

Boost Your Business

Voucher Program Guidelines



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Glossary

Term	Definition
Applicant	An eligible organisation that applies for Voucher funding to support a project that will lead to improved productivity, market engagement and/or innovation.
Registered Service Provider	An eligible organisation selected by the Department to provide services to an Applicant, supported by Voucher funding.
Recipient	An Applicant that has secured Voucher funding.
Scope of Services	A scope of services, also called a scope of works, is a detailed work order. A scope of services helps define the services being sought and details what services are required. In this case the scope of services will include a price quote.
Service Activity	An activity conducted by a Registered Service Provider that is supported by a Voucher.
Service Agreement	A service agreement is used to document a transaction where the Service Provider provides a service to the Recipient. A service agreement is prepared by the Registered Service Provider, and must detail services, timelines and costs and be signed by the Applicant and the Service Provider.
Voucher	A Voucher is a form of government assistance which can be used by businesses to access services, advice or expertise provided by Registered Service Providers.
Voucher Project	The defined activities described in the Service Agreement.

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Boost Your Business Voucher Program

The Victorian Government launched the Boost Your Business Voucher Program (BYB) in December 2017 to support Victorian businesses to become more productive, employ more people, improve market access and in general, increase their size, diversity and profitability.

The three main **objectives** of BYB are to:

- Increase the number of Victorian businesses entering new export markets and securing supply chain opportunities
- Increase the number of Victorian businesses developing and commercialising new products and services through research and development and generating improved productivity through process innovation
- Improve the capability of Victorian businesses to accelerate growth and realise new opportunities.

1.2 What is a Voucher?

A Voucher can be used by businesses to access services, advice, or expertise provided by Registered Service Providers.

Vouchers are issued in the name of the Applicant company (the Recipient), have no cash value and are non-transferable, they are only payable to the selected Registered Service Provider. Except where otherwise stated, Vouchers are provided on a cash co-contribution basis, where Recipients contribute at least 50% of the service cost. Payment up to the face value of the Voucher (plus GST) are made by the Department to the Service Provider upon the successful completion of work.¹

Voucher applications are administered through rounds with defined open and close dates. Applications are assessed on a competitive basis.

1.3 What is supported under the Boost Your Business Voucher program?

BYB funds Victorian businesses through distinct streams targeted at Victorian Government policies and strategies. Funding is provided through Vouchers and is available to projects that support the BYB objectives. Individual funding streams have additional objectives and requirements. Further information on all Voucher service activities is listed in Section 2.

The terms and conditions are described in this document. General conditions apply to all Voucher Streams unless otherwise varied within the sections related to a specific Voucher Stream.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions reserves the right to amend the Voucher Streams as required.

1.4 What is a relevant project?

Projects funded through a Voucher are growth orientated activities undertaken by the Recipient that, by using the expertise of a Registered Service Provider, will assist the Recipient to become more productive, employ more people, create market access and in general increase their scale and profitability.

Voucher funding is not for 'business as usual' activity and the Applicant is required to articulate how their proposed project is likely to lead to these longer-term goals.

¹ Where applicable the Voucher to be paid by the Department will be increased by the amount of GST.

2 Voucher Streams

There are currently seven Voucher streams in BYB. Specific requirements of each Voucher Stream are provided in this section. Please use the below list to navigate to the stream most relevant to your needs:

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2.1 Advanced Manufacturing

Background and Program Objectives

In 2017 the Victorian Government released its *Advancing Victorian Manufacturing: A Blueprint for the Future*, a key component of this Statement is helping businesses innovate, increase their scale and build export capability.

To deliver on this, the Advanced Manufacturing Voucher Stream has been established to achieve the following **objectives**:

- increase the development and commercialisation of new products and advanced manufacturing processes by Victorian manufacturers
- increase the adoption of new or improved capability, business models and business processes by Victorian manufacturers, and
- increase the number of Victorian manufacturers entering new export markets and securing global supply chain opportunities.

The achievement of these objectives will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes:

- improved productivity and competitiveness of Victorian manufacturers,
- the creation of new jobs for Victorians, and
- increased exports.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Voucher under the Advanced Manufacturing Voucher Stream for the service activities listed in Table 11.

Table 1.1 Advanced Manufacturing - Voucher service activities

Voucher Types	Supported Service Activities
Fastrack to Export (Market Engagement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and Branding Strategy (international) Market Development Plan (international) In-Market Support (international) Intellectual Property (export related)
Manufacturing Innovation (Innovation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process Innovation Product Development Intellectual Property
Enhancing Manufacturing Capability (Business Capability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Process and Systems Improvements Financial Management Planning Industry Standards Implementation & Certification Tender Guidance Marketing and Branding Strategy Market Development Plan

Information on Voucher Types:

- Fastrack to Export vouchers are primarily intended to support one on one, bespoke services to individual Victorian manufacturing companies to secure international market development and export opportunities.
- Manufacturing Innovation vouchers are primarily intended to support commercialisation and late stage research and development rather than early stage research and development activities or ‘business as usual’ activities. Preference will be given to projects that are likely to result in commercialisation of new products or development of new innovative processes in the short to medium term.
- Enhancing Manufacturing Capability vouchers are primarily intended for projects that will significantly transform the Applicant’s competitiveness rather than “business as usual” activities. Preference will be given to projects where evidence is provided that the capability enhancements identified will assist the applicant to obtain a specific new business opportunity or opportunities, such as entry into a global supply chain or access to a new revenue stream.

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3, and in addition must be:

- Currently engaged in manufacturing or the manufacturing supply chain, or demonstrate a genuine commercial connection to the manufacturing supply chain.
- For service activities that specifically relate to international or in-market support, it is understood that these activities may occur outside of Victoria.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST) – see Table 1.2.
- Recipients must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.
- Recipients will be eligible for up to two Vouchers under this Voucher Stream.

