



Department of
Jobs, Tourism, Science
and Innovation

ACCESS ASIA BUSINESS GRANTS

Guidelines for applicants

2020 to 2021

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These guidelines are to be used as a reference throughout the entire process from application to acquittal.

Applicants should read the guidelines thoroughly before completing an Expression of Interest application and, if shortlisted, a project proposal application.

Key dates

Date	AABG Round 2: December 2020-June 2021
13 October 2020	Expression of Interest (EOI) applications open
26 October 2020	EOI closes at 12 noon
December 2020	Announcement of grant recipients
30 June 2021	Round 2 projects conclude Acquittals and reports submitted

1. Introduction

The Access Asia Business Grants program (AABG) is an initiative of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTISI) to support Western Australian (WA) owned and/or operated small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and organisations advance their international business efforts in Asian markets.

The grants program helps businesses improve their Asian business capability and commercialise their products or services by collaborating with Asian business providers or engaging specialist support services to get their products or services export ready or to bring their products to market.

Round 1 of the program opened on 16 September 2019 and had 14 recipients.

Round 2 will focus on helping firms build and/or maintain competitiveness in Asian markets to contribute to WA's economic recovery.

2. Key outcomes for the state's recovery

- Increased trade and investment with Asia will create jobs and help drive WA's economic and social recovery.
- New Asian markets for premium goods and innovative services will create a pipeline of jobs for Western Australians across supply chains.
- New partnerships in Asia to support tourism, local manufacturing, international education and renewable technologies will build investor confidence in WA's skills and capabilities and drive industry development.
- Promoting WA's strengths in innovative technologies in Asia will attract investment in emerging industries, creating pathways for skilled trainees and apprentices.

3. Who can apply?

- SMEs (200 or fewer employees), owned and/or operated in WA for at least 12 months.
- Industry associations, Asian business councils and not-for-profit groups or entities established in WA for at least 12 months.
- Round 1 AABG recipients are not eligible to apply.

4. How much can I apply for?

Grants of up to \$10,000 (excluding GST) are available on a net co-investment basis at a rate of no less than 20% (applicant) to 80% (State Government) funding. All co-investment

items may be subject to an independent audit. Projects must be completed within 6 months of a fully executed Financial Assistance Agreement .

5. What can I use grant funds for?

As international travel is currently not possible in the foreseeable future, the new grants will assist WA-owned and/or operated SMEs to engage in state-based activities that will enable them to:

- adopt new business models to expand market share
- scope new supply or value chains
- develop export plans that manage COVID-19 implications
- access new Asian markets or sectors
- develop new partnerships through specialist in-market support and services
- increase innovation in logistics and supply chain models
- scope new e-commerce models and digital platforms
- gather in-market intelligence to capture new opportunities
- develop new marketing collateral for Asian markets.

What happens to unspent grant funds?

Successful recipients receive the grants upfront. If it is determined during the acquittal and post-project reconciliation process that the project has unspent grant funds, those funds must be refunded to JTSI.

6. How do I apply?

In order to be considered eligible, and to be included in the evaluation process, an Expression of Interest application must be received by 12 noon, Monday 26 October 2020. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

The EOI application form is available at <https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/about-the-state/asian-engagement/access-asia>. Once completed, the application should be emailed to accessasia@jtsi.wa.gov.au

Shortlisted applicants will be required to submit detailed project proposals via an online portal that will allow them to work on the proposal until the closing date. Late applications or extensions will not be permitted.

7. How will my application be assessed?

The grants program is highly competitive. JTSI will convene a panel to score EOI applications, which will be assessed to determine the extent to which the application meets the key outcomes of the AABG outlined above, align with the objectives of the [Asian Engagement Strategy](#) (outlined below) and whether they offer value for money as an investment when compared to other submitted EOIs.

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to submit a more detailed 2 to 3-page project proposal, including a budget, which will be assessed and weighted equally against the following criteria:

- Project overview – viability of the project
- Project objectives and KPIs
- Economic benefits to WA
- Asian target markets

Project proposals must provide sufficient:

- Evidence of business capability
- Targeted reach
- Clear planning
- Financial responsibility.

Final approval of shortlisted applications depends on available budget and endorsement by JTSI's Director General.

8. Eligibility criteria

8.1. Applicant eligibility

Applicants must meet all the following criteria to be eligible for assistance under the program. However, this does not automatically entitle applicants to assistance as the grants program is highly competitive and limited grants are available.

