



Department of  
Energy and Economic  
Diversification

# Innovation Booster Grant

## 2026 Guidelines



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# 1. Introduction

The Western Australian Government has invested \$40 million into the [New Industries and Innovation Fund \(NIIF\)](#) over four years (2025-29) to boost the development and acceleration of innovation-based technologies and their take up in global value chains.

Building jobs and new industries requires an industry-led approach to innovation and business competitiveness. The *New Industries Fund* was initially established in 2017 to support a self-sustaining innovation environment that encourages collaboration and private sector investment. This will help grow the State's competitive advantages and build the skills required for the jobs of the future.

The NIIF is administered by the Western Australian Department of Energy and Economic Diversification (the Department). The NIIF provides funding for several initiatives, including the [Innovation Booster Grant](#), to foster an innovative and diversified Western Australia that is competitive, sustainable, and attractive to investors, industry and entrepreneurs.

The NIIF is the primary tool for the State to deliver against [WA Innovation Strategy: the place to innovate](#), and is a key enabler of the State's economic development framework [Diversify WA](#).

## 2. Western Australia's Innovation Strategy

The goal of *WA Innovation Strategy: the place to innovate* is to inspire a new generation of innovators to solve our challenges and encourage the economy to diversify. The mission is to elevate Western Australian innovation onto the global radar and propel the local ecosystem into a new phase of growth. The Strategy sets itself the following five 10-year goals to realise this vision, along with the associated Innovation Action Plan, for Western Australia to become a:

- world leader in research and inventiveness;
- location of choice for product and technology development, translation and testing;
- home to globally-focussed organisations that scale, creating new jobs;
- adopter of new technologies and a tech transfer haven;
- place where innovation is inclusive and purposeful, rewarded and respected.

To achieve these goals, the Government is taking action in a range of areas, including:

- **Skills, people and culture:** The Western Australian Government will invest in building additional talent across the State and attracting talent globally.

- **Research and tech transfer:** The Western Australian Government will set out a bold new science and research agenda, fit for the decade ahead, and seek to maximise technology transfer opportunities across the State's growing economy.
- **Networks, precincts and shared facilities:** The Western Australian Government will accelerate efforts to enable innovation hubs, precincts and shared facilities to strengthen the innovation ecosystem across the State.
- **Access to capital:** The Western Australian Government will encourage the growth of an active local venture capital market for WA innovators and investigate other ways to ensure there is access to sufficient capital.
- **Procurement and supply chains:** The Western Australian Government is making procurement easier for WA startups and small businesses to provide access to major industry and Government contracts, and will work with partners to open market access to global supply chains.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** The Western Australian Government will grow and foster the diversity and inclusiveness of the Western Australian economy, providing opportunities for greater participation in new and innovative economic activity by underrepresented groups.
- **Promotion and adoption:** The Western Australian Government will elevate efforts to promote and celebrate the outstanding scientific, technological and innovative capability of WA internationally and at home, supporting the adoption of new technologies and innovations across businesses and communities.

## 3. About the grant

### 3.1. Overview

The *Innovation Booster Grant* (Grant) is a competitive Western Australian Government grant, funded through the NIIF. The grant targets early-stage founders, innovation-driven SMEs, and startups in Western Australia to improve capability and commercialise innovative projects, in one of the State's priority sectors as outlined in *Diversify WA*.

The Grant is designed to assist businesses to:

- develop or enhance products or services that are commercially ready, or to reach a commercial ready stage;
- test, validate, or certify their Minimum Viable Product (MVP);
- procure specialist external consultancy services to assist with intellectual property, marketing or commercialisation support; and/or
- address a specific technical problem that the business cannot solve themselves, or for which the solution is not readily available.

For further information please refer to the *Innovation Booster Grant - FAQ* document available on the website.

## 3.2. Objectives and outcomes

Startups and innovative SMEs can face barriers to successfully execute their ideas due to a lack of resources. In particular, they can lack the necessary capital to access the support services and expertise required to refine, test, protect, validate, and certify their innovation.

The objective of the *Innovation Booster Grant* program is to support startups and innovative SMEs to progress their innovations through access to support services and expertise that improve the capability of the business to validate or commercialise a product.

