill business owners and staff to benefit from new technologies or business models;
- embrace business diversification to adapt and sustain operations; and
- create or retain employment.



Regional and SEQ funding is available

The Program is available to eligible businesses throughout Queensland. However, total funding for the Program is equally divided between Regional Queensland and South East Queensland.

Your location under this program is based on your principal place of business.

South East Queensland is defined as the following 12 local government areas:

- Brisbane
- Ipswich
- Gold Coast
- Lockyer Valley
- Logan
- Moreton Bay
- Noosa
- Redlands
- Scenic Rim
- Somerset
- Sunshine Coast
- Toowoomba

Regional Queensland is defined as all other local government areas within Queensland.

How much can you apply for and what can it be used for?

The available grant amount is from a minimum of \$2,000 up to a maximum of \$10,000 per eligible small or micro business.

Grant funds can be used towards the following activities (provided by a business unrelated to the applicant):

- financial, legal or other professional advice to support business sustainability and diversification;
- continuing to meet business operational costs including: utilities, council rates, rent, telecommunication charges, insurance fees, licensing fees or franchise fees.
- strategic planning, financial counselling or business coaching aligned to business sustainability and diversification;
- building the business through marketing and communications activities, such as content development (web pages, mobile apps, visual and audio media etc.);
- digital/technological strategy development;
- digital training or re-training and up-skilling employees to adapt to new business models;
- capital costs associated with meeting COVID-19 safety requirements; and
- specialised digital equipment or business specific software to move business operations online (e.g. logistics program for online ordering).

Please note that grant funds can be used towards any of the above activities occurring from **23 March 2020 onwards**, keeping in mind that the project must be completed within a maximum of six months from the date of approval.

Applicant small and micro businesses must meet the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered.

Who can apply?

All small businesses and micro businesses registered and operating in Queensland can apply, as well as those small businesses and micro businesses who may be operating outside of Queensland but have a Queensland headquarters.

What are the eligibility criteria?

To be eligible for this grant, the small or micro business must:

- have been subject to closure or otherwise highly impacted by the shutdown restrictions [announced by Queensland's Chief Health Officer on 23 March 2020](#);
- demonstrate that business revenue has experienced a significant decline since 23 March 2020 over a minimum one-month period due to the onset and management of COVID 19;
- employ staff and have fewer than 20 employees at the time of applying for the grant (these employees should be in addition to the business owners and be employed on the business's payroll);
- have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) active as at 23 March 2020;
- be registered for GST;
- have a Queensland headquarters;
- have an annual turnover over \$75,000 for the 2018-19 or 2019-20 financial year or provide financial records that indicate that this will be met for recently started small businesses;
- have a payroll of less than \$1.3 million; and
- not be insolvent or have owners/directors that are an undischarged bankrupt.

Only one application per round will be accepted from an individual ABN or a financial beneficiary of a business.

Only one approved grant per small or micro business is available across all funding rounds under the program.

Refer to the frequently asked questions document for any supplementary information regarding eligibility.

What won't be funded?

There are a range of activities that will not be funded under this program:

- applications with a total cost less than \$2,000 – all your proposed activities or quotes and invoices must be eligible and total to \$2,000 or more;
- business costs otherwise supported by other Queensland and Commonwealth Government financial assistance measures;
- salaries or wage expenses for your employees including superannuation or WorkCover;
- services delivered in-kind (grant funding will only cover services paid for via a financial transaction);
- purchase of business assets such as stock or fleet vehicles/machinery;
- fees for services and/or goods provided by related parties (such as companies with common shareholdings or directorship with the applicant, and employees or immediate family of the applicant);

- direct-selling businesses (where sales of another business' goods or services are made in the customer's home, work or other meeting place through methods such as party plan and network marketing); and
- goods or services purchased, or any payments made, prior to 23 March 2020.

All invoices or quotes from suppliers will be checked to determine if they are genuine e.g. supplier has as active ABN and the invoices or quotes have not been altered in any way.

