



Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Business Grants Hub

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

Maritime Skills and Training Initiative (MSTI) Program

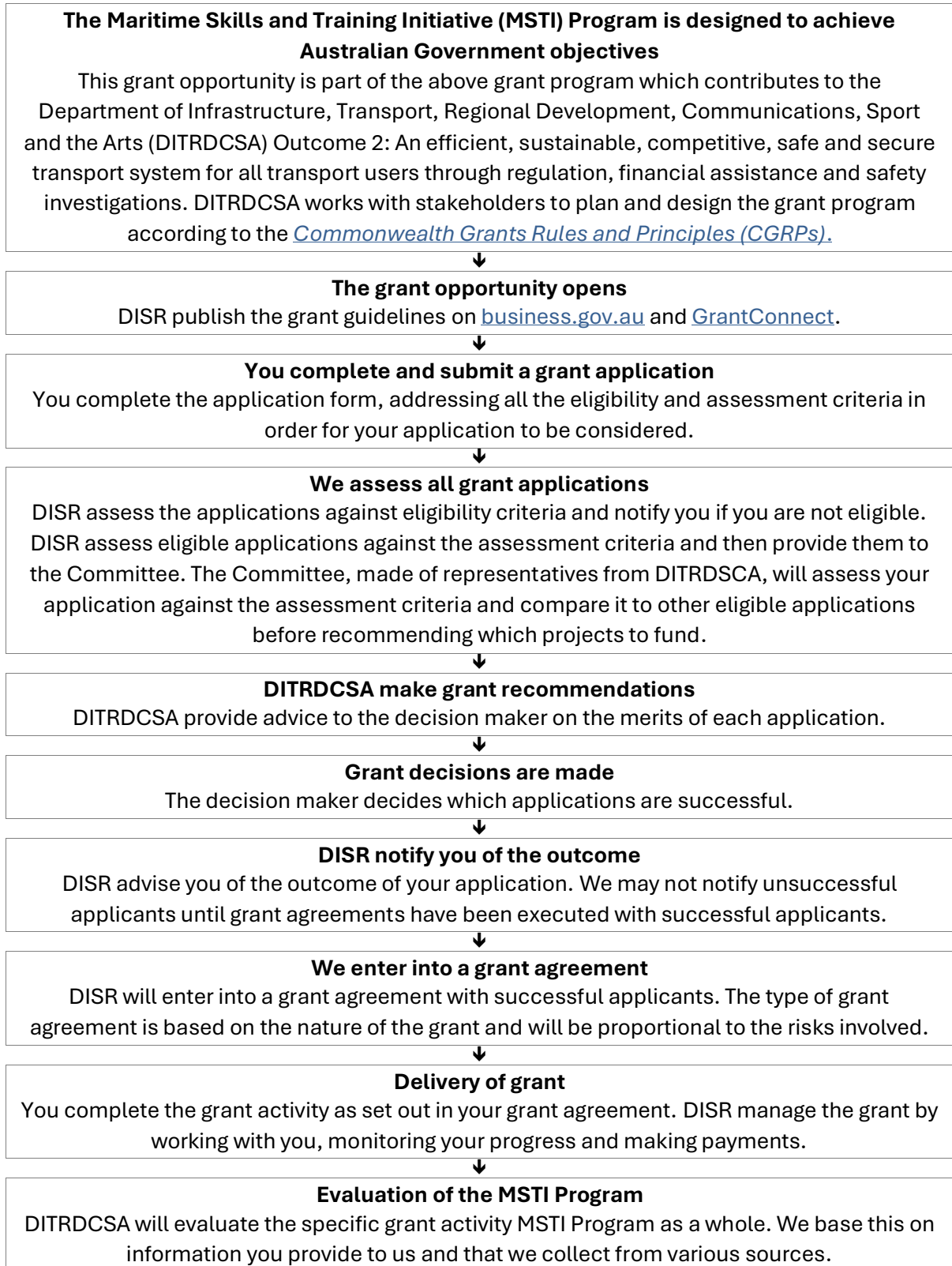
Opening date:	24 November 2025
Closing date and time:	5.00pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) on 23 December 2025 Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
Commonwealth policy entity:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (DITRDCA)
Administering entity:	Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
Date guidelines released:	12 November 2025
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

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1. Maritime Skills and Training Initiative (MSTI) Program processes



1.1. Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Maritime Skills and Training Initiative (MSTI) Program grants.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment 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.

This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department/DISR) on behalf of Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (DITRDCA).

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at Section 14.

