



BusinessBalance

Supporting small business mental health and wellbeing

Small businesses are significant contributors to the Australian economy—yet they suffer more from symptoms of depression and anxiety than the general population and are under increased financial and emotional pressure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, the Australian Government’s BusinessBalance initiative is providing \$7 million in 2020–21 to support to support small businesses. This includes:

- \$4.3 million to provide free, accessible and tailored support for small business owners by expanding Beyond Blue’s *NewAccess* program in partnership with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, and
- \$2.2 million to expand a free accredited professional development program that builds the mental health literacy of trusted business advisers so that they can better support small business owners in times of distress, delivered through Deakin University.

BusinessBalance will help small business owners take proactive steps to improve their mental health.

NewAccess for Small Business Owners

The Australian Government is providing funding to expand Beyond Blue’s *NewAccess* program to deliver tailored, free and confidential mental health support to small business owners.

[*NewAccess for Small Business Owners*](#) is designed to support small business owners manage life stress by providing up to six structured sessions with a trained mental health coach who has a background in small business. No doctor’s referral or mental health treatment plan is required. The program is available nationally and can be accessed via phone or video call.

Counting on U

The Australian Government is providing funding to Deakin University to deliver [*Counting on U*](#)—a professional development program for small business advisers. *Counting on U* is run in partnership with the Institute of Public Accountants, CPA Australia, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers, Beyond Blue, WorkSafe VIC, and Mental Health First Aid. It integrates mental health first aid training with relationship-centred, business mentoring that will empower small business advisers to better support the mental wellbeing of their small business clients.