Intended outcomes of the *Innovation Booster Grant* program are that:

- businesses have greater access to capital to engage support services and experts
- businesses access support services, enabling them to address a technical problem, progressing their innovation towards commercialisation
- businesses develop new to market products that are commercially ready
- the number of commercially ready innovations in WA increases, and
- Western Australia is a location of choice for product testing and development.

# 4. Funding

## 4.1. Funding Availability

Tier	Applicant	Recipient matched funding requirement
1	Applicants headquartered in regional WA	15%
2	First Nations founded businesses <sup>1</sup>	15%
3	Female founded businesses	15%
4	All remaining applicants	20%

<sup>1</sup> Tier 2 applicants are eligible for grant writing support from a First Nations grant writer. Please contact [ibg@deed.wa.gov.au](mailto:ibg@deed.wa.gov.au) for more information and to access this support service.

A maximum of \$50,000 grant per application is available for projects to be completed within 12 months.

There is a minimum matched funding requirement that must be met and demonstrated in your application. Please refer to the table above to determine which Tier your application is as this will determine the percentage of matched funding for your application.

The matched funds must be demonstrated cash and must not include Western Australian government funding from other sources. All co-contribution items may be subject to an independent audit.

Where an applicant is successful, the recipient must enter into a Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) with the Department (see Section 8.1) prior to receiving funds. This FAA must be executed before project work commences.

Successful recipients will be required to provide evidence that they have appropriately spent the grant funding, as outlined in the Forecasted Expenditure spreadsheet (Section 4.4) at the end of their project. More information on reporting is available in Section 8.5.

## 4.2. Eligible Expenditure

Expenditure against the project can only commence on or after the execution of a FAA. Eligible costs are those costs directly associated with the delivery of the project.

The Grant funding may be spent on expenses related to the procurement of one or more external support services in one or more of the following four categories:

### 1. Research and Development

- a. compliance testing
- b. product testing and validation
- c. laboratory verification
- d. certification

### 2. Product Development

- a. engineering design work
- b. building a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)

### 3. Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property

- a. protection of intellectual property
- b. legal advice
- c. licensing

### 4. Commercialisation Support Services

- a. innovation management and consulting
- b. commercialisation strategies (including marketing strategies to support market entry)
- c. commercialisation feasibility studies
- d. financial support (including tax incentive advice, capital raising strategies)

In your application you will be asked to provide the name of your selected support service(s) or a clear description of the service you will be engaging.

### 4.3. Ineligible expenditure

Grant funding, or the matched funding, cannot be used for any of the following;

- a. 'in-house' or 'business as usual' activities (Eg: existing staff costs, website development);
- b. business and strategic planning;
- c. design and production of marketing or promotional materials or events (unless it can be demonstrated that this expenditure is focused on a commercialisation pathway);
- d. hardware and software purchases (for standard business purposes);
- e. training courses;
- f. maintenance and upkeep of facilities; and
- g. any other general business/operational/business planning activities that are usual requirements of a business.

### 4.4. Forecasted Expenditure

As part of the application process, applicants must complete and upload a Forecasted Expenditure spreadsheet, which is a downloadable spreadsheet template you can find on the [Innovation Booster Grant](#) webpage. Only eligible expenses can be included.

The spreadsheet will show the direct, attributable costs of your project over its timeline and will be the basis for the Expenditure Summary that you will submit with your Acquittal Report.

*Please Note: You must use the Forecasted Expenditure template provided or your application will be found ineligible. This template is the only format that will be accepted as it allows fair comparisons across competing applications.*

