



Department of  
Jobs, Tourism, Science  
and Innovation



# Defence Ready Initiative

## Guidelines





# Contents

## Defence Ready Round Guidelines

- Objectives of this round ..... 3
- Key dates..... 3
- Level of funding ..... 3
- Eligibility criteria ..... 3
- Assessment process ..... 3
- Project completion date..... 3
- Contact..... 3
- Program objective..... 4
- Who can apply? ..... 4
- Eligible activities ..... 4
- Ineligible activities..... 5
- How do I apply? ..... 5
- How will the applications be assessed? ..... 5
- Financial Assistance Agreement ..... 6
- Payment of Grant..... 6
- Tax information ..... 6
- How many times can I apply?..... 6
- Reporting requirements..... 6
- Amendments to guidelines..... 7
- Overview of applicant’s business operations ..... 8
- Evaluation criteria..... 8
- Tips..... 11



# Defence Ready Initiative Guidelines

## Objectives of this round

The objective of the Defence Ready Initiative (DRI) is to provide funding support to Western Australian SMEs that operate in the Defence sector, to enhance their business capability, capacity and competitiveness in specific areas to participate as suppliers of products, services and works that assist in meeting Defence's requirements.

## Key dates

The timelines below are indicative only, and are subject to change at the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation's (the Department) discretion. Information regarding the closing date of the round will be published on the Department's website in the event that the closing date changes.

Round Opens	9am (AWST) 4 November 2024
Round Closes	3pm (AWST) 3 December 2024
Assessment and notification of outcomes to applicants	Within 3 months of round closing
Execution of Financial Assistance Agreement	Within 30 days of notification of outcome
Completion of activities and claim for payment submitted	No later than 30 June 2026

## Level of funding

The level of funding support available under this round of the DRI is 50 per cent of eligible costs (excluding GST) - up to a maximum of \$20,000 per successful applicant. For example, to be eligible for the full \$20,000 you would need to have minimum eligible costs of \$40,000 (excluding GST).

**NB: The Department reserves the right to support applications for more than \$20,000 on a case by case basis.**

## Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, in addition to satisfying the general DRI eligibility criteria as detailed in [Who Can Apply?](#) on page 4, applicants must also:

- » Have been operating for at least two years - including at least one year in Western Australia - at the time of submitting an application for funding.

**NB: The Department reserves the right to support applications where the business does not strictly meet the eligibility criteria on a case by case basis.**

## Assessment process

Applications will be assessed by an independent Evaluation Panel which will meet to consider all submitted applications following the closure of the round. Applications will be assessed against their eligibility as well as the round objectives, and will then be scored against the following evaluation criteria and weightings:

- » Relevance/need 30%
- » Level of impact 30%
- » Capability and capacity 15%
- » Value for money 15%
- » Financial viability and risk 10%

## Project completion date

All activities must be completed, and claims for payment submitted to the Department, by 3pm (AWST) 30 June 2026.

## Contact

If you have any questions regarding this assistance program, the application form or your business's eligibility for funding under this round, please contact:

[defencewest@jtsi.wa.gov.au](mailto:defencewest@jtsi.wa.gov.au).



# General Program Guidelines

## Program objective

The Defence Ready Initiative (DRI) is a funding program administered by the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (the Department).

The objective of the DRI is to provide SMEs with funding support to enhance their capacity, capability and competitiveness to supply major projects and markets in Australia and overseas.

## Who can apply?

To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- » Be registered for GST for at least 12 months prior to application submission date;
- » Have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- » Be a for-profit organisation or business (Not-for-profits and charities are ineligible);
- » Have its principal place of business (operating facility) in Western Australia and continue to be based in Western Australia for at least the next 12 months following application submission date; and
- » Employ less than 200 people.

**NB: Additional eligibility criteria may apply. Refer to the additional [eligibility criteria](#) on page 3 for further details.**

Previous recipients of funding through the DRI are eligible to apply, subject to:

- » The business having complied with the requirements of the Financial Assistance Agreements entered into for the prior funding - including all reporting requirements.

## Eligible activities

The following activities are eligible for funding.

### A. External expertise for the purpose of:

- » Planning and business advice. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - > Strategic and business planning;
  - > Development and implementation of marketing plans;
  - > Supply chain facilitation;
  - > Tender submission advice and preparation; and
  - > Preparation and submission of applications for other government and international grants.
- » Improvements to internal business infrastructure / systems. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - > Production systems;
  - > Transportation and distribution systems;
  - > IT and communication systems including cyber security;
  - > Implementation and certification of national and international standards and management systems; and
  - > Operational and other activities identified as necessary to meet the pre-qualification requirements of the target market.
- » Training and/or customer engagement. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - > Up-skilling of employees which leads to improved operational processes;
  - > Training that is part of the employer's staff development requirements;
  - > Costs involved in activities that build customer relationships, such as participation in trade shows;
  - > Travel and accommodation costs associated with training – where local options are not available; and
  - > Costs involved in bringing registered trainers to deliver local group training.