Table 1.2 Advanced Manufacturing - Voucher value and co-contribution

Voucher Types	Maximum value of Voucher (exclusive of GST)	Minimum cash co-contribution by Applicant
Fastrack to Export	\$50,000	50%
Manufacturing Innovation	\$50,000	50%
Enhancing Manufacturing Capability	\$50,000	50%

2.2 Asia Gateway

Background and Program Objectives

In August 2017 the Victorian Government released its *Globally Connected: Victoria's Trade Statement*, which forms a key part of the Victorian Government's approach to building the Asia capabilities of Victorian businesses and their capacity to secure market development and export opportunities in Asia. The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream is seeking Voucher projects that align with the Stream objectives:

- **Capitalising on growth opportunities in Asia** – Voucher projects will increase immediate to short-term business activities with Asian markets.
- **Connecting and expanding into Asia** – Voucher projects will provide businesses with the know-how, networks and skills for effective access to and expansion into Asian markets.
- **Increased Asia capabilities** – Voucher projects will better position businesses for long-term engagement with Asian markets.

Building Victoria's Asia Capabilities

The Voucher Stream will support Victorian businesses to capitalise on growth opportunities arising from Asia, to ensure that they are well-equipped with the skills and capabilities needed to effectively do business with the region.

The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream defines building Asia capabilities as²:

- Developing sound knowledge and understanding of Asian markets and environments
- Developing the ability to adapt behaviour to Asian cultural contexts
- Developing strong networks and relationships in Asia
- Building capacity to deal with governments in Asia
- Gaining experience operating in Asia
- Tailoring business offerings and value propositions based on customer insights

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

The Asia Gateway Voucher Stream will support one-on-one, bespoke services to individual Victorian businesses, to identify and secure international market development and export opportunities with the state's top Asian trading partners.

Eligible businesses can apply for a Voucher under this stream for the service activities listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Asia Gateway - Voucher supported service activities

Voucher Type	Supported Service Activities
Market Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Branding Strategy (international) • Market Development Plan (international) • In-Market Support (international)

Registered Service Providers will support individual businesses through the development and implementation of their Asian market engagement project which will contribute to:

- expanded market access
- increased product or service scale and profitability
- increased knowledge and capability of doing business in Asia or with Asian clients.

Service activities are only eligible for the State's top Asian trading partners, which include³:

- China
- Hong Kong
- India
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Malaysia
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST).
- Applicants must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.

Recipients will be eligible for only one Voucher under this Voucher Stream.

Assessment Criteria (also refer to Section 6 of the Program Guidelines)

Applicants need to address each of the Assessment criteria in Section 6 of the Program Guidelines:

- Assessment criteria responses and the scope of services needs to include or make reference to the following: research and evidence that there is demand for their product or service offering with the specified Asian market; and
- Detail on how the Voucher project will be delivered at each stage of implementation.

² Asialink's Developing an Asia Capable Workforce: A National Strategy

³ Applicants wishing to undertake services focussing on more than one market must provide a compelling case in their application.

2.3 Defence, Aerospace and Security

Background and Program Objectives

In 2016 the Victorian Government released its Defence Technologies Sector Strategy. The Defence, Aerospace and Security Voucher Stream is a Victorian Government initiative that will support Victorian Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to improve their business maturity and capability to effectively compete for and win defence and security related contracts and supply chain work.

Sectors supported include:

- defence
- aerospace (including aeronautics and astronautics)
- national and civil security

The Defence, Aerospace and Security Voucher Stream has been established to achieve the following objectives:

- increase the adoption of new or improved capability, business models and business processes by Victorian defence businesses

- increase the development and commercialisation of new products and advanced manufacturing processes by Victorian defence businesses
- increase the number of Victorian businesses entering new defence export markets and securing global supply chain opportunities.

The achievement of these objectives will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes:

- increased number of Victorian businesses winning defence work
- improved productivity and competitiveness of Victorian manufacturers
- the creation of new jobs for Victorians.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Voucher under the Defence, Aerospace and Security Stream for the service activities listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Defence, Aerospace and Security – Voucher supported service activities

Voucher Type	Supported Service Activities
Market Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Branding Strategy (international) • Market Development Plan (international) • In-Market Support (international) • Intellectual Property (export related)
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Innovation • Product Development • Intellectual Property • Early stage feasibility & testing • Research & Development
Business Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Process and Systems Improvements • Business Transformation • Financial Management Planning • Industry Standards Implementation and Certification • Tender Guidance • Marketing and Branding Strategy • Market Development Plan

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3. In addition:

- applicants must be currently engaged in a domestic or international defence or security supply chain or be able to demonstrate a genuine intent to enter a defence or security supply chain.
- for service activities that specifically relate to international or in-market support, it is understood that these activities may occur outside of Victoria.
- businesses that employ less than 200 staff or have a revenue greater than \$500,000 are eligible to apply.
- where an Applicant is seeking support to win work in an overseas market, satisfactory evidence must be provided to verify that any direct exports by the Applicant will be allowed under relevant Australian and international laws and regulations governing the export of defence and strategic goods and technologies (see www.defence.gov.au/ExportControls/Default.asp).

Funding Conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST).
- Recipients must contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services.
- Recipients will be eligible for up to two Vouchers under this Voucher Stream.

2.4 Entrepreneurs with Disability

Background and Program Objectives

In 2018 the Victorian Government released *Every opportunity: Victorian economic participation plan for people with disability 2018-2020*. This plan sets out the government's approach to ensuring that people with disability are active participants in the Victorian economy, including as business owners and entrepreneurs.

Every opportunity takes a broad view of economic participation, encompassing the range of ways people contribute to and participate in the economy. Early actions underpin a longer-term agenda and will be built on over the three-year lifespan of the plan. Actions reflect a number of key themes:

- improving educational pathways;
- leading through the public sector;
- community organisations and business community partnerships; and
- supporting people with disability to run their own business.

Every opportunity identifies that entrepreneurs and business owners with disability in Victoria may benefit from developing business capabilities through accessing specialist assistance to resolve growth limiting issues and/or to take advantage of growth opportunities.

The Entrepreneurs with Disability Voucher Stream is a new initiative to support the viability, sustainability and growth of businesses run by people with disability.

