

# City of Whittlesea

## Business Relocation and Growth Program

The Business Relocation and Growth Program is aimed at supporting both existing businesses and those wanting to relocate to the City of Whittlesea's commercial and industrial precincts.

The primary objective is to increase employment for our residents in our preferred target industries.

Applicants can apply for funding under one of the following grant categories;

- Business expansion,
- Capital investment, or
- Relocation or expansion to City of Whittlesea.

The funding offered must be matched dollar-for-dollar by the business and will only be paid 12 months after the funding has been awarded and on meeting key milestones.

### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

*We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung people as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

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## What is the Business Relocation and Growth Program (BRGP)

### **Purpose of the BRGP**

The City of Whittlesea is committed to supporting a thriving local economy by encouraging and supporting innovation, creation, growth, and opportunity.

The Business Relocation and Growth Program is aimed at supporting both existing businesses and those wanting to relocate to the City of Whittlesea's commercial and industrial precincts.

The primary objective is to increase employment for our residents in our preferred target industries, through a range of support services and business funding.

### Objectives of the BRGP

The Business Relocation and Growth Program aims to provide support to businesses looking to establish and/or grow their presence in the City of Whittlesea. The range of initiatives offered are designed to contribute toward building a prosperous and inclusive economy for all.

Applicants can apply for funding under one of the following categories;

- Business expansion - Support existing City of Whittlesea businesses to move into larger premises, or expand operations, increase employment opportunities and/or increase their product/service offering,
- Capital investment - Support to invest in capital machinery or improvements, or
- Relocation or expansion to City of Whittlesea - Support for businesses to expand into or relocate to the City of Whittlesea.

The funding offered must be matched dollar-for-dollar by the business and will only be paid 12 months after the funding has been awarded and on meeting key milestones.

Applications may be applied for from \$10,000 through to \$40,000.

Qualification on the assessment criteria alone does not guarantee approval of financial incentives or funding. The final decision on assistance is at the discretion of Council's Grant Steering Committee and number and size of applications requested may impact decision.

## Key dates

The following key dates are a guide to the timelines.

Applications received will be assessed initially by the Business Relocation and Growth Program Assessment Group and final assessment is made by Council's Grants Steering Committee, which meet quarterly.

Application Period	Notification Month
1 January 2024 – 31 March 2024	May 2024
1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024	August 2024
1 July 2024 – 30 September 2024	November 2024
1 October 2024 – 31 December 2024	February 2025
1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025	May 2025

Reporting and Acquittals	
Six Month Progress Report for approved applicants	6 months after approval
Works to be completed by	12 months after approval
Acquittals and Final Report due	12 months after approval
Payments made by	8 weeks after acquittal

## Eligibility requirements

The City of Whittlesea Business Relocation & Growth Program is designed to assist medium to large sized businesses. To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- Be the owner or tenant named on an existing or pending lease agreement (not subletting space from another business)
- Have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Provide evidence of insurance including certificate of currency (public liability, professional indemnity, or any other relevant insurances).
- Be able to demonstrate business financial viability
- Be a business in one of the identified preferred target industries (exceptions may apply if the application demonstrates a significant employment outcome)
- Have a minimum of 5 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) employees
- Provide increased employment opportunities for residents in the City of Whittlesea for a minimum of nine months
- Not have an outstanding debt to City of Whittlesea

## Who is not eligible?

Businesses that will not be eligible to be assessed for consideration under this BRGP include:

- An employee of the City of Whittlesea operating a business
- Businesses that incur their primary revenue relating to sales to consumers of alcohol, tobacco and tobacco related products i.e., e-cigarettes, shisha, hookahs and pipes, gambling, and electronic gaming machines
- Businesses that have been trading less than 12 months or have not yet opened
- Businesses that have less than 12 months remaining on their current lease at the time of submitting an application
- Any business that does not hold all relevant permits and licenses to trade in the City of Whittlesea this includes but is not restricted to, building, and planning permits, health and liquor licenses and any other statutory permits or licenses that are required for business to operate legally.
- Businesses that have outstanding acquittals, debts, or financial disputes with the City of Whittlesea.

## What can be funded?

### **Business expansion**

Support for existing City of Whittlesea businesses in the preferred target industries to;

- New or increased ongoing employment opportunities for City of Whittlesea residents for a minimum of nine months\* and,
- Move into larger premises and/or,
- Expand operations and/or,
- Increase their product/service offering and/or,
- Upskill existing staff through recognised training and increase their wage reflective of this (by no less than 10% and not less than the average FTE wage in City of Whittlesea) and/or
- Support for local business (amount spent, not less than 10% of annual turnover) and/or
- Implementation of a circular economy plan, for example, recycling and reusing materials.