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

2. About the Maritime Skills and Training Initiative (MSTI) Program

The MSTI Program will run over 4 years from 2025-26 to 2028-29 and provide access to berths to complete sea time required to obtain International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers 1978 certification. The grant opportunity is part of a new maritime skills and training initiative announced on 4 March 2025 and addresses the recommendations of the [Strategic Fleet Taskforce](#) (the Taskforce).

The MSTI Program aims to assist approximately 20 trainee/cadet seafarers per year to access berths on board ships to complete sea time required for international certification.

The Taskforce was appointed in October 2022 to advise the Government on establishing a Strategic Fleet of up to 12 Australian flagged and crewed vessels that will operate commercially and are able to be requisitioned by the Government in a time of need.

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should establish a cadetship or similar scheme to provide financial assistance to organisations that provide berths for cadets and trainees to complete mandatory sea time requirements to obtain STCW certification. The MSTI Program aims to implement the Government's response to this recommendation.

The Taskforce identified a major barrier to increasing the number of Australian seafarers is the limited access to training berths available for entry-level seafarers to undertake qualifying sea service and achieve STCW certification. Certification to the international standards has different qualifying sea service requirements, which stipulates the length of sea service, the duties to be completed and the type of vessel sea service needs to be completed on. Entry-level seafarers have historically relied on vessel owners and operators to sponsor the costs associated with access to berths for sea time, however, industry has reported that there is little incentive to make this high-cost investment due to the low retention rate once certified.

Over time a shortage of qualified seafarers will erode Australia's capacity to operate ports and ensure the safe operation of ships in Australian waters.

The objectives of the program are:

- increase availability of training berths on vessels to ensure more Australian trainee/cadet seafarers can access sea time to complete their qualifications
- address the skills shortage of Australian seafarers certified to the STCW level in the Australian maritime industry
- respond to Australia's maritime skills shortage and support the implementation of the Strategic Fleet.

The intended outcome of the program is to increase the supply of Australian seafarers certified to the international convention on STCW.

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

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. Grants available

The Australian Government has announced a total of \$13.8 million over 4 years for the program. For this program \$3.451 million is available in each year to support approximately 20 trainee/cadet seafarers.

The maximum grant amount for each trainee/cadet seafarer is:

- Trainee - Integrated Ratings: \$102,000
- Deck Cadet: \$187,500
- Engine Cadet and Electro-Technical Officers: \$197,500.

The minimum grant amount for all roles is \$80,000.

You are responsible for the remaining eligible and ineligible project costs.

You cannot apply for MSTI funding for a trainee or cadet for whom you intend to claim the shipping exempt income tax incentive under the [Shipping Reform \(Tax Incentives\) Act 2012](#).

3.2. Project period

You must complete your project by 30 March 2029.

4. Eligibility criteria

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

¹ <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-principles-2024>

4.1. Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have an account with an Australian financial institution.

and be the following entity:

- an entity, incorporated in Australia.

4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications where:

- you are the employer of the trainee/cadet seafarers and are one of the following:
 - a Group Training Organisation (GTO)
 - an Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) registered private seafarer recruitment and placement service
 - a shipping company or vessel operator.
- you acknowledge you cannot claim the shipping exempt income tax incentive under the [Shipping Reform \(Tax Incentives\) Act 2012](#) for the same trainee/cadet seafarers funded under this program.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

4.3. Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you:

- are an organisation not included in Section 4.1
- are an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'
- are an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*
- are an individual
- have had any convictions in the previous three years under any Australian work health and safety law
- have been found by a court to have underpaid seafarers (including underpayment of superannuation/ social benefits) on vessels in which they have beneficial ownership or operational control, which use Australian ports
- have been found by a court or tribunal to be in breach of the Fair Work Act 2009, an enterprise agreement, award, or other fair work instrument made under that Act
- have had any compliance or enforcement action taken against it by the Fair Work Ombudsman (including being issued with a compliance notice, or entering into an enforceable undertaking) in relation to an underpayment or a potential breach of the Fair Work Act 2009, an enterprise agreement, modern award or other fair work instrument and the decision maker considers that the compliance or enforcement action taken against the employer was significant

- have been subject to any current AMSA, Australian Transport Safety Bureau, or any other comparable regulatory agency significant actions relating to unsafe operations, environmental damage or contamination
- are a supplier of vessels to the Strategic Fleet.

4.4. What qualifications, skills or checks are required?

If you are successful, relevant personnel working on the grant activity must continue to deliver your grant activities in line with all relevant industry regulations and accreditations.