The Entrepreneurs with Disability Voucher Stream's long-term objectives are to:

- grow the number of businesses owned and operated by people with disability in Victoria
- enhance the future viability, sustainability and growth of businesses owned and operated by people with disability
- raise the profile of the contribution businesses owned by people with disability make to the Victorian economy
- contribute to the pipeline of investable Victorian businesses.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Voucher under this Stream for the service activities listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Entrepreneurs with Disability – Voucher supported service activities

Voucher Type	Supported Service Activities
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Development • Intellectual Property • Early stage feasibility & testing • Research & Development
Business Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Process and Systems Improvements • Business Transformation • Financial Management Planning • Industry Standards Implementation & Certification • Tender Guidance • Marketing and Branding Strategy • Market Plan Development • Prepare for and Attract Investment

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

- Applicants must have a disability
- Applicants can be developing an innovative product, process or service
- Shortlisted candidates may be interviewed to seek more information about their business
- Not-for-profits, charitable organisations and social enterprises are eligible to apply, on the proviso they are majority owned and operated by people with disability
- Businesses that employ less than 20 staff are eligible to apply.

In addition to the eligibility criteria described in Section 3, Applicants that operate a social enterprise will be required to demonstrate that they:

- are a social enterprise with a business model that supports an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit;
- derive a substantial portion of income from trade-based activities;
- offer award wages and conditions aligned with wages and conditions enjoyed by the broader Victorian community; and
- reinvest the majority of business profit in the fulfilment of their mission.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$25,000 (exclusive of GST).
- Applicants must contribute a minimum of 20 per cent of the total costs of services.
- Vouchers will subsidise 80 per cent of the services up to a maximum of \$25,000 (i.e. \$4 of Voucher funding for every \$1 contributed by the applicant).
- Recipients will be eligible for up to two Vouchers under this Voucher Stream.
- Requests for split payments of Vouchers may be made for Vouchers with a minimum value of \$10,000 (exclusive of GST).

2.5 Food Innovation

Background and Program Objectives

In March 2016, the Premier of Victoria launched the Victorian Government's *Food and Fibre Sector Strategy*. A key component of the Strategy is helping businesses innovate and grow.

The Victorian Government has established the Food Innovation Voucher Stream to encourage collaborative problem solving, develop innovation capability and stimulate business growth.

These Vouchers and the Food Innovation Network link industry with innovation services and capabilities in regional and metropolitan areas, including the government's key food and fibre research centres and relevant CSIRO, university and industry facilities.

The main **objectives** of the Food Innovation Voucher

Stream are to:

- foster industry engagement and collaboration between R&D providers and businesses
- increase commercialisation rates of research through development of innovative products, packaging and processes, in growth-oriented SMEs
- improve productivity by shifting the food sector's focus and culture from reactive to proactive, and from survival to competitive and disruptive
- support projects that align to Food and Fibre Sector related government initiatives including the Healthy Choices Guidelines, and
- reduce the barriers and challenges faced by businesses that limit the level of investment.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Food Innovation Voucher for the service activities listed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Food Innovation – Voucher supported service activities

Voucher Type	Maximum Voucher Value (excluding GST)	Minimum Cash Co Contribution	Supported Service Activities
Innovation*	\$50,000	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Innovation • Product Development • Research & Development • Market positioning and labelling
Early Stage Feasibility & Testing*	\$10,000	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Stage Feasibility and Testing
Business Capability	\$50,000	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for and attract Investment

* Note: smaller businesses with at least 10 FTE or turnover greater than \$500,000 are encouraged to apply for Research & Development and Early Stage Feasibility and Testing vouchers. This recognises there are smaller businesses in the ecosystem that require support particularly for R&D and early stage works that would otherwise be omitted under the general eligibility criteria.

- Applicants are encouraged to consider the Victorian Government's Healthy Choices guidelines in their applications (<http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/healthy-choices/guidelines>); for example, projects to develop an innovative product to increase the nutrient rating of foods, product size reformulation, product design for healthy fresh vending or otherwise increase the supply of healthier foods, would be considered favourably.

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3 and in addition must:

- become a member of the Victorian Food Innovation Network (www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/FoodInnovation), and
- be currently engaged in the food value chain (this includes agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing and excludes forestry and fishing), or
- demonstrate a genuine commercial connection to the food value chain.
- Applicants for the 'Prepare for and attract Investment' Vouchers must also demonstrate a growth opportunity and the need for external investment in order to realise that opportunity.
- Not-for-profits and charitable organisations may be eligible for a Food Innovation Voucher providing they meet turnover and/or employment criteria. Also, noting:
 - Eligibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis, a compelling justification should be included for the application to be considered; and
 - Demonstration of flow-on economic benefits outside the applicant organisation will be considered favourably.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Food Innovation Vouchers are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (plus GST) – see Table 3.1.
- Applicants must contribute at least 50 per cent of the total cost of services.
 - Early stage feasibility and testing Vouchers are capped at \$10,000. They do not require a cash co-contribution (see Table 3.1). Businesses are expected to make an appropriate staff member available to work with the Registered Service Provider for up to 10 hours.
- Recipients are eligible for up to two Food Innovation Vouchers.

Voucher Specific Program Requirements (also refer to Section 8 of the Program Guidelines)

Registered Service Providers will be required to participate in the Victorian Food Innovation Network as part of a Community of Practice (CoP). Organisations must nominate at least one technical expert to participate as a member of the CoP.

CoP members will be required to:

- a) attend one annual face-to-face meeting;
- b) attend three quarterly online meetings per annum;
- c) contribute to the development of network content (two contributions/year); and
- d) provide information about events and opportunities relevant to the Food Innovation Network for the promotion to the food sector.

Exemptions from joining the CoP may be requested in writing to the Department and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

2.6 Social Enterprise Capability

Background and Program Objectives

In 2017 the Victorian Government released its *Social Enterprise Strategy* which outlines how the government will partner with the sector to provide support and strategic leadership. The Victorian Social Enterprise Strategy vision is that “Victoria’s inclusive growth is supported by thriving and sustainable social enterprises”.

The Strategy has three action areas:

- Increasing impact and innovation
- Building business capacity and skills
- Improving market access.

