



## 19 Grant Ideas to Boost Your Startup Business in 2024

**DELL FOR STARTUPS**



**GRANTS OFFICE**  
empowering communities

**DELL**Technologies



## Build Your Business Through Grant Opportunities

As of 30 June 2023, Australia boasted a thriving landscape of over 2.5 million actively trading businesses. Surprisingly, startups and small businesses accounted for 97.3% of these businesses. Small businesses have a massive impact on both our domestic and international markets. To help put it into perspective, here are some quick stats on small businesses and their impact. Small businesses:

- Provide jobs for 5.1 million Australians - that's two out of five private sector jobs
- Contribute over \$500 billion to Australian GDP - nearly one-third of the nation's total GDP
- Employ 42% of all apprentices and trainees in training

Statistically, a small business owner earns less than the average full-time wage, and 61% of small business owners work 39 hours or more per week. Important to also highlight is that 43% of micro and small businesses are non-profitable.

If small businesses are struggling in today's economy, with 75% of small business owners taking home less than the average wage, what support programs are out there and how do they help?

### Grant Funding Landscape for startup Businesses in Australia

In Australia, there's a wide array of grants available to support small businesses, reflecting the commitment of all levels of government to fostering a diverse and robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. While there are specific grants aimed at advancing startup businesses, it's also strategically beneficial for these businesses to explore grants that are not exclusively targeted toward startups. Many of these programs include priorities in their guidelines that align with projects that enhance the prospects of startups.

### Federal Funding Sources

Federal funding opportunities for startup businesses in Australia are limited in comparison to other levels of government. Regardless, these grants play a crucial role in supporting the growth and development of startup businesses. These initiatives, managed by federal agencies such as the Department of Industry, Science, and Resources, aim to stimulate innovation, foster research and development, and enhance the global competitiveness of startups.

These grants are often highly competitive and are awarded based on the technical merits and commercial potential of the proposed projects, as well as their anticipated impact on the Australian economy. Some of the key examples include:

- **Industry Growth Program:** This program provides advisory services and grants to innovative small and medium businesses undertaking commercialisation and growth projects within the National Reconstruction Fund priority areas. Matched grant funding from \$50,000 to \$5,000,000 are available if deemed eligible from the advisory services stage.
- **CSIRO Kick-Start Fund:** Provides matched funding for Australian startups and small businesses to access CSIRO's research expertise and capabilities. This support can be pivotal in the growth and development of women-led businesses.
- **Energy Efficiency Grants for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):** Supports businesses to upgrade or replace inefficient equipment to improve their energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Grants from \$10,000 to \$25,000 will cover up to 100% of eligible expenditure.

## State and Local Funding Opportunities

At State and Local Government levels in Australia, there is a richer diversity of funding opportunities available specifically targeting startup businesses. These programs are often more tailored, flexible, and responsive to the unique challenges and needs faced by startup entrepreneurs. They are designed to address specific barriers that startups commonly encounter, such as access to capital, networking opportunities, and mentorship. State and Local initiatives also tend to focus on sectors where startup businesses are prevalent. Examples of such programs include:

- **Queensland - Female Founders Co-Investment Fund:** This program focuses on increasing investments in female-founded businesses in Queensland, offering support to leverage funding for new investment and business capacity building.
- **New South Wales - MVP Ventures Program:** Designed to support promising start-ups, with funds to progress from proof-of-concept to a minimum viable product.
- **Victoria – Enabling Tourism Fund:** This program funds regional and rural Victorian tourism projects to help deliver demand-driving tourism infrastructure projects across Victoria.

Additionally, many Australian workforce grants prioritise projects that support jobseekers from groups who may experience greater disadvantage in the labour market.

One notable example is the ‘Jobs Victoria Fund’, a Victorian government initiative. This program provides wage subsidies to businesses that hire jobseekers from these priority groups. The aim is to support employers to create job opportunities, particularly in industries impacted by the pandemic.

