



Accessible Tourism Elevate Fund - Access Starter Grants

Program Guidelines

October 2023



Queensland
Government



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport respectfully acknowledges and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, winds and waters where we live, learn and work.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions and the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the nation.

We will walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations in our journey to enrich lives and strengthen community connections.

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Contents

- 1.0 Program overview4
 - 1.1 Objectives4
- 2.0 Key dates*5
- 3.0 Available funding5
- 4.0 Eligibility5
 - 4.1 Eligible applicants5
 - 4.2 Eligible projects6
 - 4.3 Eligible projects costs7
 - 4.4 Ineligible activities7
- 5.0 Application and assessment process8
 - 5.1 Application8
 - 5.2 Assessment criteria8
 - 5.3 Notification of outcome8
- 6.0 Grant funding payment9
- 7.0 Privacy9
- 8.0 Complaints10
- 9.0 Further information10
- Appendix 111
 - Definitions11

1.0 Program overview

The 2023 Year of Accessible Tourism in Queensland recognises the importance of accessible experiences for all, is igniting change and creating opportunities for Queensland tourism operators. This will enable everyone to participate in a tourism experience with choice and confidence and lays the foundations for making Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympics Games the world's most accessible and inclusive sporting event for athletes and spectators.

The Year of Accessible Tourism directly supports outcomes under the [Towards Tourism 2032 – Transforming Queensland's visitor economy future, a tourism industry strategy \(Towards Tourism 2032\)](#) that sets an ambitious target to more than double the state's tourism overnight expenditure to more than \$44 billion a year by 2032. *Towards Tourism 2032* is the course for Queensland's government-industry partnership to transform and grow the visitor economy and position for success leading up to Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympics Games.

Under the 2023 Year of Accessible Tourism package of initiatives, a new \$5 million Accessible Tourism Elevate Fund will support projects that elevate the accessible tourism experience and help the Queensland tourism industry better cater to visitors of all abilities, including people with physical, sensory (vision/ hearing), autism, intellectual disabilities, guide/assistance animals and/or neurodiverse people.

The Accessible Tourism Elevate Fund (Fund) comprises two grant schemes:

- Access Starter Grants
- Access Projects Grants.

These are the guidelines for the Access Starter Grants.

1.1 Objectives

The key objectives of the Access Starter Grants (Access Starter) are to support projects that will:

- support Queensland tourism and events operators to develop greater understanding of accessibility opportunities and requirements for their business through undertaking access audits, and developing accessibility plans and statements
- improve the visitor experience through design and planning of accessibility improvements across the travel journey
- increase the number of tourism operators with accessibility information on their websites and improved accessibility in their websites, marketing and communications materials
- improve tourism and events service delivery to visitors with accessibility needs through staff training and awareness.

2.0 Key dates*

Activity	Date
Guidelines available	12 October 2023
Applications open	9.00am (AEST), 26 October 2023
Applications close	11:59pm (AEST), 6 December 2023 (or earlier if the funding allocation is exhausted prior to the closing date)
Application Assessment	Complete applications are assessed in order of receipt
Outcome of applications advised	After completion of the assessment and approval procedures
Project completion date	By 30 June 2024

*Please note these dates are indicative only and may be subject to change.

3.0 Available funding

Funding of \$5,000 (excluding GST) is available for projects that can be delivered by 30 June 2024. Eligible applicants will receive an upfront grant payment of \$5,000 (excluding GST) for approved activities following assessment and approval of the application.

Eligible applicants do not have to co-contribute to the cost of approved activities, however successful applicants will be required to cover eligible expenses above the approved funding amount, and all ineligible costs.

4.0 Eligibility

4.1 Eligible applicants

To be eligible for funding an applicant can be one of the following:

- for-profit organisation
- not-for-profit organisation
- regional or local tourism organisation
- visitor information centre
- local government authority.

Eligible applicants must also:

- be an **eligible business** or **eligible non-profit organisation** or **local government authority** (refer to definition in [Appendix 1](#)); and

- have an **established operating base in Queensland** (refer to definition in [Appendix 1](#)); and
- operate in the **tourism and events industry in Queensland** (refer to definition in [Appendix 1](#)).

Bodies not eligible for funding under the Access Starter include:

- State, Territory and Australian Government agencies or associated agencies such as statutory bodies or government owned corporations

One successful application per eligible applicant can be submitted.

Approved grant recipients from Boosting Accessible Tourism Experiences and Accessible Tourism Infrastructure grants can apply for projects that did not receive funding under these grant schemes.

Eligible applicants can apply for funding under both Access Starter and Access Projects grant schemes.

4.2 Eligible projects

An eligible project must meet the objectives of the grant and may comprise of one or multiple priority areas.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage suitably qualified consultants in undertaking the activity/activities. The Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport website accessibility page has information on [potential providers and resources](#). Applicants are to make their own enquiries to make an informed decision.

