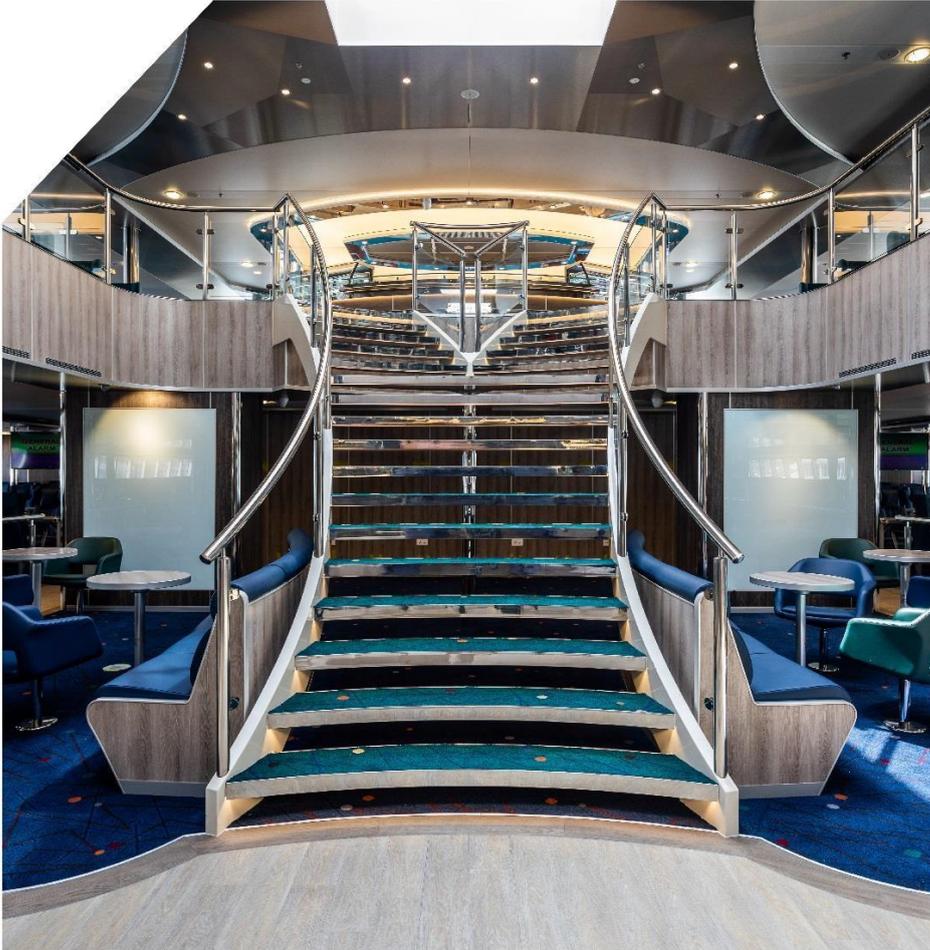


July 2020

# Accelerating Trade Grant Program



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## Background and program objective

Launched in February 2019, The Tasmanian Trade Strategy 2019-2025 sets a coordinated whole-of-government approach to work with business and partners to grow trade, both domestically and internationally. It sends a positive signal to the market and provides a consistent long-term framework for action.

Initiative 4.1 under the Tasmanian Trade Strategy 2019-2025, the Accelerating Trade Grant Program (the Program) helps Tasmanian businesses to collaborate, expand their presence and introduce Tasmanian products and services to the world.

The Program has been updated for 2020-21 to recognise and reflect the impact of COVID-19 on Tasmanian businesses, and to support them in accelerating trade outcomes into the future.

## Key features

- Funding will be made available to Tasmanian businesses on a co-contribution basis to support market research and business-matching services, promotional activities and materials, attendance at domestic and international trade shows and events. It will also be available to assist with inbound buyer visits to Tasmania, study tours, travel to undertake marketing activities, supply chain efficiency improvements and cluster development, and will support businesses to undertake activities that will enable them to re-establish or re-connect with markets and customers where relationships or supply has been interrupted by COVID-19.
- Preference will be given to businesses from key sectors, targeting priority markets, as outlined in the Tasmanian Trade Strategy 2019 – 2025, noting that for the purposes of this Program, the domestic market is taken to mean the Australian mainland.
- Grants will be provided on a co-contribution basis, up to a maximum of \$10 000 in any one financial year per applicant.
- Funding will be provided to Tasmanian businesses that demonstrate that the Activity which is the subject of their application will lead to an opportunity for increased trade. This may involve exploring a new market with an existing product or service; or promoting a new product or service in an existing market. Applications will also be considered where the business can demonstrate that markets outside of Tasmania existing prior to COVID-19 have been affected, and that new or updated activities are required to re-enter or re-establish a presence in that market.
- The Program has an annual financial year allocation and the Program will be closed if the allocation for any financial year is fully exhausted.

