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IN QUEENSLAND

# New Market eCommerce Program

APPLICATION GUIDE 2024-25



**TRADE +  
INVESTMENT**  
QUEENSLAND

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This document supplements the program guidelines and provides detailed guidance about the SmartyGrants application process. If you need more information at any time, talk to your TIQ (Trade and Investment Queensland) Trade Advisor.

## Application process

### High level requirements

In general, grant applicants must:

- fully acquit any grant they have previously received from TIQ
- be headquartered in Queensland
- have an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- be trading for at least 3 years as of 01 February 2024
- apply for funding of between \$10,000 and \$15,000 (excluding GST) in whole dollars only
- make a 1:1 matched cash contribution for each eligible item of the project that is at least equal to the value of the grant funding sought
- provide evidence of their ability to meet the required 1:1 matched cash contribution through the provision of an interim profit and loss, balance sheet and bank/investor guarantees/loan documents, as at the date of application
- submit one application per eligible business or financial beneficiary<sup>1</sup> under each round via the TIQ SmartyGrants application page.

Refer to the program guidelines for full information.

### How many applications you can submit

Only one application form can be accepted from each applicant organisation. Where two or more businesses have a substantial number of directors and/or shareholders in common, only one application will be accepted per round.

### When you will hear the outcome of your application

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application at the earliest possible time, dependent on the volume of applications received. As the program includes a detailed assessment, due diligence, and government approval process, it is expected that applicants will learn of the outcome of their submission within six to eight weeks of the program's close date.

You will be notified via email on the outcome of your application.

### Revising your application after lodgement

You will not be able to revise your application after lodgement, but you must advise your TIQ Trade Advisor of any changes which are likely to impact your eligibility.

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<sup>1</sup> TIQ considers a related party and/or financial beneficiary to be those who gain an advantage and/or profits from something including receipt or distribution from a trust, will or life insurance policy. This can include companies with common shareholdings, directors, employees, or immediate family.

## Eligibility

### What '*headquartered in Queensland*' means

For an applicant, Queensland-based means the Australian Business Register must designate the organisation's principal place of business as being in Queensland.

TIQ will use the Australian Business Register website to verify applicant's ABN details.

### How to identify the number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees within your organisation

For the purposes of grant applications, you must include the FTE employees of all related companies when identifying your FTE count. For further assistance in defining FTE please visit the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) website.

### Applying for NMEP funding if you are already receiving government funding for your project

If your project is currently receiving funding support from other agencies including, but not limited to, local government, Queensland Government or federal government grant or reimbursement programs, you cannot apply for further funding for the same project.

### How can one determine the commencement date of their trading history?

The commencement of your trading history is correlated with the initial registration of your Australian Business Number (ABN). Eligibility for consideration requires that your ABN registration date precedes a three-year threshold from 01 February 2024.

### Applying for NMEP funding if you have previously received government funding

You can apply if you have previously received any government funding, for a separate project or another purpose. However, your cash contribution cannot be sourced from any existing government grant funding or reimbursement scheme.

If you have previously received a grant from TIQ, you must have fully acquitted that grant to be eligible for funding under this program.

### Meeting the pre-qualification requirements

As an exporter, TIQ works with you to develop your skills, give you the market intelligence and business connections you need, and offer in-market insights critical for entering a new market.

As part of your pre-qualification for NMEP, you will need to work with TIQ on an endorsed *eCommerce Market Identification Certificate*. This document is created by our TIQ domestic team and endorsed by our international office to ensure suitability of your product in the identified market.

Our eCommerce team are available to meet with you in person or virtually to discuss your project and possible application as well as the range of options and solutions enabling to progress your eCommerce export journey.

If you have not worked with TIQ previously, please complete the details on the [“Contact Us”](#) page of our website and a Trade Advisor will be in touch to discuss your organisation and its export goals.

## Proposed project details

### What are the expected outcomes for grant recipients?

The goal of funding under this program is to support the project to deliver international eCommerce sales into a new overseas market for the successful applicants within the project period, that are sustainable over a longer term. Recipients are required to report on outcomes via an acquittal report (with invoices and receipts) and may be required to provide additional reporting (such as google analytics) and details of export sales.

### What we mean by ‘new market’

Market is, for the sake of this program, the importing country, be it a previous export target or one that you have not exported to previously and wish to sell to.

New market is one that the applicant has not completed a B2B commercial sale to in any form within the previous five years (from 2019 onwards).

Incidental digital sales to the identified market will not deem the market ineligible for this program if they total less than 10% of your total annual sales over the prior five years.

