



Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Centre for Defence Industry Capability - Capability Improvement Grants

Opening date:	Ongoing
Closing date and time:	Ongoing
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Defence
Administering entity	Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
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Type of grant opportunity:	Demand driven

COVID RESPONSE: In recognition of the challenges faced by Australian industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made interim changes to co-contribution requirements, as well as minimum and maximum grant amounts. These changes will be in place for all applications lodged between 12 November 2020 and 30 June 2021.

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1. Defence Industry Capability Improvement Grants processes

The Centre for Defence Industry Capability – Capability Improvement Grants is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program, which contributes to Department of Defence's Outcome 1.1. The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*.



The grant opportunity opens

We publish the grant guidelines on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.



You complete and submit a grant application

You complete the application form, addressing all the eligibility criteria in order for your application to be considered.



We assess all grant applications

We review the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible.



Grant decisions are made

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



We notify you of the outcome

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



We enter into a grant agreement

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.



Delivery of grant

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



Evaluation of the Capability Improvement Grants

We evaluate the specific grant activity and the Capability Improvement Grants as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

2. About the program

The Centre for Defence Industry Capability (CDIC) is a key initiative of the 2016 Defence Industry Policy Statement. The CDIC provides strategic leadership for the Australian defence sector and partners with industry to help build a strong, sustainable, innovative and internationally competitive Australian industry that meets defence capability requirements.

The intended outcomes of the CDIC are to:

- improve the business capability, productivity and global competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the defence sector
- ensure that industry and Defence are well connected in order to tailor business capabilities to defence industrial priorities
- contribute to a strong, sustainable, and internationally competitive defence industry.

More information about the CDIC can be found at www.business.gov.au/cdic.

CDIC Capability Improvement Grants are a sub-program of the CDIC.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines \(CGRGs\)](#)¹.

2.1. About the CDIC Capability Improvement Grants

These guidelines contain information for the CDIC Capability Improvement Grants.

To be eligible for a Capability Improvement Grant you must first access a CDIC advisory and facilitation service and receive a report from your business adviser identifying recommendations to improve the operations of your business. Refer to www.business.gov.au/cdic for information on how to access CDIC advisory and facilitation services.

Capability Improvement Grants are small grants to engage external expertise to help you work on improving the operations of your business.

The objective of the grant opportunity is to improve the operations of your business by implementing recommendations made by your CDIC business adviser, through the CDIC Advisory Service Report.

The intended outcome of the opportunity is to improve the capability, capacity and sustainability of your business to meet Defence requirements.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (the department/we) is responsible for administering the grant opportunity on behalf of the Department of Defence.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at section 13.

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

3. Grant amount and grant period

For this grant opportunity, approximately \$3 million is available each year. To support COVID response changes to co-contribution amounts, there is an estimated additional \$3 million available over 2020-21 and 2021-22.

3.1. Grants available

The grant amount will be up to 80 per cent of eligible project costs (grant percentage).

- The minimum grant amount is \$4,000
- The maximum grant amount is \$240,000

You are responsible for the remaining 20 per cent of eligible project expenditure plus any ineligible expenditure.

Contributions to your project must be cash.

There is no limit on the number of grants a business can receive, however funding is capped at \$240,000 per grantee in a three-year period.

You cannot use funding from other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government grants to fund your share of eligible project costs.

3.2. Project period

The maximum project period is 12 months.

The Program Delegate can consider an extension of up to two additional months in exceptional circumstances.

4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must:

- be a small to medium enterprise (SME) with less than 200 employees
- be applying to implement recommendations identified by your CDIC business adviser in your advisory service report
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

and be one of the following entities:

- a company, incorporated in Australia
- a company limited by guarantee
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust.

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications:

- where you apply within 12 months of receiving a CDIC advisory service report

4.3. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an income tax exempt corporation
- an individual
- a partnership
- a trust (however, an incorporate trustee may apply on behalf of a trust)
- a Commonwealth, state or local government agency or body (including government business enterprises).

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- sufficiently improve the capability, capacity or sustainability of your business to meet Defence's need for a product or service
- have a clear link to a recommendation identified in your CDIC advisory service report
- engage a provider that is external to your business to provide a service
- not have commenced or had any costs incurred prior to notification that your application is successful
- have at least \$5,000 in eligible expenditure.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

The grant supports costs associated with utilising external advice to support and implement activities to help your business action recommendations that your business adviser has made in your report.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

If your application is successful, you will need to provide quotes to substantiate your claims.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure that aligns with the project if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by your business.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

You may start your project from the date we notify you that your application is successful. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

5.3. What you cannot use the grant for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- business as usual activities such as wages, office expenses, maintenance costs, accounting, legal, compliance and government fees
- sales activity such as advertising, representatives, printing and placement and trade shows
- capital expenditure
- costs associated with maintaining existing software licences
- software licences which are predominantly off-the-shelf
- costs associated with software licences which extend beyond the duration of the eligible activity
- costs associated with maintaining existing industry certifications and accreditations
- costs associated with security clearances
- creating or registering patents/intellectual property
- opportunity costs
- activity related to the preparation of grant applications or tender writing
- any skilling or training activity other than those that directly relate to developing managerial capability or are incidental to a project
- travel costs that exceed ten per cent of total eligible project cost.

