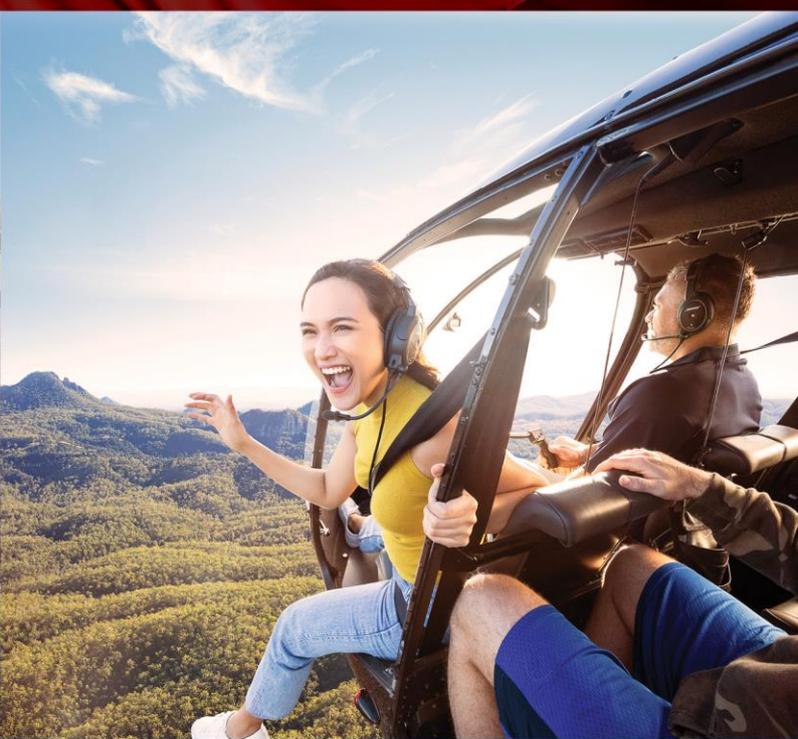


# City of Ipswich Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program Guidelines

2020-2021



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## OVERVIEW

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The Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program (IEEP) provides matched funding to support eligible Ipswich businesses to develop new or enhance an existing experience that actively increases visitor day-trip and/or overnight visitation to the City of Ipswich and in doing so increase employment in the city.

Ipswich City Council (council) recognises the important contribution tourism makes to the economy and cultural ecosystem of the city. This program aims to further develop our vibrant tourism industry through stimulating the creation of local jobs, attracting new business and residents to the region.

Through the Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program we are:

**Boosting economic returns  
for the city**

**Developing new tourism  
experiences and attractions**

**Creating new sustainable jobs**

**Increasing visitor expenditure  
in the city**

**Building resilient businesses  
and communities**

The Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program is a competitive assessment funding program. Successful applicants will receive funding of up to 50% of the cost of the project (See section called HOW MUCH FUNDING YOU CAN APPLY FOR?).

Funding will be issued to successful applicants following the delivery of the proposed project and submission of an acquittal report on or prior to 30 April 2021.

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## WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

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To be eligible, projects must:

1. Have the primary purpose of either the:
  - creation of a new tourism experience, or
  - significant enhancement of an existing tourism experience
2. Be a new/enhanced experience delivered within the Ipswich City Council boundaries (Attachment 1)
3. Have the potential to sustainably grow the number of visitors, associated visitor spend and support employment in the City of Ipswich
4. Demonstrate the capability of completion with an acquittal report submitted on or prior to 30 April 2021
5. Have all necessary permits and approvals for the delivery of the proposed project

The following projects are **excluded**:

- Projects that are primarily focused on only marketing of a tourism experience<sup>^</sup>
- Projects with activities that directly contravene existing council policy
- Projects involving activities with safety hazards and/or negative environmental impacts
- Projects involving activities (or promotion of activities) that take place outside the Ipswich City Council boundaries (Attachment 1)
- Projects which present a potential inherent risk to council, including:
  - conflicts of interest (actual or perceived)
  - reputational risk to council
  - direct or indirect personal benefits received by Councillors or council officers
  - perceptions of being influenced by the funding recipient
  - perceptions of endorsing the funding recipient's products/services

<sup>^</sup> Marketing activity expenses associated with the promotion of the experience being developed/enhanced may be included in the application but may only contribute up to a maximum of 20% of the total project cost.