## B. Plant and equipment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- » Acquiring new equipment or machinery;
- » Acquiring second-hand equipment or machinery through a dealer;
- » Modifying existing equipment or machinery;
- » Upgrades or expansions to applicant owned business operating facilities;
- » Purchase of specialised motor vehicles. These are vehicles which perform specific and specialised functions (e.g. bobcats, forklifts, cherry pickers, back hoes, bucket trucks etc.) and will be used exclusively for business purposes. **NB: Utility vehicles, 4x4s and vans are not considered specialised vehicles;**
- » Purchase of specialised computer hardware and software (e.g. tender management software; project management software; on-line sales and marketing systems).

## Ineligible activities

- » Works carried out by consultants without the appropriate expertise to deliver the service;
- » Works carried out by third parties that are perceived by the Department not to be at arm's length from the business;
- » Support of any legal action;
- » Purchase of equipment and machinery second-hand through a private sale;
- » Purchase of motor vehicles which do not perform specific and specialised functions (e.g. utility vehicles, vans, 4x4s);
- » Purchase of general computer hardware, software, and office furniture and equipment upgrades and purchases e.g. Microsoft Office/Windows operating systems, photocopiers etc. (Unless it is specialised equipment considered vital to the operations of the applicant's business and is used exclusively for business purposes);
- » Land and property acquisitions;
- » Upgrades or expansions to leased or rented property<sup>1</sup>;
- » Internal research and development activities;

- » Expenditure of an operational nature (i.e. business as usual expenditure such as wages, advertising, office expenses, accounting, legal, IT maintenance services etc.);
- » In-house training (i.e. training delivered by employees of the business);
- » Training by organisations without the appropriate expertise and experience;
- » Tertiary education - this includes certificate level courses at TAFE or private colleges;
- » In-kind contributions are not considered as part of the business commitment to activity costs and are not funded under the DRI;
- » Retrospective activities. The activity or expenditure on the activity must not be undertaken prior to submitting your application;
- » Activities for which other Federal, State or Local Government funding has been, or is likely to be granted; and
- » Activities implemented outside of Western Australia.

**NB: The Department may, at its discretion, consider requests for grant funding being used towards some of the above activities depending on individual circumstances.**

## How do I apply?

Eligible applicants must submit their application online using the DRI Application Form. A preview of the Application Form detailing the information required is available through the DRI webpage.

Before applying, applicants must read and understand these guidelines and the Financial Assistance Agreement found on the DRI webpage.

## How will the applications be assessed?

Applications are usually assessed by an independent Assessment Panel that will meet to consider all submitted applications following the closure of the round. The Assessment Panel will comprise of officers from within the Department as well as external expertise, as required. Applications are assessed against their eligibility as well as their relevance to the

<sup>1</sup> Leasehold improvements may be considered in some cases.



round objectives and against the [evaluation criteria](#) of the round.

A satisfactory response is required across all of the evaluation criteria in order for an application to have a good chance of success.

To mitigate risk, a Risk of Failure report will be obtained through Illion (formerly Dun & Bradstreet) for recommended applicants.

A High Risk of Failure on the report will be taken into consideration when determining successful applications. The final decision on applications where a High Risk of Failure report is returned will be at the Department's discretion.

Illion is an independent, third party used to carry out due diligence and is not associated with, or part of, the Department. Further information on Illion can be found on its [website](#).

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

## Financial Assistance Agreement

Approval of funding is subject to the applicant entering into a Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) with the Department.

Applicants must read the FAA template prior to submitting an application. This template includes the non-negotiable terms and conditions that successful Applicants will be required to agree to when entering into an FAA with the Department.

## Payment of Grant

The grant will be paid in two instalments, the first instalment on the execution of the FAA, and the second instalment upon completion of all agreed activities. Progress instalments will not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

The grant payment will be made on submission of a Tax Invoice to the Department for the GST exclusive value of the grant and must be accompanied by copies of suppliers' invoices and receipts as proof that the activity has been paid for in line with the application and FAA. Additional documentation may be

required and will be detailed on [page 3](#) as required.

Claims for payment, and submission of the associated documents, are to be made via email to the Department officer managing the grant.

