

Business Growth Program Guidelines

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1. Objectives

The Business Growth Program (the Program) is a Northern Territory Government business support initiative to help Northern Territory small and medium businesses develop, grow and expand.

2. Program overview

The Program provides support for businesses to access professional services that aim to improve business performance, sustainability, and profitability.

Funding of \$2,000 to \$10,000 is available to reimburse 50% of the costs of eligible services provided by an approved service provider. Businesses can receive funding across a single or multiple applications within each financial year to a total of \$10,000

Note: This includes previous iterations of this program.

Once funding allocation is exhausted the program will close until the next funding period.

3. Eligible applicants

You must meet all the following criteria to apply:

- a) Be a Territory Enterprise ([Appendix A – Key definitions](#)),
- a) Hold a valid Australian Business Number (ABN),
- b) Have a turnover of more than \$75,000 but less than \$10 million,
- c) Have at least one full-time equivalent and no more than 50 full-time equivalent employees, including owners and directors.

Note: The Department reserves the right to decide in its discretion if an applicant meets the assessment criteria.

4. Ineligible applicants

If one or more of the following applies to a grant recipient or enterprise, they are ineligible:

- a) Private or public educational institutions, government agencies and government owned bodies, statutory corporations, and local government bodies,
- b) Has outstanding grant acquittals or unmet obligations from previous Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations or Northern Territory Government funding,
- c) Grant recipient or owners/directors that are insolvent or have an undischarged bankruptcy,
- d) Have received \$10,000 in the current financial year through the Business Growth Program,
- e) Have a conflict of interest with the service provider.

5. Eligible expenditure

Program funding is available for businesses to access professional advice, services and systems to help their business grow, develop, and expand. Services must be directly related to the commercial operation of the business, or the implementation of projects funded through this program. Refer to [Appendix B – Business Growth Program Service Area Categories](#) for a list of funding service areas and examples.

6. Excluded expenditure

Ineligible expenditure includes any costs related to:

- a) Operational, business-as-usual or recurring costs, including any expenses related to buildings, land, utilities, workforce, wages, education, training courses and workshops (excluding workshops related to implementation of a funded service under this program)
- b) Purchase or replacement of assets, stock, property, plant, software, hardware and equipment
- c) Memberships, accreditation, certification, subscriptions, registration or joining fees
- d) Legal, regulatory compliance, real estate and rental fees
- e) Management, recruitment, insurance, franchise, bookkeeping or accounting fees
- f) Legal, taxation or investment advice
- g) Maintenance of existing digital technologies, ongoing software or IT management and hosting fees and charges
- h) Advertising fees, materials, photography, video and signage
- i) Contract design, development, negotiation and disputes
- j) Performing grant or tender writing
- k) Website development that is not part of a re-branding or re-positioning strategy
- l) Business travel, transport and accommodation costs in relation to the delivery of these services
- m) Services from related parties or already being provided through another program or that commenced before funding is approved.

7. Service providers

Grant applicants participating in the program can only receive funding for eligible services provided by an approved service provider.

Service providers must submit a 'Business Growth Service Provider' application form via Grants NT and be assessed and approved as a supplier.

Grant applicants can choose from a list of 'approved service providers'. Approved service providers who have elected to be listed, can be found through the [program webpage](#).

Grant applicants can also nominate any business that meets the 'service provider eligibility' criteria to deliver eligible services. If the nominated service provider is not an approved provider, the service provider will need to apply for approval and be assessed as successful before the grant application can be assessed. This will result in longer grant application processing times. Listing on the program webpage is optional.

For more details, see the [Service Provider Terms and Conditions](#).

8. GrantsNT application process

Step 1. Register for a GrantsNT account and set up an 'Individual Profile' and 'Organisation Profile' on GrantsNT.

If you already have the required account, you can proceed to step 2.