The Strategy identifies that social enterprise founders and managers in Victoria can benefit from developing business capabilities through accessing specialist assistance to resolve growth limiting issues and/or to take advantage of growth opportunities.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream is a key initiative aligned with the building business capacity and skills action area to support the viability, sustainability and growth of social enterprises.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream’s long-term outcomes are to:

- grow individual social enterprises in Victoria, assisting them to scale up their social, economic and environmental impact;

- assist individual social enterprises in Victoria to create new and extend existing opportunities for employment of disadvantaged Victorians;
- raise the participation of Victorian Social Enterprise founders and managers in capability development leading to future viability, sustainability and growth; and
- further develop the pipeline of investable Victorian social enterprises.

The Social Enterprise Capability Voucher Stream will support capability development projects within individual Victorian social enterprises and is seeking Voucher projects that align with the Stream objectives:

- improved organisational efficiencies through implementation of new-to-the-firm business systems and processes that increase firm productivity;
- increased new market development through identifying new market opportunities and developing workable plans to access those markets;
- increased financial readiness, better equipping social enterprises to identify and manage investment and funding opportunities;
- increased contract readiness, better equipping social enterprises to access government and corporate procurement opportunities.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a Voucher under this Stream for the service activities listed in Table 6.1.

Voucher Type	Supported Service Activities
Business Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Process and Systems Improvements • Business Transformation • Financial Management Planning • Industry Standards Implementation & Certification • Tender Guidance

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

- Not-for-profits and charitable organisations are eligible to apply, on the proviso they already operate as a Social Enterprise; are looking to start a social enterprise; or move to a social enterprise model.
- Businesses that employ less than 20 staff are eligible to apply.

In addition to the eligibility criteria described in Section 3, Applicants are required to demonstrate that they:

- are a social enterprise as defined by its business model that supports an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit;
- derive a substantial portion of income from trade-based activities; and
- reinvest the majority of business profit in the fulfilment of their mission.

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$25,000 (exclusive of GST).
- Applicants must contribute a minimum of 20 per cent of the total costs of services.
- Vouchers will subsidise 80 per cent of the services up to a maximum of \$25,000 (i.e. \$4 of Voucher funding for every \$1 contributed by the applicant).
- Recipients will be eligible for up to two Voucher under this Voucher Stream.
- Requests for split payments of Vouchers may be made for Vouchers with a minimum value of \$10,000 (exclusive of GST).

2.7 Victoria-Israel Innovation

Background and Program Objectives

The Victoria-Israel Innovation Voucher is funded under the Victoria-Israel Science Innovation and Technology Scheme (VISITS), which is an initiative providing Victorian and Israeli organisations with the opportunity to work collaboratively on projects of mutual benefit.

The Victoria-Israel Innovation Voucher program supports Victorian technology companies to increase business and innovation networks and activities with Israel by developing technology projects, including for example, feasibility and proof of concept testing, and market engagement.

Service activities undertaken in this Stream are designed to assist companies with product development and commercialisation or to enter into market. Strong applications to this stream will have a clear point of engagement with Israel.

The Victoria-Israel Scheme voucher has the following **objectives**:

- Increased engagement and collaboration between Victorian technology companies and Israeli organisations;
- Victorian technology companies access Israeli business and innovation environments and Israeli capabilities, services and practices;
- Increased development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services by Victorian technology development companies via demonstration, feasibility, proof of concept and market validation that have applicability in international markets.

Voucher service activities (also refer to the Appendices of the Program Guidelines)

Eligible organisations can apply for a voucher under this stream for the service activities listed in Table 7.1.

Applicants may seek services from registered Victorian providers (providing a connection with Israel can be demonstrated), or from Israeli Service Providers which can be identified in the application and will be assessed against the eligibility criteria at Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

Table 7.1 Victoria-Israel Innovation – Voucher supported service activities

Voucher Type	Supported Service Activities
Market Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketing and Branding Strategy (international)• Market Development Plan (international)• In-Market Support (international)
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process Innovation (local or international)• Product Development (local or international)• Research & Development (local or international)

Eligibility Criteria (also refer to Section 3 of the Program Guidelines)

To be eligible for this Voucher Stream the Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria as described in Section 3 with the exceptions that:

- Businesses that employ fewer than 20 staff are eligible to apply
- Applicants must be developing an **innovative** technical product, process or service

Funding conditions (also refer to Section 4 of the Program Guidelines)

- Vouchers in this stream are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST).
- Applicants must contribute a minimum of 25 per cent of the total costs of services.
- Recipients will be eligible for up to two Vouchers under this Voucher Stream.

3 General Eligibility

3.1 The Applicant Legal Entities

The Voucher Program is open to small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that are on a growth trajectory. Applicants may apply individually or jointly. Where a project involves more than one Applicant, the lead organisation should submit the application, but both Applicants may contribute to project expenditure to meet any co-contribution requirements (refer to Section 4, Funding Conditions).

3.1.1 Companies

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for assistance under the program:

- a) Be a legally structured business registered in Victoria with an Australian Business Number (ABN)⁴
- b) Meet any co-contribution requirements with eligible cash expenditure
- c) Meet all industrial relations obligations as an employer in accordance with the National Employment Standards
- d) Have an operating presence in Victoria
- e) Employ at least 20 FTE (full-time equivalent) staff or have an annual turnover of greater than \$1.5 million (preference will be given to Applicants that employ less than 200 people),^{5,6}
- f) Conduct the majority of proposed activities in Victoria in partnership with a Registered Service Provider⁷
- g) Agree to participate in future program evaluation activity.

3.1.2 Trust Structures

- a) An Incorporated Trustee can apply on behalf of a Trust provided that the Trustee will remain sufficiently liable for the performance of any agreement it signs
- b) Comply with the criteria as set out for Companies under items b) to g) in 3.1.1 above.

3.1.3 Partnerships

- a) The individual Partners may apply on behalf of a Partnership provided that the Partners will remain sufficiently liable for the performance of any agreement they sign
- b) Comply with the criteria as set out for Companies under items b) to g) in 3.1.1 above.

3.1.4 Ineligible Applicants

The following are **not eligible** to apply⁸:

- a) Individuals
- b) Commonwealth, state and local government agencies or bodies
- c) Publicly funded research institutions
- d) Industry associations
- e) Not-for-profit organisations
- f) Community-based organisations.

