



REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION

The RED Grants program is a State Government initiative that invests in projects that contribute to economic growth and development in regional Western Australia.

Applicants apply for funding in the program by submitting their project detailing how it meets the grant criteria. Insufficient or weak responses to criteria present an easy means for an administrator to discard an application.

As competition for available funding is always strong, applicants need to ensure that they and their projects are eligible, they have undertaken sufficient planning and analysis to meet the criteria, and can demonstrate that they can deliver the project.

A quality funding submission requires the gathering and summation of many different components related to the project, often requiring external studies such as options, design, costing, economic impact and feasibility. The applicant must be prepared to make these upfront investments; therefore, sufficient time needs to be allocated to these processes.

The effort required to prepare a funding submission that has the best chance of success is often under estimated. This guide has therefore been prepared to assist proponents in navigating what is required to be competitive.

ELIGIBILITY

This may seem like a redundant question but it is often something that is overlooked in the early stages. You do not want to get half way through your investigations or be writing your response to the selection criteria and then whilst checking the fine print realise that your organisation or project may not be eligible!

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

You need to confirm that your organisation is eligible for the funding program and that you can demonstrate eligibility with appropriate documentation. RED Grants have the following eligibility criteria:

The applicant must have an Australian Business Number (ABN), and be one of the following entities:

- A local government.
- A not for profit organisation that is a legal entity.
- Australian registered business.
- Industry association, cooperative or business group
 - NB: Business groups can apply but one lead business must meet the criteria and accept responsibility for contractual obligations on behalf of the business group.
 - The business group should be capable of entering into sub agreements with the lead business that reflect the head agreement and terms.
- Incorporated body, or have equivalent status (i.e. represented by an incorporated auspicing body).
- Universities or training institutions (under collaborative arrangements with third parties).

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- A State or Federal Government Agency.
- Government Trading Enterprise (GTE)
- School or hospital.
- A Trust.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Once you have determined that you are an eligible organisation you need to confirm that your project is not seeking funding for ineligible activities. The REDS Guidelines outline these as:

Ongoing costs incurred after the project is completed (e.g. operating and maintenance costs).

- This could include ongoing salary costs, depreciation, software renewals, subscription services beyond establishment phase etc.

Retrospective payments or expenditure incurred prior to execution of a RED Grants agreement.

- A grant agreement may not be in place until 3rd quarter of the 19/20 FY. Please ensure you consider in your planning of the project timelines.
- Expenditure refers to the grant and your matching cash contribution

GST payments.

- Ensure your budget does not include GST if you are GST Registered.
- If you are not GST registered please discuss with the Commission.

Operational Overheads (such as rent, insurance, telephone etc.)

- These costs should not be included in the cash budget, even as a matching cash contribution.

Existing Staff Salaries

- Staff working on the project as part of their core hours are not eligible for funding or as matching cash contribution. If can demonstrate through a contract variation / payroll that the hours will be increased for the project or new person appointed to deliver a key aspect of the project, this is likely to be eligible. Discuss your individual circumstance with the Commission.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

ADDRESSING THE CRITERIA

You will be assessed against a set of criteria and your responses in the application form and attachments will be used to determine a ranking against all other proponents.

Ensure that you provide us with a complete understanding of your project – remembering that MWDC is unlikely to have the detailed understanding of your project that you have. You should therefore write your application on the basis that the reader/assessor knows very little about the background and merits of your project.

Please remember to complete all questions in the application.

Applicants should demonstrate:

How their project meets at least one of the economic growth and development objectives: A) Sustainable jobs growth. B) Increasing productivity. C) Expanding or diversifying industry. D) Developing skills or capabilities. E) Attracting new investment in the region.

- Be specific in your response, do not try to meet all the objectives, just the most relevant.
- We want to know how many jobs your project is going to create, whether these are full time, part time, permanent, casual and what FTE they correlate to. Consider the State Government commitment to creating 30,000 new jobs in the regions by 2023/24, how is your project going to contribute to this goal?
- Try and estimate the indirect impact of your project or flow on effects to the economy. You may consider utilising an economist or work with the Development Commission early to help identify the indirect impact.
- Consider what the impact of the project will be on productivity and specify the percentage improvement expected if relevant. Use statistics and extrapolate out.
- If diversifying the industry specify exactly which industry, what the current economic value of that industry is to the region and how this project will add to the Gross Regional Product.
- If new skills/ capabilities are being developed how will these address any regional gaps and create efficiencies or increased production.
- Specify any investment which will be attracted into the region because of this enabling project including quantum and proponent.
- If you are successful, your final acquittal report must report against your proposed outcomes and demonstrate that they have been achieved. Be wary of claiming outcomes that you will be unable to demonstrate or evidence!

Local partnerships and collaboration including co-investment/supported by key regional stakeholders.

- What partners are involved in your project?
- Are these of a financial or non-financial nature?
- Do you have letters of support from these partners for the project, which provide confirmation of the partner's commitment and/or contribution? These documents must be:
 - current to this funding round;
 - relevant to the specific project for which funding is sought; and
 - from organisations or individuals that are genuine partners, stakeholders and/or supporters of this project.
- What other partners could be involved to improve the outcomes of your project?

Delivery of local content outcomes

RED Grants applications must address what the project means for the local community/region in relation to jobs and economic activity.

Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate:

- Building the capability of local suppliers, and the opportunity for regional businesses to supply items/services for the project;
- Increased regional employment and regional business participation through subcontractors, suppliers, apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Support for emerging or new industries in the region, promotion and awareness of local industry/businesses;
- Benefit to the regional economy through any other identifiable means.