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## HOW MUCH FUNDING CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

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Applicants can apply for a dollar-for-dollar matched funding of up to:

- \$5,000 (exclusive of GST) in contribution from Ipswich City Council, for Businesses with less than five (5) full-time equivalent employees.
- \$10,000 (exclusive of GST) in contribution from Ipswich City Council, for businesses with five (5) or more full-time equivalent employees\*.

This is available once per business per financial year through the IEEP. The total pool of funding is capped at \$50,000.

*\* Applicants applying for more than \$5,000 in funding will be required to verify that they currently engage five (5) or more full-time equivalent employees (e.g. a letter from the applicant's Certified Practising Accountant).*

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## INELEGIBLE PROJECT COSTS:

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The following costs are not eligible under this program:

- ongoing administration or operational costs of the applicant. This includes general expenses for ongoing operation of your organisation/group including such things as staff costs, administrative and miscellaneous expenses
- donations or fundraising projects that support the recurrent operations of the applicant
- remission of rates
- activities which have already commenced prior to 28 October 2020
- retrospective payments or deficit funding
- the purchase of equipment which is not specifically inherent to project delivery and would otherwise support the recurrent operations of the organisation
- costs associated with obtaining approvals and achieving compliance.

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## WHO CAN APPLY?

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1. Have an appropriate business registration (ABN), including that of sole trader
2. Be a registered member of the Ipswich Tourism Operators Network (ITON) at the time of application
3. Adhere to all relevant legislation and local laws, and hold all necessary permits and approvals, as they relate to the project
4. Have the appropriate current insurances and risk management plan including:
  - Public Liability Insurance Minimum Limit: AUD \$20,000,000.00
  - Professional Indemnity Insurance as per regulatory requirements
  - Risk Management Plan that identifies and exercises all necessary precautions for the health and safety of themselves, their own employees and members of the public whilst carrying out their activities (template available through [Smarty Grants](#)).
5. Meet all of the following requirements:
  - Financially sound and capable of managing public funds
  - Have not received other funding from council or other government body for the same project
  - Have satisfactorily accounted to council for the expenditure of any previous council funding
  - Have no outstanding debts of any kind with Ipswich City Council

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## WHO CAN'T APPLY?

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- Businesses or business units owned or managed by Ipswich City Council or a State or Federal Government agency are not eligible to receive assistance under this program
- Businesses owned or operated by employees of Ipswich City Council, Councillors or other government agencies
- Businesses with overdue debts owing to Ipswich City Council