If you are successful, you must ensure the trainee/cadet seafarer:

- is an Australian Citizen or permanent resident
- requires sea time to complete their STCW certification
- will be placed on a suitable vessel (or vessels) as per AMSA requirements
- has completed or is completing (as appropriate) an AMSA approved pre-sea course/qualification for the role being placed. Individual role requirements can be found on the [AMSA website](#).

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1. Eligible grant activities

To be eligible your project must directly place trainee/cadet seafarers onboard a vessel for mandatory sea time to achieve STCW certification.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and must include:

- provision of appropriate placement for trainee/cadet seafarers on board the vessel/s
- placement of trainees/cadets in all seafaring roles, including:
 - Trainee - Integrated Ratings
 - Deck Cadet
 - Engine Cadet and Electro-Technical Officers.

We may also approve other activities; any additional activities must be in line with objectives and outcomes in Section 2.

5.2. Eligible expenditure

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

Eligible expenditure items are:

- wages and on-costs associated with engaging a trainee/cadet seafarer including payroll tax, superannuation, leave and insurances related to the trainee/cadet
- provision of appropriate placement onboard the vessel/s including accommodation and victualling
- travel to and from the vessel from the trainee/cadet seafarers' home if required. Eligible air transportation is limited to the economy class fare for each sector travelled. Where non economy class air transport is used only the equivalent of an economy fare for that

sector is eligible expenditure. Where non-economy class air transport is used, the grantee will require evidence showing what an economy airfare costs at the time of travel

- the cost of an independent audit of project expenditure (where we request one) up to a maximum of 1 per cent of total eligible project expenditure.

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, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is a Manager within the department with responsibility for administering the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities.

You may elect to commence your project from the date we notify you that your application is successful. We are not responsible for any eligible expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. The Commonwealth will not be liable, and should not be held out as being liable, for any activities undertaken before the grant agreement is executed.

5.3. What the grant money cannot be used for

Expenditure items that are not eligible are:

- course fees such as TAFE, University or Registered Training Organisation fees
- AMSA fees for certificates, including certificates of medical fitness
- issue of a Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC)
- costs associated with maintaining existing industry certifications and accreditations
- government and union fees
- recurring or ongoing operational expenditure (including administration costs, annual maintenance, rent, water and rates, postage, legal and accounting fees and bank charges)
- wages and related costs for employees other than the trainee/cadet seafarer (e.g. we will not cover the wages of a training officer).

The program has been funded specifically to address the sea time component of STCW certification only.

6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. The Committee will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative

to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers. The application form displays character limits for each response.

Only applications that score at least 50 per cent against each assessment criterion will be considered for funding.

6.1. Assessment criterion 1

How your project aligns with the program purpose, objectives and outcomes (40 points).

You must demonstrate this through identifying and providing details of:

- a. how your project will provide mandatory sea time to trainee/cadet seafarers (20 pts)
- b. how many trainee/cadet seafarers you will provide with sea time leading them to gaining STCW certification under the grant, and the seafaring roles you are planning to fill (10 pts)
- c. the trainee/cadet seafarer roles you plan to onboard with consideration to the priorities identified at Section 8.1 of the guidelines and the spread of seafaring roles (5 pts)
- d. your demonstrated need for funding, specifying your current challenges to providing sea time to trainee/cadet seafarers. (5 pts).

6.2. Assessment criterion 2

Your capacity, capability and resources to successfully support trainee/cadet seafarers in their sea time (40 points).

You must demonstrate this through identifying and providing details of:

- a. the vessel type/s the sea time will be provided on as part of the STCW certification requirements (3 pts)
- b. the amount of time each trainee/cadet will spend on a vessel (or onboard more than one vessel) (2 pts)
- c. your recruitment plan to recruit trainee/cadet seafarers, including due diligence to ensure new recruits are suited to a maritime role (and help reduce turnover) (5 pts)
- d. your sample training plan for how you will onboard trainee/cadet seafarers for the purposes of STCW certification (provided as an attachment) (10 pts)
- e. the support mechanisms that will be available to the trainee/cadet seafarers during their time onboard, including mentoring and personal development opportunities, pastoral care and supervision (10 pts)
- f. your experience in training and supporting trainee/cadet seafarers during their sea time, including how many trainee/cadet seafarers you have been involved with to complete their sea time leading to STCW certification in the past 5 years. (10 pts).

6.3. Assessment criterion 3

Financial capability and governance (20 points).