Step 2. Complete an online application via GrantsNT and attach all the following:

a) Financial documents

One of the following:

- i. Profit and Loss statement for the previous 12-month period
- ii. Four most recent BAS statements (or notice of assessment), or a
- iii. Letter from a certified accountant detailing actual income for the previous 12-month period.

b) Service details

An overview of your works including a project title, planned commencement and completion date and requested funding amount (excluding GST)

c) An application summary

This should cover:

- i. What your business does.
- ii. The issue or challenge your business is facing.
- iii. What you are hoping to achieve and what results do you expect.

d) Quote from a service providers with the experience and expertise needed

The quote must include:

- A quote number and date
- Your provider's ABN (Australian Business Number)
- Your provider's contact person and their details
- Your business entity name
- Your business address
- Terms and conditions of payment to your provider
- A detailed description and cost of each part of the services being proposed and details of any subcontractors and the percentage of work they'll be doing.
- The estimated start and completion dates
- A full cost breakdown including a separate subtotal (excluding GST), GST amount and total cost (including GST).

If your service provider is not a 'Territory Enterprise' you will be required to additionally provide a written justification and an 'Industry Capability Network' report. You can request a report from ICNNT here: <https://icn.org.au/regions/northern-territory/northern-territory-submit-enquiry/>

Step 3. Review and submit your online application.

Ensure that you have accurately provided all the required information. Your application will not be approved unless you have provided all the above documentation. Additional requests for information may occur.

9. Application assessment

Step 1. Application received.

Application received by a Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations officer through GrantsNT.

Step 2. Eligibility assessment.

The applicant will be assessed for eligibility by Departmental Officers.

Step 3. Service Provider Assessment.

The service provider will be assessed to confirm they are an approved service provider for the requested serviced.

Listed service providers have already been approved for elected services.

Non-listed service providers will be required to apply for approval, this could result in extended processing times.

Step 4. Budget and expenditure assessment.

The provided quote, budget and requested funding amount will be assessed for business eligibility.

Step 5. Application outcome.

Applicants will receive a notification of the outcome of their application within an estimated five weeks after submission.

10. Funding agreements

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with the Northern Territory Government.

Applicants who receive a funding offer will need to accept the offer within 14 days from notification. Funded activities must be completed within a period of six months from receiving a funding offer. Specific dates will be included in the funding agreement.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a notification from GrantsNT notifying them of an unsuccessful application.

11. Payment of funds

Funding reimbursement will be released in one payment after the approved works are completed, and an acquittal has been accepted by the Department.

Note: In some situations, the Department may include special conditions in the funding agreement which may change the schedule of payments.

12. Acquittal, reporting and evaluation

All successful applicants will be required to comply with the program acquittal, reporting and evaluation requirements. Acquittal must be submitted upon completion of the funded works. Specific dates and details relevant to successful applications will be included in the funding agreement.

As part of the acquittal process, grant recipients will be required to submit the following:

- a) Evidence of works completed by the service provider that aligns with the approved quotation.
- b) Evidence of payment for funded works under this program either a receipt of payment or remittance invoice.

Acquittals will be completed through GrantsNT. Details regarding acquittal timings can be found in individual grant agreements.

Successful applicants may also be required to participate in project reports. With notice, an officer from the Department may request an update on your project.

Applicants may be contacted to gather feedback on their experience with the program, this information will help to improve the program and ensure it is meeting its intended objectives and outcomes.

13. Further information

Refer to the Business Growth program roadmap in **Appendix C** which provides a step-by-step guide to help you navigate and understand the program pathway when applying.

For further information please contact a Department Officer or one of our Small Business Champions. Visit business.nt.gov.au for contact details.

Business NT's corporate website business.nt.gov.au is a valuable resource for accessing information to support applications, including business research, strategies, and templates.

14. General terms and conditions

In this section, a reference to 'you' is a reference to participants and service providers.

14.1. Privacy

The Department is bound by the Information Act 2002 (NT) and will only ever use information in accordance with the Northern Territory Government's Information Privacy Principles. These principles are available at www.infocomm.nt.gov.au/privacy/information-privacy-principles or by contacting the Information Commissioner Northern Territory on 1800 005 610. You should read the [Department's Privacy Policy](#) and by providing information to the Department under the Program, you agree to the following Privacy Statement:

Information collected as part of the Program application process is collected in accordance with the Program's terms and conditions and for the purposes of assessing eligibility, audit; monitoring; evaluation; and reporting.

By applying to participate in the Program, you consent to the Northern Territory Government:

- a) Storing information, including personal information (such as names and personal contact details);
- b) Using the information, including personal information for the purposes mentioned under the paragraph above;
- c) Transferring some of this information, including personal information, outside of the Northern Territory (but not outside Australia) for the purpose storing it; and
- d) Releasing non-sensitive information, de-identified data in accordance with the Northern Territory Government's open data policy. If you have provided personal information of another individual to the Northern Territory Government, you warrant that you have informed the person to whom the personal information relates that the personal information will be provided to the Northern Territory Government, and of the Northern Territory Government's intended use of this personal information, and that you have obtained consent from all such persons to allow the Northern Territory Government to use and disclose their personal information in this manner.