Securing funding from these competitive programs not only provides financial support but also enhances the credibility and visibility of startup businesses, fostering further growth and investment opportunities.

## Funding Priorities

Below are some federal and state grants that startup businesses can pursue either on their own, or in partnership with other organisations.

While there are a handful of specific grants that startup businesses can apply for, it’s important not to disregard general small business funding. These programs, although not startup-specific, can provide valuable funding for business expansion, workforce development, and even global exports.

	Opportunity Name	Funding Amount and Deadline	Purpose	Program Page Link
1	Industry Growth Program	Advisory Services available, with additional grants for eligible applications from \$50,000 - \$2,500,000	The program will support innovative small and medium businesses undertaking commercialisation and/ or growth projects	<a href="#">Link</a>
2	CSIRO Kick-Start Fund	Grants between \$10,000 - \$50,000, Applications open year-round	Offering funding to access CSIRO’s research expertise and capabilities to help grow and develop their business.	<a href="#">Link</a>
3	Energy Efficiency Grants for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	Grants between \$10,000 - \$25,000, Applications close 8 April 2024	Provides grants for businesses to upgrade inefficient equipment that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and assist SMEs manage energy us-age.	<a href="#">Link</a>



4	Small Business Export Loan	Loans of \$20,000 to \$350,000, Applications open year-round, with a response within 2 weeks of submission	The loan provides SMBs export businesses with loans to cover up to 80% to secure an export contract or order with an overseas organisation	<a href="#">Link</a>
5	Small Business Skills and Training Boost	Eligible small businesses can receive an additional 20% tax de-duction for external training courses	This initiative provides small businesses with a bonus tax education to help them train new staff and upskill	<a href="#">Link</a>
6	NSW Gov - MVP Ventures Program	Grants between \$25,000 - \$50,000, covering up to 50% of eligible costs, open until 30 April 2024	Designed to support startups with the funds needed to progress from a proof-of-concept to a minimum viable product	<a href="#">Link</a>
7	NSW Gov - SafeWork Small Business Rebate	Up to \$1,000 to cover eligible safety items, applications open year-round	Assists small businesses to improve work health and safety for their business and workers	<a href="#">Link</a>
8	NT Gov - Business Innovation Program	Up to \$30,000 available, applications open bi-yearly	Supports businesses to develop and commercialise innovation and aims to increase investment in start-ups and early-stage growth businesses in the Northern Territory	<a href="#">Link</a>
9	NT Gov - Smart Business Solutions	Grants of up to \$20,000, with applications accepted year-round	Provides grant funding to Territory enterprises to adopt efficient, innovative technologies to reduce their water, waste and energy costs	<a href="#">Link</a>
10	QLD Gov - Female Founders Co-Investment Fund	Grants between \$50,000 - \$200,000, Applications open year-round	The FFCF will provide support to leverage funding to secure new investment to build business capacity	<a href="#">Link</a>
11	QLD Gov - Business Energy Saving and Transformation Rebate	Rebates up to \$12,500, covering up to 50% of the purchase of eligible equipment/installation, Applications open year-round	This scheme provides rebates to eligible small businesses to install energy-efficient equipment to reduce consumption and lower energy bills	<a href="#">Link</a>
12	QLD Gov - Manufacturing Hubs Grant Program	Grants between \$10,000 - \$500,000, covering 50% of eligible costs, open until 30 June 2024	Assists eligible QLD manufacturing businesses to become more productive, build advanced manufacturing facilities and create the jobs of the future	<a href="#">Link</a>
13	QLD Gov - Gambling Community Benefit Fund	Grants of up to \$35,000 available, future rounds opening early 2024	Provides support to not-for-profit groups to provide services, leisure activities and opportunities for QLD communities	<a href="#">Link</a>
14	SA Gov - Seed-Start Grant	Grants between \$50,000 - \$500,000 depending on business stage, with applications accepted on an ongoing basis	Provides SA businesses with financial support to assist with the cost of commercialising a service or product that is unique and has a sustainable competitive advantage	<a href="#">Link</a>
15	TAS Gov - Small Business Advice and Financial Guidance Program	Grants of up to \$1,500, with applications closing 30 May 2024	Provides businesses access to specialist financial services or business support to assist in their growth and transition	<a href="#">Link</a>