You must demonstrate this through identifying and providing details of:

- a. a detailed project plan and budget (provided as an attachment) that identifies all income sources and eligible expenditure relating to the costs of delivering the project. This should include the number and type of trainee/cadet seafarers you anticipate you will employ each year (for example Engineering Cadet, Deck Cadet, Electro-Technical Officers, Trainee Seafarers or seafarers who are upskilling) (12 pts)
- b. your ability to fund the remaining costs of supporting trainee/cadet seafarers and ongoing running costs of your organisation external to the project and any project costs that are not covered by the grant. (8 pts).

7. How to apply

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

Applicants should read all eligibility and assessment criteria closely and attach detailed evidence that supports the assessment criteria.

You will need to set up an account to access our online [portal](#).

To apply, you must:

- complete and submit the application through the online [portal](#)
- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

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 Act 1995](#). 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.

After submitting your application, we may contact you for clarification if we find an error or any missing information, including evidence that supports your eligibility. The acceptance of any additional information provided after the submission of your application is at the discretion of the Program Delegate. Additional information should not materially change your application at the time it was submitted and therefore may be refused if deemed to be purely supplementary.

You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal for your own records.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](#) at [business.gov.au](#) or by calling 13 28 46.

7.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- a project plan and detailed project budget
- a sample training plan
- proposed trainee/cadet seafarers placements (template provided on [business.gov.au](#) and [GrantConnect](#)).

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You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. Individual file sizes cannot be greater than 25MB, while the total of all attachments cannot exceed 50MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.2. Timing of grant opportunity processes

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project around March 2026.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	4 weeks
Approval and announcement of successful applicants	4 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	4 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	1 March 2026
Project completion date	30 March 2029
End date of grant commitment	30 June 2029

7.3. Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, [contact us](#) at business.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. Assessment of grant applications

DISR first review your application against the eligibility criteria.

If eligible, your application will be assessed against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.²

² See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with relevant money we will have regard to:

- the overall objective/s of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought
- prioritising the following roles for grant funding based on industry evidence available, including the most recent report from Industry Skills Australia (ISA):
 - Trainee - Integrated Ratings
 - Deck Cadet
 - Engine Cadet and Electro-Technical Officers
 - seafarers who are upskilling will also be considered.

If applications are scored the same, the Committee will consider value with relevant money alignment to the program objectives, spread of priority roles and geographical spread of applicants to recommend applications for funding.

We also consider any national interest, financial, legal/regulatory, governance or other issue or risk that we identify during any due diligence process that we conduct in respect of the applicant. This includes its directors, officers, senior managers, key personnel, its related bodies corporate (as defined in the *Corporations Act*) or its application that could bring the Australian Government into disrepute if it were to fund the applicant. Such issues and risks include where we consider that funding the application under this grant opportunity is likely to directly conflict with Australian Government policy. Where possible³, we will provide you with an opportunity to comment on any material risks identified during this due diligence process prior to our determining the extent (if any) to which those issues or risks affect our assessment of the application and, if so, whether they are sufficient to warrant the exclusion of your application from the assessment process.

8.2. Who will assess applications?

DISR assess your application against the selection criteria.

We will refer your application to a Committee composed of representatives from DITRDSCA to assess applications. The Committee may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts to inform the assessment process.

The Committee will make recommendations to the Minister for the final decision.

The Committee will assess your application against the assessment criteria and compare it to other eligible applications before recommending which projects to fund. The Committee, and any expert or advisor, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

The Committee may seek additional information about you or your application. They may do this from within the Commonwealth, even if you do not nominate the sources as referees.

³ Subject to national security and other considerations.

The Committee may also consider information about you or your application that is available as a result of the due diligence process or through the normal course of business.

8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government decides which grants to approve, taking into account the recommendations of the Committee and the availability of grant funds.

The Minister'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 Minister will not approve funding if there are insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

9. Notification of application outcomes

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

You can submit a new application for the same (or similar) project in any future funding rounds. 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 for assessment.

9.1. Feedback on your application

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing, whether successful or unsuccessful.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1. The 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 will manage the grant agreement through the online portal. This includes issuing and executing the grant agreement. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have accepted the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur and cannot make any payments 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 Minister. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

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If you enter into an agreement under the MSTI Program, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities for the same trainee/cadet seafarers from other Commonwealth, state or territory or local government granting programs. You cannot apply for MSTI funding for a trainee or cadet for whom you intend to claim the shipping exempt income tax incentive under the [Shipping Reform \(Tax Incentives\) Act 2012](#).

We will use a standard grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Minister.