## Definitions

**Activity or Project** means the activity(ies) which are the subject of a funding application under the Program.

**Eligible Expenditure** is expenditure presented in an application and approved by the Department. Refer to the Eligible Expenditure section below and *Attachment A: Accelerating Trade Grant Program: expense rates and supporting evidence* for more information.

**Funding Agreement** means a Funding Agreement entered into between an approved applicant and the Crown in Right of Tasmania.

**Program** means this Accelerating Trade Grant Program.

**Tasmanian Business** means a business that's products and services are produced, transformed or value-added in Tasmania and are, or are intended to be, despatched from Tasmania.

## Eligibility

Tasmanian Businesses looking to increase the value of products or services sold can apply and assistance may be provided if the following criteria are satisfied:

- The business must have an Australian Business Number and be registered for GST.
- The business's products and services must be produced, transformed or value-added in Tasmania, and be despatched from Tasmania
- The business must demonstrate the necessary capabilities, resources and capacity to undertake the trade development Activity.

A business cannot receive in excess of \$10 000 per financial year under this Program.

For the Activity for which the applicant is seeking funding - the business must not have received, or plan to make a claim for, funding under the Australian Government's Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) Scheme, or any other government or industry organisation assistance scheme.

Government agencies or business enterprises are not eligible for support under the Program.

Annual sales turnover must have been greater than \$150 000 and less than \$20 million in at least one of the last two full financial years and/or it can be demonstrated that annual sales are likely to fall within this range in the current or next financial year.

The business must not be a consultant or intermediary.

The business must financially viable and must not be under external administration, been appointed a liquidator, being wound up, dissolved or trading insolvent.

Note that eligibility to apply does not guarantee that an application will be approved.

## Selection criteria

All applications are subject to a merit assessment, made by the Department. The Department's decision will be final. The Department will consider:

1. The value for money presented by the application, particularly considering the potential for the Activity to lead to an increase in the value of products or services sold by Tasmanian businesses, and/or to lead to an improvement in brand awareness in targeted markets.
2. The sector and market that the business identifies with in its application. Priority will be given to products or services from key sectors and markets identified in the Trade Strategy (noting that for the purposes of this Program, the 'domestic' market is taken to mean the Australian mainland).
3. The research conducted and presented which substantiates the activities outlined in the application.
4. The applicant's previous trade, marketing and business development experience and success, and its business plan or marketing strategy as detailed in the application.
5. The nature, suitability and quality of the trade Activity, as detailed in the application, including its eligibility under this Program and the manner and degree to which it aligns with the objectives of the Program.

## Eligible expenditure

The Program provides a grant payment of up to 50 per cent of approved expenses for Tasmanian businesses that demonstrate that the Activity which is the subject of their application will lead to an opportunity for increased trade in markets outside of the State. This may involve exploring a new market with an existing product or service; or promoting a new product or service in an existing market. Applications where a business can demonstrate that new or updated activities are required to re-enter or re-establish a presence in a market impacted by COVID-19 will also be considered.

The maximum amount that will be provided under any application is \$10 000; and no more than \$10 000 will be provided to a single applicant in any one financial year.

For approved applicants, the Program also provides a 'per day' allowance for on-ground activities including accommodation, travel, meals and beverages.

The Department will make decisions on eligibility and rate of expense items presented in applications, and the Department's decision will be final. More information on eligible expenditure, and the evidence required to substantiate such expenditure is included as Attachment A.

As a guide, the following expense items may be eligible for up to a 50 per cent grant contribution.