14.2. Due diligence, audit and compliance with law

All participants in the Program acknowledge:

- a) That the Department will conduct such due diligence enquiries as it sees fit in order to ensure the integrity of the Program and that the allocated funding is used strictly in accordance with the intent of the relevant government policy. Such enquiries may include (but are not necessarily limited to) company, association and business name searches on a business, title and other searches for the Premises, searches of the courts and / or the trustee in bankruptcy and enquiries of private businesses or institutions as the Department sees fit; and
- b) That it is a condition of participation in the Program that providers and Recipients comply with all relevant laws, including the Payroll Tax Act 2009 and Taxation Administration Act 2007 and, without limitation, that participants ensure they are aware of their obligations under the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (the Act) and that none of their officers, employees, and/or members engage in improper conduct as that term is defined in the Act; and
- c) Participants must exercise utmost integrity and honesty in all their dealings with the Department. Misleading and/or deceptive conduct in relation to any aspect of a participant's activity under the Program may result in cancellation of the right to participate (including an obligation to repay any monies not already committed).
- d) All participants in the Program acknowledge and expressly agree to the Department seeking from and sharing information with other NT Government agencies, as well as such external professional advisers as it may need to do in order to assess eligibility, such as conveyancers / solicitors.
- e) Participants must present, within 10 working days of the request by the Department, any documentation required by the Department that is related to its eligibility to participate in the Program and expenditure of any grant made. The Department reserves the right to conduct an Audit at any time before or after the completion of the Eligible Services, or within 12 months after the Program's End Date.

- f) By applying to participate in the Program, Providers and Recipients declare that they expressly agree to the Department having access to any private register of information in relation to the Provider or Recipient, and to the Department using, storing, and releasing for lawful purposes, their information, including personal information.
- g) Eligible Recipients must provide a statutory declaration in the form and as to the matters as required by the Department from time to time and published on the Website. Persons who cannot make the declaration truthfully of their own personal knowledge will not have their business admitted participating in the Program.
- h) By registering an Eligible Service Provider for participation in the Program, the Department gives no warranties, express or implied, as to the suitability or calibre of the Provider to conduct the Eligible Services quoted. A Recipient must carry out any due diligence on a Provider it deems appropriate before engaging that Provider to provide Eligible Services.
- i) The Department will not carry out any specific enquiries in relation to a Provider other than those it deems necessary in its absolute discretion. The Recipient must make all enquiries it thinks necessary to ensure that the quoting Eligible Service Provider is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the Services.
- j) The Department takes no responsibility whatsoever for any works or conduct by the Provider which may not meet the Recipient's expectations, including without limitation works that are of unacceptable standard, quality or workmanship. Further, the Department takes no responsibility for any damage or loss of any kind accruing to the Recipient in the event that the quoting Provider fails to complete the work by the cut off dates (or at all).
- k) The Recipient and Service Provider confirm that all required permits, certificates and licences required to carry out the eligible services have been obtained, including through the engagement of a building certifier and other relevant professionals.

14.3. Release of indemnity

By applying to participate and as a continuing obligation throughout any period of participation in the Program, you declare and warrant to the Department that you have read, understood and fully accept these terms and conditions and fully release and indemnify the Department against any loss or damage he/she/it/they may suffer of any nature whatsoever (including without limitation personal injury or death) caused or contributed to by participation in the Program.

14.4. Feedback

Disputes and complaints relating to applications for this Program, or other complaints involving the Department during the currency of the Program can be made at [Feedback | Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations](#).

15. Duration of the program

15.1. Changes to the program

The Department reserves the right to:

- a) Vary the program guidelines, terms and conditions, the eligibility criteria or any other documented rule or procedure relating to the Program at any time; and
- b) Accept or reject any application for participation in the Program in its absolute discretion; and

- c) Cease the Program at any time should Northern Territory Government's policy change.

15.2. Termination of the program

This Program is ongoing and will end at such time as is determined by the Northern Territory Government.