### What we mean by the ‘proposed project’

The project is the eligible activities undertaken and eligible costs attributed to delivering export outcomes via an eCommerce platform.

### What does ‘eCommerce’ mean

The term eCommerce, short for electronic commerce, refers to the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. It involves a transaction between two parties, usually a business and a consumer, where the payment and delivery of products or services are conducted online.

### What does ‘localisation’ mean

Localisation means targeted specific for the export market you are focussing on. For example, when exporting to the USA, localised content pages would include pricing in USD, USA shipping fees, local return policies for this market, etc.

### Your funding contribution

Applicants to the NMEP are required to make a 1:1 matched cash contribution for each eligible item of the project that is equal to, or greater than the value of the grant funding sought.

For example:

- If you are seeking a grant of \$15,000 you would be required to contribute a minimum of \$15,000 in cash to the project.

## The costs you can cover with your cash contribution

Your cash contribution can be used to cover any eligible project costs. Eligible project costs are external costs that are specific to the project (i.e. excluding any internal business-as-usual costs) and are actual costs incurred as part of a transaction that directly supports the proposed project.

You can include eligible project costs incurred from the date the grant is launched as a matched fund contribution. (Note – any costs incurred prior to NMEP funding approval is at the applicant's own risk, with no guarantee of the application being successful for funding).

## Eligibility of in-kind costs

In-kind costs and non-cash contributions are not considered eligible for matched funding.

## Internal Costs – Ineligible

Under the policy, TIQ determines that “Internal Costs” relate to any costs that are incurred by the grant recipient company, including offshore divisions, internal marketing teams, their subsidiaries, internal consultants, partners (where we can draw a clear link such as the same management structure/shareholders/address/emails/websites.)

## Who you can source matched funding from

Applicants can source cash contributions internally or from investors, customers, or business partners. Cash contributions cannot be sourced from any existing government grant funding or reimbursement scheme. You are required to provide evidence of all cash contributions with your application.

## How to demonstrate your project is financially viable

You must upload with your application your company profit and loss statement and balance sheet for the last 2 years, plus one of the following documents to prove financial viability:

- bank statements for current liquidity that shows your ability fund the project
- any parent business or company or investor guarantee/s that shows your ability fund the project
- financial statements of parent business, company, or investor that shows your ability to fund the project
- loan statement indicating the project applied for was the reason for the loan.

This is a highly competitive grant process with limited funding available. Clients must be able to demonstrate financial viability to contribute to the grant and deliver the project. Clients providing statements showing a weak financial position, including negative cashflow, low liquidity ratio and other indicators, may have their grant application rejected and be deemed ineligible – in this case, please provide additional information and documentation to demonstrate ongoing financial viability. Applicants who fail to provide sufficient satisfactory information will be deemed to be ineligible.

## Providing a project budget

The NMEP application form will include a budget table where you will add:

- eligible expenditure items
- proposed supplier names



- amount of NMEP funding attributed to each item
- amount of applicant cash contribution attributed to each item.

For example:

- \$5,000 to engage a digital agency to customise and improve your eCommerce website to be more internationally friendly – theme update, installing a currency converter, creating custom shipping rates, updating your shipping page, language translation, market-specific content for the product or service relevant to the new market.
- \$5,000 to redesign your product and/or packaging for efficiency and space saving when using an in-market 3PL – this may include labelling changes required to meet an eCommerce export market requirement.
- \$3,000 for initial setup costs for an in-market 3PL solution for your targeted international market.
- \$10,000 to promote your product on social media platform/s in your targeted international market with the help of a digital agency or external contractor. If selling on an Amazon Marketplace, sponsored listings are allowed.

It is important to be as realistic and specific as you can when completing this section.

If your application for funding is successful, you will be required to report actual progress and achievements against the funded activities and outcomes contained in the application form and included in the Funding Agreement.

## What information to provide about project outcomes and benefits for Queensland

In the application, the outcomes of the project should be clearly defined and quantified, as far as possible, in terms of economic and/or regional benefits.

In identifying the economic benefits of the proposed project, you should consider:

- estimated export revenue from the developed goods/services/processes
- direct employment effects
- any benefit that will be delivered to regional Queensland (any centre outside of the Brisbane City Council or Redland Council boundaries)

## What supporting documentation is required to lodge your application

The required supporting documentation is set out in the application form and includes:

- Provide an endorsed TIQ-provided *eCommerce Market Identification Certificate* confirming the market suitability for your product, signed by a TIQ international representative.
- your company's most recent profit and loss statements and balance sheet for the last 2 years plus one of the following documents to prove financial viability:
  - bank statements for current liquidity that show the applicant's ability to fund the project
  - any parent business or company or investor guarantee/s that show the applicant's ability to fund the project
  - financial statements of the company, parent business or investor that show the applicant's ability to fund the project
  - loan statement indicating the project applied for was the reason for the loan



## Completing the application form

### Issue: the online form tells you your organisation or project is ineligible

The online form collects information relating to the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the proposed project. If information is entered that identifies your organisation or project as being ineligible, the form will flag this.