⁴ Businesses that are not registered in Victoria but have a significant operating presence in Victoria may apply for a Voucher. The Department will review these applications on a case-by-case basis.

⁵ Note that some Voucher Streams allow for support to smaller companies – see Section 2 for stream eligibility requirements

⁶ Pre-revenue companies that do not meet the FTE and annual turnover eligibility criteria may be considered for support on a case-by-case basis and should therefore contact the Department to determine their eligibility

⁷ This requirement may not apply to 'In-Market Support (International)' activities

⁸ Refer to Voucher Streams for stream-specific eligibility conditions

3.2 Service Provider Eligibility

The Registered Service Providers are selected by the Department through a competitive assessment process. Service Providers may be publicly funded, not-for-profit enterprises or privately owned; and should meet one or more of the specified service types offered under the Voucher Streams as detailed in Section 2.

Through the application process invited Service Providers will need to demonstrate that they:

- a) Have a trading history of at least two years⁹
- b) Are financially viable¹⁰
- c) Are based in or have an operating presence in Victoria¹¹
- d) Supply eligible services and where applicable demonstrate sector or market-specific knowledge;
- e) Commit to undertake their role in accordance with these Guidelines; and
- f) Are one of the following entity types:
 - i. A private or public company (not listed) incorporated in Australia under the *Corporations Act 2001*, that is non-tax-exempt and is registered for GST; or
 - ii. A not-for-profit organisation that:
 - is an incorporated body, co-operative or associate (including business associations); and
 - has an Australian Business Number (ABN) or can provide written advice from the Australian Tax Office that no withholding tax is required from the Voucher payment.

Registered Service Providers will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that they are:

- a) Committed to providing services at competitive market rates;
- b) Committed to servicing projects within a reasonable timeframe as agreed with the Applicant, including the negotiation and agreement of terms concerning intellectual property rights; and
- c) Not currently involved in litigation against the Department.

Registered Service Providers will be listed on the Boost Your Business webpage at business.vic.gov.au¹².

3.3 Applicant and Service Provider relationship

Voucher Applicants and Service Providers must be entirely separate entities. They may not be owned by the same parent company, share governance or have common directors.

Vouchers are primarily intended to support projects where:

- a) There is a new relationship, i.e. the company has never worked (formally or informally) with the nominated Service Provider; or
- b) There has been no recent financial transaction between the company and the Service Provider.

In the Voucher application, Applicants are required to declare any existing governance relationships between themselves and the nominated Service Providers, including whether any of the project Service Providers:

- a) Are subsidiaries or related bodies corporate within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001*; or
- b) Share common directors, officers or senior managers.

⁹ The Department reserves the right to waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

¹⁰ To become a Registered Service Provider, potential service providers may be required to submit audited financial accounts for the previous two (2) financial years, plus interim accounts if the financial accounts are over six (6) months old.

¹¹ Where applicable, services that are to be conducted offshore, or otherwise cannot be conducted in Victoria, will be exempt from this requirement – refer to the conditions under the Voucher Streams.

4 Funding

4.1 Funding conditions

Applicants are permitted to apply for one Voucher per funding round. Multiple applications from one Applicant in any round will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but must be able to demonstrate that each application is a separate project.

Vouchers are capped at a maximum value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST). For example, if the total cost of services is \$125,000, the Voucher will cover the maximum, \$50,000. The remaining \$75,000 must be covered by the Applicant.

Vouchers will be provided on a cash co-contribution basis outlined below unless an alternate co-contribution amount is stated in the Voucher Stream (refer to Section 2):

- Applicants contribute a minimum of 50 per cent of the total costs of services; and
- Vouchers will subsidise 50 per cent of the services to a maximum of \$50,000 (i.e. \$1 for every \$1 awarded through the Voucher).

Applicants may be permitted to receive a maximum of two Vouchers over the course of the Program. The receipt of multiple Vouchers is dependent on available funding and the directions as set within each Voucher Stream (refer to Section 2).

Funds from other State and Commonwealth Government programs cannot form part of the co-contribution.

The Department reserves the right to amend these conditions and the conditions stated within the Voucher Streams in respect to Vouchers that have not yet been awarded.

4.2 Duration of funding

Projects are to commence within two months and be completed within 12 months of the date of Voucher issue. The Department reserves the right to withdraw the offer of Voucher funding if projects are not commenced within two months.

4.3 Payment conditions

Each Voucher can only be used for the services of one Registered Service Provider, not multiple Service Providers. Payment up to the face value of each Voucher will be direct from the Department to the Service Provider following provision of services, advice or expertise. GST will be paid in addition to the Voucher value where applicable.

Any upfront payments must be covered by the Applicant out of their co-contribution to the project.

The Department will not be liable to pay the Service Provider until it has received:

- A valid tax invoice from the Service Provider for services
- The Voucher signed by both the Applicant and the Service Provider indicating that the agreed activities have been completed
- A Statutory Declaration that states that the project has been completed and that the Service Provider has received the Applicant's co-contribution
- A final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence as the Department may reasonably require.

Consideration may be given on a case-by-case basis, and at the Department's discretion, to split a Voucher payment subject to the following conditions (unless specified in a Voucher Stream - refer to Section 2):

- The total Voucher value must exceed \$25,000 (exclusive of GST)
- The period of the project is greater than four months
- Evidence that the cash co-contribution by the Applicant has been made in full.

The request to split a Voucher payment must be made at the application stage.

5 Project Expenditure

All project expenditure is to be incurred only after the Voucher is issued. Funding will not be provided for retrospective activities. Applicants will need to meet the cost of any ineligible expenditure associated with their project.

5.1 Eligible expenditure

Eligible project expenditure for Voucher funding includes project-related non-capital expenditure required to deliver the project and project-related costs of the Service Providers. Applicants will need to meet the cost of any additional and ineligible expenditure that are outside the scope of the Voucher Project.

5.2 Ineligible expenditure

Voucher funds may not be used to cover 'business as usual' expenses unless approved in writing by the Department under exceptional circumstances, or it is the specific purpose of the Voucher service activity as described in Section 2.