## 5. Eligibility

### 5.1. Applicant Eligibility

To be considered eligible for the Grant and progress to the Evaluation Stage, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- a. Your business is registered in Western Australia and possesses a current Australian Business Number (ABN) and/or Australian Company Number (ACN);
- b. Your business will continue to be based in Western Australia for the next three years;
- c. Your business employs between one and 20 people. This includes sole traders, private sector firms, partnerships and non-profit entities;
- d. Your business is solvent and will pass due diligence checks;
- e. Your business has not previously raised significant capital (\$5,000,000 or more);
- f. You are developing an innovative project/initiative in Western Australia, with a total project budget less than \$100,000;
- g. Your project/initiative is pre-revenue (your business can have previous revenue, but the project/initiative cannot have previous revenue);
- h. Your business has not previously received an *Innovation Booster Grant* for the same project/initiative;
- i. You have not previously received, or are not likely to receive, Western Australian government funding for the same project/initiative;
- j. Your business is willing, and has the financial capacity, to co-contribute the applicable amount of matched funding (see Section 4.1 Funding Availability);
- k. Grant funding, and matched funds, will be used to procure and pay for support service(s) that are external to and not affiliated with your business. An affiliated business may include a parent or subsidiary company, a company that has shared founders or board members, or other such relationships;
- l. Grant funding, and matched funds, will be used for a future project;
- m. Grant funding, and matched funds, will not be spent on business-as-usual operational expenses;
- n. Your application is submitted via the Good Grants platform by the application closing date and time (see Section 7.1 Key Dates).

## 6. Evaluation criteria

All eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria to determine the extent to which the application meets the funding requirements of the Western Australian

Government. Consideration will be given to the scale of impact the Grant has on the applicant in comparison to other applicants.

For a competitive application, please address the five criteria as clearly as possible and use concrete evidence where possible. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should allow assessors to determine your capacity and capability to deliver the project to completion. Each criterion is assessed out of 10, with the maximum score being 50.

### **1. Innovation**

Provide an overview of your business and your project, giving consideration to;

- a. the unique innovation embedded in your project;
- b. what is new about your innovative project/initiative;
- c. what you have managed to accomplish to date;
- d. what 'customer problem' your innovation is designed to solve and how it does this; and
- e. how you have protected (or are going to protect) the intellectual property within your project.

### **2. Need for funding**

Describe the need for the Grant, giving consideration to;

- a. how the Grant will directly help address your financial need in advancing your innovative project/initiative;
- b. why you cannot fund this project yourself (difficulties and gaps in funding); and
- c. what the Grant funds will be spent on and how this will enable you to advance your innovation.

### **3. Competitive advantage**

Explain what competitive advantage your innovation has in a sizeable market by identifying the;

- a. cost benefits of your innovation;
- b. distinct product features;
- c. delivery; and
- d. any other unique features.

#### 4. Capacity, Capability and Resources

Demonstrate how you will deliver the project by identifying how;

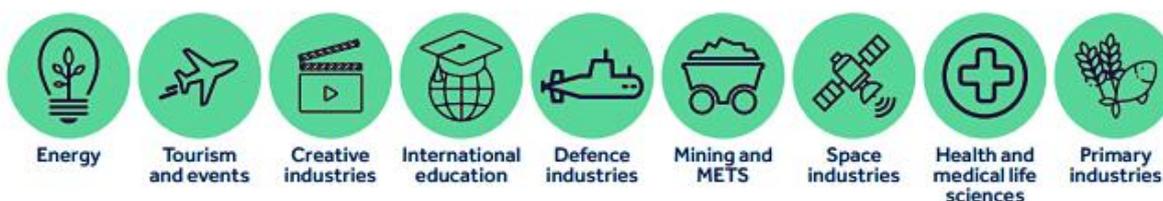
- your team, and your selected support service(s) have the relevant skills, experience and capacity to advance your project;
- collaborating with the support service(s) will meet this need, why you have selected them, and how you intend to work together; and
- how other resources (e.g. mentors, advisors, others) may contribute towards the project and its success.

#### 5. Impact and Alignment to Government priorities

Explain why your proposed project and associated plan is feasible, persuasive and back-able by demonstrating;

- that your application aligns with at least one of the priority sectors in the State's economic diversification strategy, *Diversify WA*;
- the impact your project will have on new job creation in Western Australia; and
- the potential and real impacts that grant funding for your innovation will have on delivering tangible benefits for industry and customers, such as income growth, new markets, technological transfer, collaboration, future capital raising, and any other measurable benefits.