16. Disputes and complaints

The Department is not responsible for resolving any disputes between Recipients and Providers. Recipients and Providers must conduct their own due diligence regarding their contract to carry out Eligible Services.

Consumer Affairs can be contacted on 1800 019 319 or go to <https://consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au/> to find information on [dispute resolution](#).

The Department gives no warranty that these Recipients will be able to resolve disputes. If a dispute cannot be resolved in these forums the parties to the dispute will need to take independent legal advice.

For disputes and complaints relating to applications for registration, applications for Grant Funding, the Eligible Service Provider or the Eligible Recipient can [contact the Department](#).

Appendix A – Key Definitions

Approved service provider

Approved service providers are service providers who have successfully submitted an application to be an approved service provider and been advised that they are successful.

Acquittal

Acquitting a grant involves a grant recipient providing information which accurately details the outcome of your funded activity, including a financial report detailing how the monies were spent.

It is a formal condition of NT Government funding and ensures the obligations of both parties (grant recipient and NT Government) have been met in accordance with the terms of a grant agreement.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is where you have a conflict between your personal and professional duties or associations in relation to this grant.

Eligible recipient

An eligible recipient is a business that meets the eligibility criteria as listed in this Program's Guidelines.

Eligible services

Eligible services are services defined as eligible in the 'Business Growth Program Guidelines.' A copy of this can be found in **Appendix B**.

Evidence of works completed

Evidence of works completed are used to confirm that the service provider has met the grant applicant's business needs as per the quotation and determine value for money. Depending on the work undertaken, the evidence of works completed should be a short report supported by any relevant documentation. The Department may request more information if the supplied evidence is not sufficient.

GrantsNT

The online Northern Territory Government grants management system.

GST

Goods and Services Tax.

NT

Northern Territory.

NTG

Northern Territory Government.

Professional Services

Professional services include advice or consultancy services to improve business performance, sustainability, and profitability. For this program Professional Services means 'Eligible Services.'

Registration

Registration is a process of application and assessment. Registration is completed with a successful outcome from an assessment.

Related entity

- a. In the case of a company, a related entity within the meaning of section 50AAA of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), and directors, officers and shareholders of the company and/or a Related Entity;
- b. In the case of other incorporated bodies, a member of the board of management of that body or other person that is in a position of influence in respect of decision making of that body; and
- c. In the case of unincorporated bodies, includes sole traders, members of a partnership, joint venturers, and members of the management committee.

Related Party

A person, associated or connected (actual, potential or perceived) because of any of the following:

- a. they are a related entity;
- b. of a family relationship;
- c. of a business partnership;
- d. one is a company and the other is a director or manager of the company;
- e. one is a private company and the other is a shareholder in the company; or
- f. a chain of relationships can be traced between them or their family members under one or more of the above sub-paragraphs.

Relationship (family)

A person connected to you by family (e.g., parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins).

Service provider

A service provider is a company or individual that provides services related to this program to others. For more details, see the [Service Provider Terms and Conditions](#).

Territory Enterprise

Territory enterprises must satisfy all three elements of the definition:

- a) Operating in the NT – the enterprise is currently engaged in productive activities (for example, production of goods or delivery of services) within the NT.
- b) Significant permanent presence – the enterprise maintains an office, manufacturing facilities or other permanent base within the NT.
- c) Employing NT residents – the enterprise employs Territorians. An enterprise which relies exclusively on transient, interstate/international labour or a fly-in fly-out workforce will not satisfy this element. (For the purposes of this program, employ includes subcontracting to NT residents).

The Department

The Northern Territory Governments 'Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations.'

The Program

The Business Growth Program.

Appendix B - Eligible program service areas

Note:

- Mentoring and coaching services that help business managers maximise the effectiveness of the implementation in any of the below service areas is also supported.
- The below list of eligible activity examples is not exhaustive, similar project activities may be considered.
- The Department retains absolute discretion as to what services will be approved under the Program.