Should you receive an ineligible message on the application form, check the information you have entered is correct. If it is correct, you will not be able to complete the application form. Talk to your TIQ Digital Officer or Trade Advisor for further guidance.

All applications received will be checked for eligibility and any organisations and/or projects found to be ineligible will not be considered for funding.

### The form does not allow you to provide a full response to a question

Answers to questions have strict word limits and therefore you should ensure your responses are clear, concise, and highly relevant.

### Support for my application

Please contact your TIQ Trade Advisor or e-mail [grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au](mailto:grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au) for any questions about your application.

## Funding

### How many projects are likely to be funded

The number of grant recipients will depend on the funding pool allocated to this funding round and the quality of the applications submitted. The grant is highly competitive, so applicants are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible in the application to deliver a high-quality application for assessment with all relevant documents attached.

### Where the grant funding should be spent

It is expected that, wherever possible, the grant funding will be spent within Queensland. For example, if you are purchasing goods or services that are available in Queensland, it is expected that you would purchase them from within Queensland. We acknowledge that, if travelling to market, some costs may be international. Note – these costs need to be acquitted in Australian Dollars at the time of expenditure. You will be expected to provide valid invoices and receipts as part of the acquittal report.

### How the NMEP funding is paid

Funding is paid in instalments throughout the lifetime of the project. The first payment of 70% of the NMEP funding will be made when the Financial Agreement is executed between the recipient and the Queensland Government, and a valid tax invoice is produced by the grant recipient.

The second and final payment of 30% of the NMEP funding is made following the submission of a satisfactory final report detailing the outcomes of the assistance provided and evidence of expenditure of the full value of the NMEP funding awarded.

Note that successful grant recipients are required to make a matched dollar for dollar contribution to the project. This is done through the provision of additional invoices and receipts showing this additional expenditure at acquittal (e.g. If the grant amount was for \$15,000 ex GST, the recipient must also put in a contribution of \$15,000 ex GST, providing invoices and receipts for a total of \$30,000 ex GST). Supplier credit arrangements in lieu of payment will not be accepted.

## Conditions of award

### When your project will start

Successful projects must commence within 90 days of being advised that funding has been approved. All projects must be completed within 12 months of being awarded funding.

### The Funding Agreement?

The Funding Agreement is legally binding and consists of:

1. Letter of Offer
2. Financial Incentive Agreement (grant contract terms and conditions)
3. Program and Application guidelines
4. Application submitted by the applicant relating to the grant funded activity
5. Acquittal Documentation Guide
6. Terms agreed in writing between the parties (if there are any other terms agreed)

### Negotiating the terms and conditions of the Financial Incentive Agreement

The terms and conditions are non-negotiable. Recipients will be bound by the terms and conditions set out in the NMEP Financial Agreement.

Ensure you have read and accepted the terms and conditions prior to signing as they will not be negotiable at the time a funding offer is made. Successful applicants will be required to execute the Financial Agreement within 10 business days of receipt, or the offer of funding will lapse.

### Applying for funding support for an existing activity

NMEP funding and the applicant's matched cash contribution can only be used for activities which commence after the date of program opening (**5 February 2024**). Any costs incurred prior to NMEP funding approval is at the applicant's own risk, with no guarantee of the application for NMEP funding being successful.

## Unsuccessful applicants

### Feedback on your application

Feedback is available to unsuccessful applicants. If you are unsuccessful, feedback provided will be brief and focused on key areas that could be strengthened.

### Assistance for unsuccessful applicants

TIQ Trade Advisors across Queensland can work with you, whether you are an unsuccessful applicant in this round or potential future applicant, to support your export journey and develop export readiness.

TIQ Trade Advisors can also connect you to other business development support to enable you to be ready for future NMEP rounds.

### **Appeals Process**

Should you wish to appeal a grant decision or make a complaint about the process, you can do this via the TIQ Appeals and Complaints Process. Please direct your email to the TIQ Grants and Finance team, Corporate Services, Email: [Corporate.Services@tiq.qld.gov.au](mailto:Corporate.Services@tiq.qld.gov.au).

### **Disclaimer**

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