If a claim for payment is not received by the specified due date given in the [key dates](#) section on page 3, the grant approval will lapse and the funding agreement terminated.

## Tax information

The Department is registered for GST and has been issued with Australian Business Number (ABN) 90 199 516 864.

Grants paid under the DRI are not regarded as payment for a supply to the Department. Therefore, the Department will not increase the grant to include GST, nor will it reimburse a grant recipient for GST paid to a third party.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes. We recommend applicants seek independent professional advice on the business's taxation obligations or seek assistance from the Australian Taxation Office. The Department does not provide taxation advice.

## How many times can I apply?

Only one application per round per financial year is allowed for each applicant (determined by applicant ABN number). Unsuccessful applicants may not reapply in the same financial year for the same round. If a business applies more than once under the same round, only the first application submitted will be considered - unless otherwise requested by the applicant.

## Reporting requirements

As previously stated, approval of funding is subject to the applicant entering into an FAA with the Department. The FAA requires the applicant to provide a report at six months and 12 months after the end of the financial year that the grant is awarded. These reports are to be submitted by the email to the Department officer managing the grant. The FAA also stipulates that at any time within two years of receiving payment, the Department may



contact the applicant for verbal updates on business performance generally.

## **Amendments to guidelines**

The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and related documentation through the course of the round, if required.



# Guidance for completing your application

DRI application forms are broken into a number of different sections. Refer to page 3 for the [evaluation criteria](#) related to the round you wish to apply for.

The following will guide you through each section to ensure that you are providing the required information in your application.

## Overview of applicant's business operations

### What are the business's core business and products/services?

Provide a brief explanation of the business's core business and products/services and how these are supplied to the market. I.e. What exactly does the business do? Is the business a direct supplier to the sector? If there are major projects within a sector/market that the business has supplied to, provide details of the project and what work the business did.

## Evaluation criteria

### Relevance/need

#### *Activity alignment with the organisation's business plan and the proposed timing*

Provide a brief explanation of how the proposed activities strategically align with the business plan or how they further the long-term goals of the business. Why are the proposed activities a short-term priority? Does anything else need to occur before the proposed activities are implemented? Where do the proposed activities fit in with regards to the business's long-term goals?

#### *Opportunities/barriers/issues faced and proposed resolutions*

Provide an explanation of the major opportunities and any barriers or issues faced by the business. Elaborate on how the proposed activities and the grant funding will assist the business to take advantage of these opportunities, improve the operations of the business or help it to overcome / resolve the barriers / issues it currently faces. E.g. meeting pre-qualification requirements,

increasing technical capability, improving internal processes, or staff upskilling and training.

#### *Realistic outcomes*

Any improvements listed should be realistic and directly related to the activities that the business wishes to carry out. In your answer you want to show a clear line between what the business is seeking funding for and the improvements the business hopes to see.

### Level of impact

You should endeavour to answer all questions in this section in two parts. First, what the expected outcome is – this should be a number if possible. E.g. five new contracts. Second, provide an explanation of how that outcome would occur from the activity the business is seeking funding for.

#### *Quantify and qualify*

Assessors of your application will be looking to see that the answer is quantified (there is a number), that it is achievable by undertaking the funded activity (your explanation of how the outcome will occur), and that it is realistic for the business.

Please note the assessors of your application will take into consideration the annual turnover figures of the business that you provide to measure whether the expected outcomes for contracts, employees and estimated income are a realistic projection.

There may be some aspects of the section where outcomes from the requested activity are not expected. This is okay, not all businesses would have outcomes in all categories necessarily, and not all funded activities will lead to some of the outcomes listed. However, you should try to answer as many of the categories as you can and if you answer 'N/A' to all of them then this will result in a low score for this section.

The categories outlined are what the business will be required to report against at six months





and 12 months should your application be successful.

## Capability and Capacity

*Describe the business's commitment, capacity and capability to implement the proposed activity.*

I.e. How is the business committed to carrying out the requested activity? Is this something that is being driven from the top of the business? Is the activity part of any planning the business is undertaking?

Where possible, you should aim to answer the three parts of this question: commitment, capacity, and capability.

Even though the business may be using external consultants or suppliers to deliver the activity, this will still require some amount of the staff's time and/or a financial commitment from the business, does the business have this capacity?

Don't forget that the DRI provides payment on completion of the activity not before, so the business needs the financial capacity to carry out the activity before being provided with the funding.

Does the business and its staff have the capability to carry out the activity? If the business is purchasing a new piece of equipment, are the staff able to use it? If they aren't, are there plans to train them so they are? If the business is carrying out an activity that will help it move into a new market, will the staff be able to undertake this work?

