

Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant

Frequently Asked Questions

The frequently asked questions contain key information regarding the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program and should be read in conjunction with the program [funding guidelines](#). This program is administered by the Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

Why has the Queensland Government launched this program?

The Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program is a key action under focus area one of *Paving the Way – the First Nations Training Strategy*. *Paving the Way* is the Queensland Government's plan to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' skills development and respond to local and community employment needs.

Up to \$7 million will be available under the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program until 30 June 2025 to fund Indigenous designed and led projects that support or respond to local training and workforce needs.

The Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program recognises that skills and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be more successful when solutions are designed and developed locally and supported by the community.

The program aims to create training and employment pathways for up to 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to increase their likelihood of greater economic and social participation.

Am I eligible to apply for a grant?

DESBT is looking to fund Indigenous organisations to deliver place-based projects that have a focus on assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into employment while addressing a local training or workforce concern for the community. The intent of this program is not to provide direct funding to individual Indigenous businesses to assist with expenses relating to core business activity such as operating costs, recruitment costs, staff attraction, wages, staff training and business development within your own organisation.

Applications from the following entities are not eligible to apply:

- Indigenous businesses registered as individual/sole trader
- Indigenous businesses registered as partnerships

Applicant organisations eligible for funding must be an Indigenous organisation and:

- located in Queensland
- have an ABN and be registered for GST
- be an incorporated association or a public company or a council
- have past experience delivering employment, training and/or workforce development services
- can provide company constitution, charitable constitution or governance documentation
- 50% of the board of directors identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Examples of eligible organisations can include:

- Indigenous councils, corporations and Institutes
- Indigenous community groups and neighbourhood centres
- Indigenous social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations
- Indigenous organisations who are the only workforce or service provider in remote or discrete communities
- Indigenous groups such as chambers of commerce
- Indigenous businesses who focus on improving training and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For this program, other Indigenous business types not listed above and those registered as sole traders or partnerships are not eligible to apply.

Applicant organisations must be able to demonstrate they have a strong local presence, including well-established community and employer relationships.

Partnership arrangements between eligible organisations are strongly encouraged as there may be benefits by connecting and collaborating to generate effective solutions.

Do I have to be located in Queensland?

Yes. The applicant organisation must be located in Queensland (i.e. have a Queensland headquarters or main business location in Queensland).

Applicant organisations are expected to have a strong local presence including well-established community relationships across diverse cultural groups and linkages with employers.

Do I need to be registered for GST?

Yes. The applicant organisation have an ABN and be registered for GST at the time of application to be eligible for funding under this program.

Applicant organisations must also be able to provide audited financial statements for the past two years.

Who can be supported?

The program specifically targets Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are seeking local training and employment opportunities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may also be indirectly assisted with local Indigenous and non-Indigenous employers being supported to create culturally safe and responsive workplaces.

Applicant organisations must be able to demonstrate proven experience and success in assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into employment.

Eligible participants will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are:

- living in Queensland
- 15 years or older and no longer enrolled in school.

How much funding is available under the program?

Funding is available up to a maximum of \$250,000 per project, for 12 months of delivery.

Funding levels will be dependent on the location of project delivery, nature of the training and employment support to be provided, number of participants to be assisted and additional activities or specialist services.

It is expected that grants for applied research proposals and course development or product design proposals will be of lesser value.

What types of activities are funded under the program?

The Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program has a project-based delivery model and will fund Indigenous-led projects to address a training and skills challenge or opportunity, with a specific focus on activities that support job outcomes and improved economic participation and advantage.

It is expected local solutions and new approaches will be developed to support transitions from school to training or work; increase training completions; build local workforce capability; or ensure local non-Indigenous businesses have culturally safe workplaces.

Projects can include a mix of the following face-to-face services and activities:

Culturally safe training

- delivery of fit-for-purpose, regionally responsive and culturally safe training approaches that are adapting to changing job markets and skills needs
- development of training products to build cultural capability to transform workplace practices
- delivery of, or referrals to, nationally recognised training to gain skill sets or qualifications up to Advanced Diploma level
- delivery of 'soft' or 'essential' skills to promote job mobility so participants can thrive in any workplace
- delivery of foundation skills - language, literacy, numeracy, digital and employability skills.

Support services

- provision of wrap around support including meal programs, subsidised travel costs, interview outfits, driver licence assistance, case management etc
- delivery of integrated learner support including career advice, resume writing, job search techniques and job readiness skills
- provision of health and wellbeing support to build confidence
- assistance with formal identification such as birth certificates, Medicare cards, tax file numbers etc.