Ineligible expenditure includes the following:

- a) Capital expenditure
- b) Internal costs, salaries or resources of the Applicant
- c) Software and hardware purchases
- d) Training courses, units or modules (e.g. language or other)
- e) Interpreting and translation (with the exception of branding or promotional translating associated with broader promotional campaigns)
- f) Costs associated with minor or non-technical alterations of a product to suit a specific market
- g) Costs associated with applying for government grants and funding programs
- h) Basic professional services such as ongoing, routine accounting, tax and legal business requirements, licencing, costs associated with export documentation, legal/intellectual property costs, financing fees
- i) Routine maintenance
- j) Travel costs and entertainment costs
- k) Costs associated with group trade missions, delegations, events, seminars, workshops and/or training
- l) Any amount paid on account of goods and services tax
- m) Any administrative fees or surcharges for administering the expenditures listed above;
- n) Services relating to import activities
- o) Projects where the primary purpose relates to offshore manufacturing
- p) Intellectual Property fees and charges associated with registering domestic or international patents or other intellectual property enforcement expenses
- q) Any other expenditure as determined by the Department that does not meet program conditions.

6 Assessment Criteria

Applicants are required to submit an application online along with a Scope of Service, including quotation, provided by the Service Provider. All questions in the application need to be completed to proceed to assessment.

A Departmental assessment panel will assess all Voucher applications against the following assessment criteria and scoring:

Assessment Criteria	Weighting %
1. How will the project support one or more of the Program objectives and Voucher Stream objectives?	30
2. How will the project benefit the company by reaching longer term outcomes (e.g. new jobs, access to new markets and customers, new products and services and increased revenue).?	30
3. Demonstrate your capacity or capability to successfully implement the project or project findings (e.g. track record of company and resources to be allocated to the project)	20
4. Why does the project need Government support to proceed? Detail the risks to the project without Government support.	20

Further information may be sought from applicants if required.

To be competitive an application must address each assessment criterion and make the best possible case for funding. Claims made against each criterion must be substantiated and full details of all underlying risks and assumptions should be clearly stated.

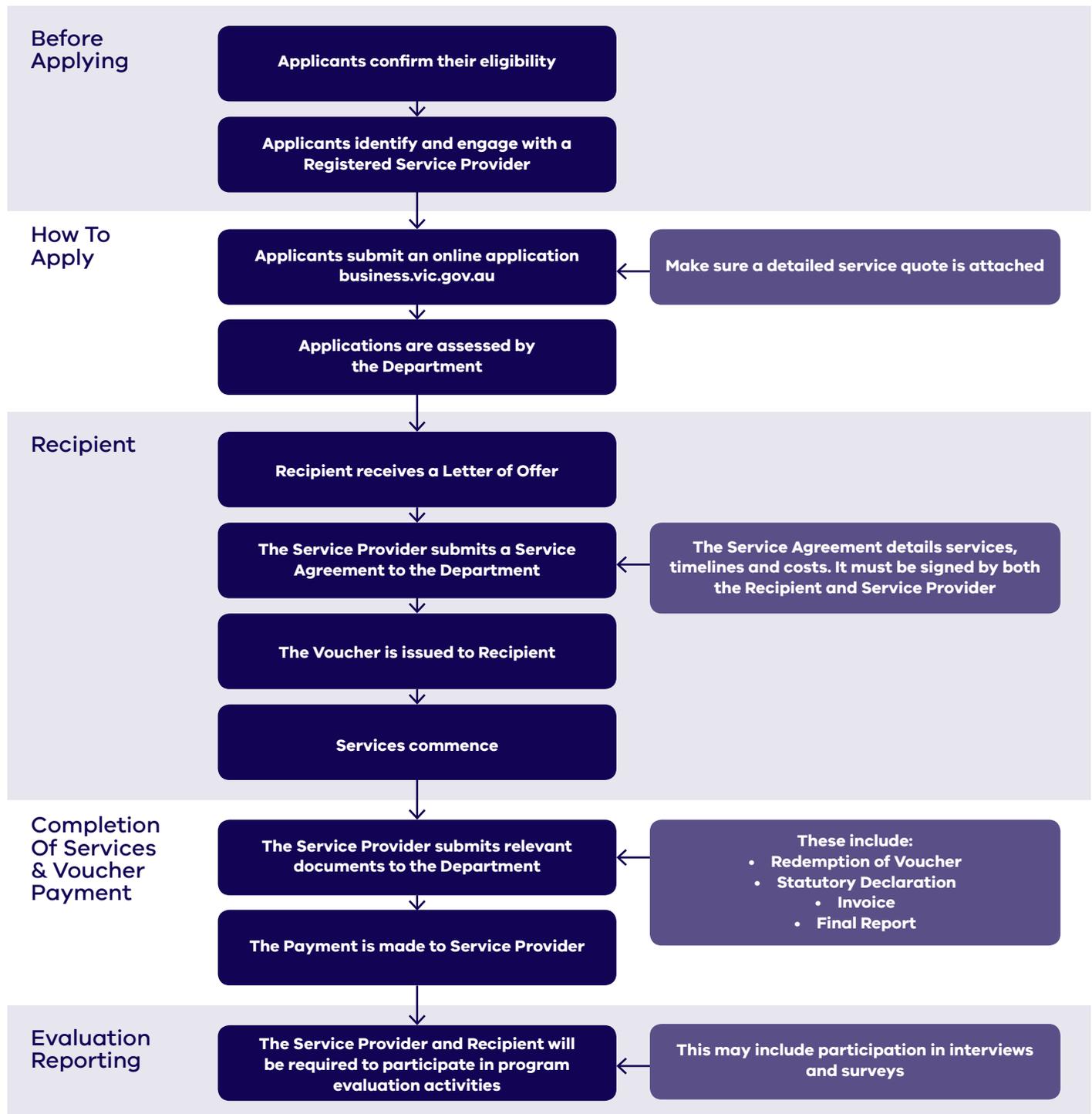
The Department will endeavour to notify all Applicants on the outcome of their application within eight weeks of applications closing.

