



Innovation Events Fund

Guidelines

Round 1, February 2026

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government

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We are committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights, and our obligations under the Human Rights Act 2019.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

February 2026

Cover image: Event at The Precinct in Fortitude Valley

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Overview

The Queensland Government is committed to fostering a strong, inclusive, and sustainable innovation ecosystem that delivers real benefits for Queenslanders.

The Innovation Events Fund supports the Government's vision of driving economic growth, improving quality of life and building a prosperous future.

The Fund is designed to enable local place-based Queensland led initiatives that strengthen and expand collaboration and connections across the innovation ecosystem. By supporting innovation-led events and activities that encourage partnerships, share knowledge, and develop innovation capabilities, the Fund aims to accelerate the development of new and emerging technologies and industries. These efforts will contribute to Queensland's productivity, economic development, and a better quality of life for all.

Objective



The Innovation Events Fund supports innovation-driven organisations to deliver events that explore new or emerging innovations, opportunities or services. The Fund aims to build the skills, capabilities, knowledge and connections of event participants, while contributing to the growth of Queensland's innovation sector.

Through this Fund, the Queensland Government aims to establish a strong, inclusive, and mature innovation ecosystem that delivers prosperity to the state.

The department encourages long-term sustainability and regional partnerships for the delivery of events.

Events must focus on innovation opportunities and include the engagement of local participants.

Available funding



Grant funding of between \$10,000 to \$25,000 (excluding GST) is available for Queensland based organisations. The funding amount requested will cover up to 50% of the total cash expenditure budget to deliver the event.

The applicant's co-contribution of at least 50% of the total event costs may include salaries as cash.

Successful applicants must expend the allocated funds within the timeframe specified in the executed Funding Agreement, ensuring all activities are completed and reported on by the agreed deadlines.

Salaries as cash: Salary costs for event staff (including standard salary related on-costs).

The salary claimed must be commensurate with the actual FTE percentage committed to the event. For example, if an individual spends 40% of their time (per week) on the event, then no more than 40% of their weekly salary can be claimed for the period committed to the event.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants

To be eligible, your organisation must:

- Be a legal entity, such as a company, partnership, or incorporated association.
- Hold an active Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- Be the event owner, with rights to the event and all relevant approvals to deliver it.
- Be headquartered in Queensland and operational over the previous 12 months.
- Hold public liability insurance of at least \$20 million or have the ability to secure it prior to entering into a Funding Agreement.

Applicant organisations and their related corporate entities are limited to one application per funding round.

Ineligible applicants

The following applicants are ineligible to apply for funding:

- Individuals or unincorporated groups.
- Australian, State, and Territory Government agencies; statutory bodies and political parties.
- Applicant organisations that have not met reporting or acquittal requirements for previous Queensland Government funding.
- Applicant organisations that have received any Queensland Government funding for the event outside of this Fund.
- Applicant organisations funded through the other departmental innovation programs, unless they can demonstrate the funding request addresses a new and unique priority for the local area, which has not been part of their existing, long-term (three-year) program of activities.

Eligible events

Funded events must be held in Queensland in 2026.

Eligible events must focus on supporting businesses or directly engaging with businesses that are developing innovative products, processes or services.

Events must aim to build innovation capability and deliver outcomes in one or more of the following areas:

- **Innovative solutions to existing problems:** Events that foster the development or implementation of creative and effective approaches to identified challenges.
- **New-to-world innovation:** Events that promote the creation or introduction of entirely novel products, services or processes that have not previously existed in any market.
- **Innovation diffusion:** Events that encourage the adoption or unique application of existing technologies or innovations in ways that are significantly different from prior uses.
- **Innovation in the Indigenous context:** Events that support innovation identified by the applicant as advancing cultural or community practices and delivering benefits for Indigenous communities.

Ineligible events

Events ineligible for funding include those that have already received financial support from other Queensland Government programs in the same financial year or events that are considered part of regular business-as-usual activities of the applicant.

Event types

The Fund seeks purpose-driven events that take place in Queensland and deliver measurable outcomes for the local innovation ecosystem, contributing to industry development opportunities.

Examples include:

- Conferences and festivals that bring together thought leaders and innovators from across industries and the innovation ecosystem.
- Summits that facilitate high-level discussions and collaboration on key challenges
- Expositions showcasing cutting-edge technologies and Queensland's innovation strengths
- Industry forums and roundtables that promote dialogue and partnerships within and between sectors and innovators
- Cross-sector showcases that connect ideas, industries, and investors with opportunities
- A regional innovation roadshow.