### **Capital investment**

Support for existing City of Whittlesea businesses in the preferred target industries to;

- New or increased ongoing employment opportunities for City of Whittlesea residents for a minimum of nine months\* and,
- Invest in capital machinery or improvements to expand operations and/or,
- Increase their product/service offering and/or
- Upskill existing staff through recognised training and increase their wage reflective of this (by no less than 10% and not less than the average FTE wage in City of Whittlesea) and/or,
- Support for local business (amount spent, not less than 10% of annual turnover) and/or
- Implementation of a circular economy plan, for example, recycling and reusing materials.

### **Relocation or expansion to City of Whittlesea**

Support for existing businesses in the preferred target industries, currently operating in another local government area, to expand into or relocate to the City of Whittlesea to take advantage of our rapid growth and development and increased employment opportunities.

- New or increased ongoing employment opportunities for City of Whittlesea residents for a minimum of nine months\* and,
- Relocate an existing business to the City of Whittlesea,
- Establish a business in the City of Whittlesea,
- Support for local business (amount spent, not less than 10% of annual turnover) and/or
- Implementation of a circular economy plan, for example, recycling and reusing materials.

*\* New or increased employment must be a minimum the equivalent of 1 FTE employee and the employment should be on-going. Funding cannot be used to pay for employee wages.*

### What won't be funded?

- More than two successful grants per applicant.
- Upgrade or installation of either internal or external security (CCTV)
- Projects and activities that relate to politics or the advertising or promotion of gambling, alcohol, electronic gaming machines or tobacco in anyway
- Projects that have already been completed prior to submitting an application
- Upgrades to warehouse, industrial and manufacturing business frontages
- Property extensions
- Statutory and regulatory fees
- More than one grant per year (won't be funded), and if applying for a grant in a subsequent year then it needs to be for different project
- More than 15% of the total grant application cannot be for business overheads related to recruitment
- Except for business overhead costs associated with recruitment, the use of funding to pay general business expenses is strictly prohibited (i.e., rent, utilities, telecommunications, wages, insurance).

**Please note that only one application can be submitted. Where a person or persons operate more than one business there can only be one project application submitted relating to one business.**

### How do I apply?

1. Ensure you have carefully read the guidelines and that your business and project submission meet the eligibility criteria before submitting
2. Submit your project application online through Smarty Grants online platform. Go to [www.whittlesea.smartygrants.com.au](http://www.whittlesea.smartygrants.com.au) to register an account and complete your application.
  - The Smarty Grants program requires applicants to first create a username and password and applications can be saved, and edited, prior to submission.
  - Incomplete and/or late applications will not be accepted.
  - For technical support using Smarty Grants, contact the support desk on 9320 6888 or email [service@smartygrants.com.au](mailto:service@smartygrants.com.au)
  - For assistance using the Smarty Grants online portal refer to: [Help Guide for Applicants \(smartygrants.com.au\)](http://Help Guide for Applicants (smartygrants.com.au))  
[Applicant FAQ's \(smartygrants.com.au\)](http://Applicant FAQ's (smartygrants.com.au))

## Application Process

### **Application: Full Project Plan and supporting documentation**

Applications must be submitted via the Smarty Grants online portal and include a Full Project Plan and supporting documentation. The following information is to assist applicants with preparing to complete the on-line application form that will include all of the following.

- Business information
  - Name, address and contact details
  - Main business activity (reference preferred target industries and specify ANZSIC code business is recorded as)
  - Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Project Brief
  - Total annual turnover
  - Total number of FTE employees
  - Number of employees employed that are or will work at the business premises in the City of Whittlesea
  - Number of employees that are currently residents of the City of Whittlesea
  - Tenancy
  - Evidence of property ownership or commercial tenancy agreement, with a minimum of two years remaining, located in the City of Whittlesea (as applicable).
  - Funding application category
  - Project plan overview
  - Funding amount sought
  - Overview of how the funding will be used to support the business idea, concept, or proposal
- Detailed project plan including:
  - Project name
  - Objectives — key project deliverables/outcomes
  - Timeline — key project dates
  - Budget — key project costs including detailed third-party quotations
  - Risk Assessment and Mitigation strategy
- Evidence of business financial viability:
  - Profit and Loss Statement for financial year ending 30 June 2023
  - The last 3 quarterly Business Activity Statements (BAS)
  - Last 3 months of Business Bank Account statements
  - Cash flow forecast (12 months)

### **Business site visit**

A business site visit will be undertaken by Council Economic Development officers, if required, to verify that the business operates as indicated on the application. Any applicants where a business site visit is deemed necessary will be contacted prior to the visit to determine a suitable date and time.

