



Queensland
Small Business
Commissioner



Small
Business
Friendly

Small Business Friendly Member Information Pack

A Queensland Small Business
Commissioner program



Queensland
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Providing feedback

For enquiries or feedback about this document, or to request a printed copy, contact the QSBC by phoning 07 3334 2300 or email engagement@qsbcc.qld.gov.au or post to PO Box 15483, City East Qld 4002.

ISSN 2653-5912 (Online)

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Message from the Commissioner

There are more than 482,000 small businesses in Queensland representing over 97% of all business in the state!

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities. They define our identity as a place, as a region, as a destination. Small businesses create jobs and provide essential goods and services to the community, large organisations, and the projects that power development.

Small businesses exist in all industries including:

- Construction
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Rental, hiring and real estate
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Transport, postal and warehousing
- Health care and social assistance
- Retail trade
- Administrative and support services
- Financial and insurance services
- Accommodation and food services
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade.

These small businesses face a multitude of socio-economic challenges and must navigate a range of strategic and operational complexities. Some of the top challenges for small businesses revolve around local and state government activities and functions, particularly in relation to communication, awareness of information and access to support.

The Small Business Friendly Program is a commitment to work collaboratively with the small businesses that help drive our local economies. It provides a network and tools to increase awareness, share ideas, improve support, and reduce barriers.

We look forward to working with you to enhance the operating environment for small businesses in your community.



Dominique Lamb

Small Business Commissioner

Small Business Friendly Member Information Pack





Introduction

The Queensland Small Business Commissioner (QSBC), including the Small Business Commissioner and supporting office, is a passionate supporter of Queensland small businesses.

The Small Business Friendly (SBF) Program provides the framework, support and tools required to help local governments, Queensland Government agencies and large enterprise to realise their role in supporting small businesses.

By bringing people together around a common goal, the program aims to enhance the operating environment for small businesses and provide the opportunities they need to thrive. It is driven by each member's commitment to a simple, yet powerful SBF charter focused on improving how members transact, interact, and support small businesses across Queensland.

It is not a box-ticking exercise – it is designed to create tangible and practical improvements and outcomes that help members not only deliver on their commitments, but also become more efficient and effective. The purpose of this information pack is to provide information about the SBF Program for prospective and current members.

About the program

Being small business friendly means recognising and considering small businesses as an important customer, recipient, and supplier to your community, services and/or organisational activities. It means:

- Considering small businesses when you make key decisions that impact them, such as purchasing and payment practices, tender processes and legislative or policy decisions
- Being mindful of small businesses, their issues and priorities when making decisions for your community and for Queensland
- Agreeing to and signing the charter which outlines your commitment to improve your organisation for your small business community
- Keeping track of your improvements, showcasing innovative activities, and reporting on your progress each financial year.

Central to the SBF Program is a charter which provides a set of simple and clear commitments that members agree to meet. All organisations joining the SBF Program sign the same charter of commitment to small businesses.

The charter helps set a course for organisations and can highlight what you may already be doing to be small business friendly. It also provides guidance about where to focus improvement efforts across the organisation.



Signing the charter is an intentional act that demonstrates each member's clear intent and focus on improving policies, processes, and outcomes for small businesses.

To help you, the QSBC has created the 5-Step Approach and the Accelerator, a range of tools to help support members to start and/or refresh their small business friendly journey.

Throughout all activities, members and organisations interested in joining the program must actively engage with their small business community. Putting people at the centre of these activities ensures small businesses are heard and that your decisions and activities are well informed.

With a collaborative relationship, organisations will be better placed to enhance the operating environment for small businesses.

Member benefits

Members enjoy a range of benefits including:

- A framework and tools to support you to create a strategy and action plan to help you be more small business friendly
- Access to a facilitated community of like-minded organisations to discuss experiences, inform your own efforts, and provide support
- Regular forums to learn more about what others are doing, discuss ideas and what you can do to support small businesses
- Opportunities to showcase your activities that support small businesses, promote your efforts, and provide inspiration to others
- Use of the SBF Program logo to promote your commitment to small businesses and raise awareness of your involvement in the program
- Dedicated advice and support from the QSBC including statewide advocacy and small business assistance.

Member obligations

Joining the SBF Program requires members to commit to:

1. Ensuring the organisation meets or exceeds the SBF Program charter commitments
2. Working collaboratively with small businesses, stakeholders, and other members to enhance the operating environment for small businesses across Queensland
3. Fulfilling the SBF Program member requirements.

This includes the following member requirements each financial year:

- Nominating an authorised representative and proxy for SBF Program activities
- Actively participating in at least four online Roundtable meetings
- Actively participating in at least two Community of Practice meetings
- Providing at least one showcase submission to the QSBC
- Attending the annual conference (in person or virtually)
- Submitting the Accelerator Action Plan to the QSBC within 6 months of joining the program
- Submitting an annual report to the QSBC by 30 September (for the previous financial year).

If an organisation does not meet its member obligations, the QSBC may ask the organisation to provide further information as to why they have not been met. The Small Business Commissioner may then take further action, including but not limited to:

- Providing further assistance
- Cautioning the organisation with suggested steps for improvement, and/or
- Deciding to rescind membership.



