

Business Growth Fund

Round 6 Guidelines

About the program

The Business Growth Fund (BGF) grants program (Program) targets high-growth businesses who can **accelerate growth, drive Queensland's economy and employ more Queenslanders**.

Program key details

Business size	Small to medium-sized businesses with 5-49 employees (headcount)
Opening date	9am, Wednesday 1 May 2024
Closing date	5pm, Tuesday 14 May 2024
Application process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1: Expression of interest (EOI) • Stage 2: Full application • Stage 3: Pitch
Grant type	Competitive – not all applications will be funded
Available funding	\$50,000 - \$75,000 (excluding GST) per project
Co-contribution	At least 40% of total project costs
Project length	Maximum 12 months
Payment milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestone 1: On approval and acceptance of Funding Agreement – 20% • Milestone 2: On completion of a compliant 3-month report – 40% • Milestone 3: On acquittal and completion at 12 months – 40%
Key documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms and Conditions • Frequently Asked Questions • Preview of the EOI application form

The program provides funding for small to medium-sized high-growth businesses to buy **specialised equipment**, enabling them to unlock growth potential, increase production, expand their workforce, and maximise economic returns to move them into the next stage of growth.

Funded businesses are expected to:

- Increase confidence for growth, transitioning from small to medium-sized
- increase productivity, turnover, profit and/or employment by 20%, and
- improve confidence to automate, scale up, increase market share, diversify and/or exploit exporting opportunities.

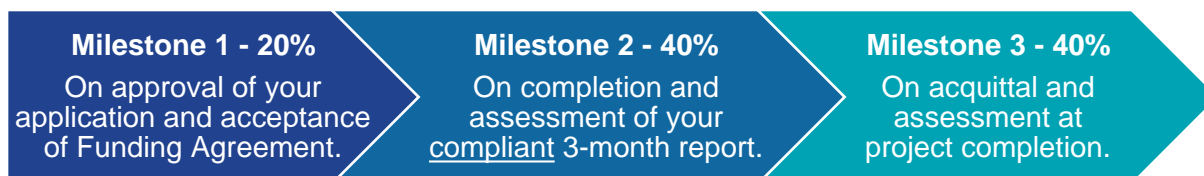
The program is administered by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).



Available funding

Businesses can apply for funding ranging from \$50,000 to \$75,000 (excluding GST).

If successful, funding is paid in three milestone payments:



Successful applicants must co-contribute at least 40% of the total project costs.

DESBT **will not fund** projects with:

- ✗ a total cost of less than \$83,333 (excluding GST) or
- ✗ payments made before submitting the Stage 2: Full Application (project must not have commenced substantially).

The table below shows the breakdown of total project costs and the co-contribution amounts.

	Minimum	Maximum
Total project costs (excluding GST)	\$83,333	\$125,000*
Applicant contribution (at least 40% of total project costs)	\$33,333	\$50,000
Total grant funding	\$50,000	\$75,000

* The total project cost can be more than \$125,000, but the maximum amount DESBT will contribute is \$75,000.

Eligibility criteria

Applying businesses must be an established and financially sound small to medium-sized Queensland business with the potential for high-growth within the next two years.

High-growth is defined as an average annualised 20% increase in turnover and/or employment in the last two years.

Detailed eligibility criteria

To be eligible for this grant, your business must have:

- a **minimum of 5 employees** and **maximum of 49** at the time of applying for the grant;
- an **active Australian Business Number (ABN)** and be **registered for GST**;
- a registered location of **Queensland headquarters** (per your Australian Business Register (ABR) record);
- a **minimum trading history of five years** at the time of applying for the grant;
- a **minimum turnover of \$500,000** for the last financial year (2022/23);
- competitive opportunities in domestic or international markets;
- experienced **two years of high-growth** and have clearly defined high-growth and employment opportunities in Queensland;
- **not** been **approved for funding** under an earlier BGF round; and
- not been insolvent or have owners/directors that are an undischarged or currently bankrupt;

Your business must maintain this eligibility for the **duration** of the grant funded project.

Eligible and ineligible activities

The grant funding must be used to purchase **specialised equipment** aimed at facilitating business growth. This equipment should directly contribute to **increasing employment opportunities** and **maximising economic returns**.

