



FRESH IDEAS FOR WORK AND FAMILY GRANTS

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

MARCH 2009

NOTES FOR READING THE GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

- There are a number of defined terms in these Guidelines. Defined terms start with a capital letter.
- Headings, titles and notes are intended for guidance only. Readers should refer to the text of each section to understand these Guidelines.
- A reference to the singular also includes the plural and vice versa.

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1. What is the Fresh Ideas for Work and Family grants program?

The Australian Government has established the Fresh Ideas for Work and Family grants program (the Program) to assist small businesses to pursue practices that help employees balance their work and family obligations. The Program is administered through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (the Department).

2. The Guidelines

These Guidelines for Applicants (the Guidelines) apply from March 2009.

Applicants should use the Guidelines to assist them with their application and to further inform them of the process and main aims of the Program.

The Guidelines set out how the Program will be administered by the Department. All applications for funding under the Program will be assessed against the provisions outlined in these Guidelines.

The Department will review the Guidelines from time to time. The current Guidelines are available at www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas.

The Guidelines are to be read in conjunction with:

- the Application form; and
- the Terms and Conditions applicable to the provision of funding to successful Applicants.

More information on the Program and copies of the documents referred to in these Guidelines are available on the website www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas, by telephoning the Workplace Infoline on **1300 363 264** or by emailing the Department at FIWF@deewr.gov.au.

3. Objectives and Principles of the Program

The objectives of the Program are to encourage small businesses to:

- implement practices that help employees balance their work and family responsibilities; and
- improve employee retention and productivity.

The Department aims to achieve these objectives by providing funding to small businesses which are proposing to implement practices designed to:

- attract and retain workers and reduce the additional costs associated with employee turnover;
- meet the needs of working families;
- maintain workforce motivation thereby achieving higher productivity;
- provide greater continuity of employment and improve ongoing connections to the workforce; and
- provide incentives for, and greater awareness of, Family Friendly Work Arrangements and Work-Life Balance.

At the discretion of the Delegate funding of between \$5,000 and \$15,000 (GST inclusive) will be provided to each successful Applicant.

In administering the Program, the Department applies the following principles:

- Applicants who meet the **eligibility criteria** set out in Section 5 of these Guidelines will be assessed against the **selection criteria** as set out in Section 6 of these Guidelines. Only applicants who have been assessed against the selection criteria will be considered for funding.
- The funding amount provided to successful Applicants will be determined on a case-by-case basis. While Applicants are required to specify in their application the amount of funding they are applying for, the decision on how much funding to be provided to successful Applicants is at the discretion of the Delegate (see Section 8).
- Funding will only be provided to successful Applicants who agree to the **Terms and Conditions** of funding.
- Submitting an application does not in any way indicate or guarantee that funding will be provided.

PART B: APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4. Information for Applicants

Small businesses, as defined in Section 5 of these Guidelines, that are interested in implementing Family Friendly Work Arrangements may apply for funding under the Program to assist in the implementation of those arrangements.

Applications from consortia may be considered by the Department. A consortia is a group of small businesses (which each satisfy the eligibility criteria specified in Section 5) where either:

- each member of the consortia is applying for funding of between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for each member to fulfil a common purpose for all consortia members; or
- all members of the consortia are applying together for combined funding of between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for the entire consortia.

Applications from a consortia must be made on the Application Form for Consortia.

Where a successful **Applicant chooses to subcontract** part or all of the Family Friendly Work Arrangement to a third party, the Department is required to approve the use of the subcontractor. Where the Department approves a subcontracting arrangement, the arrangement is subject to clause 6 of the Terms and Conditions.

Applicants are entitled to submit one application per Funding Round. However, an Applicant who has previously received funding for a Family Friendly Work Arrangement under the Program must have completed that Family Friendly Work Arrangement and fulfilled its obligations under the related Terms and Conditions before it will be eligible to receive

funding for additional Family Friendly Work Arrangements.

