

Digital Refresh Grant Program Guidelines and Terms & Conditions

The following program Guidelines and Terms and Conditions contain essential information on the purpose of the grant including eligibility, how to apply and your obligations as an applicant. You should read this document before submitting an application.

What is the Digital Refresh Grant Program?

The Digital Refresh Grant Program offers financial support to tourism businesses on the North Coast to either refresh an existing website or build a new one. The program supports businesses to:

- Improve digital capabilities
- Improve online visibility and reach more potential customers
- Deliver an easy and seamless online booking process
- Access the latest digital technologies to increase productivity and competitiveness

How much funding can I apply for?

The program is funded through Destination North Coast and the Australian Government as part of the Recovery for Regional Tourism Grant.

The applicant can apply for one of the following grant funding amounts based on the following:

OPTION 1: \$2,500 (exc GST) - the total project cost must be between \$2,500 and \$4,999 (exc GST)

OPTION 2: \$5,000 (exc GST) - the total project cost must be \$5,000 (exc GST) or over.

A financial co-contribution from applicants is not mandatory, however it is strongly encouraged and highly regarded in the assessment of applications.

Grant funding is highly competitive. The assessment panel will be reviewing many applications, so it is crucial that your application is clear and concise, meets eligibility criteria and addresses all of the stated criteria requirements. Refer to 'How will applications be assessed' for more information.

There is only one round of program funding available. Projects must be completed by Friday 4 March 2022. Applicants must not begin the project or pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation that the project grant funding has been approved.

Who can apply and what are the eligibility criteria?

All applicants need to meet eligibility criteria to be considered. To be eligible for this program, the business must:

- Be a tourism business in tourism sectors of Accommodation, Attractions, Tour Operators, Conference and Events, Transport Operators and Food and Beverage Businesses. If your business does not fit into one of these categories but you are part of the North Coast visitor economy, please call us to discuss your individual circumstances and possible eligibility to apply.
- Have an existing operating business with a physical and main business located on the North Coast and located within one of the Local Government Areas (LGA's) including: Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Kyogle, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Nambucca Valley, Mid Coast, Kempsey, Port Macquarie-Hastings or Lord Howe Island
- Have an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- Not be insolvent or have owners/directors that are undischarged bankrupt

All applications must be for an approved digital technology or service that falls under one or more of the six priority areas. Only one application will be accepted from an individual ABN or a financial beneficiary of a business for consideration

What can the funding be used for?

The digital technology or service must fall under one or more of the six priority areas:

1. **Website build or upgrade**
2. **Design development:** e.g. website design, web pages, mobile apps, social media integration
3. **Receiving payments or selling online**
4. **Specialised digital technology and/or business specific software**
5. **Digital business support***: e.g. Digital planning, digital marketing strategy development and/or digital training and coaching
6. **Content development*** e.g. copywriting support, photography and video creation for website use.

** A maximum of 50% of the total grant funds can be used for Digital Business Support and/or Content Development. This totals to \$1,250 exc GST (for the \$2500 grant) or \$2,500 exc GST (for the \$5,000 grant) the remaining grant funds must be used in one of the other priority areas.*

Your application must clearly demonstrate how the proposed project/s product or service will significantly enhance digital capabilities and impact on the growth of your business (eg. assist the business to be more competitive).

When must the project be completed?

All website projects approved for grant funding must be completed by **Friday 4th March 2022**. DNC may withdraw the offer and/or final payment if the project is not completed within this timeframe.

You must advise DNC of any variations to the project dates. If these timeframes are not met, the offer of funding may be withdrawn.

Applicants must not begin the project or pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation that the funding for the project has been approved.

What won't be funded?

There are a range of activities that will not be funded under this program:

- Maintenance of existing digital technologies
- Paid advertising campaigns e.g. Google AdWords, Facebook advertising or similar expenses. The grant can cover the development of an online marketing plan but not the actual advertising cost
- Website hosting
- Computer hardware e.g. includes the physical parts of a computer including the case, central processing unit (CPU), monitor, mouse, keyboard, computer data storage, graphics card, sound card, speakers and motherboard,
- Tablets, iPads and mobile phones
- Services delivered in-kind (funding will only cover services paid for via a financial transaction)
- Fees for services and/or goods provided by related parties (such as companies with common shareholdings or directorship with the applicant, and employees or immediate family of the applicant)
- Franchise fees or related costs
- Direct-selling businesses (where sales of another business' goods or services are made in the customer's home, work or other meeting place through methods such as party plan and network marketing)
- Purchase of non-project related assets such as stock
- Salaries
- Travel costs for staff, suppliers or any other party
- General business operating costs (including bookkeeping/accounting and tax returns)
- Goods or services purchased or any payments made prior to the grant funding approval date

How do I apply?