Eligible activities

Specialist equipment is considered an independent or additional piece of complex machinery that will have a direct impact on the operations of the business to increase, automate or enhance productivity and present a significant investment to the business. The type of equipment and the impact it will have, unique to the growth of the business, and local economy, may be taken into consideration.

Examples of **eligible highly specialised equipment** include (but are not limited to):

- ✓ production equipment to meet otherwise unachievable growth demand, or
- ✓ advanced manufacturing or digital equipment and systems, or
- ✓ advanced logistics systems and equipment

Non-eligible activities

We **will not fund**:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ activities or items paid for using crypto-currencies, cash, barter, or services in-kind✗ bain-maries, dishwashers, fridges, ovens or stainless-steel tables✗ dental chairs✗ fleet vehicles, other motor vehicles, trailers, or forklifts✗ franchise fees✗ general business operating costs (e.g., bookkeeping/accounting, tax returns, marketing/advertising activities)✗ GST, registration and fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ goods, services, or fees from related parties (see related party definition below)✗ memberships and joining fees✗ non-specialised office equipment (e.g. desks, chairs, PCs, laptops, monitors)✗ purchase of stock✗ real estate/property, hire, lease, or rental fees✗ salaries✗ services or standard digital technology not considered specialist to the extent required (as determined by assessment panel)✗ travel |
|--|--|

**Related parties include companies with common shareholdings or directors, employees, or immediate family.*

Additional considerations

During assessment of all three stages, DESBT retains discretion to relax eligibility criteria as necessary to align funding allocation with the grant program's objectives. Consideration may be given to adjustments in the grant guidelines to accommodate diverse business ownership or businesses in regional or remote Queensland. For instance, this could involve easing eligibility requirements for small regional businesses to enhance access to government funding aimed at addressing regional challenges and opportunities.

Before you apply

Grant applicants have time to prepare their EOI application – it will open at 9am, 1 May 2024. Submit your application by completing these steps.



1. Read the key documents and information

These Guidelines, [Terms and Conditions](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and the [Sample EOI application form](#)

2. Check your eligibility

Refer to page 3 for additional details.

3. Apply for a [DESBT SmartyGrants Applicant account](#) (if you don't have one already)

4. Ensure your **ABR profile** for your business is up to date (check your ABN status, GST status and Main Business Location)

5. Submit your application

Note: *If necessary, a virtual queue may be implemented on the SmartyGrants portal. Estimated wait times will be provided if you enter the queue.*

Before you submit, your application must:

- be complete, include all required supporting evidence and every question validated.
- include only realistic and probable answers.
- be submitted by the business, not a third-party¹.
- be the only application you submit - only **one application** is allowed per eligible **business or financial beneficiary**² under each round.

¹ Third parties can include a business or a financial advisor, such as an accountant, or the supplier mentioned in the grant funded activity. Third party can also relate to IP addresses (where you submit your application from).

² DESBT considers a related party and/or financial beneficiary to be those who gain an advantage and/or profits from something including receipt or distribution from a trust, will or life insurance policy. This can include companies with common shareholdings, directors, employees, or immediate family.

Apply at [Business Growth Fund Program | Business Queensland](#) when the grant opens.