### Market research and business matching services

- Commissioning market research
- Commissioning business matching services (using a third party to identify and engage with contacts in eligible markets that can import, purchase, distribute or support your product or service locally)
- Study tours
- Innovative communication platforms to ensure communication with key buyers whilst travel is restricted

## Promotional activities, materials and supporting services

Promotional activities, materials and supporting services clearly linked to a market, including but not limited to:

- Campaigns in TV, print and/or magazine media
- Website design/re-design where it identifiably relates to a new market (ie. language translation, culturally appropriate imaging etc)
- Business software or activities that support increased online promotion or new e-commerce opportunities
- Online promotions including social media campaigns
- Printed brochures or pamphlets
- Digital productions such as DVDs or multimedia presentations
- Cost of samples (note that samples are to be priced at the wholesale cost; and that the maximum grant funding for this expense item is \$1 000)
- Freight for samples (maximum grant funding for this expense is \$250)
- Attending trade exhibitions and promotions; including exhibition stand or promotional space fees; exhibition equipment and infrastructure; and freighting promotional items to and from exhibitions or promotions (person-specific costs such as trade show entry or workshop registration are capped to one person per application).

## Inbound buyer visits to Tasmania

Costs incurred by the applicant associated with interstate or international buyers visiting Tasmania, including airfares, accommodation and meals.

Note: Grant funding for this expense (inclusive of airfares, accommodation, meals) is capped at \$3 000 per Tasmanian visit, and any grant funding provided will be included as part of the \$10 000 maximum that may be provided to a single applicant in any one financial year).

## Travel to an off-island market

Cost of return economy airfare ex-Tasmania for one person per application.

## Supply chain improvement activities

Supply chain improvement activities which will lead to increased opportunities for trade, as identified following completion of a supply chain gap analysis.

## Cluster activities

Cluster activities where Tasmanian businesses combine efforts to improve cost effectiveness and efficiency to increase the value of products or services sold to the mainland domestic or international market. Eligible businesses may apply individually or, if a single business is representing a broader industry or a group of businesses, it may apply as the 'lead business'.

## Eligible Expenditure - On-ground expenses – per day allowance

An allowance to assist with on-ground expenses (accommodation, meals, beverages and transport) is available under the program and can be claimed at a rate of \$250 for one person, per night spent outside of Tasmania. Grant recipients are not required to provide receipts or proof-of-expenditure for these cost items, it will be paid as a basic allowance.

The applicant must be away from Tasmania for at least one night to be eligible for the daily allowance. The maximum number of nights away that can be claimed for on-ground expenses is seven (\$1 750).

The applicant's accommodation, meals, beverages and transport will not be claimable as an eligible expense outside of the per day allowance.

Any per-day on-ground allowance paid is included in the \$10 000 per business threshold for any financial year.

## Ineligible Expenditure

The Department will make decisions on eligibility of expense items presented in applications, and the Department's decision will be final. Generally, the following expenses will not be considered eligible expenditure:

- Retrospective expenditure. Applicants must receive grant approval prior to the Activity for which funding is sought taking place. Applicants should allow **up to three weeks** for assessment to take place.
- 'In-house', 'in kind' or related-party costs/expenditure including wages and salaries.
- Fees paid or payable directly to the Tasmanian Government for attendance/involvement in trade activities or initiatives.
- Expenditure on similar activities that have been, or will be, supported through the Australian Government's Export Market Development Grants Scheme, or any other government or industry organisation market development assistance scheme.
- Person-specific costs such as exhibition or workshop registration or entry, for more than one person per application.

## Application and evaluation process

### Application Process

Applications must be submitted and assessed **prior to** the trade Activity taking place. Applicants should **allow up to three weeks** for assessment to take place. Steps in the process are as follows:

1. A business reviews the Program Guidelines and is briefed on the Program by the Department of State Growth. The Department will forward a link to an application form if basic eligibility is confirmed. At this stage the business should review the application form in detail to confirm eligibility.
2. The application is completed and lodged online through the SmartyGrants application.
3. The application is reviewed by the Department.
4. The Department makes a decision.
5. The business is advised of the outcome in writing within three weeks.

## Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will receive a Funding Agreement for acceptance, signature and return to the Department.

1. Successful applicants will need to submit the following information within one month of the Activity taking place for payment to be processed.

- Satisfactory proof of eligible expenditure, which may include invoices and evidence of expenditure (receipts, bank statements etc) depending on the expense item and amount being claimed. Note that, where approved, under the On-ground expenses – per day allowance, receipts for individual items (for example a meal, a coffee, a taxi or a night's accommodation) will not be required for claiming the allowance, although recipients will be required to prove the time spent away from Tasmania through provision of travel itineraries and/or boarding passes. Refer to Attachment A for more information.
- A detailed written report on the activities undertaken and outcomes achieved (template to be provided by the Department).
- Correctly rendered tax invoice.

