



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

Business Grants Hub

Australian Small Business Advisory Services – Digital Solutions Round 3

Information Session October 2025

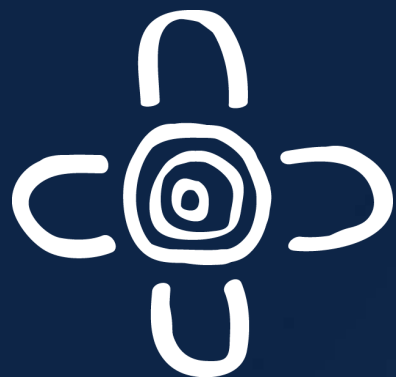
Our purpose is to help the government build a better future for all Australians through enabling a productive, resilient and sustainable economy, enriched by science and technology.

business.gov.au

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Welcome, logistics and etiquette

Tess Dempsey – Department of Industry, Science and Resources



Acknowledgement of Country

Our department recognises the First Peoples of this Nation and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters, seas, skies, and communities.

We Acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Lore Keepers of the oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past and present.

We extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.

Agenda

- Introductions and roles
- Policy context and objectives
- The grant opportunity
 - Overview
 - What does a good application look like
 - How to apply
 - Questions during the application process
- Q&A session
 - This will be interactive and conducted via the Q&A feature
 - What's next?

Introductions and roles

Tess Dempsey – Department of Industry, Science and Resources

Introductions and roles



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Science and Resources

Department of the Treasury

Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR)

- The Business Grants Hub (BGH) is part of DISR.
- Partners with government agencies to achieve their policy objectives through designing and implementing grant programs.
- This grant opportunity and process is administered by DISR/BGH on behalf of The Treasury.

The Treasury

- The Commonwealth agency responsible for this program and ensures delivery on the Government's objectives.
- Part of Treasury's functions relates to small business policies and programs.
- The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Small Business, Minister for International Development, and Minister for Multicultural Affairs will delegate relevant powers and functions in agreed terms to enable DISR to provide the Services.

Policy context and objectives

Christopher Karas – The Treasury

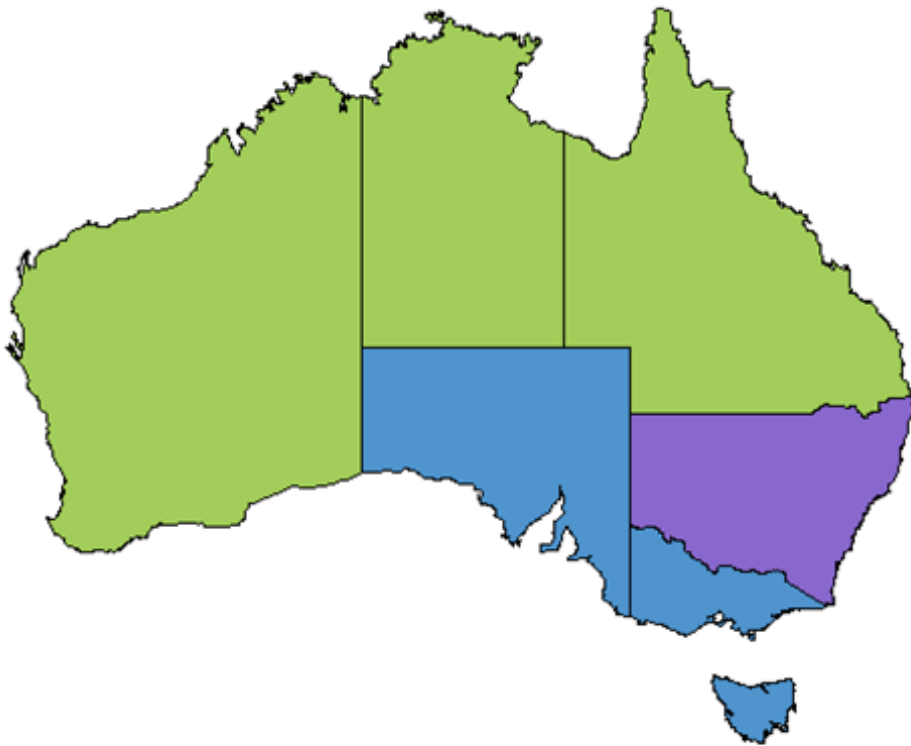
The context

- Improve productivity and growth of Australia's 2.6 million small businesses.
- The 2025 National Small Business Strategy identifies that adopting digital technology is key to a stronger, more productive and resilient economy.
- Digital technology can help small businesses deliver products and services faster.
- Small business owners continue to have lower digital literacy, including about emerging technologies like AI.
- The 2025 CPA Asia-Pacific Small Business Survey ranks Australia 10th out of 11 markets in the Asia-Pacific for small business growth.
- The Digital Solutions program has been operating since July 2018.

The program – key elements

- Purpose is to improve the capacity of service providers to deliver digital advisory services to small businesses.
- 3 grants available, corresponding to service area across Australia.
- Program is known and marketed as Digital Solutions.
- Providers need to offer:
 - Free workshops, webinars and self-directed tutorials to small businesses
 - Covering 5 priorities areas of: how digital can help your business; social media, digital marketing and selling online, using business software; AI and emerging technologies; and cybersecurity and data privacy.
 - Up to 5 hours of 1:1 mentoring at a one-off cost of \$110 (including GST).