All applicants must:

- Be a solvent legal entity in possession of a valid certificate of incorporation, current Australian Business Number (ABN) and/or Australian Company Number (ACN)
- Be an incorporated entity, company, partnership, trust, not-for-profit group or organisation with operations in WA for at least 12 months
- Demonstrate a net economic benefit to the state

- Be either a SME that employs fewer than 200 people or
- A business organisation or industry association (for example Asian business council) that is a legally constituted not-for-profit organisation recognised by JTSI.

8.2. Application criteria

Applications must:

- Support business growth into Asia and assist WA's recovery
- Align with the objectives of the Asian Engagement Strategy to:
 - Increase trade, exports and investment opportunities
 - Generate strategic economic benefit for the WA economy
 - Contribute towards the diversification of the WA economy
 - Contribute towards an increase in jobs for Western Australians
- Include an estimated project budget
- Declare any funding from federal or other state government agencies for the same project/initiative

Shortlisted applications must also:

- Have evidence of a net co-investment of matched funds at a rate no less than 20:80 of applicant (20%) to State Government (80%) funding.
- Ensure service provider(s) such as consultants are an independent third party
- Ensure eligible expenditure is incurred on or after the date the Financial Assistance Agreement is executed and expended by the project completion timeframes.

8.3. Project expenditure eligibility

Grant funds can be spent only on non-capital expenditure items such as the following:

Eligible expenditure includes

- Marketing expenses to:
 - Develop marketing materials to support in-market activity and target Asian markets, such as production of brochures, images, videos and digital materials. All materials must target Asian markets. Funding cannot be spent on general business marketing
 - Cover translation costs of written/verbal marketing materials aimed at Asian markets.
- Business and strategic planning and research that supports in-market business entry into Asia

- Specialist services to:
 - Develop new partnerships, business models or export plans
 - Scope new supply or value chains, e-commerce models and/or digital platforms
 - Gather market intelligence to capture new opportunities.

Failure to provide the required supporting documentation and evidence in your application will result in your application being deemed ineligible.

9. Who is not eligible to apply?

9.1. Ineligible organisations

- Businesses with 200+ employees
- Businesses based overseas
- Shareholders or directors who are not citizens of Australia or residents of WA
- Local councils, state, government or commonwealth agencies and bodies
- Sole traders
- Previous recipients

9.2. Ineligible project expenditure items

- Retrospective payments or expenditure incurred prior to the execution of a Financial Assistance Agreement.
- Ongoing costs incurred i.e. general business/operational/planning activities that are day-to-day requirements of a business, such as:

Staffing or salaries

Administration, reporting, auditing and/or acquittal costs of the grant

Sales activities

Non-Asian market-related business

Training or professional development courses

Hardware and software packages

Design and production of unrelated or ongoing project marketing or promotional materials or events

Website development, online videos, blogs or social media development

Operational overheads such as maintenance and upkeep of facilities (rent, utilities, telephone, insurance).

- Sponsorship payments towards conferences/forums/events
- Activities that are commercially viable in their own right

- Capital expenditure or investment in real estate, property or purchase of property or equipment
- Costs of registering patents or intellectual property.

Determination of Eligible Expenditure and Non-Eligible Expenditure is at the absolute discretion of JTISI.

10. Application, evaluation and funding conditions

10.1. EOI process

The EOI is an invitation to SMEs, Asian business councils and industry associations to describe how a grant will be used to support business growth into Asia and assist WA's economic recovery. An estimated project budget should be included.

JTISI will convene a panel to score applications, which will be assessed against the assessment criteria to determine the extent to which the application meets the key outcomes of the AABG, align with the objectives of the Asian Engagement Strategy (both outlined above) and whether they offer value for money as an investment when compared to other submitted EOIs.

A shortlist of applications will be presented to JTISI for approval.

10.2. Process for shortlisted applicants

It is a one-stage online process whereby applications are submitted via a secure grant platform at accessasia.grantplatform.com/.

The grant platform allows for multiple attachments and details the required documentation.

Applications are more competitive when supported by all the required supporting documentation.

Failure to provide documentation and evidence to support the project may result in the application being deemed ineligible.

Required documents include:

- Certificates of business
- Project plan/budget
- Written quotations from independent third-party service provider(s) and declaration
- Financial or annual reports

- Organisation/team structure or profile

Late applications or changes to applications will not be accepted after the closing time.

For all enquiries regarding your application:

Email accessasia@jtsi.wa.gov.au Phone 08 6277 2927

Visit www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/accessasia

10.3. Decision-making process

Applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria.