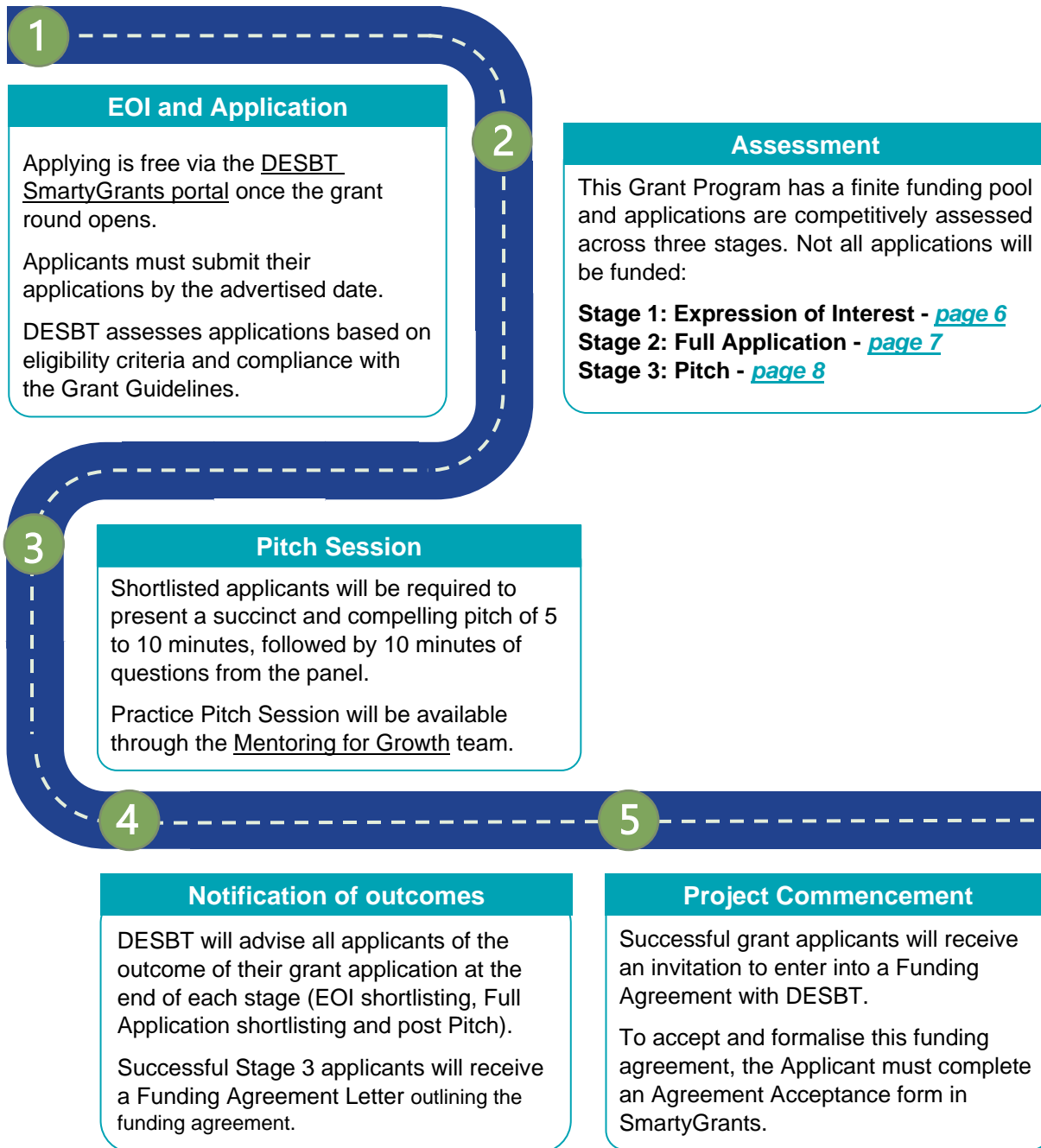
Key Application Dates

	Open	Close	Notification
Stage 1	9am, Wednesday 1 May 2024	5pm, Tuesday 14 May 2024	Est. 4 June 2024
Stage 2	1 July 2024	12 July 2024	Est. 13 August 2024
Stage 3	30 August 2024	13 September 2024	Est. Late Sept 2024

Note: *DESBT reserves the right to modify the key dates at any time. Applicants will be notified changes where possible.*

DESBT provided notice of the grant and access to supporting documents on 18 April 2024.

Application Process



Detailed application process

Stage 1: Expression of Interest

In your Expression of Interest (EOI) application, you will be asked to:

Details

- confirm the business meets the eligibility criteria (see page 2)
- provide core business and contact information
- provide a summary of the project, how it innovative and how the equipment is **highly specialised**
- provide a description of the high-growth opportunity achievable through implementation of your project; and
- confirm your financial contribution.

Supporting Evidence

- *Verify the main business location*
- *Verify the link between trust and business conducting the business activity*
- *Verify the link between the authorised contact and the business conducting the business activity*
- Provide a copy of the related **business plan**.

NB. If invited to progress to a Full Application (Stage 2), Applicants will be required to provide evidence to support claims regarding minimum turnover and financial viability, as outlined in the criterion on page 2.