Connections with employers

- provision of ongoing career coaching and mentoring
- connection to local employers and/or peak industry bodies to advise on career options, workplace expectations and promote networking opportunities
- provision of work experience opportunities
- delivery of education sessions and workshops to increase cultural competency of local non-Indigenous employers to support employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers
- delivery of culturally customised business training to support self-employment and build business skills to start a small business.

Workforce planning and research

- development of workforce plans – identifying ways to address local workforce challenges and opportunities in remote areas
- delivery of action-based workforce planning initiatives such as flexible career and employment pathways
- applied research and/or course development and product design.

What can I spend the grant funding on?

Funds under the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program can only be spent on costs directly associated with the delivery of the project including:

- wages and on-costs for a project coordinator and other service delivery staff
- student co-contribution fees which may also cover training costs for approved qualifications and skill sets not funded on the Priority Skills List
- non-accredited training costs
- development of training resources and assessment materials
- administration costs such as rent, audit fees, accommodation, venue hire, telecommunications, office supplies, advertising, travel costs, vehicle hire/lease (organisations are able to apportion costs directly associated with project delivery).
- administration fees associated with the facilitation of work experience or work placement
- support costs such as learner driver training, subsidised travel, personal grooming, counselling services or participant meal programs
- specialist workshops and mentoring costs
- materials and equipment excluding capital equipment or assets
- overheads or operating costs (with the management fee not to exceed five per cent of total funds).

What can't I spend the grant funding on?

Projects will not be considered if funds are requested for the following activities and/or expenses (but not limited to):

- purchase of assets/capital equipment (i.e. IT equipment, building or vehicles)
- overseas and/or interstate travel, training or conferences for project staff
- business development within the organisation
- any recurrent costs such as established positions within the organisation or core functions of the organisation
- to pay allowances to participants for attending.

What's a PIPO?

Principal Indigenous Program Officers (PIPOs) are identified positions within DESBT. There is a regional network of PIPOs who are available for a yarn and to hear your project ideas.

When will applications open?

Applications for funding in 2024–25 under the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program opened on **Wednesday, 5 June 2024**.

Is it mandatory to submit a project proposal?

Although not mandatory, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a [Project Proposal](#) to DESBT for review and feedback by a local DESBT PIPO.

This helps with the development of applications prior to submitting a full application.

Where can I get an application form?

The application is an online form which is available via the Training and Skills Programs portal [here](#).

In addition to completing the online form, applicant organisations must also submit the following supporting documentation for the application to be considered complete:

- applicant organisation's audited income and expenditure statements for past two years
- project plan which provides an overview of all the support services, project activities and milestones
- quotes for any accredited or non-accredited training
- training and support plan template which must include strategies to address barriers to training and employment
- resumes/background information/position descriptions for staff involved in delivery of the project
- letters of support from local employers or industries
- letters of support from partnering organisations and referral agencies

Where do I submit my application?

All applications and supporting documentation must be submitted to DESBT via the online Training and Skills Programs portal [here](#).

Project Proposals, for review and feedback by local DESBT PIPOs can be submitted to iwsgd@desbt.qld.gov.au.

A draft Project Proposal can be submitted at any time however, keep in mind the closing dates of funding rounds to allow enough time for feedback.

When will applications close?

Applications for funding in 2024-25 under the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program must be submitted by **5pm (AEST) Thursday, 25 October 2024**. Incomplete applications and applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

The funding round will be open for 17 weeks, allowing extra time for organisations to develop their project proposals.

Note: DESBT may at its sole discretion decide to extend the closing date for applications.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications will be assessed against the published criteria on page five (5) of the funding guidelines. Applications determined as ineligible in accordance with the criteria will not progress.

Applicants should note that the list of assessment criteria is not necessarily exhaustive, and DESBT may also consider other criteria.

Grants will be awarded on merit to projects that demonstrate the best value for money and potential to deliver benefits and outcomes that address the priorities of the program.

How will I find out if I've been successful?

It is anticipated the assessment and approvals process will take up to two months. All applicants will be advised of the outcome in writing.

DESBT will advise applicants of any unforeseen delays.

How will grant funding be paid?

Successful applicants must enter into a formal Services Agreement with DESBT, which will include standard and non-standard key performance indicators.

Payments are GST inclusive. A first payment will be made once the Services Agreement has been executed, and no sooner than 30 days before start of the project.

Subsequent payments are made when all reporting requirements have been met, including acquitting what has already been spent from the first payment.

Monthly reports will be required throughout the life of the project.

Grant funds must be fully acquitted when the project has completed, and any unspent funds returned to DESBT.

Further information

For further information about the program, please refer to the Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant Funding Guidelines.

You can also call 1300 369 935 or email iwsdg@desbt.qld.gov.au.