Recipients will receive a Letter of Offer outlining funding obligations. This offer remains valid for a period of two (2) months from the date of the Letter of Offer. A Voucher will be issued to the Recipient once the Department has received the acceptance of the Letter of Offer signed by the Recipient, along with a Service Agreement signed by both the Service Provider and the Recipient.

7 Vouchers – Step-By-Step Guide

Vouchers are to be used by Victorian businesses or organisations in exchange for services that will build their capabilities. Vouchers are not intended for ‘business as usual’ activities.

Projects funded through a Voucher are expected to be growth-orientated activities undertaken by the Applicant. The Applicant engages a Registered Service Provider to undertake a service, or services, to assist the company to become more productive, employ more people, create market access and in general, increase scale and profitability.



How to Apply

Victorian companies and organisations will be able to apply for a Voucher to undertake services with a Registered Service Provider. The Applicant must first engage with a Registered Service Provider to agree on the services, timing and cost before applying for a Voucher. A detailed scope of services must be included in the Applicant's application.

Before Applying

Step 1: The Applicant confirms their eligibility for the program and identifies the particular voucher Stream they wish to apply to (see Section 3, Eligibility and Section 2).

Step 2: The Applicant identifies and engages with a Registered Service Provider and requests a 'scope of services', with quote – refer to Glossary.

How to Apply

Step 3: The Applicant submits an online application with an attached Scope of Services. The application form must be completed by an Applicant's authorised officer (i.e. An appropriate financial delegate to approve external service agreements and payments).

Step 4: Applications are assessed by the Department's assessment panel.

Recipient

Step 5: A Letter of Offer is sent to successful Recipients requesting a signed Service Agreement between the Service Provider and Recipient (refer to Section 8.2, Service Agreement).

Step 6: The Recipient accepts the offer in writing and sends this along with a Service Agreement signed by both the Service Provider and the Recipient to the Department detailing the services, timelines and costs. The Service Provider can send both the acceptance of the offer and the signed Service Agreement on behalf of the Recipient

Step 7: The Department reviews the Service Agreement, and if satisfactory, issues the Voucher to the Recipient.

Step 8: Services must commence within two months of issuing the Voucher. Services must be completed within twelve months of Voucher issue.

Voucher is paid on the completion of project

Step 9: Upon completion of services, the Registered Service Provider must submit the following documents:

- The Voucher document signed by the Recipient and the Service Provider
- Statutory Declaration signed by the Service Provider that states the services were completed and the Recipient's cash co-contribution has been received in full by the Service Provider
- A final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence as the Department may reasonably require; and
- An invoice (issued to the Department to the value of the Voucher).

Step 10: Payment is made to the Registered Service Provider¹².

Evaluation Reporting

Step 11: Recipients and Registered Service Providers will be required to participate in program evaluation activities.

¹² All proposed project costs included in an application must be exclusive of GST. Where applicable, the Voucher, to be paid by the Department, will be increased by the amount of GST.

8 Terms And Conditions

The Department reserves the right to make changes to these Guidelines as required.

8.1 Conditions of Registered Service Provider Engagement

Selected Service Providers will be made an offer in writing to register for the Service Providers' panel. By accepting the offer, Service Providers will be agreeing to the following Terms and Conditions:

- a) Commit to providing services at competitive market rates;
- b) Commit to undertake their role and responsibilities in accordance with these Guidelines;
- c) Guarantee that they are not currently involved in litigation and that they will advise the Department if these circumstances change;
- d) Guarantee that they have sufficient funds to manage terms of payment of up to 90 days against a redeemed Voucher; and
- e) Commit to participate in program evaluation activities as required by the Department.

8.2 Service Agreement

The Registered Service Provider will enter into a Service Agreement with a Recipient to provide the agreed services. This service agreement must include, at a minimum, the following:

- a) A description of the services to be provided;
- b) Total fees for the services;
- c) An outline of any required Intellectual Property arrangements; and
- d) Any other Terms and Conditions as required by the parties to the agreement.

Neither the Department nor the State will be deemed to be a party to the Service Agreement or in any way responsible for the consequences or outcomes under the Service Agreement.

8.3 Payment of Registered Service Provider fee

Registered Service Providers will be reimbursed for an amount up to the face value of the Voucher (plus GST where applicable) for the supply of the service, on the provision of:

- a) a valid tax invoice from the Service Provider;
- b) the Voucher signed by both the Recipient and the Service Provider, indicating that the agreed service activities have been completed;
- c) a statutory declaration signed by the Service Provider confirming receipt of the cash co-contribution from the Recipient; and
- d) a final report to the satisfaction of the Department and/or any additional documents, photos, or other evidence the Department may reasonably require.

8.4 Removal from Registered Service Provider Panel

- a) The Department reserves the right to remove any Registered Service Provider from the panel at its absolute discretion; and
- b) A Service Provider may request to be removed from the Registered Service Provider panel at any stage. The Service Provider must ensure any active Voucher projects are managed to completion following removal from the panel.

8.5 Post Project Evaluation

All Recipients and Service Providers must agree to comply with the Department's performance monitoring and evaluation regime. The Recipient and the Service Provider may receive an evaluation survey from the Department and may be required to participate in program evaluation activities.

The evaluation surveys may be required for up to three years following completion of the Voucher issue. This is a non-negotiable requirement for all participants of the Program. Non-compliance could impact future applications to the Department's programs.

Successful Program outcomes may be used in program evaluation reviews and Departmental marketing collateral.

8.6 Voucher Specific Program Requirements

Refer Section 2 for additional Terms and Conditions that relate to a specific Voucher Stream.

8.7 Publicity

Recipients and Service Providers must agree to cooperate with the Department in the promotion of the Program. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies or promotional events and activities.

The Department may request Recipients and Service Providers to fact check any text and seek approval to use any owned imagery associated with the activity prior to the publication of any such promotional materials.

Recipients and Service Providers must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a Voucher without prior approval by the Department.

All Voucher recipients will be publicly listed in Departmental annual reports and on Program websites.