The types of activities that may be considered include (but are not limited to):

Priority Areas	Activity examples
Access audits, plans and statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access audit or assessment of tourism experience / businesses • Development of disability action plans • Development of accessibility statements for publishing on applicant’s website
Experience design and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product and experience testing to improve accessibility
Digital and communication accessibility, including accessibility content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital accessibility audit • Implementation of website/product or experience accessibility improvements • Development of content and marketing materials to improve accessibility, including audio and visual
Training and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability awareness and inclusion training and coaching for staff

To help inform the project design, it is recommended to use the templates or checklist available through the [Accessible tourism toolkit](#).

Projects should align with [Queensland's Disability Plan](#) and [Towards Tourism 2032](#).

4.3 Eligible projects costs

Eligible project costs are those costs directly associated with the delivery of the approved project.

Applicants will be responsible for all ineligible project costs and any eligible costs over and above the approved funding amount; and must ensure they have adequate funds and resources to meet these costs.

Eligible costs may include:

- professional or specialist consultancy service
- improvements to websites, signage, traditional and digital marketing materials to be more accessible
- content creation to support accessibility including written, audio and/ or visual content
- value-adding to existing experiences with additional activities, e.g., interpretative or interactive tourism signage
- materials and equipment directly related to the project
- disability awareness and inclusion training and coaching.

Projects may be made up of project activity/ies from a single supplier or activities using different suppliers. Independent supplier quote/s detailing description and costs of services for all project activities must be included as evidence in the application and include:

- Supplier details – supplier's name, ABN, contact details and website URL
- Details of the grant-funded activity including a description of each component and the associated cost.
- Quotations must be a formal quote on business letterhead.

4.4 Ineligible activities

The following activities and expenditure are not eligible to be funded through Access Starter:

- activities that cost a combined total of less than \$5000 (excluding GST)
- activities commenced prior to approval of the grant
- costs of activities or projects that do not align to the intent of the Access Starter
- activities already supported by other Government grant funding (including local, state and federal government grants)
- costs that are not clearly related to a tourism product or experience
- general business administration or operating costs
- new or improvements to capital infrastructure costs
- wages and salaries for an applicant's employees
- feasibility studies, business cases or similar activities
- general business marketing and promotional activities such as search engine optimisation, initial website set-up, traditional and digital marketing campaigns and advertisements

- ongoing costs beyond the end of the funding period.
- consultants who are not directly engaged for the purpose of the project
- purchase of an asset or works to an asset that will not be controlled by an eligible applicant
- costs of works that are considered maintenance of existing equipment or infrastructure
- goods, services or fees from related parties (includes companies with common shareholdings or directors, employees or immediate family)
- costs to meet any existing, mandatory legislative accessibility requirements for new construction or existing infrastructure under the [National Construction Code \(NCC\)](#) and relevant Australian Standards including the [Disability \(Access to Premises-Buildings\) Standards](#).

Note this list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where it is determined they do not directly support project outcomes or the Access Starter objectives.

5.0 Application and assessment process

5.1 Application

The lodgement of an application does not guarantee that funding will be approved. Complete applications will be assessed in order of receipt. Incomplete applications will not be assessed until all required information is received.

To apply for this funding, applicants must:

- complete the online application form via the [SmartyGrants portal](#)
- provide all necessary supporting information/evidence
- address all eligibility criteria
- submit the application by the closing date and time (Refer to [Section 2.0 - Key Dates](#)).

5.2 Assessment criteria

Applicants will need to:

- a) demonstrate they are an eligible applicant (Refer to [Section 4.1 - Eligible Applicants](#))
- b) demonstrate the project is eligible based on project description provided (Refer to [Section 4.2 - Eligible Projects](#))
- c) demonstrate the project will be fully completed by 30 June 2024
- d) provide supplier quote/s for eligible activities totalling at least \$5000 (excluding GST) and the project represents value for money.

5.3 Notification of outcome

Following assessment, the assessor will make a recommendation on the application to the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport (DTIS) decision-maker.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their grant application via the email address submitted with their application. Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Approval outlining the funding conditions.

Applicants should ensure their email address is current and correct. You should also check all your email folders including junk or spam folders to make sure you haven't missed any communications from DTIS.

6.0 Grant funding payment

Funding will be processed as one payment to the applicant's nominated bank account once the Letter of Approval has been issued.

After the project is complete a non-payment final acquittal survey will be sent and completion is compulsory as a condition of this funding.

DTIS will undertake a sample audit of grant recipients to ensure the grant has been spent as per the approved grant application.

Applicants will be required to retain all records associated with their project for a minimum of 12 months.