To apply, complete the online [Application Form](#) via the DNC website. This will take approximately 15 minutes.

Applicants must read these program Guidelines and Terms & Conditions before submitting an application. We also highly recommend reading all the [Frequently Asked Questions](#). All application questions must be answered and a maximum of two supplier quotes are to be submitted at the time of application.

An applicant must only submit the applicant's own original answers. Applications that are found to have been derived from a third party will be considered invalid. An Applicant who does not properly comply with the application process, will be ineligible to receive the grant.

When do I apply?

Applications Close at 5pm on **Friday 1st October 2021**.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their application prior to the closing date and time to ensure they encounter no technical difficulties. No extension to the submission closing date will be provided. DNC is not responsible for delays to the submission of applicants caused by technology, connection or other issues outside of its control.

How will applications be assessed?

DNC will have an assessment panel that considers eligible applications and assesses applications against weighted criteria.

Grant funding is highly competitive. The assessment panel will be reviewing many applications, so it is crucial that your application is clear and concise, meets eligibility criteria and addresses all of the stated criteria requirements

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, DNC will consider the following five criteria to evaluate and make a determination regarding funding being provided to a project:

- 1. The impact the digital technology or service will have on the business:**
The applicant must clearly address how the grant funding for the project would have a positive impact on the business. This can be measured by estimating revenue growth, increase in gross profit as well as time savings, improved user-experience, increased website traffic, positive consumer feedback, improved digital capabilities, increased occupancy/visitation etc.
- 2. The extent to which the digital technology or service will enhance the digital capabilities of the business to make the business more competitive and benefit the North Coast visitor economy.**
The applicant must clearly address how the grant funded activities for the project would improve digital capabilities of the business to make the business more competitive and benefit the visitor economy within the North Coast. For example, creating a book now button for the website would increase sales by x%, bringing more visitors into the region and as a flow on effect has a positive impact on local food and beverage businesses.
- 3. Value for money**
The applicant must clearly address how the grant funding for the project will be spent and how it represents value for money.
- 4. Valid quote for service**
The applicant must submit a copy of a valid quote or proposal from supplier/consultant/s. Invalid or incorrect invoices will not be accepted.
- 5. Financial Contribution**
Applicants do not have to co-contribute, however it is strongly encouraged and highly regarded in the assessment of applications.

It is essential that applicants supply information to support how the project addresses each of the criteria.

DNC may validate and check the authenticity of applications and the applicant's details at any time. Applicants who are awarded the grant must refund the grant in full to DNC if the grant is subsequently found to be based on an invalid application.

When will I be notified about the outcomes of my application?

Applicants will be notified via email from **Monday 11 October 2021**.

Applicants must not begin the project or pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation that the grant funding has been approved.

When will funding be available? And how will I receive payment?

If successful, the applicant will be required to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement with DNC. Funding will be paid as follows:

Payment 1:

50% of the total grant funding upon acceptance of the Funding Agreement contract and a valid tax invoice issued to Destination North Coast.

Payment 2:

50% upon completion of the project and the return of a completed Post Project Report approved by Destination North Coast, a current [Get Connected \(ATDW\) listing](#) and a valid tax invoice issued to Destination North Coast.

Payments will be made directly to the applicant's business bank account. DNC endeavors to pay grant funding within 30 days once the above conditions have been issued and approved.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of payment for all products and services purchased as part of this grant.

Applicants must not begin the project or pay for the service/s, in part or full, without confirmation that the project has been approved for funding. The project must be completed by **Friday 4 March 2022**.

At the conclusion of the project the applicant will need to provide a Post Project Report including financial reconciliation. Should the project cost less than the grant provided, a refund to Destination North Coast, for the shortfall in expenditure, will be required.

Where do I go for more information?