When and how can you apply?

When the second funding round opens on 1 July 2020, you will be able to lodge an application online at: www.business.qld.gov.au/adaption-grant. All applications must be submitted electronically – physical applications will not be accepted by any office or by post.

The second funding round may only be open for a short period due to demand and will be closed once the funding allocation is anticipated to be exhausted based on the number of applications received. Regional Queensland and South East Queensland will have independent funding allocations and may close at different times.

An applicant must only submit the applicant's own original answers. Applications that are found to have been derived from a third party will be considered invalid. An applicant who does not properly comply with the application process will be ineligible to receive the grant or receive funding under other small business programs run by the Queensland Government.

Please note that your submitted application is final and you will not have an opportunity to provide further evidence and supporting documents. It is important to ensure applications are complete (including all evidence and supporting documents) when submitted.

Where incomplete evidence of eligibility is provided, this will result in the application being rejected. For eligible applications, funding amounts may be reduced where the quote/invoice/receipt attached cannot be assessed or does not meet program guidelines. If funding is reduced below the \$2000 minimum funding amount, these applications will be rejected.

What should you include in your application?

Your application **must** include:

- a statement describing how the funding will contribute to your small business during the COVID-19 crisis in terms of employment retention or outcomes, business capability and resilience, continuity (including the ability to continue to meet operating expenses), diversification, and/or digital capability of the business;
- evidence to demonstrate that business revenue has experienced a minimum 30 per cent decline since 23 March 2020 over a minimum one-month period due to the onset and management of COVID-19 (e.g. BAS statement, ATO records, dated accountant letter on letterhead from a member of CPA Australia, Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand or the Institute of Public Accountants);
- invoice and/or receipt of purchase if related to the purchase of specialised digital equipment or business specific software on or after 23 March 2020;
- invoices and/or receipts as evidence of operating expenses;
- quotes for services related to the project;
- declaration of employee head count;
- evidence of annual turnover; and
- evidence of annual payroll.

How will applications be assessed?

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, applications will be assessed against:

- funding availability – applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis, and therefore not all applications will be successful;
- submission of a complete application form, with all requested supporting documentation included; and
- value for money, as determined by the Queensland Government.

A final decision will be made based on the assessment criteria and the information contained within the submitted application. Failure to submit all required documents will result in your application being rejected.

The Program Terms and Conditions allow the Queensland Government to validate and check the authenticity of applications and the applicant's details at any time. Applicants who are awarded the grant must refund the grant to the Queensland Government if the grant is subsequently found to be based on an invalid application.

What's the process?

A. Online application

Applicants are required to complete an application form online and attach the required documentation as outlined in the *What Should You Include in Your Application* section.

B. Eligibility check

All applications will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria to determine compliant applications.

C. Assessment

Compliant applications will be assessed to determine the amount of funding allocated to the applicant. The delegate will then consider the applications and approve applications against the available funding.

D. Applicants notified of outcome

All applicants will receive formal notification of the outcome of the application as soon as possible following assessments. Successful applicants will receive an approval letter advising the application has been approved. The letter will also reiterate the terms and conditions of funding.

Applicants must not pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation the funding has been approved, notwithstanding the allowance of retrospective payments from 23 March 2020.

After approval, successful applicants will receive 100 per cent of the eligible funding amount approved as an up-front payment.

E. Acquittal

Applicants will have six months to complete their projects after receiving approval for the funding and must acquit the total amount of funding received. Applicants must complete and submit an acquittal report with copies of supplier and proof of purchase invoices for the total project cost.

The acquittal form is a simple online document providing information on the success and outcomes of the project to date, the activities undertaken and the learnings.

Businesses will be surveyed six months after the completion of the Program.

Other Conditions

Applications received, including material and supporting documents accompanying the applications, shall not be returned to the applicant. Please keep copies of any documents that you may need for other purposes.

The Program guidelines may be changed, cancelled or the application process varied at any time without consultation.

