

Spirit Preparedness Fund for Businesses

Program Guidelines



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Acknowledgement of Aboriginal People and Country

The Department of State Growth acknowledges and pays respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people, as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live. We honour Aboriginal peoples' enduring connection to Country, which includes the lands, seas, skies, and waterways of Tasmania.

We also recognise and respect the sovereignty of the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We acknowledge the strength, resilience, and wisdom of Aboriginal people, and we commit to learning from their knowledge and experiences.

1. Aim

The Spirit Preparedness Fund for Businesses aims to respond to visitor demand and improve the visitor experience in anticipation of the arrival of the new Spirit of Tasmania ships.

Businesses can apply for a grant to create authentic Tasmanian experiences which respond to core and emerging visitor demand and directly contribute to our visitor economy.

The program will be open for applications from 10am 28 March 2025 and close at 2pm on 20 May 2025.

2. Funding available

The program budget is \$3 million, with grants of between \$50,000 and \$250,000 (excluding GST) available.

All successful applicants will be required to provide a cash contribution at least equal to the grant amount requested.

3. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a grant you must meet the following eligibility criteria:

3.1. You must be able to complete your project by 31 December 2027.

3.2. You must demonstrate you can make a cash contribution at least equal to the grant amount requested.

3.3. You must be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) and have a continuously active Australian Business Number (ABN) registered on or before 30 June 2024.

Exceptions to 3.3 (with supporting documentation) may be considered, for example:

3.3.1. You have purchased a business that was actively trading for at least 12 months before 30 June 2024.

3.3.2. You have changed your business structure which has resulted in a new active ABN issued after 30 June 2024, but the business has been in operation for at least 12 months at the time of application.

3.4. You must be currently operating and physically located in Tasmania.

Refer to *Section 6 Supporting documentation* to see the list of documentation that you will need to submit with your application to support your eligibility.

Please note, the information you provide may be subject to authenticity checks using third party software.

4. Ineligible applicants

You will not be eligible for this program if any of the following apply to you:

- 4.1. Your application is for a project which already has financial support (including loans) from the Australian or Tasmanian Governments.
- 4.2. You received a grant for any project through the Tasmanian Government's Tourism Innovation Grant Program.
- 4.3. You are a local, state, or federal government body, government agency or government business enterprise.
- 4.4. You are a public company as defined in the *Corporations Act 2001*.
- 4.5. You are an unincorporated association.
- 4.6. You are an investment entity that solely generates passive turnover from residential and commercial property investment and/or the renting of property.
- 4.7. Your business is for sale, trading while insolvent, under external administration or bankrupt at the time of submitting an application.
- 4.8. You have made more than one application under the same ABN.
- 4.9. You are a third party submitting an application on behalf of a business owner.

5. Ineligible expenditure

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- 5.1. Any expenses incurred prior to 1 December 2025, or prior to the date of entering into a funding agreement, whichever occurs first.
- 5.2. Refurbishments or renovations of a premises, venue or attraction where no new capacity or capability is created.
- 5.3. General operational business expenses not directly related to your proposed project – for example regular salaries and wages, rent, office expenses, stock purchases, insurance premiums, accounting, legal and compliance expenses, licences, memberships, subscriptions, council fees.
- 5.4. General marketing activities not directly related to your proposed project, including website development and/or upgrades.
- 5.5. Any other expenses not directly associated with the proposed project (including capital purchases such as plant and equipment, land, and buildings).

- 5.6. Repairs, maintenance, installation, replacement, or running costs of existing assets (including purchase of parts and extension of warranties).
- 5.7. State Government charges, duties, and taxes.
- 5.8. Servicing creditors or personal debts and expenses.

6. Supporting Documentation

The table below outlines the acceptable documentation you will need to submit with your application to demonstrate your eligibility.