Provide a copy of the related business plan

Included in the business plan should be:

1. **Executive Summary:** An overview of the business plan, highlighting key points such as business concept, target market, selling proposition and financial projections.
2. **Business Description:** Detailed information about the business including its mission, vision, values, legal structure, location and history.
3. **Market Analysis:** Research and analysis of the industry, target market, competitors, and market trends.
4. **Projects or Services:** Description of the products or services offered by the business.
5. **Marketing and Sales Strategy:** Plan for reach and acquiring growth, including market channels, promotional strategies, sales tactics and customer acquisition costs.
6. **Operations and Management:** Overview of the business operations, organisation structure, management team, advisory boards, and key personnel.
7. **Financial Projections:** Forecasted financial statements, including income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement, for the next three to five years.
8. **Funding Request:** Clear explanation of the funding request, including the amount requested, how the funds will be used, and the expected return on investment.
9. **Appendix:** Additional supporting documents, such as market research reports, legal documents, and other relevant information.

💡 Please refer to the [Business Plan Template](#) as a reference for what the Department requires for assessment purposes.

Stage 2: Full Application

If your **Stage 1** EOI application is shortlisted, you will be invited to submit a full application.

In addition to the information provided in the EOI, in the full application you will be asked to:

Details

- update (if required) the core business and contact information,
- provide detail on whether you will need to secure other financial support to fund your co-contribution, and
- provide details of your growth over the last two years

Supporting Evidence

- provide a **letter from a registered accountant** (See section below for details):
 - declaring 2021/22 and 2022/23 turnover and employee headcount
 - declaring 2023/24 actual + projected (April to June) turnover and employee headcount
 - certifying the attached balance sheet and profit and loss statements
- provide a simple **balance sheet** for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years (see section on page 7 for details).
- provide a simple **profit and loss** statement for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years (see section on page 8 for details).
- provide independent supplier **quote/s (no more than 3) or proposals** that provide comprehensive details of the specialised equipment that you intend to purchase as part of the project (see *Supplier Quotes on page 8*).

NB. Once shortlisted to progress to Stage 3: Pitch, applicants **cannot** vary their project.

Registered accountant's letter

The accountant must be registered with either:

- [Certified Practising Accountant](#) (CPA) or
- [Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand](#) (CAANZ) or
- [Institute of Public Accountants](#) (IPA)

Please let the accountant know if they don't appear in the public search that they will also need to provide a certificate or registration including:

- Accountant's full name
- Registration number, expiry, and type held

💡 Refer to the [Sample Accountant's Letter](#) provided as a reference for what the Department requires for assessment purposes.

Balance sheet

The balance sheet should include:

- **Dates:** 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 **and** 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.
- **Asset Breakdown:** Current assets (i.e cash, accounts receivable) and non-current assets (i.e property, equipment).
- **Liability Breakdown:** Current liabilities (i.e accounts payable, short-term loans) and non-current liabilities (i.e long-term loans, deferred tax liabilities).
- **Equity Details:** Including retained earnings, share capital, and any other equity components.
- **Intellectual Property (IP):** Indicate the value of IP, debt holders, and terms.

Profit and loss

The profit and loss statements are a financial report that summarises revenues, costs and expenses over a specific period and provides insight into a company's financial performance.

The statements should include:

- **Dates:** 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 **and** 1 July 2022 to 30 June 23.
- **Expenses:** Provide a breakdown of all expenses incurred by the business, including operating expenses (e.g., wages/salary/payroll, rent, utilities), cost of goods sold (if applicable), and any other relevant expenses.
- **Income Sources:** List all sources of income generated by the business during the reporting period, including sales revenue, service fees, interest income, etc.
- **Net Profit (Turnover) Calculation:** Calculate the net profit (turnover) by subtracting total expenses from total income, providing a clear indication of the business's profitability during the reporting period.

Supplier quotes

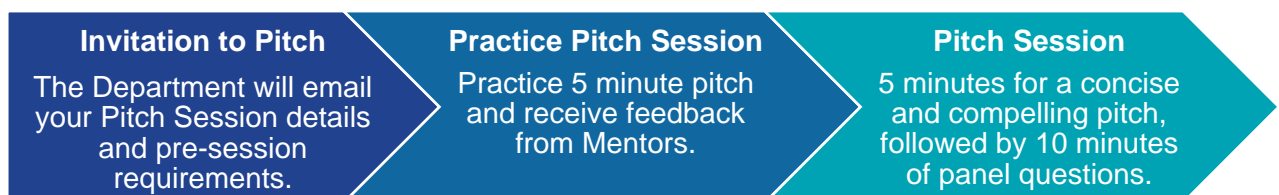
Quotes must be comprehensive and include:

- Supplier details – supplier name, ABN (if Australian), contact details and website URL.
- Details of the project, description of services and outline of key activities or items.
- Quotes must be a formal quote/proposal on the supplier's letterhead, unless.
- It's a shopping cart for an online purchase, then a screenshot/print out is acceptable.