Successful Applicants must complete the Family Friendly Work Arrangement by the completion date specified in the Letter of Offer or in accordance with any extension granted to the Applicant pursuant to clause 1.2 of the Terms and Conditions.

5. Eligibility Criteria

All applications will be assessed against the following eligibility criteria:

- a. **A small business is defined as a business with fewer than 15 employees** (including those in any associated entity of the employer). Each full-time and part-time employee will count as one employee. Casual employees will also be counted as one employee if they are employed on a regular and systematic basis.
- b. Funding will only be provided to Applicants who have not previously received Commonwealth and or State Government funding for the same Family Friendly Work Arrangement they are seeking funding for under the Program.
- c. Funding will only be provided to Applicants who are currently engaged in good work practices. Funding will not be provided to applicants who have failed to engage in good work practices. To determine whether an applicant has engaged in good work practices, the Department may have regard for the applicant's compliance with the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* and any relevant State or Territory legislation, award or other industrial instrument.

- d. Sole traders and incorporated sole traders are not eligible to receive funding under the Program unless the sole trader/incorporated sole trader employs between 1 and 14 employees (not including the sole trader/incorporated sole trader). Each full-time and part-time employee will count as one employee. Casual employees will also be counted as one employee if they are employed on a regular and systematic basis.
- e. Small businesses which are subject to receivership, voluntary administration, liquidation, a deed of company arrangement or any other form of insolvency administration are not eligible to receive funding under the Program.
- f. Not-for-profit and non-government organisations are eligible to apply.
- g. Applications must be submitted using the correct application form. All sections of the application form must be completed and must specify the amount of funding the Applicant is applying for.
- h. Applications must have been received by the Department on or before the closing date of the Funding Round in which the Applicant is applying.
- i. Funding will only be provided to small businesses which are proposing to implement Family Friendly Work Arrangements (as defined in Part E of these Guidelines). Arrangements which are proposing to use the funding for expenses unrelated to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement are not Family Friendly Work Arrangements. Arrangements which are not Family Friendly Work Arrangements for the purposes of the program include, but are not limited to, arrangements which are proposing to use the funding for capital expenditure such as purchasing equipment or machinery which is unrelated to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement; employment of new staff; staff wages not directly related to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement; unforeseen emergencies; expenses associated with employee absences; operating expenses such as lease and interest payments; salary subsidies; and leave payments.

6. Selection Criteria

Applications which have satisfied the eligibility criteria will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

- a. The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates that they engaged in discussions and meetings with employees, and the Family Friendly Work Arrangement is supported by the Applicant and its employees.
- b. The extent to which the Family Friendly Work Arrangement can be tailored to suit the specific needs of the business and create work-life balance solutions for its employees.
- c. The extent to which the Family Friendly Work Arrangement will benefit the business and its employees having regard to the objectives of the Program set out in section 3 of these Guidelines.
- d. The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates their commitment to the ongoing support and development of the Family Friendly Work Arrangement after the funding has ceased, including financial and other support.

7. Assessment Process

The Program will be administered in Funding Rounds.

The opening and closing dates of each Funding Round are available on the website www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas, by telephoning the Workplace Infoline on **1300 363 264**, or by emailing the Department at FIWF@deewr.gov.au.

A three (3) person external Panel will assess applications.

Incomplete application forms will be returned to the Applicant. Applicants can re-submit the completed application form in either the same or a subsequent Funding Round.

Applications will be assessed by the Panel using the following three step assessment process:

- Step 1: Assessment of all applications against the eligibility criteria contained in Section 5 of these Guidelines;
- Step 2: Assessment of all eligible applications against the selection criteria contained in Section 6 of these Guidelines; and
- Step 3: Assessment of how much funding (if any) is to be provided to Applicants.

The Panel may ask the Department to contact Applicants about any matter in their application form which may require further clarification, or for any other reason in relation to their application.



