

Small Business Month  
1 - 31 October 2023

NSW Small Business Month 2023

# Grant Guidelines

# Accessibility

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If you need this information in a format that is accessible to you or in another language, contact the NSW Small Business Month team from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Call: **1300 795 534**

Email: [smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)

Website: [smallbusinessmonth.nsw.gov.au](http://smallbusinessmonth.nsw.gov.au)

# Introduction

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NSW Small Business Month is a month-long program created for small businesses across New South Wales to attend events aligned to their individual business interests. It's all about providing an opportunity for small businesses to take the time to work on their business in October!

Co-ordinated by the NSW Small Business Commission, NSW Small Business Month brings together small businesses with local chambers, industry associations, other not-for-profits, large businesses, and all levels of government.

During Small Business Month grant recipients and collaboration partners host events focused on delivering insightful business opportunities,

information and trends relevant to the current business environment and the annual Small Business Month theme.

The theme for October 2023 is **My Small Business** and is focused on providing assistance and tips on how small businesses can strengthen their business in seven key areas - branding and marketing, cyber security, business health, ecommerce, current market conditions, resilience and teams.

Eligible grant applicants are invited to apply for a grant to host an event between 1 to 31 October 2023 that meet the assessment criteria in this guideline.

Applications open Tuesday 27th June 2023 and close 9am Tuesday 1st August 2023.

# Applying for a grant

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The NSW Government is offering grants to eligible applicants to deliver events during NSW Small Business Month October 2023. This is a competitive grants program with a total funding pool of \$600,000.

## Who can apply

To be eligible for the NSW Small Business Month grant, applicants must meet these criteria:

- Be an NSW local council, chamber of commerce, industry association or other not-for-profit based in New South Wales or with a presence/member base in New South Wales
- Be a legal entity that can enter into a funding agreement with NSW Government
- Have a business identification number (e.g. ABN)
- Hold an event(s) focused on one or more of the **My Small Business** categories for NSW small businesses between 1 to 31 October 2023 and upload the event details to the NSW Small Business Month website.

Who cannot apply:

- For-profit organisations
- Individuals
- Organisations that have an outstanding NSW Small Business Month grant or final activity report from previous years.

## How to use the grant

The grant must be used to deliver events that focus on providing insights, tools and resources for small businesses in New South Wales. Events can be in person or virtual. They must be free or low cost (up to \$25 incl. GST) for attendees.

## Funding

The funding amounts available are:

- Up to \$2,500 for local councils for a face-to-face event(s)
- Up to \$3,500 for other eligible applicants for a face-to-face event(s)
- Up to \$1,500 for all eligible applicants for a virtual event(s).

Funding can be used for:

- speakers, trainers and/or facilitators
- catering (excluding alcohol)
- venue hire
- marketing material and promotion.

Funding cannot be used for:

- business as usual expenses, such as staff wages or capital costs
- alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substances, or the promotion of the same
- prize money or gifts.

Any grant paid may need to be refunded should a term or condition of the funding agreement not be met.

## Event type and topic

For your event to be considered, it can be virtual or face-to-face, and it must be either a:

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- workshop (practical, hands on, small group)
  - training program, or
  - seminar (lecture style, large group).

Events should align to one or more of the categories of **My Small Business**:

- **My Small Business** Brand
- **My Small Business** Cyber Security
- **My Small Business** Health
- **My Small Business** Online
- **My Small Business** Resilience
- **My Small Business** Team
- **My Small Business** Trade.

Please see page 5 for further information on the Theme.

### Example events

**My Small Business Online:** A webinar looking at how small businesses can tap into marketing on emerging social media platforms.

**My Small Business Cyber Security:** A seminar on cyber security for your digital platforms.

**My Small Business Health:** A face-to-face workshop on mental health best practices to implement in small businesses.

**My Small Business Resilience:** A face-to-face workshop on how small business operators can de-risk operations and have plans to deal with the unexpected, whether that be natural disasters or sudden changes in economic conditions or competition.

**My Small Business Trade:** An online training program on how to grow your business through expanding on or creating new products and services for your small business.

For examples of past events, please visit the About page on the [website](#).

You must consider the current environment when planning your event and follow any NSW Health guidelines, see

[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

### How to apply

Complete the application form through SmartyGrants, a secure online grants system <https://nswgovernment.smartygrants.com.au/SmallBusinessMonth2023>

After you complete your application on the SmartyGrants online platform, you will receive an automated response confirming we have received your application along with a copy of your application. We assess all applications after the closing date. You will find out the outcome of your grant application approximately four weeks after the closing date.