10.2. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and Australian Government sanctions 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 Workplace Health and Safety
- [Maritime Labour Convention 2006](#)
- [International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeepers for Seafarers 1978 \(STCW\)](#)
- [Navigation Act 2012](#)
- [Marine Order 70 \(Seafarer certification 2014\)](#)
- [Marine Order 71 \(Master and deck officers\)](#)
- [Marine Order 72 \(Engineer Officers\)](#)
- [Marine Order 73 \(Ratings\)](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2018](#).

10.2.1. Child safety requirements

You must comply with all relevant legislation relating to the employment or engagement of anyone working on the project that may interact with children, including all necessary working with children checks.

You must implement the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)⁴ endorsed by the Commonwealth.

You will need to complete a risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse, and put appropriate strategies in place to manage those risks. You must update this risk assessment at least annually.

⁴ <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

You will also need to establish a training and compliance regime to ensure personnel are aware of, and comply with, the risk assessment requirements, relevant legislation including mandatory reporting requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

You will be required to provide an annual statement of compliance with these requirements in relation to working with children.

10.3. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- the expected number of trainee/cadet seafarers to be onboarded.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

10.4. Grant Payments and GST

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 entities⁵.

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.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on [GrantConnect](#) 21 calendar days after the date of execution.

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on [GrantConnect](#). We are required to do this by Section 5.4 of the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles \(CGRPs\)](#). 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.

⁵ See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](#)

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1. 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.

12.2. 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 and outcomes
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds
- changes to the expected number or type of trainee/cadet seafarer.

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.

12.2.1. 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
- changes to the expected number or type of trainee/cadet seafarer
- 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.

12.2.2. Ad-hoc reports

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.

12.2.3. 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
- 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.

12.3. Audited financial acquittal report

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.

12.4. 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 time period allowed in program guidelines
- 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 project grant agreement end date. You can submit a variation request via our online portal.

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.

12.5. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.6. Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

12.7. Evaluation

DITRDSCSA 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.

12.8. 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.’

13. 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 CGRPs.

13.1. 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.

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:

General Manager
Business Grants Hub
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#) with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

13.2. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor 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 or member of an external committee
- 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\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)⁶ on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

13.3. Privacy

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per below, or
- personal information as per below.

⁶ <https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/conflict-interest-policy>

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.

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, the Committee, 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](#)⁷ 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.

13.4. Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

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

⁷ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

We may disclose confidential information:

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

13.5. 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.

14. Glossary

Term	Definition
administering entity	When an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is Australia's national agency responsible for maritime safety, protection of the marine environment, and maritime aviation search and rescue.
application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
assessment criteria	The specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application ranking.
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles (CGRPs)	Establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
completion date	The expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by
date of effect	Can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
decision maker	The person who makes a decision to award a grant.
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.

Term	Definition
eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
eligibility criteria	Refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
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	For the purposes of the CGRPs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: a. under which relevant money⁸ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁹ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
grant activity/activities	Refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake
grant agreement	A legally binding contract that sets out the relationship between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding, and specifies the details of the grant.
grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
grant opportunity	Refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
grant program	A 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant

⁸ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See Section 8, Dictionary.

⁹ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See Section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
	opportunities under a single DITRDCSA Portfolio Budget Statement 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 CGRPs.
grantee	The individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.
non-income-tax-exempt	Not exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i> (Cth) or under Division 1AB of Part III of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1936</i> (Cth).
personal information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is: - Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: 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	A Manager within the Business Grants Hub in DISR with responsibility for administering the program.
program funding or program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
project	A project is defined as the activity undertaken by the grantee under the program. For the MSTI Program 'project' refers to the funding to support costs of eligible trainee/cadet seafarers access to berths to complete sea time required for STCW certification.
selection criteria	Comprises of eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
STCW	<i>International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978</i> (as

Term	Definition
	amended by the 1995 Protocol, the 2010 Protocol, and as further amended from time to time).
Strategic fleet	The Strategic fleet of vessels established by the Commonwealth.
training berth	An allocated cabin or space on a vessel for a trainee or cadet seafarer.
trainee/cadet seafarers	Meaning the following onboard a vessel: ▪ Trainee – Integrated Ratings ▪ Deck Cadet ▪ Engine Cadet and Electro-Technical Officer.
value with money	Value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations. When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to: ▪ the quality of the project proposal and activities; ▪ fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives; ▪ that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved; and ▪ the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
vessel	A ship.
vessel operator	Entity that oversees various aspects of a vessel's operation.
vessel owner	Entity that owns a vessel.