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IN QUEENSLAND

# New Market eCommerce Program

PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2024-25



**TRADE +  
INVESTMENT**  
QUEENSLAND

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## About the New Market eCommerce Program

Trade and Investment Queensland's (TIQ) New Market eCommerce Program (NMEP) is designed to provide export-ready Queensland small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) with financial support to cover the eligible project costs of driving eCommerce sales in a new international market.

The use of eCommerce by Australian businesses to support exports has been growing steadily over the past decade but has seen an acceleration due to recent global conditions. It has been reported that recent pandemic impacts have fast-tracked global eCommerce to such an extent that it is now at levels previously forecast to be reached in 2030.

Matched funding of between \$10,000 to \$15,000 (excluding GST) is available to build capabilities and capacity in global eCommerce among Queensland exporters. If you are seeking a \$15,000 grant **you will need to contribute at least \$15,000** to the project so at acquittal time, you will be required to provide evidence of expenditure totalling \$30,000+ ex GST.

## Program objectives

One of the core objectives of the NMEP, which also aligns with those of TIQ's more broadly, is to assist Queensland businesses with an internationally competitive offering, by developing capability, providing market intelligence, accessing networks, and making valuable connections.

The objectives of the NMEP are to:

- Provide an initial support platform for businesses across Queensland for ongoing eCommerce export success.
- Assist export-ready companies in overcoming the challenges arising from executing international eCommerce sales.
- Create a pathway for success for new eCommerce export sales that will create additional employment across Queensland.

In this program, the focus will be on TIQ priority markets listed below:

- Greater China
- UK / Europe
- South Asia
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Korea
- Latin America
- Middle East / North Africa
- The Pacific Islands
- North America
- ASEAN
- Taiwan

## Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for the NMEP the applicant organisation must:

- have fully acquitted any grant they have previously received from TIQ
- have an active **Australian Business Number (ABN)** and be **registered for GST**
- be **headquartered in Queensland**

- submit only **one application** per **eligible business or financial beneficiary**<sup>1</sup> under each round
- be a company incorporated in Australia or be an incorporated trustee applying on behalf of a trust
- have **no more than 200** full-time-equivalent employees and not be a subsidiary of a group of companies that has 200 or more full-time-equivalent employees in total
- have a trading history of more than three years as at 01 February 2024
- have a project capable of being completed and delivering export outcomes within 12 months
- be seeking to export to a new international market not previously exported to via an eCommerce platform
- provide evidence of your ability to meet the matched cash contribution to the project for each eligible project costs
- produce and export Queensland products and not act as a consolidator or distributor of Queensland, other domestic or imported products.
- provide a TIQ-endorsed *eCommerce Market Identification Certificate* confirming the market suitability for your product, signed by a TIQ international representative

## Eligible project costs

The grant is available to cover project costs that support your business to sell via eCommerce in a new overseas market. It is not intended to address problems that are part of ordinary, everyday operations of your business, or to pay for costs associated with existing eCommerce activities.

Eligible project costs include but are not limited to external costs associated with:

- Online content development to support international eCommerce presence via a digital agency/marketing consultant (e.g. localised international content pages, mobile commerce).
- Product redesign, packaging, and labelling required to meet an eCommerce export market requirement for storage, distribution, or market regulation requirements.
- Enhancement of localised marketing material (e.g. visual and audio media, translation services)
- Purchasing of in-market advertising to support international eCommerce activities via a digital agency/marketing consultant (i.e. engaging local, in-market influencers, email marketing, Marketplace Sponsored Advertising etc.) Note: this item cannot be more than 50% of the overall eligible project cost applied for.
- External ICT (Information and Communications Technology) to support eCommerce activities (e.g. website upgrades, functionality enhancements, implementing B2B platforms, email marketing solutions, logistics integration, domain name mapping, international market setup).
- The setting up of a 3PL (third party logistics) partner for eCommerce sales to the international market (initial set up fees, initial 3PL receiver fees, in-market logistics consultant).
- Legal/tax/trademark advice to finalise eCommerce sales in-market and modify payment systems.

## Ineligible project costs and activities

NMEP funds, and the applicant's 100% matched cash contribution, cannot be used to cover ineligible project costs which include (but are not limited to):

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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.

- Maintenance of existing digital technologies
- Website hosting as a stand-alone cost
- Payments of wages/salaries – any supplier or consultant hired for the project must be external to the organisation (evidence will be required via an invoice for services provided at acquittal).
- 3PL storage costs
- Freight costs and import duties
- Marketing and advertising campaigns aimed at Australian audiences
- Marketing campaigns on the TikTok platform
- Goods or services purchased prior to the grant opening date and/or any retrospective costs
- Any program, project or activity that is subsidised directly by another government agency
- Activities that are elsewhere covered by contributions from other agencies, including but not limited to local, state, or federal government grant or reimbursement programs
- Participation in study tours or other missions, regardless of the organiser nor contributions to, booth, expo, or event costs
- Cost of inventory or raw materials in the production of the good or service
- Internal costs of routine operational business activities (i.e. marketing, staff expenditure such as wages, salaries, rent, insurance, food and beverage expenditure), no purchase of physical assets (such as photography/video equipment/laptops)
- Using a subsidiary, parent company, partner or other internal division as a supplier – with the same parent company, same management, address, shareholders (for more information, refer to the application guide)

This list is not exhaustive and other exclusions may apply at TIQ's discretion.

## Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed on three criteria of equal weighting:

### 1. Business capability

You should provide:

- your organisation's relevant management experience
- previous export history including work done with TIQ, Austrade or any Government agency related to business development undertaken to achieve export readiness
- information on the market suitability, consumer interest, an understanding of market regulations including labelling laws, licensing, trademarks, IP, duties, taxes, and customs regulations
- evidence of the financial viability of the applicant organisation (financial statements provided)

Note: previous TIQ grant recipients will be reviewed to confirm that they have satisfactorily met TIQ's acquittal processes with previous grants.

### 2. eCommerce readiness

You should provide:

- your organisation's export and/or international eCommerce history
- information as to your marketing and communication strategies, eCommerce sales, platforms used, website and social media information, functionality, and SEO (Search Engine Optimisation),

upgrades, target audience information, distribution models, shipping and returns policies and website requirements/enhancements.

- justification of the suitability of your product to the identified international market, as well as an endorsed TIQ-provided *eCommerce Market Identification Certificate* signed by a TIQ international representative
- a satisfactory total project budget including eligible project costs

### 3. Benefit potential

You should demonstrate that:

- the funding sought will assist you in achieving enhanced eCommerce success in your chosen international market
- the project will be sustainable beyond the funded project period
- there is a benefit to Queensland e.g. jobs, particularly in regional Queensland, expressed in terms of full-time-equivalent employees (FTE) created or retained; how much export revenue will be generated

Note that previous TIQ grant recipients will be reviewed to assess outcomes/benefits since receiving the grant.

## How to apply

Apply online for the NMEP [here](#).

You must read the NMEP Application Guide for detailed guidance on addressing the Assessment Criteria. Applications close at **1:00 PM on Friday 8 March 2024**.

The financial and commercial information pertaining to or included in an application for funding under the NMEP will be kept strictly confidential, and all information provided treated as commercial-in-confidence. Any information given on an application or subsequent report, or survey will only be reported as part of aggregated data that does not identify any individual responses or companies, unless otherwise permitted in writing by companies.

All applications will be assessed against eligibility requirements and only eligible applications will be considered for funding support.

All eligible applications will be assessed against the criteria, in a merit-based approach, by a panel with relevant expertise.

Applicant organisations may be contacted at any stage of the assessment process to clarify any information provided in the application, and/or to request further information to enable a due diligence and probity assessment.

There is no guarantee of approval at any stage of the process, and applicant organisations will be notified via email of the outcome of applications.

Decisions to offer grants to successful applicants are made considering availability of funding.

The decision to award funding is at the discretion of the Queensland Government and all decisions are final. To appeal a grant decision or make a complaint about the process, you can do this via the TIQ Appeals and Complaints Process. Appeals are to be directed to the TIQ Grants and Finance

team, Corporate Services, email: [Corporate.Services@tiq.qld.gov.au](mailto:Corporate.Services@tiq.qld.gov.au). Unsuccessful applicants can re-apply for funding in a future round.

## Conditions of funding

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement with the Queensland Government. Within 10 working days of receipt of the agreement, please sign and return to TIQ. You should ensure you have read and accepted the terms and conditions of the Letter of Offer and Financial Incentive Agreement prior to signing, as they will not be negotiable at the time a funding offer is made.

The Funding Agreement 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)

Successful applicant organisations must commence projects within 90 days of execution of the Funding Agreement. Payment of grants will be made in instalments based on project milestones. 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 final milestone payment (30 per cent of the approved funding) will be in arrears following successful completion and acquittal of the project.

The final milestone payment will be made upon the provision of documentary evidence that all project requirements have been satisfied, including evidence that the relevant activities have been completed; adequate project expenditure has been incurred, and matching cash has been contributed.

In addition to a detailed acquittal report, grant recipients are required to complete the TIQ template, outlining invoice details, activity explanation and expenditure totals (TIQ and Recipient portion, due to matched funding). This template must be signed off by the recipient's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or a Qualified Certified Practising Accountant or Chartered Accountant, outlining their registration number and confirming that they have validated all the invoices and receipts for the grant expenditure, and confirming that the expenses are eligible and meet TIQ's grant criteria for the program (tax accountants are also permitted to sign).

In addition to this, clients will be required to submit valid supplier invoices with the corresponding proof of payment (remittance advice, bank payment with corresponding invoice details, etc for amounts \$500 and over). Supplier credit arrangements in lieu of payment will not be accepted. For clients who do not have a CFO and are unable to obtain CPA/CA certification, TIQ will accept invoices/receipts for all transactions to be submitted.

Funding recipients will be expected to:

- actively promote their projects
- provide information and attend media/promotion events to TIQ, if requested
- connect with a TIQ Trade Advisor to support their export pathway success

- report on eCommerce sales into the identified international market at the time of application, at the time of acquittal and at once more within 12 months of acquittal

The Queensland Government funding should be acknowledged by recipients in all relevant published material, media releases and public statements.

## Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to assess applications for the program. Only authorised departmental officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information.

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

Your personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without your 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 supporting material supplied.

The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

## Further information

Application Guidelines

## Disclaimer

This publication is to be used as a guide only. The authors have taken reasonable steps to ensure the publication is accurate at the time of publication. The State of Queensland accepts no responsibility and gives no warranty, guarantee or representation about the accuracy, reliability, timeliness or otherwise of the information contained within the publication. The State of Queensland expressly excludes legal liability in all jurisdictions concerning the use or reliance of any information contained in this publication. Any direct or consequential loss or damage suffered because of reliance on this information is the user's sole responsibility. Persons using information contained in this publication should conduct their own enquiries and rely on independent professional advice. This exclusion shall extend to all users and related parties who may suffer loss because of the use of information contained in this publication and applies despite any negligence on the part of the State of Queensland.