Events **NOT supported** under the Fund include, but are not limited to:

- Events not focused on innovation
- Networking-only events
- Gala dinners, or exclusively celebratory events
- Trade missions and famils
- Routine business activities or events that form part of the applicant's usual operations
- Webinars, online-only events, or virtual conferences
- Events with a primary focus on liquor, gambling, tobacco, or adult services, or those that do not align with reasonable community expectations
- Programs such as business coaching, mentoring or entrepreneurship activities (e.g. workshops and incubators) that fail to demonstrate clear, system-level benefits to the innovation ecosystem.

Use of grant funding

The grant is designed to support essential costs directly related to the delivery of the event.

These include:

- Guest speaker fees, including economy-class travel, standard accommodation and transfers. The speaker cannot be an affiliated entity of the applicant organisation
- Venue hire and event logistics
- Marketing and promotional activities targeting Australian and international audiences where appropriate
- Equipment hire, technical services, and other tools required for event delivery
- Development of Fund content that aligns with Innovation Events Fund objectives

Costs **NOT supported** under this Fund:

- General business operating costs (e.g., rent, utilities, insurance)
- Salaries for existing staff or organisational overheads unrelated to the event
- Expenses incurred prior to the approval of the grant or the execution of the Funding Agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement. Only future costs directly related to delivering the event can be included in the application
- First-class or business-class travel. Meals and travel incidentals
- Alcohol, merchandise
- Self-promotional activities, such as branded advertising for the applicant's business, website development or enhancement
- Purchasing of plant and equipment

It is expected that the grant funding will be expended in Queensland unless it can be demonstrated that expenditure outside Queensland is essential to ensure successful delivery of the event.

Applicants must ensure their proposed budget demonstrates effective use of funds to maximise the event's impact and deliver measurable benefits to Queensland. Applicants must also demonstrate efforts to minimise the event's environmental impact, such as reducing waste, using sustainable materials, or encouraging eco-friendly practices.

Assessment criteria

Applicants must demonstrate:

Significance and impact	Delivery capacity	Innovation and sustainability
The event will deliver measurable benefits to Queensland and align with the Fund objectives.	The applicant has the resources and capability to effectively deliver a local and professionally managed event.	The event will build innovation, opportunities, capabilities and connections in Queensland while promoting environmental and financial sustainability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justify the need for the event, funding support and that the event offers value for money (reflective of market rates) Foster and support innovation industries and sectors in Queensland Provide clear benefits and capability development opportunities for the Queensland innovation ecosystem A plan for evaluating the direct short-term impacts and benefits of the event. Focusing on capability uplift; diversity and inclusion; and business leads, partnerships, and/or collaborations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills, resources, capabilities and a proven track record to deliver the event and achieve measurable outcomes A detailed plan for effective delivery of the event, including balanced budget, marketing, participant engagement, risk mitigation and management, and financial sustainability Strategies for an inclusive and accessible event. First Nations peoples, those with a disability, multicultural groups, regional Queenslanders, and Female Founders to be considered A strategy to attract participants, including from regional locations, and reach innovation industries/sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on a new innovation opportunity or offering. Showcase emerging technologies; local innovators; research translation and commercialisation Feature and build Queensland's innovation capabilities Create opportunities for partnerships, collaboration and knowledge exchange. Highlight confirmed support from regional partners including letters of support Minimise environmental impact

Applications will be assessed on the above equally weighted criteria.

Measuring impact

Applicants are encouraged to ensure their proposed activities align with the Fund's objectives and contribute to measurable outputs and outcomes.

In alignment with the assessment criteria, applicants will be required to provide data as part of their application and, if successful, report on outputs to support the following:

- Target audience and attendance targets
- Participant numbers including local, national and international targets, where relevant
- Financial performance including non-government financial support
- Partner contributions to the event
- Media and event profile
- Diversity and inclusion in participant cohorts and event programming
- Participant-reported application of learnings and connections made, including both commercial and non-commercial.

If successful, recipients will need to report progress against targets set in relation to all or some of these outputs, depending on the nature of the event to be delivered.

Successful applicants will also be required to conduct and report on a post event survey of participants to measure outcome impact. Additionally, the Department requires successful applicants to ensure they have the right and appropriate consent to survey event participants up to 3, 6 months or one year post event.

Further details on the specific data requirements the applicant is required to collect will be provided in the Application Form.