The above may guide you in answering this question. Good applications give assessors an idea of where the activity fits into the business's goals and whether the business has ability to not only carry out the activity but also to benefit from it.

*How will the business fund its own contribution towards the cost of the proposed activities?*

The DRI is a re-imbusement scheme, which means that the business will need to have paid for the activity prior to claiming the approved amount of funding from the Department. Accordingly, the business needs to illustrate that it has the financial capacity to

carry out the activity before being provided with the funding.

You don't need to provide a large explanation here of how the business will fund its contribution of the costs, but assessors will want to see that the business has the financial capacity to bring the project to completion.

## Level of market/industry engagement (if relevant)

*What part of the targeted project is the business hoping to supply to?*

You may want to provide some context of the project beyond just naming the package the business is hoping to supply to. It is helpful if you are able to tie the proposed activity that the business is seeking funding for to how the business will be better placed to supply to the project.

*What other similar projects or markets has the business done work for in the past and what was the nature of the work done?*

Detail here can provide assessors with a sense of how realistic it is that the business can supply to the major project it is targeting with its application. Provide information on how the business supplied to the project(s) or market(s) e.g. did the business supply directly, what was the length of the business's participation in the project or market?

*How has the business engaged with the project it is targeting or the State Government department/head contractor overseeing the project?*

Please upload any evidence of the business's engagement where relevant. The assessment panel is looking to see that the business has begun engagement with the project they are targeting in the application. If there is communication or other relevant documentation showing this engagement then providing a copy will assist your application. If the business has not engaged with the project yet, then it is worth providing some detail about what the business's plan is to engage with the project so that assessors can see that the business has thought out a strategy to become a supplier for the project.



## Value for money

It is critical that the business a) seek competitive quotes for the activity the business is seeking funding for, and b) provide copies of those alternative quotes with your application. It is expected that the business will get at least two quotes for each activity.

### *The importance of alternative quotes and research*

If you do not provide alternative quotes, you must provide an explanation as to why the business has not sought/provided them. There will be some situations where it is simply not possible/feasible to get alternative quotes, such as when there is only one supplier of a particular product or service. If this is the case, you need to explain this so that assessors can understand why there are no alternative quotes.

Regarding the choice of consultants, you need to provide a good explanation of why the business has chosen the particular consultant/supplier. Does it represent better value for money (remember that 'value for money' does not always mean cheapest)? Will the service be delivered faster than the alternatives (enabling the business to see the benefits of the activity sooner)?

Assessors will be considering whether the activity you are seeking funding for represents value for money not only for the business but also for the government, therefore, Assessors will consider the expected benefits to the State relative to the grant amount requested.

## Financial viability and risk

If you answer yes to any of the questions in this section, you must provide an explanation of what occurred, the current position and what outcomes occurred (if any). The evaluation panel considers whether providing funding would present a risk, and so it is advised that you provide an explanation that is detailed enough (without being too long) to demonstrate that while senior officers of the business may have had business ventures that haven't worked out in the past that the current business is sustainable.



## Tips

1. Always double-check your application. It is worth getting someone else to read over it, if possible, before you submit it to ensure it makes sense.
2. Remember that assessors are unlikely to be experts in the business's industry. Overly technical and detailed answers may be difficult for assessors to understand which could lead to lower scores. When writing an application it is useful to write it in a way that anyone could understand, not just those who work in the business's industry. A good way of doing this is to imagine you are promoting the business via its website or social media where the public will need to understand the core activities of the business.
3. Give yourself enough time before the closing date to be able to source quotes and relevant documents. As these documents can often take a bit of time to get hold of - with quotes sometimes taking a number of weeks - if you start an application the day before the closing date, and do not have the necessary documents ready to go, then you might run out of time to get them. Applications without quotes or relevant documents will receive lower scores.
4. Good applications provide sufficient detail but are also concise. While you definitely want to provide enough detail to ensure assessors are able to properly assess your application, if you overwhelm them with large amounts of detail it may be difficult for them to determine the point you are trying to make. Again, it is worth double checking your application and getting someone else to look over it to make sure that it is detailed, but to the point.
5. Assessors are only able to make a recommendation based on the information you provide in your application. If there is something important that will help your application stand out then include it.
6. Always read the [eligibility criteria](#) and the [eligible activities](#) carefully to ensure the business is eligible to apply, and that the activities the business is seeking funding for are eligible. A good application takes time to write, so if the business is ineligible you don't want to spend time on an application that will be rejected straight away. If you have queries about whether the business (or an activity) is eligible, feel free to contact the relevant team as detailed on page 3 under [Contact](#).