

Digital Growth Program Guidelines

OVERVIEW

The Digital Growth Program supports small businesses in the Hobart Local Government Area to build long-term digital capability. The program combines workshops, mentorship, and funding to help businesses strengthen their online presence, improve digital performance, and adopt the right tools for sustainable growth.

BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

- Build confidence and capability in digital tools and marketing
- Access expert guidance through structured mentorship
- Receive up to \$8,500 in funding
- Connect with other Hobart businesses through shared learning
- Support local digital service providers and keep investment within the Hobart economy
- Improve online reach, customer engagement, and competitiveness

ELIGIBILITY

To participate, businesses must be an individual, partnership, company or trust that:

- is independently owned and operated
- has an annual turnover between \$45,000 and \$2 million
- has less than 20 full time equivalent (FTE) employees
- holds an active ABN registered in Tasmania
- Currently be operating within the Hobart LGA

Ineligible:

- Businesses that have overdue payments or outstanding compliance issues with the City of Hobart

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

www.hobartcity.com.au

- Attend at least 2 workshops
- Demonstrate a clear digital need or opportunity
- Submit an application outlining the digital challenge or opportunity the business intends to address
- Commit to working with an assigned mentor to develop an implementation plan

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

1. Registration & workshops

Businesses register for the program and attend a series of workshops covering topics such as:

- Social media and content strategy
- Website optimisation and SEO
- E-commerce
- Digital advertising
- Automation
- Email marketing and customer engagement

2. Identify needs

After the workshops, businesses should have clarity on their digital gaps, priorities, and opportunities for improvement.

3. Submit an EOI

Eligible workshop participants may submit an EOI to participate in the rest of the program and receive funding of up to \$8,500 by outlining a digital need.

4. Facilitation and mentorship

Successful applicants will attend a facilitation session to discuss their project and define their goals. They are then matched with a digital program mentor with expertise in the area of their digital need.

Mentors will be available to:

- help to refine project objectives, scope, milestones and KPI's
- assist with developing an implementation plan

- help to maintain momentum in delivering the project
- offer support if timelines shift or challenges arise

5. Approval and implementation

Funding is released once the implementation plan is submitted and approved. Quotes will need to be provided prior to funding if an external provider is appointed to deliver any aspects of the project.

6. Project delivery

Businesses complete the identified digital improvements with the support of their mentor.

7. Acquittal

Businesses report on mutually agreed milestones and KPI's (defined at the facilitation session).

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

- Website upgrades or redevelopment
- E commerce platforms
- Digital marketing tools or campaigns
- CRM or customer database setup
- Email automation tools
- SEO services
- Photography/videography for digital content
- Social media strategy or optimisation
- Cyber security improvements
- Training or consultancy from Hobart based digital service providers

INELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

- Routine operating costs
- Purchase of non-digital equipment
- Ongoing subscription costs beyond the project timeframe
- Retrospective expenses (purchases made before funding approval)
- Cash payments or reimbursements without receipts

- Any activity inconsistent with City of Hobart policies

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Businesses must complete required workshops before being eligible for funding
- Funding recipients must submit a mentor supported implementation plan before funds are released
- All expenditure must align with the approved plan
- No variations without prior approval
- All funded digital work must be completed by approved suppliers
- Businesses must complete an acquittal report including evidence of outcomes
- The City of Hobart branding must be used where required
- The City may publish non-commercial outcomes for promotional purposes

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to attend all the workshops?

You need to attend at least 2 workshops to be eligible to continue with the program and receive funding.

Can I attend the workshops if I am not seeking funding?

Yes, but limited places are available and priority will be given to those seeking to complete the full program.

What does 'independently owned and operated' mean?

- the business is not owned by a large corporation, chain, or government body
- the owners are responsible for day-to-day decisions, management, and operations
- it does not rely on corporate parent funding or control

- all profits and risks belong to the owner(s)

Can I choose my own mentor?

Mentors are selected from an approved panel to ensure quality and consistency. Businesses may indicate preferences.

Can I use a provider outside Hobart to deliver my digital project?

Providers must be located within the Hobart LGA to support the local economy.

Is the program competitive?

Yes, a limited amount of funding is available.

Is co-contribution required?

It is not mandatory, but it does help to strengthen your funding application.

Is there a fee to participate?

No. The City of Hobart covers program costs.

INFORMATION AND ENQUIRIES

The Economic Development Team
Phone: 03 6238 2711
Email: business@hobartcity.com.au

Accessibility

If you can't access the online form or documents for this program, please contact the Economic Development Team to discuss how it can be adapted to suit your needs.

Documents

Copies of all City of Hobart documentation referred to throughout these guidelines can be found via the hyperlinks contained in this document and on the City of Hobart website.

Assessment criteria	
<p>Demonstrates strong alignment with the objectives of the Digital Growth Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen online presence • Improve digital performance • Increase market share • Adopt tools to support digital growth • Improve brand visibility and awareness 	40%
<p>Demonstrates that the activity is well planned, that suitably skilled people are involved, and that the applicant and the activity are financially viable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant demonstrates good project management skills and planning with a clear and realistic timeline. • The activity has clear objectives and outcomes, aligned with the program purpose. • There is evidence of risk identification and mitigation strategies. • Key personnel identified are suitably skilled and able to manage the scale and complexity of the proposed activity. • The budget is well-documented, realistic and achievable, and reflects reasonable costs for the proposed activity. • External businesses engaged to support the delivery of the project are located within the Hobart LGA. • The applicant has attended the Digital Growth Program workshops and engaged in an appropriate number of mentorship hours to develop their project plan. 	30%
<p>Demonstrates value for money for the level of funding request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant demonstrates sustainable financial planning, with more than one income stream and/or in-kind contribution. • For the funding amount requested, the project delivers strong business outcomes in alignment with the program. 	20%