A wider economic development benefit

- Is your project addressing a gap that will enable a wider industry development opportunity?
- How will others in the industry have access to the benefits. Outline how the IP may be shared or how an innovation may be applied to a cluster of businesses. Will there be any conditions around access to the information?
- Will this project enable other ancillary business opportunities to develop?
- Is this a new industry or product line that will create local consumption flow on effects?
- Will new regional jobs be developed contributing to the overall economy?

Alignment with regional priorities.

How does this project address any of the MWDC regional priorities detailed below:

- Unlocking the economic potential of the Abrolhos Islands including tourism, aquaculture and fishing industries.
- Developing the wider tourism industry across the Mid West.
- Supporting an integrated network of key infrastructure to generate new industry opportunities and economic growth.
- Support growth in the Agribusiness and aquaculture sector to generate new jobs.
- Facilitate wider Industry Development through digital connectivity, innovation, maximising benefits from the mining sector, local capacity building and purchasing.
- Creating and sustaining liveable & connected communities supported by appropriate education and medical facilities and vibrant centres.

A minimum 50% matching cash contribution to the project (not-for-profit organisations will be assessed on a case by case basis).

All other things being equal, preference will be given to projects that demonstrate that a grant will lever cash from other sources.

- How confident are you of your costings? Provide preferred quotes to substantiate your budget.
- Ensure your budget balances and does not include ineligible items.
- Cash refers to physical payments to be made by the applicant body to third parties and does not include in-kind.
- Provide written evidence of contributions from other organisations / parties that are secured or being sought. If funds have been requested but not yet approved please provide details regarding when a decision is expected.
- There is always more funding applied for than available, therefore, it is critical that your project can demonstrate value for money. Value for money is not just about what will be produced but also about attracting additional investment, leveraging partnerships that extend beyond the project and other benefits that would not occur without the project.

The capacity to undertake and complete the project (past grant experience, project management and governance structure, experience of key personnel, project risk identification and mitigation);

You may have a very attractive project and an excellent business case but if a funding body has no confidence that you have the ability to deliver it, they are unlikely to provide funding.

A funding body needs to satisfy itself that applicants are ready and able to deliver the project within a certain timeframe i.e. 12 – 24 mths. This means that planning and activities have already been undertaken to reduce the risk profile of the project.

Planning, depth and quality of project documentation is a clear indication of the effort and diligence that has gone into the project and can remove much of the project uncertainty from the assessment process and thereby improve project viability.

To demonstrate that you have the ability to deliver the project, consideration should be given to the following:

- Your access to people with the right skills and experience;
- Significant project planning has already occurred and the project can commence.
- A detailed and realistic project management plan is in place.
- All appropriate planning, construction, zoning, land ownership, environmental and/or native title approvals are in place or will be in place. Provide evidence of this in your application.
- The applicant and their partners, can demonstrate that it has successfully delivered projects of a similar scope and scale.
- All funding sources, including provisions for contingencies, are fully committed to.
- The applicant has the financial resources and experience to maintain and operate the project on completion.
- A full risk assessment has been undertaken and mitigation plans are in place.
- If you have received previous Commission funding, make sure these are all acquitted or a plan to finalise has been approved. Your track record in managing grants may influence the outcome of your application.
- Detail exactly who will have responsibility in your organisation for managing the project and ensuring deliverables are met.
- Detail how the finances will be managed i.e. all project related funds administered out of a dedicated bank account.
- If a business partnership detail how decisions will be made within the governance structure.

The capacity to meet ongoing operating and maintenance costs following the conclusion of the grant funding (if applicable).

- Legacy is highly valued – i.e. long-lasting and tangible outcomes, sustainable over the longer term.
- Ability to demonstrate how your organisation will maintain and sustain ongoing costs related to your project is important.
- Consider attaching a forecast operating / maintenance budget to demonstrate ongoing viability if applicable.

For businesses applying for funding, demonstration of financial capacity and sustainability including two years of audited financial statements.

- Please ensure you attach the audited statements for the business / organisation and partners applying for the funding otherwise your application may not be considered.
- If you do not have audited statements you will be required to provide recent bank account statements i.e. last 6 mths.
- If a Local Government Authority audited financial statements are not required



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MORE INFORMATION

The project officers at Mid West Development Commission are happy to assist you with any queries relating to the grants. For the best chance of success, we encourage potential applicants to contact us early so that we can help you navigate the application process.

Please note for feedback on draft applications you must provide the information to the Commission at least 3 weeks prior to the advertised closing date.

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Below is a list of potential local service providers to assist you in developing projects concepts, business cases and support you through the grant writing process. Disclaimer: The list of potential local service providers has been produced for convenience only. DPIRD and MWDC make no guarantee or accept any liability for services produced. Applicants should choose providers solely based on their own investigation. The list is not exhaustive.

Name	Organisation	Email	Phone number	Position / expertise
Mike Purslow	RSM Business Local	businesslocal@rsm.com.au	1800 249 562	Business Advisor
Priscilla Clayton	Priscilla Clayton Consulting	priscilla@claytonconsultingwa.com.au	0437 135 155	Grant writing/business consulting
Tara Whitney	Whitney Consulting	tara@whitneyconsulting.com.au	0422 228 162	Grant writing/business consulting

For more information, including application forms, grant guidelines, frequently asked questions, information on how to submit your application and conditions for acceptance of emailed applications, visit the RED Grants page on the Mid West Development Commission website.