💡 Please refer to the [Sample Supplier Quote](#) provided as a reference for what the Department considers to be a comprehensive quote for assessment purposes.

Stage 3: Pitch

If your Full Application is shortlisted, you will be invited to pitch to business experts and DESBT executives. The panel pitch is a critical stage in the application process, providing an opportunity to draw out the merits of the project proposed to be part funded by the grant. To assist you to prepare for this stage, DESBT provides an optional practice pitch session to specifically provide feedback on the delivery, content, and style of the pitch.



Assessment

A competitive assessment process is conducted during each stage of the grant application process.

Applications will be **assessed** for **compliance** against the **eligibility criteria** and their **competitiveness** against the program guidelines and assessment criteria.

Applicants must demonstrate the extent to which the grant funded activity will:

1. support the business to reach its high-growth goals
2. be likely to create jobs growth within the business
3. demonstrate value for money

DESBT may also distribute successful applications equitably across the state, various industry sectors (including priority sectors) and ensure a representation of Queensland's diverse business population.

Notification of outcome

DESBT will advise all applicants of the outcome of their application following each stage of the application process. We will endeavour to do this as promptly as possible, considering the volume of applications received.

Due to the grant program's comprehensive assessment, due diligence, and government approval process, applicants can typically expect to receive notification of their submission's outcome within a reasonable timeframe following the Key Application Dates outlined on page 4.

All outcomes will be communicated via email. Successful Stage 3 applicants will receive a Funding Agreement Letter detailing the proposed funding agreement and inviting the Applicant to accept the funding terms.

Funding agreement and payment

Grant Recipients who accept the funding terms and enter into a funding agreement with DESBT will receive funding of up to **\$75,000** (excluding GST). Funding is paid in three instalments:

1. Milestone 1: On application approval and acceptance of the Funding Agreement – 20%
2. Milestone 2: On completion and assessment of your 3-month report – 40%
3. Milestone 3: On acquittal and assessment at project completion at 12-months – 40%

Recipient completed activities

Grant Recipients must complete their project within 12 months of receiving their Funding Agreement Letter.

You must keep all application evidence, supplier quotes, corresponding invoices, receipts and bank transactions for audit purposes.

If you vary your approved project in any way, you must inform DESBT immediately. See the ['Making changes to your approved grant'](#) for more information.

Reporting

Grant Recipients must complete:

1. a **three-month project report**
 - The report is to include details on the progress you have made with your project, any issues you've experienced and answer some questions about the process so far. This report is mandatory to receive the Milestone 2 payment.
2. a **final acquittal report** on completion of the project
 - The report is to include details on the assets/services received, project implementation, and the impact on the business including the results and outcomes received. This report is mandatory to receive the Milestone 3 payment.

Further information

For more information about grants or your application, call the DESBT **Small Business Hotline 1300 654 687** or grants@desbt.qld.gov.au

Policy Owner:	Deputy Director-General, Investment Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
Approval Date:	10/04/2024
Effective Date:	10/04/2024
Version:	v.1

Privacy Statement

DESBT is collecting your personal information for the purposes of:

- managing the Business Growth Fund grants program;
- promoting relevant issues and services to you; and
- researching and reporting on grant programs.

DESBT, including its employees, may use and disclose the personal information provided in the application to third parties for these purposes. Third parties include:

- Queensland government departments and agencies
- Commonwealth government departments and agencies
- Other state or territory government departments and agencies; and
- non-government organisations.

DESBT or the Minister responsible for the Small Business portfolio may publish grant recipient information on government websites or in media releases while publicising the outcomes of the program. Published information may include business name, funding amount, suburb/postcode, and outcome details.

DESBT will only use your information for these purposes. DESBT will handle your personal information in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. DESBT will not otherwise use or disclose the information unless authorised or required by law.

You may view the Queensland Government's privacy guide at www.qld.gov.au/legal/privacy

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