JTSI will convene a panel to score shortlisted applications against the assessment criteria to determine the extent to which the application meets the objectives of Round 2 and whether they offer value for money as an investment when compared to other submitted proposals.

Panel deliberations and all related information and material are strictly confidential. Refer to 10.12 Release of confidential information for further information.

The final decision on successful applicants will be made by the Director General of JTSI or their equivalent.

JTSI's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

10.4. Outcome communications and feedback

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via the email address provided in the application form.

The Minister for Asian Engagement will announce the successful applicants in a media statement. As part of this, JTSI may disclose select details such as business and project aims and expected outcomes. Recipients agree to this as part of the Financial Assistance Agreement.

Due to confidentiality, feedback cannot be provided on the evaluation panel's deliberations. However, feedback on whether an application was eligible can be obtained by contacting accessasia@jtsi.wa.gov.au.

10.5. Conditions and obligations for funding

- The grant will be on a co-investment basis at a rate no less than 20% (applicant) to 80% (State Government) funding. All co-investment items may be subject to an independent audit.

- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) with the State of Western Australia, acting by and through its Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation.
- The terms and conditions of the FAA will not be negotiable at the time a funding offer is made.
- The funded project must be completed within 6 months of a duly executed FAA.
- Only eligible expenditure incurred on or after the project's start date can be claimed by successful applicants.
- Applicants are responsible for any/all additional costs incurred by them as a result of fulfilling their obligations under the grant and FAA.
- The state will not accept liability for any damages, losses, liabilities, costs and expenses claimed or incurred by the successful applicant in connection with this grant.
- Payment will be made in one lump sum after the FAA is signed by the successful applicant and endorsed by JTSI. It will be based on relevant invoices and/or quotations itemised in the proposed project's budget. On conclusion of the project, grant recipients must ensure that project cost estimates correspond with final proof of purchase receipts.
- Grant recipients may subcontract other independent third parties to deliver a project, subject to agreement with JTSI.
- Payments to successful applicants will be made via EFT upon assessment of claims and evidence, to the satisfaction of JTSI. This includes evidence such as quotations for specialist services.
- JTSI has determined that the grant is not regarded as payment for a supply and, therefore, does not incur GST. Furthermore, JTSI will not reimburse a grant recipient for GST paid or payable to a third party.
- Failure to provide all necessary information may result in forfeiture of all or part of the grant.
- Grant recipients are advised to liaise closely with the relevant Government of Western Australia overseas office in carrying out the project. See Appendix 2.

10.6. Acquittal report

Following project completion, successful applicants must provide within 30 days:

- A final acquittal report, which must be submitted via an online link provided by JTSI.
- Proof of payments for the project/eligible expenditure, which are either included in the online form or emailed to access.asia@jtsi.wa.gov.au.

- Proof of project completion, including acknowledgment of the grant, reports, marketing material and market intelligence.
- Or such other information required by JTSI to evidence eligible expenditure and completion of the project.

Failure to provide the above information may result in forfeiture of all or part of the grant.

Applicant-service provider relationship

- An applicant and service provider(s) must be entirely separate entities, with no financial or other ties. That is, the company and the service provider(s) cannot be owned by the same parent company, share governance or have common directors.
- Applicants are required to include a declaration from their chosen service provider(s) that the latter is an independent third party.

10.7. Availability of funding

The provision of financial support under this program is at the absolute discretion of the State of Western Australia and is subject to the availability of funds.

10.8. Audit, compliance and risk management

As a State Government agency, JTSI is required to ensure the most prudent and effective use of its financial assistance schemes. Grant recipients will, therefore, be required to:

- Liaise closely with JTSI to assess whether expected outcomes are being achieved
- Provide, if requested, additional information that may assist JTSI's internal audit, evaluation and review processes
- Respond, if requested, to a client survey. The survey is used to obtain general feedback from clients on the effectiveness and efficiency of JTSI's services.

10.9. Conflict of interest

Applicants are required to disclose any information that may be relevant to an actual, likely or potential conflict of interest.

10.10. Review of program

This program is subject to an internal review at the end of each financial year.

The guidelines may be updated periodically to reflect any changes in the program, priority sectors or markets.

10.11. Participation in review of project and surveys

All financial support provided by JTSI under this program is subject to a post-funding review.

Recipients must make themselves available to participate in surveys conducted by JTSI up to 2 years after the funding ceases. Surveys are generally 5 to 10 minutes long and seek feedback on inputs, activities, results, usage and impacts related to the funding.

10.12. Release of confidential information

The content of all applications will remain strictly confidential. Successful projects may be promoted in a way that retains the commercial integrity of the project in the public domain.