### Diversify WA Priority Sectors



### Assessment Scoring

The independent Evaluation Panel will assess the above criteria from 1-10 as follows:

Score	Descriptor	Additional explanatory guidance
0-2	Poor	A few strengths but with major weaknesses
3-5	OK	OK overall, but with at least one moderate weakness
6-7	Good	Strong overall, but with a few relatively minor weaknesses

8-10	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible or no weaknesses to note
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## 6.1. Evaluation Panel

The Department engages an independent Evaluation Panel to assess applications based on the above criteria, and to make recommendations for funding. To assist with their decision making, the panel may seek advice from individuals with expertise in the area/s under consideration. They may also request additional evidence to support claims against the evaluation criteria.

The deliberations of the Evaluation Panel and all related information and material are strictly confidential, subject to the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* ('FOI Act').

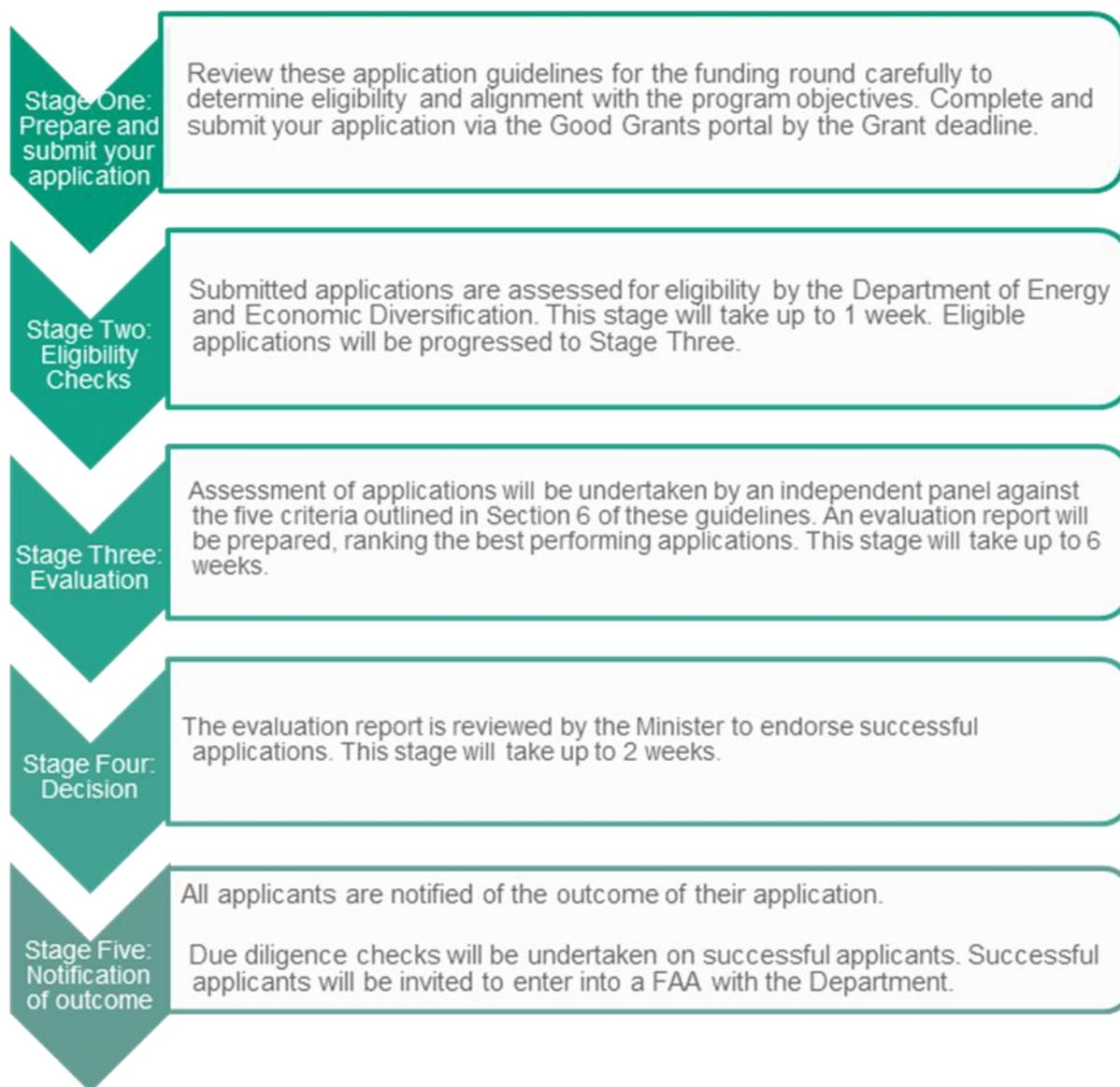
The Evaluation Panel's Recommendations will be submitted to the Minister for Science and Innovation for approval. The decision of the Minister on allocation of funds is final and at the full discretion of the Minister.

# 7. Application Process

## 7.1. Key Dates

Item	Key Dates
Applications open	Tuesday 10 March 2026, 10.00am (AWST)
Application close	Monday 30 March 2026, 4.00pm (AWST)
Outcome notification	June 2026

## 7.2. Assessment stages



## 7.3. Notification of outcomes

Notification of outcomes throughout the process will be sent to the registered email address provided in the online application submission.

All decisions are final and made at the State's absolute discretion.

## 7.4. Feedback on your application

Requests for feedback related to the evaluation criteria scoring for the application can be made up to two weeks after the outcome notification via email to [ibg@deed.wa.gov.au](mailto:ibg@deed.wa.gov.au). The Department will provide feedback within four weeks of your request.

Due to the high volume of applications, the Department cannot arrange meetings to discuss feedback.

## 8. Conditions and Obligations

### For successful Grant recipients:

#### 1. Enter into a Financial Assistance Agreement with the Department

Successful applicants under the Grant are required to enter into a written Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) with the Department that administers the Grant. No rights to financial assistance are accrued until such time as the FAA has been entered into by the relevant parties. DEED reserves the right to check the financial stability of all selected applicants before Financial Assistance Agreements are finalised.

The FAA will outline the terms and conditions under which the Department provides funding, including project performance, publicity and reporting issues. The Department specifies the conditions and obligations of funding prior to the disbursement of any funds.

Businesses recommended for funding may be required to provide more detailed information about their business. Applications may be subject to due diligence, technical, financial and economic appraisals.

#### 2. Grant and Project Expiry Dates

FAAs must be signed and returned within 30 days of receipt by the recipient, or the grant approval may lapse, and the FAA may be terminated.

Funded activities must be completed, and claims for payment made, within 12 months of FAA execution unless approval has been provided by the Department, or the grant approval may lapse, and the FAA may be terminated.

#### 3. Dealroom

Successful applicants must add their organisation to [Dealroom](#) and keep their profile up to date. Your organisation and grant information will then become visible to the WA Innovation Ecosystem, unlocking features and helping the database become more complete.

#### 4. Cyber safety responsibility

Successful applicants are expected to keep their funded projects 'cyber-safe'. The onus is on the recipient to ensure all customer and other data is kept secure. The

Department will not be held responsible for the cyber security, or otherwise, of funded projects.

## **5. Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting**

Successful applicants will be required to cooperate with an evaluation that is undertaken during and/or after completion of the investment. This includes reporting against KPIs, including evidence and financial statements, as part of milestone payments under the FAA and Grant acquittal.

Successful applicants will be required to submit completion reports and provide evidence of completion, including financial statements, to the satisfaction of the Department. Due dates for these reports will be agreed between both parties in the FAA.

The Acquittal Report submitted at the conclusion of your program to claim the final Grant payment instalment is to summarise your program including the outcomes and impacts.

A statement of financial acquittal must be provided to support the final report. This Expenditure Summary must outline the Grant funding to each milestone deliverable as well as your matched funding and be as consistent as possible with the Forecasted Expenditure submitted as part of the original application unless agreed otherwise with the Department. Invoices or bank statements may be required to verify the Grant expenditure.

After completion, recipients are required to participate in surveys conducted up to three years after the funding ceases. Surveys generally take 10 minutes to complete and seek feedback on inputs, activities, results, usage and impacts related to the Grant.

## **6. Funding availability**

Funding is available to successful applicants for up to 12 months after the awarding of the grant.

## **7. Claiming grant funds**

Grant payments to successful applicants are via electronic funds transfer (EFT), in two amounts:

- a. 50% of the funds will be remitted immediately on execution of a FAA on provision of an invoice to the Department
- b. Prior to the end of 12 months, the 50% balance will be invoiced at the end of the project, once the activities have been completed and all project expenses

paid. An Acquittal Report template and Expenditure Summary spreadsheet will be provided by the Department for this purpose.

It is important that the project be completed within 12 months, and the final payment made within this time; otherwise, the total grant funding cannot be assured.

## **8. GST excluded**

The Department does not regard the Grant as payment for a supply. Thus, the Department does not increase the grant amount to include GST.

## **9. Consultant/Supplier(s)**

The FAA is between the Department and the successful applicant. Consultant/supplier(s) and any other third parties (if used) shall have no contractual, legal or equitable rights against the Department.

## **10. Privacy and Confidentiality**

The personal information you provide in your application will be used for the primary purpose for which it was collected. Your personal information will at all times be dealt with consistently with any legal obligation and in accordance with any applicable legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the *State Records Act 2000 (WA)* and the *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA)*. The Department holds your information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Australian Privacy Principles* (together, Australian Privacy Laws). The *Australian Privacy Principles* can be found [here](#).

## **11. Freedom of Information, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information**

Applicants must keep confidential any dealings with the Department about their application, including any financial assistance offered, but may make disclosures to advisors who are under an obligation of confidence or if required by law.

The State and the Department reserves the right to publicly disclose the names of applicants, general information about funding and assistance provided, and details about the anticipated economic outcomes and benefits to the State. The State and the Department may also disclose confidential information of, or provided by, the applicant:

- a. if required to be disclosed by law;
- b. to its advisors, consultants and contractors; and/or
- c. to any government agency.

Applicants are informed that the Department is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)* ('FOI Act'), which provides a general right of access to records held by State agencies and local governments. Under the FOI Act, applicants should be aware that information pertaining to the receipt of State Government funding may be tabled in the Western Australian Parliament. This information could include the names of recipients, the amount of funding the name of the project/activity and, possibly, a brief description thereof. This could result in requests for more detail to be released publicly.

Applicants should clearly identify all commercial-in-confidence material, noting that recipient name, funding amount, total cost, and a brief recipient project description may be published for all successful applicants.

Successful applicants should be aware that their organisation's name, investment name and amount of funding approved will appear on the Department's website and potentially in media releases.

The Department reserves the right to discuss an application with a third party if it is deemed necessary to assist in assessing the application.

State agencies are subject to the legislative and administrative accountability and transparency requirements of the State, including disclosures to the Western Australian Parliament and its Committees. As such, applicants should be aware that disclosure of information outside of State agencies may occur if the information is required or is authorised to be disclosed by law.

## **12. Media and promotions**

All media enquiries or public announcements relating to the Grant are coordinated and managed by the Department's Media team. Where possible, all media and communications about investments will be undertaken jointly with successful applicants. Recipients must:

- a. seek and obtain the Department's approval before making public statements, or contacting or responding to the media, regarding successful or unsuccessful applications;
- b. provide the Department with at least 10 business days' notice of any proposed media event; and
- c. provide any proposed media or public statement to the Department for approval prior to its release as well as make any changes or amendments to the form, content or manner reasonably requested by the Department.

### **13. Code of Conduct**

Successful applicants for the Grant will comply with all relevant laws and ensure the services they provide and/or participate in proactively address, manage and where possible avoid any unwelcome behaviours that offends, humiliates or intimidates a person. Unwelcome behaviour can include physical, verbal or visual conduct (e.g. in the form of posters, email or SMS messages).

Successful applicants are expected to treat all people with respect and courtesy. The Department reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to discontinue the provision funding or not provide funding to any successful applicant that acts contrary to the code of conduct.

## **9. Disclaimers**

The provision of financial assistance under the Western Australian Government's New Industries and Innovation Fund is at the absolute discretion of the Department. Nothing in the application process, the selection process or any associated documentation shall give rise to any:

- a. legal relations or any process or other contract between the Minister or the Western Australian government on the one hand and the applicant on the other;  
or
- b. legitimate expectations on the part of the applicant.