# Theme

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The theme of NSW Small Business Month October 2023 is **My Small Business** and focuses on different elements of being a small business owner in New South Wales. Proposed event(s) should align to one or more of the categories below to allow small business owners the opportunity to work on their business in an area that suits them.



## My Small Business Brand

Branding is important to both established and new small businesses. We want to help small businesses use branding to their advantage to tell their business story, connect with customers and grow their businesses. Events related to branding could focus on marketing, business planning, intellectual property and attracting new customers.



## My Small Business Resilience

Small businesses operate in an ever-changing environment with the unexpected often having serious impact on business operations. Whether it be natural disasters to changes in consumer preferences or international supply chains. Your event would provide small businesses with information and support on how to prepare for the unexpected and have plan(s) to deal with potential events to de-risk and secure their futures.



## My Small Business Cyber Security

Security is an ever-growing concern for small businesses, especially in the wake of an increase in cyber security attacks. Small Business Month events could focus on linking small businesses with information and resources to help increase the security of their business.



## My Small Business Team

The current staffing shortage has made it difficult for small businesses to find and keep staff. Additionally, small businesses often do not have access to trained HR and legal professionals which can make navigating employee rights and issues challenging. Events addressing recruitment, staff professional development, skilled migration, apprenticeships and workplace laws could be of great benefit to small businesses.



## My Small Business Health

This category is all about ensuring the health of small businesses. Small business health can range from the mental health and wellbeing of small business owners and their staff to the financial health of the business including cashflow.



## My Small Business Trade

This Small Business Month, we would like to provide opportunities for small businesses to explore their current markets and address issues impacting their trading. An event in this space could focus on product development, supply chain, manufacturing, importing, exporting, cost management, and trade relationships.



## My Small Business Online

The online space can play a vital role in the success of a small business. Online platforms can be a great way for small businesses to promote themselves and to sell their goods and services. Your event could help small businesses to enhance their social media presence, explore selling online, website development, or to take their business digital.

# Assessing your application

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## Assessment criteria

Your application will be assessed against the criteria below. You must respond to all these criteria.

This is a competitive grants program. The application will be assessed and ranked according to the responses and attachments in your SmartyGrants submission.

Please note you will be required to provide a recent bank statement to help identify your organisation type and if successful, set up your organisation in the payment system.

Criteria	Weighting	Details
Project Detail	20%	<b>Your application should include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a clear description of the proposed event(s) including type, topic, frequency, location, date and speakers.</li></ul>
Project Impact	25%	<b>Your application should demonstrate:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• alignment with one or more of the categories under the My Small Business theme and format of events</li><li>• how the event is new, creative and/or engaging</li><li>• need for proposed event and how small businesses will benefit from the event.</li></ul>
Audience Reach	25%	<b>Your application should include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• knowledge of the target local small business community, target attendance numbers and a clear promotional strategy to reach them</li><li>• ways you will promote the broader Small Business Month program.</li></ul>
History and Experience	20%	<b>Your application should demonstrate:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how the project will be managed</li><li>• previous experience in delivering similar events.</li></ul>
Value for Money	10%	<b>Your budget should include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• all project costs</li><li>• all income sources including other grant funding</li><li>• value for money, including expected attendance or participation.</li></ul>

# Funding obligations

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If your application is successful, you will need to sign a funding agreement.

Under this agreement, you must:

- ensure all funded event(s) are promoted on the official NSW Small Business Month website
- ensure all written promotional, advertising and other material related to the funded event(s) meet the program's branding and marketing guidelines
- ensure any funds are used directly for the event(s) and not for staff wages or other fixed costs
- ensure the event(s) are free or low cost (up to \$25 incl. GST) for attendees
- submit the acquittal form by 17 November via the SmartyGrants platform and include details on performance measures such as whether the grant money was used for its original purpose and number

of attendees at your event

- send all attendees a post-event survey, provided by the NSW Small Business Commission, to ensure effective analysis of the funded grant event(s).

Please make sure you meet all these requirements to prevent funding being returned.

If you are successful, you also agree to be added to the NSW Small Business Month subscriber list to receive newsletters related solely to NSW Small Business Month, and; agree for your organisation and/or event to be used in promotional material distributed and published by the NSW Small Business Commission. All approved grant applications will be published on the [nsw.gov.au Grants Finder](https://nsw.gov.au/Grants-Finder) webpage.