Government records are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA), which provides a general right of access to records held by WA state and local government agencies. Exemptions do apply in certain circumstances. Further information on the Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA) can be obtained from JTSI's website.

10.13. Media and promotion

Grant recipients are required to formally acknowledge the grant throughout the life of the project across any social, digital and/or onsite promotional opportunities once the Minister has formally announced the recipients.

Recipients will be provided with a Media Tool Kit to assist in promotional work and will be asked to consent to provide contact details, including a name, phone number and email address, to be shared for media and promotional purposes.

10.14. Disclaimer

The provision of financial assistance by the State Government is at its absolute discretion. Nothing in the application process or the selection process shall give rise to any legal relationship or any other obligations between the applicant and the State.

Any obligations and responsibilities of the parties will be the subject of an FAA for successful applicants.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Reference	Definition
AABG	Access Asia Business Grants
Applicant	An organisation applying for a grant
Approved project	Activities described in a grant application that has been awarded funding under the AABG
AWST	Australian Western Standard Time
FAA	Financial Assistance Agreement
GoWA	Government of Western Australia
GST	Goods and services tax
Grant recipient	An organisation that applied for and was awarded a grant
ITWA	Invest and Trade Western Australia, a division of JTSI
KPIs	Key performance indicators
Letter of Offer	Letter from JTSI to the grant recipient
Media toolkit	Logos and assets for recipients to formally acknowledge grant support from JTSI
METS	Mining equipment, technology and services
Priority sector	Sectors identified by the State Government's economic development framework, Diversify WA, and Western Australia's Asian Engagement Strategy 2019-2030: Our Future with Asia
SME	Small and medium enterprise. A business with fewer than 200 employees
WA	Western Australia

Appendix 2: Government of Western Australia overseas offices

The Government of Western Australia operates offices in the state's key trading regions, with headquarters in Perth.

- You may wish to contact the relevant GoWA overseas office in Asia to discuss your project plans in more detail prior to submitting your project proposal.

Priority Asian markets	Office location	Commissioner	Email
Indonesia	Jakarta	Ms Jennifer Mathews	jennifer.mathews@jtsi.wa.gov.au
India, Sri Lanka	Mumbai	Mr Peter Baldwin	peter.baldwin@jtsi.wa.gov.au
South Korea	Seoul	Mr Jean Ough	jean.ough@jtsi.wa.gov.au
China (incl. Hong Kong, Taiwan)	Shanghai	Mr Stuart Crockett	stuart.crockett@jtsi.wa.gov.au
Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam	Singapore	Mr John Catlin	john.catlin@jtsi.wa.gov.au
Japan	Tokyo/Kobe	Mr David McCulloch	david.mcculloch@jtsi.wa.gov.au

- Other contact information for JTSI can be found at <https://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/invest-in-wa/our-services/global-offices>.

Appendix 3: Checklist

Read the guidelines carefully before applying and consider the assessment and eligibility criteria to understand what is being asked of you.

- Organisation is eligible to apply
- Organisation is WA owned and/or operated
- Evidence of a net co-investment of matched funds at a rate no less than 20:80 of applicant to State Government funding is provided
- Project or organisation has not received previous AABG funding

How to make your application competitive

- Application is clear and concise
- Clear project plans must address targets, actions, outcomes, key performance indicators
- Project approach makes it likely to succeed, e.g. it is targeted, thoughtful and well-structured (effectiveness)
- Project will be achieved within the set time frame (capacity to deliver)
- Application demonstrates:
- Project will generate strategic economic benefit to WA and assist in WA's economic recovery
- Project will contribute to the diversification of the WA economy
- Project will contribute to an increase in jobs for Western Australians.

Supporting documentation checklist (attachments)

Shortlisted applicants must ensure that they have attached all the supporting documentation.

- Certificate of Incorporation, ABN or ACN
- Project plan
- Detailed project budget, including income and expenditure summary of all key items to be funded by the grant and co-contribution from your organisation
- Written quotations for all items and service provider(s) and an independent third party declaration from service provider(s)

- Evidence to support project (statistics, business plans, research, reports, organisation/team structure, photos or flyers of project/event, attendees/delegation lists and itineraries of business meetings or events)

Other tips

- Download a preview of the online EOI/project proposal application form before you start your application. It is easier to draft responses to the application in another program (such as Word) before completing the actual form.
- Make sure you input dates, figures, contact phone numbers and emails correctly.
- The Funding Centre has guides and help for writing grant applications:
<https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/help>.



For further information:

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www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/accessasia