The Panel will provide its assessment in a written report to the Delegate, including recommendations as to which Applicants should receive funding and the amount of funding to be provided to those Applicants.

When determining which applications to provide funding for, the Panel will also have regard to the following:

- the Department's aim to provide funding to small businesses in a wide range of locations around Australia;
- the location and/or industry of the small business;
- whether the Family Friendly Work Arrangement is likely to result in the efficient, effective and ethical use of public money and resources; and
- whether the Family Friendly Work Arrangement is transferable to other small businesses.

8. Role of the Delegate

For the purposes of the Program, the Delegate is the Branch Manager of the Branch of the Department responsible for administering the Program.

The Delegate has absolute discretion to decide all matters relating to applications including eligibility and the amount of any funding provided to successful Applicants.

The Delegate may seek additional information from Applicants but is not under any obligation to do so.

The Delegate's decision is final. If an Applicant has concerns with the way its application was handled by the Department, the Applicant should contact the Department within 30 days of receiving notification of the Department's decision.

9. Outcome of the Assessment Process

The Department endeavours to notify Applicants of the outcome of their application in writing within seven weeks of the closing date of the Funding Round in which they applied.

Successful Applicants will be advised of the amount of funding which the Department is offering to provide.

The Department may offer to provide funding for all or part of the Family Friendly Work Arrangement proposed by the Applicant. Where the Department offers to provide funding for part of the Family Friendly Work Arrangement proposed by the Applicant, the Department will advise the successful Applicant in the Letter of Offer.

If the successful Applicant agrees to the Department's offer of funding and related Terms and Conditions, the Applicant will be required to sign and return the Department's Letter of Offer and Terms and Conditions within the timeframe specified in the Letter of Offer. Once the Department signs the Letter of Offer and forwards a copy to the successful Applicant, the Funding Agreement between the recipient and the Department will commence.

Funding will not be provided unless the Terms and Conditions are accepted.

PART C: PROVISION OF FUNDING

10. How Funding is Provided

The agreed amount of funding will be provided to successful Applicants in the following instalments:

- 75% which will be paid upfront; and
- 25% which will be paid once the Family Friendly Work Arrangement is completed.

To receive the first instalment of funding, successful Applicants are required to provide the following to the Department, within 20 business days of receiving the executed Funding Agreement:

- the completed Vendor Request Form provided by the Department containing details of a bank account held in the successful Applicant's name; and
- an Invoice for the first instalment of funding as specified in clause 2.5 and 2.6 of the Terms and Conditions.

The first instalment of funding will be deposited into the nominated account within 30 days of the Department receiving the completed Vendor Request Form and Invoice.

To receive the second instalment of funding, successful Applicants are required to send the following to the Department, within 30 business days of completing the Family Friendly Work Arrangement:

- the proforma completion report as required by clause 8.3 of the Terms and Conditions;
- copies of any paid Invoices, receipts or other documents verifying expenditure of the first instalment of the funding;
- any other Evidence demonstrating that the Family Friendly Work Arrangement has been completed; and
- an Invoice for the second instalment of funding.

The second instalment of funding will be deposited into the nominated account within 30 days of the Department receiving the documents referred to above. Within 60 days of receiving the second instalment of funding from the Department, successful Applicants will need to provide to

the Department a signed statutory declaration stating that the funding has been used for the agreed purpose, together with any receipts or other documents verifying expenditure of the second instalment of funding.

11. Reporting Requirements

Successful Applicants must comply with the reporting requirements specified in the Terms and Conditions including the requirement that they participate in a survey conducted by the Department following the completion of the Family Friendly Work Arrangement. Successful Applicants should also encourage their staff to participate in any survey conducted by the Department in relation to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement.

12. Recovery of Funding

The relevant provisions of the Terms and Conditions relating to recovery of funding will apply in the event that:

- a successful Applicant does not expend all of the funding provided to it in accordance with the Terms and Conditions;
- an amount of funding has not been acquitted to the Department's satisfaction; or
- a successful Applicant does not fulfil any of its obligations under the Terms and Conditions and does not rectify the omission or breach.

