

Local Capability Fund Frequently Asked Questions 2024-25

Regional Business Round

General questions

How do I prepare and submit my application?

Complete the appropriate online application and provide the required supporting documents via the SmartyGrants portal: lcf.smartygrants.com.au

I am having difficulty using SmartyGrants, what can I do?

If you encounter difficulties with SmartyGrants, please contact the Department to discuss. Please ensure that you have allowed adequate time to complete your application.

Can someone from the Department help me with my application?

The Department can provide general advice on completing your application or support in utilising SmartyGrants; however, it cannot provide application content. This is to maintain the equity and integrity of the application and assessment process.

I won't be able to get my application submitted on time, can I request an extension?

No, extensions cannot be provided.

How much funding is available?

The level of funding support available under this round is 50% of eligible costs (excluding GST) of up to a maximum of \$20,000 per successful applicant.

When is the closing date for applications?

3pm (AWST) on 13 September 2024. Applications will be assessed following the closure of the round. It is expected that applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within 14 weeks of the round closing (by 20 December 2024 at the latest).

How will the applications be assessed?

Applications are assessed by a panel comprising officers from within the Department

of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (the Department). External officers may form part of the evaluation panel if their expertise is required.

When will the round outcomes be announced?

It is expected that applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application, via email, within 14 weeks of the round closing.

If my project is unsuccessful, will I receive feedback on why?

If you are notified that your application has been unsuccessful, we encourage you to contact the Department for feedback.

I have submitted an application, can the business fund the requested activity now, prior to being notified as to the outcome of my application?

Yes, however the business will wear the risk of funding the entire activity if the application is ultimately deemed unsuccessful. It would be prudent to wait until you are notified of the outcome of your application prior to incurring activity expenditure.

On applicant eligibility:

Who can apply?

To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- » Have its principal place of business in one of the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the nine regions per Schedule 1 of the Regional Development Commission Act 1993; and continue to be based there for at least 12 months following application submission;
- » Have been operating in that region for at least 12 months at the time of application submission;
- » Be operating in a trade-exposed industry (or an industry that faces competition from other national or international SMEs or SMEs outside of their region);
- » Be registered for GST for at least 12 months prior to application submission and



intend to remain registered for the next 12 months;

- » Have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- » Be a for-profit organisation or business, or an incorporated not-for-profit Aboriginal Corporation operating as a commercial enterprise; and
- » Have at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) employee, in addition to the owner, but fewer than 200 FTE employees at the time of application submission.

Can a not-for-profit organisation apply?

No, not-for-profit organisations and charities are ineligible, unless they are an incorporated not-for-profit Aboriginal corporation operating as a commercial enterprise.

Can new businesses or start-ups apply?

No, the business must have been operating for at least 12 months in one of the LGAs of the nine regions as described in Schedule 1 of the Regional Development Commission Act 1993 prior to the date of submitting the application.

What is meant by operating in a trade-exposed industry?

This means that your business produces goods or services that are traded outside of its local area and faces competition from outside its region. For example, hairdressers, florists and cafes that predominantly compete within their local area rather than on a broader, regional, or international scale will generally not be considered eligible for LCF funding.

I have been operating a plumbing business for 12 years but have just started a winery nine months ago. I am using the same ABN and am seeking funding to support the winery. Is this business eligible?

No, an application for the winery would not be eligible as we are seeking applications for businesses that have been operating for more than 12 months. The winery is considered a new operation, despite its ABN having been registered more than three years ago.

The business is headquartered in another Australian state or territory,

but it has contractors that work in regional Western Australia, is the business eligible for funding?

No, the principal place of business must be in one of the LGAs of the nine regions as described in Schedule 1 of the Regional Development Commission Act 1993 and the business must continue to operate out of this region for the next 12 months following application submission.

This year the business acquired another business and has since restructured. Does the business meet the minimum trading time requirements for eligibility?

The business would need to demonstrate that the acquired business operated in one of the LGAs of the nine regions as described in Schedule 1 of the Regional Development Commission Act 1993 for at least 12 months prior to application submission and provide evidence of this e.g. ASIC registrations.

The business was successful in obtaining funding for a previous LCF round, can I apply for other LCF rounds?

Yes, you can apply for other LCF rounds for different proposed activities as long as you have already claimed the grants awarded from the previous round(s) and are up to date with all reporting requirements (i.e. don't have any overdue reports). A business is also limited to receiving no more than \$200,000 in funding under the LCF in the last five years. Any funding received as part of the \$10 million COVID-19 LCF rounds run in 2020-21 does not count towards this limit.

Can I apply for more than one LCF round?

Yes, you can apply for multiple LCF rounds. However, each application must request funding for different proposed activities.

On project eligibility:

I am unsure whether my project would be eligible for funding. What should I do?

If you are unsure whether your project or the business you represent is eligible, you can



contact the Department to discuss prior to commencing an application.

The business has recently purchased new equipment. Can the business apply for funding for this?

No, retrospective activities or past purchases made prior to submitting your application will not be funded.

Can I apply for funding to purchase a motor vehicle?

Motor vehicles are ineligible, unless it can be demonstrated that it is a specialised vehicle.

How can I show that a motor vehicle is specialised?

Specialised motor vehicles are vehicles which perform specific and specialised functions and are used exclusively for business purposes (e.g. bobcats, forklifts, cherry pickers, back hoe, bucket trucks etc.) Utility vehicles, 4x4s and vans are not considered specialised vehicles.

Can I apply to purchase second-hand equipment?

Yes, however the second-hand equipment or machinery must be acquired through a dealer. Private sales of second-hand equipment are not eligible for funding.

Can I submit a funding request for any in-house research or training done in the business?

No, in-house training or research is ineligible. All activities must be carried out by third parties that are perceived by the Department to be at arm's length from the business.

Can I apply for funding towards multiple projects?

It is suggested that you focus on applying for a single project for your business as the application has been designed for you to detail a single project. While you may have a number of smaller projects that together would still be under the maximum grant amount, this will likely weaken the application.

On grant payments and project completion:

How do I receive payment for the

approved activity?

The LCF is a reimbursement scheme. The business must pay for the activity first, then request payment for that activity via the SmartyGrants portal before the claim expiry date in the FAA. A lump sum payment will be made as a single reimbursement of approved activity expenditure.

Can I receive payment of the grant in advance?

No. As this is a reimbursement scheme, payment of the grant will only occur once the business has paid for the activity.

How long does the business have to complete the activity?

The activity must be completed and all claims submitted to the Department by 3pm (AWST) on 31 May 2025.

Who can I contact if I have any other questions?

If you have questions about the LCF, please contact: lcf@jtsi.wa.gov.au