

Social Enterprise Sector Development Grants

Funding Guidelines

Introduction

Skills are a core focus area of Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan and key investments include an additional \$200 million over four years for the Future Skills Fund.

The Future Skills Fund is comprised of a package of initiatives to support the skills and training needs of Queenslanders. It is intended to support the economic recovery and structural adjustment in response to COVID-19, focusing on reskilling and training in priority growth areas across the State.

The 2020-21 State Budget committed \$8 million over two years for the Social Enterprise Jobs Fund (SEJF), as part of the Future Skills Fund. The SEJF will continue to deliver on the Government's commitment under the Queensland Social Enterprise Strategy (QSES), released in September 2019, to support the growth and development of a thriving social enterprise sector.

As part of the SEJF, \$3 million is being delivered through development and growth grant programs to build the capability and capacity of the sector.

The Sector Development Grants program is administered by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

The aim of this grant is to fund projects that support the development and growth of the social enterprise ecosystem in Queensland.

As per *Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector (FASES) 2010/2016*, a social enterprise is defined as a business that:

- is led by an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit
- commercially trades (sells goods and/or services) to fulfil their mission and derives a substantial portion of their income from trade, and
- reinvests the majority of their profit/surplus into the fulfilment of their mission.

Who Can Apply

Eligible applicants for this grant are sector intermediary organisations or significant ecosystem developers with considerable experience and achievements in building the skills, capability and capacity of Queensland-based social enterprises.

Such intermediaries may include incubator and accelerator program providers, social entrepreneurs, social enterprise networks, research providers and academic institutions.

Individual social enterprises will be eligible to apply, but only where their primary role is to provide incubator or accelerator programs, or are active in ecosystem development.

This grant program will provide peer-to-peer opportunities to connect and collaborate on project proposals.

Applications representing partnership arrangements or consortia (with one organisation nominated as the lead 'applicant organisation' responsible for overall project management) are highly encouraged to minimise project duplication and maximise project reach, effectiveness and impact.

As the purpose of this grant program is to develop and strengthen Queensland's social enterprise ecosystem, DESBT will consider projects with an extended delivery timeframe (potentially up to 18 months) based on individual assessment of the project planning requirements, project scale and program of work to be delivered.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for this funding, applicant organisations must:

- be able to demonstrate significant experience and successful outcomes in delivering social enterprise development programs, coaching/mentoring, and/or other capacity building support to Queensland-based social enterprises
- be able to evidence strong collaborative partnerships, networks or relationships within Queensland's social enterprise sector (including

- with the peak body, the Queensland Social Enterprise Council)
- be able to show how their project proposal aligns with existing and/or planned social enterprise sector initiatives and programs within Queensland
- have an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- have operated for a minimum of two years in Queensland at the time of application
- not be insolvent or have owners/directors that are an undischarged bankrupt.

Who Cannot Apply

The following organisations are not eligible to apply:

- organisations/businesses not actively operating within Queensland's social enterprise sector
- government departments, agencies or bodies.

Program Funding

The Sector Development Grants program will fund projects that contribute to a more connected and enabled social enterprise ecosystem in Queensland.

Eligible activities and/or expenditure to support the project delivery may include:

- additional staff costs to deliver project services (e.g. new or extra roles to directly support project delivery)
- research and engagement costs
- educational resources or materials
- training or coaching programs to develop social enterprises
- travel, accommodation, and venue hire costs within Queensland.

Funds cannot be used for:

- the purchase of significant assets (e.g. buildings or vehicles)
- existing staff member salaries/wages
- interstate and overseas travel
- ongoing business operational and maintenance costs such as utilities (e.g. gas, water, electricity)
- any other recurrent costs such as established positions within the organisation
- services delivered in-kind
- retrospective payments for expenses incurred or for work undertaken, prior to funding approval

- fees for any activities or equipment provided by related parties (such as companies with common shareholdings or directorship with the applicant, and employees or immediate family of the applicant).

Funding must have a direct link to supporting the project delivery.

Funding from other sources must also be disclosed to DESBT. To avoid duplication, funding is not available for the same equipment, resources or services being funded through other initiatives or programs.