To invite the NSW Small Business Commission to your event, please email

[smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au) with your event details.

## Background

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In its seventh year, NSW Small Business Month promotes the importance of small businesses to the community and NSW economy.

The small business sector is one of the main drivers of the state's economy through business growth, innovation and employment. New South Wales is home to the largest number of small businesses in Australia.

There are more than 840,000 small businesses in New South Wales (ABS June 2022), employing 1.7 million people or 43% of the private sector workforce (ABS 2021-22).

The grants component is one part of the Small Business Month program. If you are not eligible to apply for a grant, you may be eligible to apply to become a collaboration partner. It is an unfunded program, and any organisation can apply to host an event and promote Small Business Month through their networks. It provides an opportunity to connect with and give back to the local small business community. Please visit the website for more information.

## Support

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The NSW Small Business Month team can provide information to anyone considering applying for the grant. This includes information on the organisations and types of events that are eligible for funding and advice on the online application process.

The team cannot help directly with your application. To maintain a fair and equitable process, the team is unable to edit or correct any applications.

### Grants information

The NSW Small Business Month team can assist with grant program process and eligibility questions:

✉ [smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)

☎ 1300 795 534

### Technical assistance

The SmartyGrants team can assist you with any technical issues with your application:

✉ [service@smartygrants.com.au](mailto:service@smartygrants.com.au)

☎ 03 9320 6888

# Frequently asked questions

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## Can my organisation apply for multiple grants?

No, each organisation can only apply for one grant to deliver one or multiple events.

## Can I work with other organisations to deliver my event?

Yes, you can work with other organisations.

We do not accept joint grant applications. In our assessment process each application is assessed individually.

If you are planning to combine with another potential grant recipient, please identify them in your project description and clearly demonstrate how the additional funding will provide greater value for money in the budget section.

## Can I charge for the event?

Yes, you can charge a low fee (up to \$25 incl. GST) to help cover costs and secure attendees at your event.

## Can the event be only for my members?

No, events must be available to everyone, and members cannot receive preferential treatment.

## What can we use the grant funding for?

The funding must be used appropriately and can be used for, but not limited to

- Speakers, trainers and/or facilitators
- Catering (excluding alcohol)
- Venue hire
- Marketing material and promotion.

## What can't we use the grant funding for?

Funding cannot be used to cover or pay for:

- business as usual expenses, such as staff wages or capital costs
- alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substances, or the promotion of the same
- prize money or gifts.

## How do I submit a correctly rendered invoice to receive payment of funds?

If your application is approved, you can submit your correctly rendered invoice to

[smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au).

A correctly rendered tax invoice includes:

- business name
- business address/ PO Box
- business ABN or other business identifying number
- contact number
- account name
- account BSB
- account number
- currency
- date
- invoice number
- the heading – Tax invoice
- the description 'NSW Small Business Month Oct 23 Grant Funding'
- the price - approved funding amount noting "GST is nil" or there is no GST charged.

## How quickly will I receive the grant payment?

If your application is successful and you have submitted a correctly rendered invoice and any other relevant supporting documents, payment will be made to the bank details provided on your application form within 30 days. Please note you may be required to make payments for your event prior to receiving the grant funding and should give consideration to this when planning your event.



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### What happens if I don't spend all the grant funding?

Unspent grant funding may need to be returned. Contact the NSW Small Business Month team for details.

### What happens if I need to cancel my event?

If your event is cancelled, you are responsible for notifying attendees and may need to return unspent grant funding. Contact the NSW Small Business Month team for further details.

### How do I manage registrations for my event?

You must capture the number of registrations for your event. We recommend using an online registration platform such as Humanitix or Eventbrite.

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## Conditions

Applications will not be accepted from organisations that are primarily or exclusively aligned with religious or political groups, tobacco or illegal substances, gambling, or any products or message that may cause offence or bring NSW Small Business Month and/or the NSW Government into disrepute.

Applications do not involve explicit or implicit endorsements of the grant recipient or its products by the NSW Government.

The NSW Government will not be responsible for any costs or associated risks incurred by organisations when hosting their events. The selection of grant participants is at the discretion of the NSW Government, whose decision is final. The NSW Government at its sole discretion reserves the right not to accept any application.

### Will I receive regular updates on the program?

Yes. The NSW Small Business Month team will send you regular email newsletters with information on planning your event, uploading your event to the website, promotion, etc.

### Who do I contact if I need support?

You can contact the NSW Small Business Month Team:

✉ [smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusiness.month@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)

☎ 1300 795 534



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