## Assessment Criteria

Each application will be assessed, relative to the business type and size, against how well it addresses each of the following criteria.

Funding Selection Criteria	Weighting
Project Objectives	50%
Preferred Industry	20%
Budget	20%
Risk & Mitigation Strategy	10%

Applicant response will be scored the average across each criteria rated 1 to 5 as follows:

Rating Score	Score Justification
5	Application meets criterion to a high level. A clear understanding of the selection criterion is demonstrated and there is no further questions regarding how the applicant will meet the criterion.
4	Application meets criterion well but a few details could have been a little more specific.
3	Application meets the criterion, however there are still questions regarding the application.
2	Application largely fails to meet the criterion
1	Application completely fails to meet the criterion

## Payment

### Eligible expenses

All funding must only be used for the purpose outlined in the application budget.

### Reimbursement

All payments will be made retrospectively following submission of the Acquittal and Final Report with evidence demonstrating dollar for dollar investment with the following documents;

- Receipt of detailed paid invoices to Council for reimbursement.
- Evidence of new on-going employment of a City of Whittlesea resident, for minimum of nine months.
- Report on how the business has implemented the program and spent the value of awarded funding in line with the key dates.

### Extension Requests

An application for extension to this date must be made in writing (the maximum extension period will not be more than six months).

## Conditions

### **Funding agreement**

All successful funding applicants are required to sign a City of Whittlesea Business Relocation and Growth Program Condition of Grant which will set out the:

- Terms, conditions and obligations in accepting the grant
- Total funding amount, noting funding is to be matched dollar-for-dollar by business.
- Reporting Schedule that will include Progress and Final Reports including due dates,
- Acknowledgment requirements of Council support
- Agreement to be included (at no cost) in future City of Whittlesea promotional material, advertising, and other marketing collateral such as social media, newsletters, e-Newsletters, internal and external publications.

### **Number of applications**

Applicants may only be awarded, one successful City of Whittlesea Business Relocation and Growth Program Grant per financial year.

Both successful and unsuccessful applicants are permitted to apply for other business grants, outside of the City of Whittlesea Business Relocation and Growth Program, as they become available.

### **Withdrawal**

Council reserves the right to withdraw successful funding applications if the above Funding Agreement conditions are not met.

An applicant may withdraw their application at any stage prior to the reimbursement of funding.

## Lobbying

Canvassing or lobbying administrators, employees of the City of Whittlesea or assessment panel members in relation to any grant is prohibited during the application process. Failure to comply will consider the application ineligible.

## Contact

If you have any questions regarding these Guidelines or to discuss project ideas, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Schiller, Senior Investment Attraction Officer at [michael.schiller@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:michael.schiller@whittlesea.vic.gov.au) or on 0499 732 748.

Alternatively, please contact our Grants Team via email at [Community.Grants@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:Community.Grants@whittlesea.vic.gov.au) or by calling 9217 2170.

## Preferred target industries

The below list shows preferred target industries for City of Whittlesea and their ANZSIC code, which businesses will be recorded as with ASIC. The targeted industries identified are where there are significant numbers of relevant skilled residents leaving City of Whittlesea for work and strong employee productivity (i.e., value add per employee).

Preferred target industries	ANZSIC code
<b>City of Whittlesea</b>	
<b>Professional, scientific and technical services</b>	<b>M</b>
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (Except Computer System Design and Related Services)	69
Computer System Design and Related Services	70
<b>Construction</b>	<b>E</b>
Building Construction	30
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	31
Construction Services	32
<b>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</b>	<b>I</b>
Rail Transport	47
Transport Support Services	52
Warehousing and Storage Services	53
<b>Information media and telecommunications</b>	<b>J</b>
Telecommunications Services	58
<b>Financial and insurance services</b>	<b>K</b>
Finance	62
Insurance and Superannuation Funds	63
Auxiliary Finance and Insurance Services	64
<b>Administration and support services</b>	<b>N</b>
Administrative Services	72
<b>Public administration and safety</b>	<b>O</b>
Defence	76
Public Order, Safety and Regulatory Services	77
<b>Rental, hiring and real estate services</b>	<b>L</b>
Property Operators and Real Estate Services	67
<b>Wholesale trade</b>	<b>F</b>
Basic Material Wholesaling	33
Machinery and Equipment Wholesaling	34
Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Parts Wholesaling	35
Other Goods Wholesaling	37
<b>Education and training</b>	<b>P</b>
Tertiary Education	81
<b>Healthcare and Social Assistance</b>	<b>Q</b>
Hospitals	84
Residential Care Services	86
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>C</b>
Food product manufacturing	11
Wood Product Manufacturing	14
Polymer Product and Rubber Product Manufacturing	19
Non-Metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	20
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	22