Eligibility criteria	Acceptable documentation
<p>Demonstrate you are currently operating and physically located in Tasmania.</p>	<p>Evidence to demonstrate the business address is in Tasmania and that the business is currently operating at the time of application. Examples of acceptable evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the most recent utility account (e.g. Aurora Energy) at the time of application. • A copy of your business bank statement at the time of application that clearly shows sales transactions. • A current business lease agreement. <p>Note: the documentation you provide must state your business street address.</p>
<p>If your ABN was registered after 30 June 2024.</p>	<p>Acceptable evidence is a letter from your accountant confirming that your ABN was registered after 30 June 2024 and meets one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have purchased a business that was actively trading for at least 12 months before 30 June 2024. • You have changed your business structure which has resulted in a new active ABN issued after 30 June 2024, but the business has been in operation for at least 12 months at the time of application.
<p>Demonstrate you can make a cash contribution at least equal to the grant amount requested.</p>	<p>Acceptable evidence includes one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your business bank statement showing you have the cash available to meet the co-contribution at the time of application. • A statement for an existing business loan facility showing undrawn funds available to meet the co-contribution at the time of application. • A letter of support from your financial institution, current at the time of application. • A letter of confirmation of equity investment.

7. Assessment

This grant program is competitive. This means that the assessment process will commence after the program has closed.

All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check using the eligibility criteria and the supporting documentation in your application.

This program has limited funding. Applications that meet the eligibility requirements will not automatically receive a grant, and not all applications will be successful.

Eligible applications will be competitively assessed by independent assessors using the assessment criteria and the supporting documentation in your application.

An independent panel of three industry experts will undertake final assessment of applications and decide by consensus which to recommend for funding to the Minister for Tourism for final decision.

Assessment criteria	Weighting
<p>Criterion 1 – Creates authentic Tasmanian experiences which respond to core and emerging visitor demand and directly contributes to our visitor economy</p> <p>How well your proposal EITHER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ enhances or diversifies core visitor experiences in your region such as nature, road trips, heritage and history, arts and culture, food and wine; <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ leverages emerging demand for visitor experiences, such as wellness, sustainability, agritourism and Tasmanian Aboriginal experiences. <p>You will be asked in your application to nominate which category your proposal is to be assessed against.</p>	<p>50%</p>
<p>Criterion 2 – Planning and capability to deliver the project.</p> <p>How well your proposal shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your planning, capacity, and capability to deliver the project. • your project schedule, including key project milestones and your ability to complete the project by 31 December 2027. • a project budget, including evidence of your co-contribution. 	<p>30%</p>
<p>Criterion 3 – Makes a positive impact.</p> <p>How well your proposal makes a positive impact, including how it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes to Tasmania’s status as a leading destination for climate conscious travel. • protects and enhances Tasmania’s brand, environment and community values. 	<p>20%</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides an inclusive and accessible visitor experience to meet the needs of visitors of all abilities. • generates job opportunities for Tasmanians. 	
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You can provide information in your application to support your proposal, such as business financial statements, project plan, business plan, marketing plan, or planning approvals and permits.

8. Timeframes

Applications will not be accepted after the program closes.

Description	Date/time
Program guidelines launch and applications open	10:00am, 28 March 2025
Program closes	2:00pm, 20 May 2025
Applicants notified of the outcome by	1 December 2025 (this is an estimated date and is subject to change depending on how many applications are received)

9. Contact details

Questions about this program can be directed to the Tourism and Hospitality unit by calling 1800 440 026 or emailing tourism&hospitality@stategrowth.tas.gov.au before the program closes.

10. How to apply

Applications should be submitted using SmartyGrants.

For assistance with using SmartyGrants, please see the [applicant help guide](#).

Contact us to discuss any issue preventing you from using SmartyGrants to submit your application.