Grants are subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Approved applicants will be issued a Recipient Created Tax Invoice with grant amounts paid which will include a grossed-up amount of GST to comply with taxation rules applicable to the assistance.

Some grants are considered assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. It is recommended that grant recipients seek independent professional advice on their taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office as DTIS does not provide advice on tax.

7.0 Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to assess applications for the Access Starter. Only authorised departmental officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information for the purposes of assessing the grant applications and administering the grant. Information may be shared on a commercial-in-confidence basis with partner Queensland government departments and agencies and the Minister(s) responsible for the Grant.

Applicants should note that broad details of successful projects, agreed outcomes, project progress and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government. Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

Personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of [Information Privacy Act 2009](#).

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supplied supporting material.

The provisions of the [Right to Information Act 2009](#) apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

Information regarding the department's privacy policy can be found at www.dtis.qld.gov.au.

8.0 Complaints

All decisions made in relation to applications are final. Under the department's Complaints Management Policy, DTIS has established processes for dealing with complaints and is committed to effectively managing concerns in a fair, transparent and timely manner.

If an applicant has any concerns in relation to the application or assessment process, a formal complaint may be submitted to the department by emailing GrowingTI@dtis.qld.gov.au.

9.0 Further information

If you require further information or clarification of these guidelines, please email GrowingTI@dtis.qld.gov.au.

Appendix 1

Definitions

Established operating base in Queensland means a business that is trading from premises located in Queensland which primarily delivers activities and services in the tourism and events industry in Queensland.

Tourism and events industry in Queensland means an industry classified under ANZSIC within the following class codes:

- (a) souvenir shops, duty free stores and travel good retailers (ANZSIC code 4279);
- (b) accommodation providers (ANZSIC code 4400);
- (c) food and beverage services including cafes, restaurants, taverns and clubs (ANZSIC codes 4511, 4513, 4520, 4530);
- (d) interurban and rural bus transport – tour bus, scenic and sightseeing operation, shopping tours, long distance (ANZSIC code 4621);
- (e) other road transport – hire car service with driver only (ANZSIC code 4623);
- (f) water passenger transport - boat charter, lease or rental (without crew), ferry, water taxi, water launch, cruise (ANZSIC code 4820);
- (g) road and water transport, including sightseeing (ANZSIC codes 4623, 4820, 5010);
- (h) aviation - airport operations and other air transport support services (ANZSIC code 5220);
- (i) rental and hiring services (ANZSIC code 6611);
- (j) transport rental and hiring – aviation, boats, buses, caravans, houseboats, motorcycles, motorhomes without crew (ANZSIC code 6619);
- (k) travel agencies (ANZSIC code 7220);
- (l) event management (ANZSIC code 7299);
- (m) heritage activities including museums, parks and gardens (ANZSIC codes 8910, 8921, 8922);
- (n) performing arts venues (ANZSIC code 9003);
- (o) amusement and other recreational services (ANZSIC codes 9131, 9139);
- (p) management advice and related consulting services (ANZSIC code 6962);
- (q) performing arts operation (ANZSIC code 9001);
- (r) creative artists, musicians, writers and performers (ANZSIC code 9002).

Note: A Local Government Authority will not be required to be classified under the above listed ANZSIC codes but must demonstrate how the project is primarily supporting visitors with accessibility needs in their regions.

ANZSIC means the document called ‘Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC)’ published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as amended from time to time.

Note— ANZSIC is available on the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ website.

Eligible Business

A business is an eligible business if:

- (a) the business holds an Australian Business Number for the business; and
- (b) the business is registered for GST; and
- (c) the business has an established operating base in Queensland; and
- (d) on the launch date of this grant the business primarily operated for the domestic or international tourism market; and
- (e) on the launch date of this grant, the business had:
- (f) none of the following businesses is an insolvent under administration or an externally administered business—
 - (i) the business;
 - (ii) if the owner of the business is a sole trader—the owner;
 - (iii) if an owner of the business is a partnership—the partners in the partnership;
 - (iv) if an owner of the business is a trust—the trustees of the trust;
 - (v) if an owner of the business is a company—the company or the directors of the company.

Eligible non-profit organisation

A non-profit organisation is an eligible non-profit organisation if the organisation:

- (a) is a charity or other not-for-profit entity that is incorporated under a law of the Commonwealth or a State; and
- (b) holds an Australian Business Number for the organisation; and
- (c) the organisation is registered for GST; and
- (d) the organisation has an **established operating base in Queensland**; and
- (e) on the launch date of this grant the business primarily operated for the domestic or international tourism market; and
- (f) neither the organisation, nor a member of the organisation's governing body, is an insolvent under administration or an externally administered entity.

Queensland Local Government Authority

A Queensland Local Government Authority means local government authority as defined under the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld).