Northern Beef Development

Northern Beef Development (NBD) is a two year project that aims to support the northern beef industry to become a more prosperous, resilient and sustainable sector.

Business Improvement Grants program Round 2
Frequently Asked Questions

The NBD Business Improvement Grants (BIG) program provides an incentive to enable commercial cattle producers in the pastoral regions of the Kimberley and Pilbara to enhance their competitiveness and growth prospects by connecting them with business advice and mentoring support. Round 2 of the program presents an opportunity for further participants to apply.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply for funding?
Individual, corporate and Indigenous commercial beef cattle production businesses with an ABN located in the Pilbara or Kimberley regions of Western Australia (as defined in the Pastoral Industry Survey, 2010) are eligible to apply.

Who is not eligible to apply for funding?
Pastoral enterprises who participated in the original Business Improvement Grants are not eligible to reapply. Pastoral leases not operating a commercial cattle business within the defined boundaries of the Kimberley and Pilbara are not eligible to apply. If you are unsure if your lease falls within the area, please speak with NBD staff to confirm.

Can I make an application for each pastoral lease that I own or sub-lease?
Applicants will be identified by the registered ABN provided. Each registered business is eligible to apply once.

Is this grant applicable to me if I already have a business plan?
Yes. If your business plan is less than two years old, you may complete a review of your plan and develop business improvement strategies from the reviewed plan. If your business plan is greater than two years old, you will need to complete another plan.

I already have an Ecologically Sustainable Rangeland Management (ESRM) Plan. Do I need to do another business plan?
Yes. A specific business plan will provide you with the opportunity to identify KPIs and review the information contained in your ESRM. The business plan will help to prioritise activities you may already have identified in your ESRM, and apply for further funds to help you implement these changes.
Is this grant applicable to me if I already have a property management plan?
Yes. If your business plan is less than two years old, you may complete a review of this plan and develop business improvement strategies from the reviewed plan. If your business plan is greater than two years old, you will need to complete another plan.

What is available in this grants program?
Under the program, approved applicants are eligible for reimbursement of up to a maximum of $25,000 (not subject to GST) for engaging a consultant to conduct a business improvement review and assist with identifying business improvement strategies to meet the domestic and export market specifications and demand for WA beef and live cattle.

Business Improvement Review

What is the business improvement review?
The program has two parts – a business improvement review and business improvement implementation. You must successfully complete the business improvement review and business plan before you will be eligible to apply for the additional incentives to implement your priority strategies identified in your business plan.

How much is available for the business improvement review?
There is a maximum reimbursement of $10,000 (not subject to GST) to review the physical and financial performance of the business, develop a business improvement plan, identify priority implementation strategies and provide mentoring for the business.

What happens if my consultant costs more than I was originally quoted and approved to spend on Milestone 1?
The amount of the grant for Part 1 stated in the Approval Letter may be adjusted based on approved eligible expenses claimed by the applicant but shall not exceed the maximum of $10,000 (not subject to GST). If you spend more than $10,000, the additional costs are your responsibility and will not be reimbursed as part of the program.

How much funding is available for the business improvement implementation?
There is a total of $25,000 (not subject to GST) available for the Part 1 business improvement review and the Part 2 business improvement implementation. If you spend less than $10,000 (not subject to GST) on part one, you may be eligible to use the residual funds to supplement the additional $15,000 (not subject to GST) available for the implementation.

Will I be reimbursed the full amount, including GST, for my consultant fees and/or goods and services?
No. You will pay your consultant for services including the GST. The grant reimbursement is not subject to GST so we will reimburse your costs for the consultant services less the GST (The GST exclusive amount). You will claim a GST refund from the Australian Tax Office (ATO) in your next Business Activity Statement (BAS) for the invoice cost of your consultant’s services.

What happens if I want to spend over $25,000?
You will be responsible for all out of pocket expenses above the threshold of $25,000 (not subject to GST). Any costs that exceed $25,000 are your responsibility and will not be reimbursed through this program.
Where can I access information about available consultants?
Seek out participants of the original Business Improvement Grants program or industry service providers and associations to assist you in selecting the best consultant for your business. Other industry bodies can provide a starting point if you do not have a preferred consultant.

How long do I have to complete my business review, plan and implementation?
You will get the greatest benefit from this program if you complete your business review and improvement plan as soon as possible, so that you will be eligible for the incentives to implement your priority strategies and access grants for annual review on the anniversary of your initial business plans.

Do I have to get approval before my consultant can start working on my business improvement review?
Yes. Approval must be obtained before any consultancy costs are incurred by you. When approved, you will receive a Letter of Approval to proceed with engaging your consultant to do the agreed work.

Do I need to pay the consultant first?
Yes. It is up to you to pay your consultant when you are satisfied that you have received a quality business review and business improvement plan, including an executive summary with KPIs.

What if I am unhappy with the consultant I choose?
You are engaging the consultant and therefore must manage the relationship. If the relationship proves to be ineffective then an amendment may be made to the agreement. Before doing this, please speak with NBD staff.

What documents am I required to provide for reimbursement for Part 1, Business Improvement Review?
Your **Part 1 Milestone 1 Business Review** is **due by 31 October 2018**.

When submitting your claim for reimbursement for Milestone 1 you will need to include:

- an executive summary addressing KPIs and priority improvements or training identified in your business plan (prepared by consultant)
- a copy of consultant’s tax invoice
- proof of payment of account

Your **Part 1 Milestone 2 Business Review** is **due by the first anniversary of Milestone 1**.

When submitting your claim for reimbursement for Milestone 2, you will need to include:

- a copy of the consultant’s annual review of your KPIs
- proof of payment of the consultant’s invoice
- your business application number.
Your Part 1 Milestone 3 Business Review is due by the second anniversary of Milestone 1.

When submitting your claim for reimbursement for Milestone 3, you will need to include:

- a copy of the consultant’s annual review of you KPIs
- proof of payment of the consultant’s invoice
- your business application number.

**Why do I need Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?**

KPIs are important for measuring improvements in the individual business and demonstrating productivity gains for both the business and the NBD project. KPIs also allow you to benchmark your enterprise with the regional average to help drive improvement.

**What KPIs are you asking for?**

KPIs that are important indicators for business improvement are:

**Essential KPIs** – you must provide these:
- kilograms (kgs) of beef produced / adult equivalent
- labour efficiency – adult equivalent / full-time equivalent
- female sales (% of total annual sales)
- average price received ($ per kg liveweight sold)
- cost of production ($ per kg liveweight sold)

**Desirable KPIs** – these would be good if you have them:
- reproductive rate %
- herd mortality rate %
- sale weight / head sold (all sales)
- gross value / head sold (all sales)
- annual growth rate of weaners (or other classes of cattle)

**Part 2 implementation**

**What documents do I need to provide to get reimbursed for Part 2 Implementation?**

Once approved, for each Activity application (including multiple applications) in Part 2 Implementation you will provide us with:

- a copy of service provider’s tax invoice
- proof of payment of account

**Do I have to apply for the full incentive amount (up to $15,000) in one application?**

No. If your identified priority requires a stepped process where you will test the results of one activity before proceeding to the next, you can make multiple applications until you have reached the maximum amount in your Letter of Approval.
Do I have to provide a report for Part 2 Implementation? 
Yes. The final report for Part 2 Implementation Grant is due **no later than the anniversary of the approved Part 2 implementation.**

The final report must include the following elements:
- The objectives that were met as a result of implementing the approved business improvements.
- Successful aspects of the completed activities.
- Recommendations for improvement, and
- A copy of deliverables implemented as part of the program.

What happens if I cannot meet the due dates for any of the reporting periods? 
You must inform us as soon you know this may happen. Where possible, you will be offered an extension of time. You will **not** be given an extension for a **final due date beyond 30 June 2020.**

Will I be excluded from the program if I fail to meet these dates? 
You are encouraged to plan to make the most of the opportunities offered by this program. The NBD team will help you meet your obligations and encourage you to contact us as early as possible, if circumstances prevent you from meeting your milestones under the grant program.

Will I be expected to share what I have learnt once I have implemented my plan? 
We encourage applicants to network and share what they have learnt through this program for the advancement of the northern beef industry. We are seeking pastoralists to participate in testimonials, case studies, short videos and other activities to highlight the opportunities to improve productivity and profitability in the northern beef industry.

What happens to the executive summary and reports once they are submitted? 
The purpose of collecting the executive summary and final report is to enable the NBD project to monitor and evaluate the program and improvements in productivity in the northern beef industry. The KPIs and strategies provided to NBD as part of the program may be reported at an aggregated level, so as to protect the identity of the individual business.

How will the information I supply be handled? 
DPIRD may collect personal information from applicants for the purposes of administration, evaluation and assessment of an application. Personal information may be disclosed to other Western Australian Government agencies and may be published on DPIRD’s website, provided disclosure is consistent with relevant laws, including the **Privacy Act 1988.**

Personal information will be used and stored in accordance with Privacy Principles. The **Privacy Policy is available on the website.** Applicants may contact DPIRD about their personal information or to make a complaint. Applicants should note that basic information for awarded grants may be published by the Western Australian Government.
How to apply

When do applications close for Part 1?
Applications close 5.00pm on Friday 10 August 2018.

Applications will be considered on a first-come first-funded basis, subject to program funding.

How do I apply?
Complete an online application which is accessible via the Northern Beef Development webpage on the DPIRD website or the department’s Smarty Grants webpage.

Before submitting your application online via Smarty Grants, identify the consultant you wish to work with and obtain quotations for their services.

Once submitted, you will receive an email acknowledgement that your application has been received. The completed application will then be assessed by NBD officers against the criteria and you will be notified of the outcome. NBD officers are available to facilitate your application throughout the process.

Can I fax or email my application in?
Applications must be submitted through the online system. If for any reason, you do not have access to the online system, you can speak to the NBD team to make alternative arrangements.

How long does the approval process take?
The approval process takes approximately two weeks. In order to achieve this, it is important that the online application form is completed as accurately as possible. Approval will take longer if we need to contact you for more information.

Who can I contact if I need help?
Officers from NBD team are available to assist with all aspects of the program. Please contact us at nbdgrants@dpird.wa.gov.au or telephone (08) 9194 1442.

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