1. **Prepare:** Read the program guidelines and the frequently asked questions (FAQs) before starting your application to ensure you understand program eligibility, required documentation and other important information. FAQs may be updated during the application period, so please be sure to check you have the most recent version from the Business Tasmania website <https://www.business.tas.gov.au/funding/tourism/spirit-preparedness-fund/>
2. **Start:** The application form will be available from 10am, 28 March 2025 through SmartyGrants https://stategrowthtas.smartygrants.com.au/Spirits_Fund_Business
3. **Confirm:** Ensure all information and documentation is accurate and attached before you submit.

4. **Submit:** You will receive an email notification after you submit your application. Keep this notification as confirmation of your submission. Please check your spam/junk folder if you have not received the notification soon after submitting.
5. **Assessment:** All submitted applications will undergo an eligibility check. Eligible applications will be competitively assessed by independent assessors. Recommendations for funding will be made to the Minister for Tourism for final decision. This process may take up to 6 months.
6. **Notification:** We will notify you with the outcome of your application.

You may be asked to provide information or documentation after you have submitted your application.

You must provide this information within ten working days, unless otherwise advised. Failure to provide the information within the timeframe may result in the application being unsuccessful.

The information you provide may be subject to authenticity checks using third party software.

11. Grant funding agreement

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

If your application is successful, we will ask you to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with the Crown in Right of Tasmania represented by the Department of State Growth.

The funding agreement, along with these program guidelines, provide the grant terms and conditions.

You will not receive payments until the funding agreement is completed.

12. Grant payments

If your application is successful, you will be asked for your bank account details to receive your grant payments.

The bank account must be in your name (if you are a sole trader) or the name of your business. You may be asked to provide a copy of your bank statement or a letter from your bank as confirmation.

13. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under this program may be treated as income by the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

We strongly recommend that, prior to applying, you seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications for receiving the grant.

Grants distributed under this program attract Goods and Services Tax (GST).

A valid tax invoice must be supplied by successful applicants to State Growth to receive grant payment.

14. Acquittal

If your application is successful, you must provide an acquittal at the conclusion of the grant.

An acquittal is a statement that confirms the grant was completed as per the funding agreement.

You will be required to return some or all the funds if:

- you do not complete the activities required under the funding agreement;
- you do not use any or the full amount of the funding provided;
- your situation changes in a way that prevents completion of the grant; or
- we find that the information provided to us is false or misleading.

14.1. How to acquit your grant

We will send you an acquittal form using SmartyGrants.

Details of what you will need to include in your acquittal will be outlined in your funding agreement.

14.2. Failure to complete an acquittal

If you do not satisfactorily acquit your grant by the due date:

- you may be required to return the funding to State Growth; and
- you may be ineligible for other grants from State Growth.

Contact us to discuss any issue preventing you from acquitting your grant.

15. Appealing a decision

The appeals process is designed to ensure that all applicants have been treated fairly and consistently in applying for Department of State Growth grants. The Department of State Growth will consider appeals relating to administrative process issues in grants management.

For information about appealing a decision, contact tourism&hospitality@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Your request must be in writing and received within 28 days from the date of notification of the decision about your application.

16. Publicity of grant assistance

State Growth is accountable for its spending of public funds, including providing grants. As part of the accountability process, State Growth may publicise, without further notice, information about the grants provided, including the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, and the purpose of the financial assistance.

If you have received a grant from State Growth:

- despite any confidentiality or intellectual property right subsisting in the grant funding agreement or deed, a party may publish all or any part of the grant funding agreement or deed without reference to another party, and you consent to the disclosure of your name in this context.
- all obligations under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas) still apply.

17. True and accurate information

You must take care to provide true and accurate information. Any information that is found to be false or misleading may result in action being taken and grant funds, if already provided, may be required to be repaid to State Growth.

18. Right to information

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

19. Information collection and usage

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 relates, on request to State Growth.

State Growth may use and disclose the information you provide for the purposes of discharging its functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the program and related uses. State Growth may also use information received in applications and during the delivery of the project for reporting purposes.

20. 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.



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