16	VIC Gov - Digital Jobs for Manufacturing	Grants of up to \$5,000, with applications closing 17 May 2024	Assists Victorian manufacturing businesses adapt to a digital environment by providing fully subsidised digital skills training	<a href="#">Link</a>
17	VIC Gov - Enabling Tourism Fund	Grants between \$20,000 up to \$500,000, with applications closing 28 March 2024	Supports the delivery of tourism infrastructure projects across regional and rural Victoria	<a href="#">Link</a>
18	WA Gov - New Industries Fund: Innovation Booster Grant	Grants of up to \$40,000, with applications for the current round closing 4 April 2024.	Helps small and medium Western Australian businesses with funding needed to advance their innovative idea, project, or activity in WA	<a href="#">Link</a>
19	WA Gov - Collie Futures Small Grants Program	Grants of up to \$100,000 available, with applications closing 30 June 2024	Supports projects that aim to stimulate the local economy and support community needs	<a href="#">Link</a>

### Getting Grant Ready & Common Proposal Elements

Grant funding can be just what you need to launch a new program or project, but before you even begin looking for that perfect grant opportunity, you need to get your grant toolbox ready. Your toolbox is essential for every grant. While some tools may need to be added over time for specific grants, each toolbox should contain the basics.

What do you need to get started?

#### Assemble your team.

First, you need a grants team. Your team will include, but not necessarily be limited to, a project lead/manager, a lead writer (if you don't have someone with experience, there are contractual options), a member of your finance team, and at least one member of each of the departments/divisions that will be part of the grant project or program if awarded. You will also need the approval of appropriate management staff before applying for a grant, so it is important to include them in your team as well or at least keep updated as you plan. Smaller organisations may require team members to wear multiple hats.

#### Collect your documents.

Next, you will need to collect your key documents. These are standard documents most grants require. These include your most recent complete financial statement, business registration, proof of non-profit/DGR status (if applicable), most recent budget, organisational chart, and listing of the board of directors. Some grants will also request copies of strategic plans, annual reports, the history of the organisation, needs assessments, applicable licenses/certificates, and key policies such as non-discrimination and conflict of interest policies (if you don't have these it is a good idea to be pro-active and create them in advance, especially if they have to be approved by legal and your board).

Additional documents such as demographics, key programmatic or applicable data, or access to updated data sources, letters of support can also be helpful. These documents will need to be updated at least annually. This is a suitable time to review and update your mission and vision statement if it has not been done in quite a while. Having an updated strategic plan also helps not only in the grant application process but also helps identify which grants best align with your goals and needs, now and in the near future, allowing you to apply for the grants that best meet your needs.

### Register for grant agency systems.

If you are applying, or planning to apply, for federal or state grants you will need to set up certain required account registrations, which will need to be kept active and up to date. Key accounts to register for include but are not limited to Grant Connect, SmartyGrants and your local state grants system (often each state has its own. Make sure to register for all agency systems that apply to your business).

Failure to set up and keep these accounts current can delay or prevent an organisation from applying for a grant opportunity. Many of these accounts require renewal to be kept active. Make sure you can access these accounts regularly and keep passwords, users, and required uploaded documents up to date. Some accounts require certain documents to be uploaded within a certain period after approval or change. Make sure you are aware of and abide by all account requirements. Note who the assigned user for the account is, as well as any important renewal dates. If an assigned user leaves or the organisation moves, make sure the account is updated as soon as possible. Assigned users should provide their username and password for access before their departure if possible.