2. Additional reports on the outcomes of the Activity may be requested up to 24 months after grant payment.

3. If a significant outcome occurs as a result of the funded Activity, the business agrees to the Tasmanian Government publicising the outcome and the business agrees to cooperate in any joint media opportunity involving Ministers that the Department of State Growth may require.

## Unsuccessful applicants

Applicants deemed by the Department to be ineligible or unsuccessful shall be notified in writing. The decision by the Department shall be final with no right of review or appeal.

## Taxation and financial implications

Grants under the Program attract GST. Grant payments to successful applicants are increased to compensate for the amount of GST payable.

The receipt of funding from this Program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). While grants are typically treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, how they are treated will depend on the recipient's particular circumstances.

It is strongly recommended that potential applicants consider seeking independent advice about the possible tax implications for receiving the Grant under the Program from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, prior to submitting an application.

## Confidentiality

The relevant parties will use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging their respective functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the Program and related uses. The Department may also:

1. Use information received in applications in any other Departmental business;
2. Use information received in applications and during the performance of the Project for reporting.

## Administration

The Program will be administered by the Department of State Growth on behalf of the Crown in the Right of Tasmania.

Applicants will be required to lodge their application, along with acquittals and other reports (for successful applicants) online through SmartyGrants.

Any person requiring further advice or information on the Program, or submitting an application, is asked to direct enquiries to the Accelerating Trade Program Manager via: [trade@stategrowth.tas.gov.au](mailto:trade@stategrowth.tas.gov.au) or phone 1800 440 026.

## Timeframes

All potential applicants must read the Guidelines carefully to determine their eligibility for funding under the Program.

Applications under the Program can be submitted at any time, until such time as the Program closes, or until funds have been exhausted.

Applications must be submitted and assessed **prior to** the trade Activity taking place. Applicants should allow three weeks for assessment to take place. Should the Department request further information to support or clarify an application, this information must be provided within the requested timeframe, normally two weeks, or the application may be rejected.

## Publicity of grant assistance

The Department of State Growth disburses public funds and is therefore accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, the Department may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, the purpose of the financial assistance, and any other details considered by the Department to be appropriate.

## Right to information

Information provided to the Department of State Growth may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

## Personal information protection

Personal information provided to the Department of State Growth will be used for the primary purpose for which it is collected. Basic personal information may be disclosed to other public sector bodies where necessary for the efficient storage and use of the information.

Personal Information will be managed in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act 2004. This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it related, on request to the Department of State Growth. A fee for this service may be charged.

## Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Crown in Right of Tasmania, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains. The Crown in Right of Tasmania accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from anything contained in or omitted from or that may arise from the use of this document, and any person relying on this document and the information it contains does so at their own risk absolutely. The Crown in Right of Tasmania does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by an applicant that are in any way related to the Program.

The Program will be reviewed in 12 months and these Guidelines may be adjusted accordingly.

## Attachment A: Accelerating Trade Grant Program: expense rates and supporting evidence

The below table indicates the type of expenditure that may be claimable under the Program, the supporting documentation required by the Department, the rate at which the payment is made, and any maximum that exists for a particular expense item.

Note that a business cannot receive in excess of \$10 000 per financial year under this Program.

Information below is indicative only. Final decisions on eligibility, amount and rate of expenditure are at the discretion of the Department

Expense item	Comments	Supporting documentation required for grant payment	Rate	Maximum grant amount payable for this item
Market research and business matching services		Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$10 000
Promotional activities and materials.		Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$10 000, with a maximum of \$1 000 for product samples (at wholesale price) and \$250 for freight of samples.
Travel to eligible market	Cost of return economy airfare ex-Tasmania per application for one person	Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$10 000
Inbound buyer visits to Tasmania		Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$3 000 per Tasmanian visit
Supply chain improvement activities	As identified following completion of a supply chain gap analysis.	Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$10 000

Cluster activities		Invoices; or invoices and satisfactory evidence of payment if expense item is over \$1 000	50:50	\$10 000
On-ground expenses (includes accommodation, meals, beverages and travel)	Paid as a per day allowance for one person. Must be away from Tasmania for at least one night to be eligible	Flight itinerary or boarding passes showing name of traveller, destination, times and days of travel	\$250 per night outside of Tasmania	\$1 750 (seven nights)



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