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## HOW TO APPLY

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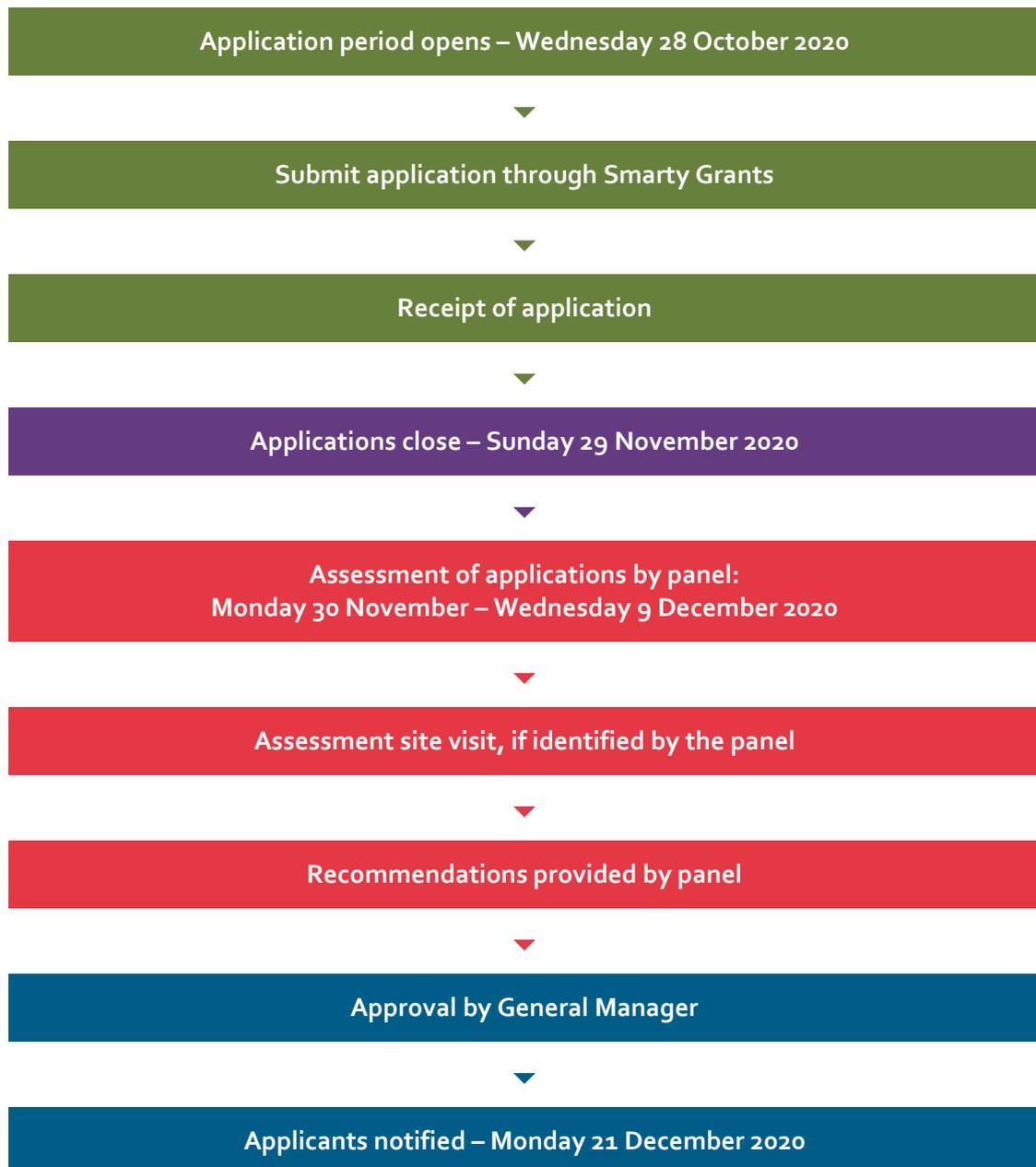
Applications must be submitted online via the [Smarty Grants](#) software.



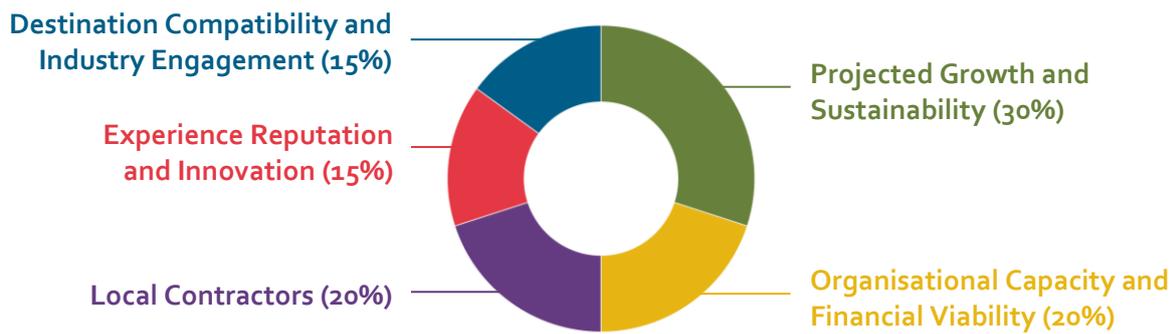
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## APPLICATION PROCESS