8.8 Confidentiality

Any personal information provided by the Applicant and the Service Provider or a third party in an application will be collected by the Department for the purpose of program administration. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purposes of assessing applications. If confidential personal information about third parties is included in an application, Applicants are required to ensure that the third party is aware of the contents of this Privacy Statement.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2000* (VIC) and other applicable laws.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. The Department's Privacy Policy can be found online at <https://djpr.vic.gov.au/>. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department's Privacy Unit by phone on (03) 9651 9749 or email privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Appendices

1 Voucher Service Activities

1.1 Voucher types

Boost Your Business Vouchers are used by Victorian businesses or organisations in exchange for services that will build their capabilities in three main areas:

- **Market Engagement** – services to assist businesses and organisations to identify and secure international market development and export opportunities
- **Innovation** – services to assist businesses to develop or commercialise new products and improve process innovation
- **Business Capability** – services to assist businesses to position them for future growth.

Voucher Streams offer a limited selection of services under these three areas. Please refer to Section 2 for the relevant service offerings for each Voucher Stream.

The Department reserves the right to amend the list of service activities as required.

1.1.1 Market Engagement

Service Activities	Voucher purpose	Examples of supported Voucher activities
Marketing and Branding Strategy (International)	Development of brand value proposition and market positioning that increases consumer relevance and differentiates business from competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand audit and research • Brand strategy, including the brand value proposition and market positioning • Visual identity system to align all customer touch-points • Develop a marketing strategy and implementation roadmap • In-country marketing and promotional campaign development
Market Development Plan (International)	Optimise entry to a new market or grow business activities in an existing market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research to understand industry trends, gain customer insights and identify gaps in current strategy • Set strategic priorities to leverage market insights • Market expansion activities • Strategic partnerships and industry alignment opportunities • Identify pathways into global supply chains
In-Market Support (International)	Navigate the business environment of a specific market, including access to traditional distribution channels and/or e-commerce distribution platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy and professional service costs for business introductions, company profiling and screening as well as business intelligence, pricing, branding and procedural advice
Intellectual Property (export related)	Establish intellectual property (IP) mechanisms to capitalise on proprietary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an IP management system and roadmap • Conduct an IP research and intelligence analysis

1.1.2 Innovation

Service Activities	Voucher purpose	Examples of supported Voucher activities
Process Innovation	Development and implementation of novel or enhanced manufacturing processes to obtain a competitive advantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new ways to enhance the productivity of existing manufacturing processes Improved manufacturing processes (e.g. use engineering or technical design expertise to implement a process that will produce a higher-quality product)
Product Development	Access the know-how to innovate and leverage technology to develop innovative products for commercialisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the commercialisation of a product Fund product design activities (e.g. use engineering or technical design expertise to determine prototype structure, function and/or materials) Test commercial viability of new hardware technology products through small volume production Product testing, validation, prototyping and verification Conduct research and development activities to develop novel technology products for commercialisation
Intellectual Property	Establish intellectual property (IP) mechanisms to capitalise on proprietary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an IP management system and roadmap Conduct an IP research and intelligence analysis
Early stage feasibility & testing	Identify collaborative research opportunities between businesses (Applicants) and research organisations. Suitable for businesses needing an innovative solution to a process, product or research development problem but have limited knowledge, or engagement with the innovation ecosystem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experimental plan in conjunction with a university including one-on-one consultations between researchers and businesses Early stage feasibility plans
Research & Development	Access the know-how to innovate and improve competitiveness and productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research project that leads to an application for an Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme Research Connections or Accelerating Commercialisation or similar Access to research facilities and equipment (e.g. Synchrotron or publicly funded research facilities)
Market positioning & labelling	Navigate international regulatory and compliance systems to identify new opportunities OR develop a food fraud vulnerability control plan, preparing a food fraud vulnerability assessment that includes specific control measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labelling to address non-tariff barriers to entry into frontier international markets Advice on navigating regulatory and labelling compliance and protecting IP in frontier international markets Developing a new approach to supply chain management to increase integrity, traceability and help reduce fraud risks Developing and implementing a food fraud mitigation plan Exploring new distribution methods such as eCommerce

1.1.3 Business Capability

Service Activities	Voucher purpose	Examples of supported Voucher activities
Business Process and Systems Improvements	Evaluate current business processes and/or systems to better inform strategies to be more competitive and efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop solutions to enhance business processes • Develop business plans or strategic plans • Benchmark current performance • Evaluate the governance structure • Project-specific leadership mentoring and coaching • Implement transformative improvements to a business specific process • Access to tailored and specialist mentoring support to innovate and improve business capability
Business Transformation	Build on business competencies, market knowledge and ideas to improve - or develop new - business models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a market gap analysis to identify potential opportunities against a benchmark of current performance • Pursue opportunities through market trends
Financial Management Planning	Financial management strategy development to better inform business decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a strong financial structure • Develop a financial management strategy to promote sustainable growth (e.g. mergers & acquisitions)
Industry Standards Implementation & Certification	Implement industry standards to advance business processes, improve products and/or services, increase competitiveness and access new/emerging markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark against and implement industry standards • Undertake certification of business systems and process • Project cost (including external audits) to achieve business systems and process certifications.
Tender Guidance	Assistance to enable businesses to respond to tenders within known supply chains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for professional services to advise on tender submissions • Advice on tender requirements - and how businesses can be more competitive in winning supply chain contracts or tenders • Independent product testing to verify tender specifications
Marketing and Branding Strategy	Development of brand value proposition and market positioning that increases consumer relevance and differentiates business from competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand strategy, including the brand value proposition and market positioning • Visual identity system to align all customer touch-points • Develop a marketing strategy and implementation roadmap
Market Development Plan	Optimise entry to a new market or grow business activities in an existing market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research to understand industry trends, gain customer insights and identify gaps in current strategy • Set strategic priorities to leverage market insights • Market expansion activities • Strategic partnerships and industry alignment opportunities • Identify pathways into global supply chains
Prepare for and attract Investment	Increase investment into priority sectors by supporting businesses to become "investor ready" and attractive to investors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing options, developing a business plan to allow potential investors to understand the opportunity • Preparing for investment by documenting financial arrangements, ownership/tax structures, legal aspects and governance arrangements for potential investors • Development of prospectus materials to assist in delivering the pitch or proposition to the investor