Any third-party contributions must be specified in the application to enable clear consideration of all funding, resources and in-kind support provided.

Outcomes

Funded organisations will be required to provide a final report detailing the outcomes achieved from the grant funding (which may include the development of an evidenced-based model or framework for sector development), and audited financial acquittal to verify project costs.

Level of funding

In 2021-22, \$1,000,000 will be made available for the Sector Development Grants.

Funding of between \$10,000 and \$200,000 (excluding GST) may be provided to support the delivery of approved project proposals including to purchase related equipment, resources and services.

Applicant organisations are only able to submit one project proposal i.e. only one application per individual ABN will be considered. Multiple delivery locations in the one application is permissible.

Application Process

The Sector Development Grants program is a limited life program and applications will be considered based on merit through a competitive funding round process.

The application, selection process and assessment criteria may be varied or discontinued by DESBT as required at any time and for any reason, in its sole discretion.

Without limitation, DESBT may in its sole discretion:

- apply such criteria and weightings as DESBT sees fit
- for applications considered ambiguous, erroneous or incomplete, refuse to consider the application or request further information from the applicant, as DESBT sees fit
- not accept any application.

DESBT may also decide to accept, suspend or not proceed with, or carry out itself, all or any part of the project proposals included within an application.

Organisations will be required to complete and submit the online application form and supporting documents by the closing deadline to be considered.

Incomplete applications and applications received after the published closing date will be ineligible for consideration.

Applications will be assessed by a central panel convened by DESBT.

Funding conditions

Successful applicants must enter into a formal Services Agreement with DESBT.

An upfront payment will be made once the Services Agreement has been executed, and no sooner than 30 days prior to the start of the project. Payments are GST inclusive.

DESBT may vary the payment schedule based on the individual assessment of the organisation and project. Applicants will be required to detail in their application the estimated delivery timeframe required to complete the project – for consideration and approval by DESBT.

Projects must be fully acquitted after completion and any unexpended or surplus funds returned to DESBT.

Appeals

Organisations may request a review of a decision made by DESBT in relation to the provision of funding under the Sector Development Grants program.

The appeals process has been established to help identify any problems in the application process, ensuring these processes continue to improve, and to assist with future applications.

Appeals must be lodged in writing to:

Appeals Officer
Program Design, Investment Division
Department of Employment, Small Business
and Training
PO Box 15483
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Organisations will be notified in writing of the appeal outcomes within 21 business days from receipt of the appeal.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria. Applicants should note that the list of assessment criteria is not necessarily exhaustive and DESBT may also consider such other criteria as it considers appropriate in its sole discretion.

DESBT may prioritise applications to ensure regional coverage state-wide (across DESBT regions).

Assessment criteria	How will this be assessed – including but not limited to:
Applicant organisation eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear evidence the applicant is an experienced intermediary organisation or significant ecosystem developer active within Queensland’s social enterprise sector • period of operation in Queensland – minimum of two (2) years • financial viability of the applicant organisation
Ecosystem benefit and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear description of the project including a breakdown of the key activities to be undertaken, delivery partners, delivery location/s and intended project participants (including social enterprise models/businesses to be targeted) • details of how the project will help to address the barriers to social enterprise growth and scalability particularly in regional areas of Queensland • details of how the project will contribute to the inclusive growth and future sustainability of Queensland’s diverse social enterprise sector, including demonstrated project alignment with existing or planned sector programs/initiatives • details of how the project will support beneficial outcomes for individual social enterprises and local communities including increasing employment outcomes • testimonials or letters of support from local employers, industry, networks or other stakeholders for the applicant organisation and project proposal
Cost/value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost effectiveness – cost of project proposal and intended outcomes • ability to deliver proposed outcomes over the period being applied for, and any identified innovative ways to reduce the costs, including articulation of a fair and reasonable delivery schedule/timeframe to complete the project • level of complementary funding and assistance accessed from other sources and in-kind or direct contributions

More information

For more information on the Sector Development Grants program, please contact DESBT via email at programdesign@desbt.qld.gov.au.

Policy Owner:	Executive Director, Design Investment Division
Approval Date:	November 2021
Related Documents:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application Form 2. Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
Version Control:	1.0