### Develop your problem statement.

Now you are ready to start your grant search. To help narrow your search, consider what is the problem or project you are looking to fund. Develop a problem statement. Consider grant opportunities and sources that fit this need. Do not try to fit your project or program into an ill-fitting grant. This is a recipe for wasted time and an unfunded grant.

### Develop your project plan.

In addition to your problem or project/program statement, also have a plan of action, plan timeline, budget estimate, sustainability plan (how will you continue to fund and run the program after the grant ends, if applicable), and benefits of the plan, program, or project to the larger community.

Having a well-thought-out ready-to-go project or program shows the funders you have invested time, talent, and knowledge into your proposal. It is also beneficial to have this information always ready as some grant opportunities arise with short deadlines, which makes organisations that are otherwise unprepared unable to apply in time.

### Grant Term Glossary

- **Applicant:** The organisation requesting a grant. This entity will be responsible for the management of the project if awarded. Also known as the lead application or recipient.
- **Application Package:** A collection of one or more files that has all the information and forms needed to apply for a particular grant.
- **Budget Narrative:** A description of the budget, including explanations about how each line-item amount in the budget is derived, the totals, the purpose of purchased supplies and services, and the justification of the size of salaries, fringe benefits, and indirect costs. Also known as the budget justification.
- **Budget Period:** The interval of time that a project period is divided into for budgetary purposes, usually 12 months.
- **Competitive Grant:** A discretionary funding program where applications are scored by subject-matter experts and the most highly scored applications are considered for funding. In most cases, only some of the applicants will get an award.
- **Co-Contribution:** A type of cost-share where the funder expects the recipient to contribute an amount equal to a certain portion of what the funder has granted. Co-contributions are usually presented in the form of a ratio, such as a 1:1 match (meaning: applicants must provide a dollar- for-dollar match for each grant dollar requested).
- **Deadline:** The date when an applicant must submit a grant application (by mail or electronically) to be

considered for funding. In most cases, the funder requires that the application be received by the deadline date. Extensions are rare and usually only granted under exceptional circumstances (e.g., an organisation-wide, life-threatening emergency and not 'our internet was down that day').

- **Expression of Interest (EOI):** Often the first stage of a two-stage application process. Commonly less cumbersome to complete than a full application. Successful applications who progress beyond the EOI phase will often be invited to complete a full application as part of stage two.
- **Funding Priorities:** The one or more areas of focus of the grant funder. They are particularly interested in seeing applications on these topics. There are several types of priorities:
  - **Grant:** A funding opportunity where a government or other funder provides monies to organisations to address a particular purpose.
  - **Grant Application Reviewer:** An individual who reads and scores applications for a funder. Also known as a field reader, a proposal reviewer, or a peer reviewer.
  - **Grantee:** An individual or organisation that has been awarded funds under a grant program. Also known as a recipient.
  - **Project Period:** The total amount of time that a funder authorises a grantee to complete the approved work of the project described in the application. Project periods of more than one year are typically divided into budget periods.
  - **Request for Proposals (RFP):** A general term for a funding solicitation that includes information about the program and what applicants will need to do to apply.

To summarise, navigating the landscape of startup grants, while at first may be daunting, can be rewarding. By understanding the different types of grants available at each level of government, whilst also identifying eligibility criteria and leveraging effective strategies for application, you can significantly increase the strength of your application, improving your chances of securing funding.

Moving forward, it's essential for startups and small businesses to remain resilient and flexible in their grant seeking efforts, and to think outside the box when it comes to implementing projects and identifying applicable funding opportunities.

Taking a proactive approach, by assembling your grants team, collecting applicable documents, and staying up to date with federal and state grant registries, you give yourself the best shot when it comes to crafting and submitting a strong application.

The Dell Grants Support Program is available to help Dell for Startup customers find and apply for grants for technology projects. Assistance is available to grantseekers with all levels of experience across all sectors (private and public).

For more information about The Dell Grants program email us at [anz.d4s@dell.com](mailto:anz.d4s@dell.com)