6. How to apply

Before applying, you should read and understand these guidelines, and the sample [grant agreement](#) published on [business.gov.au](#) and GrantConnect.

To apply, you must:

- complete the online [program application form](#) via [business.gov.au](#)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application. You should retain a copy of your application for your own records.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you are unable to submit an application online, [contact us](#) at [business.gov.au](#) or by calling 13 28 46.

6.1. Attachments to the application

Provide the following documents with your application:

- quote/s from your preferred providers to implement part, or all, of the recommendations identified in the CDIC advisory service report. If you engage multiple providers to address different recommendations, you will need to submit a quote from each provider.

Each quote must address:

- the services the consultant will provide, including a break-up of key activities
- delivery timeframes
- total costs, detailed in a payment schedule

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

6.2. Timing of grant opportunity

You can submit an application at any time while the grant opportunity remains open.

If you are successful, you can start your project from the date you are notified that your application has been successful. You must commence your project within 2 months of being approved.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	Continuous assessment
Approval of outcomes of selection process	Within 15 working days of receipt of a complete application
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	2-3 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2-3 weeks
Earliest start date of project	From the date you are notified that your application has been successful
End date of grant commitment	12 months from project commencement

7. The grant selection process

We assess applications on a continual basis. Eligible applications are considered with regard to the criteria listed below and not relative to the merits of other applications.

- how well the application aligns with the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- appropriate market value for the proposed services
- expected project benefits
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought.

We may not accept your application, or we may ask you to provide more information, if:

- it is not in line with the recommendations made in your advisory service report
- there are concerns about the quality of the proposed consultant or project
- a conflict of interest exists
- the improvements are ineligible
- the proposal does not represent value for money.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

7.1. Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate (who is an AusIndustry general manager within the department with responsibility for the program) decides which grants to approve taking into account the application assessment and the availability of grant funds.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Program Delegate will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

8. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us. You can submit a new application for the same (or similar) project however, you should include new or more information to address the weaknesses that prevented your previous application from being successful. If a new application is substantially the same as a previous ineligible or unsuccessful application, we may refuse to consider it.

9. Successful grant applications

9.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on business.gov.au and GrantConnect.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter an agreement under the Capability Improvement Grants you cannot receive other grants for this project from other Commonwealth, State or Territory granting programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

9.2. Exchange of letters grant agreement

We will use an exchange of letters grant agreement. We will send you a letter of offer advising that your application has been successful. You accept the offer by signing and returning to us. We consider the agreement to be executed from the date we receive your signed document. You will have 30 days from the date of our letter to sign and return to us otherwise the offer may lapse.

9.3. Project specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children.

9.4. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any financial contribution provided by you.

We will make an initial payment on execution of the grant agreement. We will make subsequent payments six monthly in arrears, based on your actual eligible expenditure. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

We set aside 10 per cent of the total grant funding for the final payment. We will pay this when you submit a satisfactory end of project report demonstrating you have completed outstanding obligations for the project. We may need to adjust your progress payments to align with available program funds across financial years and/or to ensure we retain a minimum 10 per cent of grant funding for the final payment.

9.5. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities².

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

² See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](#)

10. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on [GrantConnect](#). We are required to do this by the CGRGs unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on [business.gov.au](#). This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

11. How we monitor your project

11.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

11.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

11.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- include evidence of expenditure where requested
- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

11.2.2. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- itemised list of all costs claimed and proof of payment
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

11.2.3. Ad-hoc report

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

11.3. Independent audits

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is available on business.gov.au and [GrantConnect](#).

11.4. Compliance visits

We may visit you at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

11.5. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum period
- changing project activities

The program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement completion date.

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

11.6. Evaluation

We will evaluate the grant program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

11.7. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

‘This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.’

12. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

12.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or adviser and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#)³ of the [Public Service Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)⁴. Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the department's [website](#)⁵.

12.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 12.2.1, or
- personal information as per 12.2.3,

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

12.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

12.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information:

- to our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- to the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- to the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- to a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or

³ https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00270/Html/Text#_Toc491767030

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00270>

⁵ <https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/g/files/net3906/f/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf>

- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

12.2.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)⁶ on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

12.2.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

12.3. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at business.gov.au. We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

⁶ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division

AusIndustry – Support for Business

Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources

GPO Box 2013

CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman⁷](#) with your complaint (call 1300 362 072).

There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

⁷ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
AusIndustry	The division of the same name within the department.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for [services or grant funding] under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2.
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
GrantConnect	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for Defence Industry
Personal information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. whether the information or opinion is true or not; and b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.
Program Delegate	An AusIndustry general manager within the department with responsibility for the program.

Term	Definition
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.
Small to Medium Enterprise (SME)	An SME typically refers to micro-businesses, small businesses and medium sized firms. SMEs have less than 200 employees. Employees are defined as the number of individuals who are entitled to paid leave (sick and holiday), or generate income from managing your organisation.