Applying to join

Organisations interested in joining the SBF Program will need to complete two key steps:

1. Apply to join the SBF Program
2. Sign the charter.

Step 1 - To apply to join the SBF Program, an interested organisation will need to:

- Engage with their local small businesses to seek their feedback about how they can collaborate better and share ideas
- Obtain approval from the organisation's leadership to apply to join the program (for councils this should be by a resolution at a council meeting)

Submit the completed SBF Membership application form to the QSBC via engagement@qsbc.qld.gov.au

Step 2 - If the application to join is accepted by the QSBC.

- The QSBC will issue a membership letter, and then liaise with the organisation's authorised representative/s to arrange the charter signing event
- The charter signing event is then hosted and arranged by the applicant. The event is attended by the organisation's leaders, local small business leaders, the Small Business Commissioner, and where possible, the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development

- The charter is signed by the Mayor, local small business leaders, the Small Business Commissioner, and where possible, the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development.

Upon completion of these steps the organisation will then become a member of the SBF Program.

Program elements

Roundtable meetings

Roundtable meetings occur online.

The roundtables are an opportunity for members to:

- Discuss small business friendly activities
- Celebrate small business friendly successes
- Make connections with like-minded organisations.

Member organisations are required to actively participate in at least four roundtables each financial year.

The QSBC will facilitate all roundtables and may invite guests to provide updates and information to members.

The QSBC will circulate an agenda in the week prior to each meeting and a high-level summary will be provided to members in the week following each meeting.

Communities of Practice meetings

There are currently four Communities of Practice (CoPs) meetings:

- Placemaking: helping small businesses thrive
- Streamlining: reducing the time and cost of doing business
- Insights: enabling more informed decisions and innovation
- Productivity: growing small business economies.

A meeting for each Community of Practice (CoP) will occur online.

Each CoP meeting is a more detailed opportunity for members to:

- Explore challenges and emerging issues
- Discuss policies, programs, and activities
- Identify areas for improvement across business and government.

Member organisations are required to actively participate in at least two CoP meetings each financial year.

The QSBC will host all CoP meetings and provide secretariat services for the meetings.

The QSBC will circulate an agenda in the week prior to each meeting and a high-level summary will be provided to members in the week following each meeting.

Showcasing

The QSBC is committed to showcasing innovative and best-practice small business friendly activities undertaken by members across Queensland. Showcases will vary depending on the organisation and the local context. This recognises that members will be at different stages of their small business friendly journey.

Members can make a showcase submission at any time throughout the year, for publication and/or promotion by the QSBC using the approved form via engagement@qsbq.qld.gov.au

The QSBC may publish and/or promote showcases in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:

- On the QSBC website
- Across QSBC social media channels or other media
- In person by the Small Business Commissioner and others.

Each financial year, members must submit at least one showcase submission to the QSBC; however, members may submit additional showcases.

The QSBC will also consider requests from members for the QSBC to attend special events to celebrate significant small business friendly successes (subject to availability and budget).



Annual conference

The annual conference provides an opportunity to hear from industry experts and other leaders about innovative and best-practice ideas to help small businesses thrive across Queensland.

The annual conference:

- Will be delivered in person and virtually
- Is complimentary to members and invited key stakeholders (attendees are required to cover travel and accommodation expenses to and from the conference).

All members are required to have at least one person attend either in person or virtually.

The QSBC will invite senior leaders and the two authorised representatives from each member to the conference.

Accelerator

Within six months of joining the SBF Program, members are required to submit the completed Accelerator Action Plan to the QSBC. Their plan will help members to establish a strategy and identify actions that may be executed over the following months or years to support their small businesses.

When completing the Accelerator, members should engage and collaborate both within their organisation and across their small business community. Collaboration is essential to getting people onboard and driving effective activities to enhance the operating environment for small business.

While the Accelerator is a requirement for new members, existing members may choose to use it periodically to help stay focused on being more small business friendly.

Annual report

Members are required to provide an annual report to the QSBC reflecting on their efforts in relation to the charter commitments and highlighting their activities and successes.

The SBF Program is a journey and there is always room to do things differently. Members should be proud of their efforts and promote their achievements. This report may be accompanied by one or more showcase submissions to highlight specific successes in more detail.

Members must submit the report to the QSBC using the Annual Report Template by 30 September each year (for the previous financial year).

Awards

The SBF Program includes annual awards to celebrate and reward excellence in the program. Nominations for awards will demonstrate commitment to the Program. The winners are announced at the conference in the following year.

The awards are:

Member of the Year

Awarded to the member who has demonstrated overall excellence across the SBF Program and delivered significant enhancements to the operating environment for small businesses

Regional Member of the Year

Awarded to the member, in an area with a population under 50,000, who has demonstrated excellence across the SBF Program and delivered significant enhancements to the operating environment for small businesses

Innovator of the Year

Awarded to the member who has demonstrated excellence in the SBF Program and undertaken the most innovative activity that has delivered significant enhancements to the operating environment for small businesses.

The awards are decided by the QSBC and members can only win one award each year.

Contact us

The QSBC is here to support members working to enhance the operating environment for Queensland small businesses.

For matters relating to the SBF Program, please contact the Senior Engagement Officer in the Advocacy team on 07 3334 2310 or via email engagement@qsbq.qld.gov.au

For assistance with Queensland small business enquiries or disputes, please contact the Assistance team on 1300 312 344 or via assistance@qsbq.qld.gov.au

For more information about the QSBC and our programs, please visit qsbq.qld.gov.au or contact us during business hours.





February 2024
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