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## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA



### PROJECTED GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY (Weighted 30%)

- Are the aims and expected outcomes of the proposed project clearly identified?
- Does the proposed project have potential for a strong increase in visitation to Ipswich and the applicant's business, from non-Ipswich residents?
- Does the proposed project have potential for increasing visitor expenditure within Ipswich and at the applicant's business, from non-Ipswich residents, through higher visitor numbers, higher yield and/or increased length of stay?
- Has the applicant provided specified targets to evaluate the success of the proposed project?
- Has the applicant demonstrated a successful track record in growing the number of visitors to their business from outside of Ipswich?
- Has the applicant demonstrated employment growth within their business over the past 1 to 3 year period?
- Does the application indicate how the project would continue to drive ongoing increased visitation and associated spend?
- Does the applicant demonstrate how the project provides a pathway to direct/future employment opportunities?
- Has the applicant detailed what measures will be taken to minimise impact on the environment and local residents to ensure sustainable future delivery of the proposed project?

### ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY AND FINANCIAL VIABILITY (Weighted 20%)

- Does the application align to council's corporate plans and strategies?
- Is the application well planned and achievable within the allotted timeframe?
- Does the applicant have the necessary approvals for the proposed project in place?
- Has the applicant indicated that there are any barriers to project commencement or completion?
- Does the applicant have the expertise and capacity to successfully manage and evaluate the proposed project?
- Has the applicant developed other partnerships and collaborations to assist with the proposed project?
- Does the proposed budget accurately reflect the scope and scale of the proposed project?
- Have other funding sources been secured and/or identified?
- Have the resources that are required to deliver the project been clearly identified?
- Is the application financially viable and does it demonstrate sound management?

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

<b>LOCAL CONTRACTORS</b> (Weighted 20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the contractor undertaking the proposed works have their registered business address within the Ipswich City Council boundaries? (Attachment 1)</li> <li>▪ Provide evidence of registered business address location of contactor(s).</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE REPUTATION AND INNOVATION</b> (Weighted 15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do patrons of the applicant rate the experiences and services the applicant currently offers, based on scores on online review platforms including Facebook, Google and Trip Advisor?</li> <li>▪ Is the proposed project a new initiative for the applicant?</li> <li>▪ Is the proposed project a destination unique initiative (i.e. not offered by another organisation in Ipswich)?</li> <li>▪ Is the proposed project a regionally unique initiative (i.e. not offered by another organisation in South East Queensland)?</li> <li>▪ Does the proposed project represent a Queensland, Australian or World first?</li> </ul>
<b>DESTINATION COMPATIBILITY AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT</b> (Weighted 15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the proposed project present an opportunity to generate positive publicity for Ipswich as a visitor friendly destination?</li> <li>▪ Does the applicant actively position the experiences they offer as an Ipswich based experience on their public facing marketing material (including but not limited to website, brochures, social media pages, etc.)?</li> <li>▪ Does the applicant actively cross-promote and/or package with other experiences available to visitors in the City of Ipswich?</li> <li>▪ Has the applicant created an 'About Ipswich' page on their public facing website off their homepage navigation?#</li> <li>▪ Has the applicant consistently attended Ipswich Tourism Operators Network (ITON) industry events?</li> <li>▪ Has the applicant included the details of any other Ipswich businesses that will be engaged or supply to the proposed project?</li> <li>▪ Does the proposed project include partnership/package opportunities for other Ipswich tourism businesses?</li> <li>▪ Does the application demonstrate how the applicant already partners with other Ipswich based businesses?</li> </ul>