Map of service area



- **Area 1: NSW and ACT** – 908,200 small businesses (35.1 per cent) (includes Jervis Bay Territory)
- **Area 2: QLD, NT, WA** – 758,400 small businesses (29.3 per cent) (includes Christmas Island, Cocos [Keeling] Islands, and Norfolk Island)
- **Area 3: SA, VIC, TAS** – 921,500 small businesses (35.6 per cent)

The program – key elements cont.

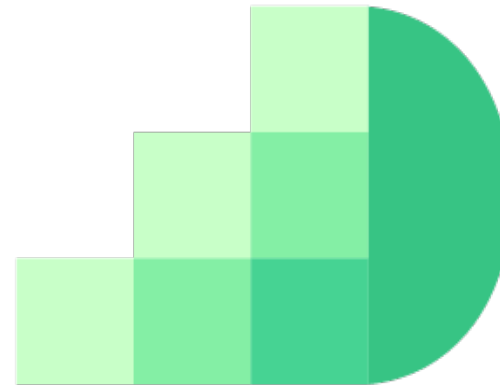
- Providers will:
 - collect data on clients and report this to DISR
 - survey clients on the quality and effectiveness of services
 - deliver services through a mix of formats (eg face-to-face, online, one-to-one and one-to-many formats)
 - accommodate beginner to advanced digital skills
 - offer digital action plans that clients can take away after their sessions.

The program – changes from Round 2

- Grant period is 5 years and service delivery is almost 4 years (1 July 2026 – 29 March 2030).
- A new priority area: Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies.
- **5** hours of 1:1 mentoring at a price of **\$110** (incl. GST)
- Applicants will be evaluated on their strategies to engage with CALD and First Nations clients and their integration of both current and emerging technologies into operations and client support.
- Key deliverable targets are set out in the grant guidelines (tell us how you'll meet them!)
- Providers are to submit reports to DISR every 6 months.
- Throughout the grant term, providers must apply the updated Digital Solutions branding for all program promotion. Providers must adhere to the branding guidelines that will be made available to them.
- Providers can implement cost recovery for clients that register but do not attend services.



Australian Government



**Digital
Solutions**

Related resources and programs

- This is part of the Albanese Government's investment of more than \$80 million since 2023 to help small businesses uplift their cyber security and digital capabilities through the Digital Solutions program, Cyber Wardens program, Small Business Cyber Resilience Service and the cyber health check.
- The \$23.4 million Cyber Wardens program helps small businesses build resilience against online threats through free webinars and online courses.
- The \$11.1 million Small Business Cyber Resilience Service provides free, one-on-one, tailored support for small businesses to prevent and recover from a cyber attack.
- The \$7.2 million cyber health check will provide small and medium businesses a tailored self-assessment of their cyber security maturity.

The grant opportunity

Angad Dhanoa – Department of Industry, Science and Resources

Grant opportunity overview

- **About the grant program**
- **Grant amount and grant period**
- **Eligibility criteria**
 - Who is eligible?
 - Joint applications
- **What the grant money can be used for**
 - Service Requirements (Section 5.2 guidelines)
 - offer and deliver digitalisation advisory services to small businesses covering the 5 priority digital capabilities identified at section 5.3
 - meet agreed service delivery targets as described in Appendix D
 - Eligible grant activities (section 5.1 guidelines)
 - Eligible expenditure (section 5.5 guidelines).

What does a good application look like

Read and understand the grant opportunity guidelines

Address all the merit criteria

- Clearly articulate the service proposal you put to government
- Articulate how you will meet the service requirements in Section 5.2
- Include all eligible grant activities outlined in section 5.1
- Make sure the amount of detail and evidence you provide is relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested
- Provide adequate evidence to support your responses and provide everything asked for!

Ensure all attachments are submitted and include all requested information

- Project plan, project budget, marketing strategy, reference letter

How to apply



- Before applying, review the guidelines, sample application, and grant agreement on business.gov.au and grants.gov.au.
- Submit applications before the deadline, considering time zones and possible issues.
- Check eligibility and assessment criteria carefully and provide supporting evidence.
- Create an account on business.gov.au to access the application portal.
- Submit your application through the online portal.

Q&A session

Department of Industry, Science and Resources

The Treasury

What's next?

- More information, including eligibility and application details, is available at <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/australian-small-business-advisory-services-digital-solutions-round-3>. This session will be also be recorded and posted here, with unanswered questions also addressed.
- Guidance on applying for a Commonwealth Government grant is available at GrantConnect's Help and Information Centre: <https://help.grants.gov.au/>.
- Further information about the grants process is available from the Department of Finance: <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/commonwealth-grants-rmg-410/grants-process>.
- For questions during the application process, visit business.gov.au, call 13 28 46 (Mon–Fri, 8am–8pm Australia), or use the 'Contact us' section on the website.

Thank you for attending.