Application and assessment process

How to apply

Organisations that meet the eligibility criteria and Fund’s objectives may apply. An application can be submitted online via SmartyGrants. Refer to the Fund website for the application link.

Applicants must submit a completed on-line application form, including detailed responses to each of the assessment criteria by the specified due date. No extensions will be provided.

Applicants are also required to submit the following additional material in support of their application:

- Event budget, including income and expenditure items
- Marketing and risk management plans for the relevant event
- Any other relevant information or material.

Assessment

Only eligible applications will be assessed in a competitive, merit-based approach by a panel of assessors against the assessment criteria.

Applicant organisations may be contacted at any stage of the assessment process to provide further information to enable a due diligence and probity assessment. There is no implicit guarantee of approval at any stage in the process, and applicant businesses will be notified via email of the assessment outcome.

The Queensland Government reserves the right to administer the Fund and conduct the assessment and approval processes as it sees fit. This may include, at its discretion, considering current government priorities and the need to balance the investment to support a diversity of events across Queensland.

Timeframe

Applications must be completed by	10:00am, AEST Monday, 16 March 2026
Assessment period	March to April 2026
Decision	May 2026



Note: Dates are indicative only and subject to change.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants must enter into a Funding Agreement and comply fully with its terms. Funds must only be used for approved purposes, and any deviations may result in partial or non-payment.

Payment of grant funding will be made based on agreed periodic project milestones. A final milestone payment will be made upon the provision of documentary evidence that all project activities have been completed, including evidence that total project expenditure has been incurred and project contributions have been made by all relevant parties.

The agreement will provide details on general and specific conditions associated with delivery of the approved event, including:

- the scope of the approved event
- milestone deliverables and dates
- funding amount and payment terms
- eligible and ineligible costs
- applicant's obligation to acknowledge Queensland Government support
- record-keeping, reporting, and evaluation requirements.

Successful applicants will be required to execute a Funding Agreement within 30 business days of being notified that the funding application has been successful. Failure to meet this timeframe may result in the funding offer being withdrawn.

Applicants may be required to work with the department to maximise the potential of all event opportunities. Events must be marketed to target audiences in accordance with the approved marketing plan. Any changes to the event, including dates or scope, must be communicated to the Queensland Government in a timely manner.

Applicants must also submit all required reporting documents, including event updates, acquittals, and, where applicable, participation data, within the agreed timeframes.

Event promotion

Funding recipients will be expected to actively promote their events, and to provide information and attend media/promotion events if requested. The Queensland Government funding should be acknowledged by recipients in compliance with the Queensland Government style guide, in all relevant published material, media releases, online content, and public statements relating to the proposed events.

Complaints

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring a transparent and fair application process. If you have concerns or wish to lodge a formal complaint regarding the application or assessment process, you may do so through the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

Complaints can be submitted via the department's website at www.detsi.qld.gov.au. All complaints will be handled in accordance with established procedures to ensure they are addressed promptly and appropriately.

Further information

If you have any questions relating to these guidelines or if you would like to discuss your application, please contact the Fund team by email at askinnovation@detsi.qld.gov.au.

Please note: department staff can provide you with the best advice based on the information provided. All decisions relating to a grant application will be made based on the information contained in the application.

Privacy statement

The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation is collecting personal information in the application for the Innovation Events Fund to assess your application for funding and prepare a grant agreement, should your application be successful.

All personal information you provide in this application form, including all attachments, will be provided to the following parties for the purpose of assessing your application:

- Authorised officers from DETSI and other Queensland Government agencies
- Approved external assessment panel members (e.g. industry experts)
- Due diligence enquiries.

Where necessary, relevant information contained in your application may also be provided to the Queensland Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation and the Minister's members of staff for reporting purposes.

If your application is successful, the following information will be published on the Queensland Government website and potentially on the Queensland Government social media channels:

- your organisation's name
- total amount of funding allocated
- project name, location and description.

The department will not otherwise use or disclose your personal information unless you provide your consent, or if the use or disclosure is authorised or required by law.

De-identified aggregated data may also be used for the purpose of managing and evaluating the Fund and initiative and to inform government.

Your personal information will also be used to provide the services outlined in the guidelines and application help guide, and for the purposes of research, evaluation, promotion, and monitoring of such services, and to improve and design services and programs. This may include surveys, interviews or focus groups. The email address you provide will be used to communicate with you about your application or Fund participation (if successful). For example, you may be contacted via email about participating in a survey, interview or focus group. Dependent upon the email service provider you have chosen, this may result in your personal information being transferred overseas.

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