# 'About Ipswich' page content is available at: <https://www.discoveripswich.com.au/about/>

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## ASSESSMENT

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Each application will be competitively assessed and scored according to the assessment criteria by a panel made up of council officers and/or external representatives with relative experience in tourism and economic development. The assessment panel will provide recommendations to the General Manager (Community, Cultural and Economic Development) for final approval.

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## SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

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Successful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their submission within 10 working days of funding approval and will receive funding from Council subject to the following terms and conditions:

- The applicant will be required to agree to all funding conditions and agreed performance outcomes/measures contained in the IEEP funding agreement, which will be provided when the applicant is advised of their successful application. This must be signed before the relevant project takes place
- The funded project must be completed and an acquittal report submitted on or prior to 30 April 2021
- The applicant is required to provide an acquittal report on completion of the project, and before the funding can be paid, including completion of a Development Conditions Self-Audit if applicable
- Qualitative and quantitative measures that will be used to measure the success of the project
- If the project costs are lower than expected, the final funding amount may be reduced to not exceed 50% of total eligible costs
- Council may make funding conditional on other specific conditions being met

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## UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

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Unsuccessful applicants will be formally advised of the outcome by email. If your application is unsuccessful, the decision does not necessarily reflect the worthiness or community benefit of your proposal. Please remember this is a competitively assessed program, with a limited annual budget allocation.

You may request feedback on your application to assist you with any future programs.

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## ACQUITTAL PROCESS AND REPORTING

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To ensure appropriate accountability by recipients with regard to use of Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program funding, and before payment of the funding will be made to the applicant, all successful applicants are required to submit an acquittal report, outlining the use of funds (including proof of expenditure) and the achieved outcomes of the project.

Specific evaluation requirements will be outlined in each individual funding agreement and may include but not be limited to:

- Monthly updates outlining progress on project delivery and expenditure
- A summary of all invoices for costs associated with the project, including formal advice of funds not spent as per the original application
- An assessment of the benefits realised against the benefits anticipated or estimated in the application form
- Details of the visitation numbers and visitor spend associated with the funded project, including demographic information of visitors
- Completion of a Development Conditions Self-Audit (if applicable)
- Where possible, further information obtained through surveys and online reviews indicating visitor sentiment
- An overview of the delivery of the project including photographs and video
- Copies of marketing collateral, promotional materials and media coverage.

Organisations that have not satisfactorily delivered the project outlined in the application within the appropriate timeframe and funding conditions agreed by Council will be deemed ineligible to receive the Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program funding.

Successful applicants to the Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program must complete the funded project and submit a satisfactory acquittal report on or prior to 30 April 2021 in order to remain eligible and receive the approved funding. No extensions for the completion of project or submission of acquittal report will be granted.

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## PAYMENT OF FUNDS

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Once the acquittal report has been submitted, and in order to receive funds, successful applicants will be required to provide a tax invoice to council for the amount of funding allocated exclusive of GST. Tax invoice to be submitted via email to [tourism@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:tourism@ipswich.qld.gov.au).

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## RECORDING OF FUNDS PROVIDED AND ACQUITTED

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A register of all funds will be kept within the [Smarty Grants](#) software.

Give permission for council to publish the name of the applicant and the funding amount received in accordance with council's requirements under the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

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## MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

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Information about the Ipswich Exceptional Experiences Program is available at [www.discoveripswich.com.au/IEEP](http://www.discoveripswich.com.au/IEEP).

If you require additional assistance please contact the Destination Development Team via email to [tourism@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:tourism@ipswich.qld.gov.au) or by phoning (07) 3810 7448.

# ATTACHMENT 1: IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL BOUNDARIES