PART D: FURTHER INFORMATION

13. Information Management

The Department collects information from Applicants for the purposes of assessing whether funding will be provided to that Applicant. Information collected from Applicants during the processing of applications is stored, collected and disclosed in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The Department may use the information collected from Applicants to promote the Program. Information collected from Applicants may be used to create case studies on Family Friendly Work Arrangements implemented by Applicants, and these case studies may be published online or in promotional materials.

The Department may use the information collected from Applicants for the purposes of conducting departmental reporting and maintaining a register of funding recipients which will be available on www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas.

14. Complaints Process

If an Applicant is dissatisfied with the way in which their application was handled by the Department, they may wish to raise their concerns with the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Before Applicants approach the Ombudsman, they are encouraged to resolve their concerns with the Department.

The Ombudsman will usually not investigate a complaint unless the matter has first been raised with the Department and the Department has been provided with a reasonable opportunity to respond.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone: **(02) 6276 0111** or **1300 362 072**

Email: **ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au**

Internet: **www.comb.gov.au**



PART E: DEFINITIONS

Applicant means a small business (or consortia) which has lodged an Application for Funding.

Department means the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Evidence means any documents, photographs, statutory declarations, invoices and/or signed statements which can be used to demonstrate that the Family Friendly Work Arrangement has been successfully implemented.

Family Friendly Work Arrangement means practices or resources that make the workplace more flexible and help employees balance work and family life. Family friendly arrangements are meant to support employees balance their work and family responsibilities, including dependent children, family members who have disabilities and elders. Arrangements which are proposing to use the funding for expenses unrelated to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement are not Family Friendly Work Arrangements. Arrangements which are not Family Friendly Work Arrangements for the purposes of the program include, but are not limited to, arrangements which are proposing to use the funding for capital expenditure such as purchasing equipment or machinery which is unrelated to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement; employment of new staff; staff wages not directly related to the Family Friendly Work Arrangement; unforeseen emergencies; expenses associated with employee absences; operating expenses such as lease and interest payments; salary subsidies; and leave payments.

Funding Round means the period during which Applications will be accepted and assessed by the Department.

Funding Agreement means an agreement entered into between the Department and the successful Applicant. The Funding Agreement consists of the Letter of Offer as signed and dated by the recipient and Department, the signed and completed application form and the Terms and Conditions as initialled.

Invoice means an invoice issued by a successful Applicant to the Department which satisfies the requirements for a tax invoice as defined in the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*, and which includes the following:

- a. title of the Activity;
- b. recipient's name and ABN;

- c. date of execution of the agreement;
- d. fees and expenses to be invoiced (including a description of the deliverables or milestones that the invoice relates to); and
- e. bank account details for payment of the invoice by electronic funds transfer.

Letter of Offer refers to the letter the Department sends to successful Applicants advising that the application for funding has been successful, and advises the funding amount being offered and includes the Terms and Conditions.

Panel means a team of experts in Work-Life Balance who will assess applications.

Terms and Conditions means the Terms and Conditions which the Applicant agrees to when accepting the Department's offer of Funding.

Work-Life Balance means achieving a balance in an employee's life that includes work, family, friends, health, relaxation, cultural and community activities and socialisation.

Further information on the Fresh Ideas for Work and Family program may be obtained from www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas, by calling the Workplace Infoline on 1300 363 264 or by emailing FIWF@deewr.gov.au

Completed application forms must be sent by the closing date of the relevant funding round to one of the following:

Fax: **(02) 6123 5413**

Post: Fresh Ideas for Work and Family Program
(LC 10M33)
Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

For more information on Fresh Ideas for Work and Family
visit www.deewr.gov.au/freshideas
call 1300 363 264
email FIWF@deewr.gov.au
or fax 02 6123 5413