The Queensland Government reserves the right not to allocate the total amount of funding available for the Program if there are insufficient eligible applications. Likewise, the funding available can be closed at any time if the funding allocation is exhausted.

All successful applicants will be required to form a grant funding agreement. The grant funding agreement will be formed in accordance with the Program Terms and Conditions. The grant funding agreement will set out the payment and program terms and conditions, and a warranty from the successful applicant regarding the accuracy of the material and statements submitted as part of that application.

Applicants will be subject to future audits by the Queensland Government (or its representatives) and will be required to produce evidence at the request of the Queensland Government.

If it is found that false or misleading information has been provided in the application process or in the supporting documentation, or grants are not used in accordance with the terms of funding as outlined in these guidelines and in the Program Terms and Conditions, further action may be taken, including asking for a refund of some or all of the grant funding or pursue other options, including legal recourse.

Appeals

Small and micro businesses may request a review of a decision made by the Queensland Government in relation to the provision of funding or a declined application under the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant program.

Small and micro businesses will be notified in writing of the appeal outcomes within 30 business days from receipt of the appeal.

Application timeframes

The tables below summarise the important dates and timeframes in the application process.

Dates	
1 July 2020	Second funding round applications open
	Applications close when funds have been estimated to be exhausted

Key Timing

An approval letter will be issued to successful applicants once applications have been assessed and approved.

On approval, the approved grant amount will be paid directly to the applicant's business bank account.

Successful applicants have six months to complete the project after approval letter being issued.

NOTE: Grant applications will be processed in order of receipt and grant funding will be endeavoured to be paid within 2 weeks of issuing an approval letter. Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of payment for 100% of all products and services purchased as part of this grant.

Contact us

For more information about the grants or advice on your application, please contact the **Small Business Hotline** on **1300 654 687** or email adapt@desbt.qld.gov.au

Additional information for businesses

Please refer to our Frequently Asked Questions section on the Business Queensland website at <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/adaption-grant>

Support available in response to COVID-19

The Queensland Government has developed a number of responses aimed at businesses affected by COVID-19. Current Queensland and Australian Government support information is included on the Business Queensland website www.business.qld.gov.au and the DESBT website www.desbt.qld.gov.au.

Please note that all of the latest updates are available on the [Business Queensland](http://www.business.qld.gov.au) website and it is suggested that you regularly visit this site to stay in touch with the most up to date information. You can also follow Business Queensland on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) for further updates

DESBT is here to listen and support where we can. We will help you navigate through all the available information.

You can also contact the **Small Business Hotline 1300 654 687** to discuss your situation and options available or emailing the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training at grants@desbt.qld.gov.au.

Policy Owner:	Deputy Director-General, Investment Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
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Privacy Statement

The Queensland Government manages personal information in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Your personal information will not otherwise be used or disclosed unless authorised or required by law.

The Queensland Government is collecting your personal information to assess and coordinate grants in relation to the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant Program.

The Queensland Government, its officers, employees, agents and subcontractors may use and disclose any of the information provided within the application to third parties including Queensland government departments and agencies; Commonwealth government departments and agencies; other state or territory government departments and agencies and non- government organisations for purposes associated with administration of the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant Program.

Information relating to successful grant applicants may also be the subject of disclosure such as media releases as otherwise provided in the approval letter, the terms and conditions in the application, and the terms and conditions in these guidelines.

The Queensland Government or the Minister responsible for the Small Business portfolio may publish information relating to grant recipients such as business name, funding amount and suburb/postcode on government websites and other details in the course of publicising the outcomes of the grants program which may include details of outcomes achieved from the recipient's grant. Information may be disclosed to third parties for promotion and research purposes

The Queensland Government will only use your information for these purposes. Your personal information will be handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 and will not otherwise be used or disclosed unless authorised or required by law.

The Queensland Government's privacy guide in relation to the treatment of information collected may be viewed at www.qld.gov.au/legal/privacy.

Disclaimer

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