For more information read the program [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

If you have further questions contact: Sarah Elphinstone, Project Manager at Destination North Coast:

e: sarah.elphinstone@dncnsw.com p: 0410 448 570

Terms and Conditions

- 1) Applications for the Digital Refresh Grant Program can be submitted for funding of \$2,500 (excluding GST) or \$5,000 (excluding GST) and must meet eligibility and program priorities areas outlined under **'What can the funding be used for'**.
- 2) One (1) grant of \$2,500 or \$5,000 (excluding GST) is available per applicant/per business.
- 3) A maximum of 50% of the total grant funds can be used for Digital business support and/or Content development. The remaining grant funds must be utilised in one of the other priority areas.
- 4) The earliest project start date is the date a Funding Agreement is signed by Destination North Coast and the applicant. **No activities for the project being funded can commence or money be spent prior to the Funding Agreement being signed.**
- 5) All projects approved for grant funding must be completed by **Friday 4th March 2022**. DNC may withdraw the offer if the project is not completed within this timeframe.
- 6) No funds are available until after a Funding Agreement is signed by Destination North Coast and the successful applicant. The Funding Agreement must be signed by the owner or manager of the business and returned to DNC within 14 working business days of issue.
- 7) Payments will be made directly to the applicant's business bank account. Destination North Coast endeavors to pay grant funding within 4 weeks from the acceptance date. 50% of the total grant funding will be paid to the successful applicant upon acceptance of the Funding Agreement contract and a valid tax invoice issued to Destination North Coast. 50% (final payment) to be paid upon completion of the project and the return of a completed Post Project Report approved by Destination North Coast, a current [Get Connected \(ATDW\) listing](#) and a valid tax invoice issued to Destination North Coast.
- 8) An applicant must be able to cover the costs for ineligible expenses and project costs over and above the grant monies. This may be the applicant's own money, partner investment and/or non-NSW State Government funding. Where any Federal Government funding is being used, the applicant will need to provide details of the Funding Agreement to ensure there is no double up, i.e. utilising separate Government Funding Agreements for delivering the same outcome.
- 9) DNC Grant funds must be expended on Project delivery costs. Unsatisfactory performance against the Partner Obligations and/or failure to achieve some or all of the Partner Obligations or the obligations outlined as part of the funding Investment under this agreement may give rise to part or all funding Investment being refunded to DNC and/or Termination by DNC. Should the Project cost less than the grant provided, a refund to Destination North Coast for the shortfall in expenditure, will be required.
- 10) At the conclusion of the project the applicant will need to provide a Post Project Report including a financial reconciliation.

11) An applicant must only submit the applicant's own original answers. DNC reserves the right, at any time, to validate and check the authenticity of applications and the applicant's details. Applications that are found to have been derived from a third party will be considered invalid and, if awarded the grant, the grant value must be returned to DNC.

12) DNC will carry out random audits on a sample of applications to ensure the information provided is true and correct. Where it is found that false or misleading information has been provided, penalties may apply, including refunding of some or all the grant funding.

13) An Applicant who, in the opinion of DNC, engages in any unlawful or improper conduct which jeopardises or is likely to jeopardise the fair or proper conduct of the Program, or who does not properly comply with the application process, will be ineligible to receive the grant or enter further Programs run by DNC.

14) Applications received, including material and documents accompanying the applications, shall not be returned to the applicant.

15) DNC may, by direct notification to the applicant or via its website (www.dncnsw.com), change the Program Guidelines (including these terms and conditions), or cancel or vary the application process at any time.

16) No person shall be entitled to claim compensation or loss from DNC for any matter arising out of the application process, including but not limited to failure by DNC to comply with the Program guidelines or these terms and conditions.

17) The applicant may withdraw the application prior to a funding agreement being entered into by notifying DNC in writing.

18) By submitting an application, the applicant:

a) acknowledges that submitting an application does not guarantee that the applicant will be eligible to receive a grant. Selection of the applicant for a grant shall be at DNC's sole and absolute discretion.

b) acknowledges that in the event that the application is approved, the applicant has read, and agrees to be bound by the funding agreement throughout the term of the funding agreement.

c) authorises the use and/or publication of the applicant's name and details of the project, in relation to any promotional or advertising purposes in conjunction with the Destination North Coast Website Refresh Program.

h) warrants that the applicant is not bankrupt or insolvent.

19) All decisions and recommendations of DNC are binding and final and there is no process of appeal.