Category	Service Area	Description	Activities examples
Organisation	Strategic business planning	Professional advice and services to help identify and articulate business goals and strategically plan for an organisation's future development.	Strategic business planning; SWOT analysis; business continuity; risk management; expansion or diversification strategies; change management strategies and implementation advice.
Workforce	Workforce development and planning	Strategies to recruit, train, and manage employees to ensure the business has the right staff capability and skills.	Staff retention strategies; staff attraction strategies; strategic planning for recruitment (excluding recruitment costs); performance planning and management; skill gap analysis; workforce analysis; succession planning and assessment.
	People management	Strategies to improve hiring processes, developing training programs, enhancing employee relations, and creating policies for better workforce management.	Employee skill assessment and development plans; human resources policies, and procedures; Aboriginal employment planning; job evaluation and design; human resources audit and compliance review; position profiling for workforce efficiency.
	Cultural awareness	Strategies to navigate cultural differences within the workplace and with key stakeholders and help business understand, communicate, and collaborate across diverse cultural backgrounds.	Cross cultural competency assessments; diversity and inclusion strategy development; product and services cultural adaptation strategies; cross cultural engagement planning; business reconciliation planning

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Marketing	Marketing and communication planning	Strategies to promote a business's products or services and effectively conveying messages to its target audience.	Marketing strategic planning; market assessment; marketing implementation planning; branding and repositioning strategies; communication plans and strategy; media planning; customer segmentation strategy; marketing campaign planning; industry insight.
	Digital marketing	Strategies to use online channels and technologies to promote products, services or brands to reach and engage with customers.	Digital marketing analysis and planning; website development that is an element of a re-branding or re-positioning strategy, search engine optimisation (as part of a digital marketing strategy)
	Market research	Methods of gathering and analysing information about consumers, competitors, and market to make informed decisions.	Market research analysis and report; customer research analysis (including survey); new market entry strategic planning; competitive analysis; market and customer segmentation.
Finance	Financial planning	Skilled guidance on how a business can strategically manage its finances for sustainable future growth.	Financial planning and forecasting; financial management strategies; asset management strategies; cash flow modelling; sales optimisation.
	Financial performance	Advice and planning to optimise financial operations and to strengthen the financial health and profitability of business.	Forecasting and budgeting, cost management optimisation; financial performance monitoring and advice; debt management and financing strategies; financial management review; working capital strategy.
Operations	Procurement	Advice and support that enhances and optimises how businesses acquire and manage the goods and services they need. Including streamlining procurement processes, negotiating better deals with suppliers, and implementing efficient purchasing strategies to help businesses save costs and operate more effectively.	Procurement strategies and advice; review and management of tender response documentation (e.g. document library); procurement policies and guidelines; sourcing and supplier selection strategies.

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Organisational governance	Expert guidance and frameworks to ensure businesses operate ethically and efficiently through strong governance practice.	Governance frameworks and internal controls; operational policies and procedures.
Work Health and Safety	Services that help business to develop systems and practices to promote and maintain a safe and healthy workplace for employees.	Risk management and hazard control strategies; management system development; development and review of policies and procedures; emergency response planning, policy and procedures.
Business improvement and innovation	Activities aimed at enhancing how businesses operate and innovate to stay competitive and achieve growth.	Analysis of business efficiency; productivity; processes or workflows; process improvement and automation planning; human centered design and customer experience analysis and modelling; customer support frameworks; quality assurance reviews.
Supply chain management and planning	Activities and strategies aimed at enhancing the efficiency, reliability, cost-effectiveness of a company's supply chain operations, overall profitability and competitiveness of the business.	Distribution channel optimisation; logistics and supply chain analysis, assessment and strategic planning; logistics and transport optimisation strategies; supply chain development; supply chain sustainability assessments.
Records and document management	Advice and planning to achieve efficient organisation and secure handling of business records and information.	System review and implementation advice; policies and procedures; information retention. <i>Note: refer to Cyber Security for data security IT services</i>
Environment, Social and Governance (ESG)	Advice and services designed to assist companies operate responsibly and sustainably by integrating sustainable and responsible practices into their operations.	ESG analysis and assessments; social and ethical organizational transformation strategic planning; identifying ESG-related risks and developing mitigation strategies; strategic planning to support community engagement, diversity and inclusion programs, and fair labour practices; de-carbonisation planning; ESG data collection and reporting frameworks; sustainability audits and strategies.

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<p>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</p>	<p>Information and communication technology management</p>	<p>Assessment and identification of inefficiencies, vulnerabilities and solutions to optimise technology resources and support.</p>	<p>ICT governance and risk management strategic planning; ICT systems review; information technology strategy development; ICT management policy and procedures; data management system review and strategies.</p>
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