

Get Back in the Game Grant Round

Guidelines

Application opening date:	Monday 21 February 2022
Application closing date:	Monday 21 March 2022 at 10:00am AEST ('Closing Date')
Funder:	NSW Department of Education (the Department)
Application method:	Electronic lodgement of applications at https://trainingservicesnsw.smartygrants.com.au/GBIG
Administering entity:	Training Services NSW (TSNSW)
Enquiries:	Please direct all enquiries to: TSNSW.RVP@det.nsw.edu.au by Friday 11 March 2022 at 4:00pm AEST
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

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Background

Regional VET Pathways (RVP) (2015 to 2022)

The Regional VET Pathways (**RVP**) program supports young people, aged 15 to 19 who are disengaged from employment, education and training, to re-engage in education or training or to move into employment using tailored transition plans.

The RVP initiative was first conceived in late 2014 when the closure of the Commonwealth Youth Connections program was imminent and youth unemployment rates were at historically high levels. In February 2015, the NSW government announced the RVP initiative as part of 'Reskilling NSW'. The government committed \$8 million over four years to provide viable pathways into education, training and/or work for disengaged young people in a selection of regional areas with high levels of youth unemployment and limited support services.

The program was tendered to non-government organisations, with successful tenderers contracted to case-manage transitions of unemployed young people into education, training and employment and to broker support services such as housing and health which may be essential to successful transitions.

Since 2015, the RVP program has been extended and expanded multiple times. The current RVP contracts with community-based third-party providers, spanning six SA4' regions across NSW, are due to end mid-2022. Those providers on RVP contracts will have the opportunity to submit applications under this 'Get Back in the Game Grant Round' process.

Educational Pathways Program (EPP) RVP (2020 to 2022)

Due to the success of the RVP program in working with disengaged young people who were not attending school, in 2020 the RVP program was included as one of 10 pilot programs across nine schools in the North Coast. The school-based EPP RVP supported young people still enrolled at school but who were disengaged and supported them to look for pathways to engage back in to school, or training or employment.

The EPP RVP program holds many similarities to the original RVP program, and both RVP and EPP RVP are currently being run in the North Coast by the same provider. The current EPP RVP contract is due to end mid-2022.

The success of the pilot has led to an expansion of EPP RVP in 2022 to 144 schools covering approximately eleven SA4 regions (with a small number of schools sitting outside those boundaries).

Get Back in the Game – a new program

The RVP and EPP RVP programs are being combined under the banner of **Get Back in the Game (GBIG)** to commence in 2022. The program will be managed locally by one lead provider per region – although consortium applications are welcomed.

GBIG will comprise 2 distinct components. The Get in the Game (formerly RVP) and Back in the Game (formerly EPP RVP) aspects of the program will be funded at the same rate per outcome, however will have different case load targets.

The **GBIG** program is managed by Training Services NSW (**TSNSW**), part of the NSW Department of Education (**Department**). TSNSW is responsible for government-funded vocational education and training (commonly referred to as ‘VET’) in NSW.

Objective

The GBIG Grant Round is seeking applications from eligible organisations (see eligibility criteria below) to deliver services to support young people, aged 15 to 19, disengaged from education and training and struggling to make effective transitions into sustainable employment, to re-engage in education and training and support their transitions to employment.

GBIG service providers will deliver industry grounded career and transition advice, mentoring and brokerage of transitions of disengaged young people into education, training and/or employment.

Anticipated Outcomes

The performance of a service provider (grant holder) in this outcomes-based grant program will be based on the achievement of the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Enrolment and commencement of a Career and Transition Plan

Outcome 2: Engagement in education, employment or training for 5 days

Outcome 3: Engagement in education, employment or training for 12 weeks

Outcome 4: Engagement in education, employment or training for 26 weeks

Service providers will also be funded to facilitate specific activities to progress participants towards work readiness.

An 'On Their Path' bonus payment for service providers is attached to Outcome 4 if a participant has been engaged in a single, stable continuous engagement for 8 weeks prior to reaching their 26-week outcome.

To assist in achieving these outcomes, a discretionary fund is available for ad-hoc spending to support participants with specific needs to assist in work readiness (e.g. job interview or work outfits, payment for white card training) or transitioning to education or training (e.g. learning materials).

Targets are assigned for each outcome, and will differ per region. See Appendix 1 for regional targets.

All funding for GBIG is subject to annual caps. For details about the outcomes, activities and the funding model, see Appendix 1 (Regional targets and funding) and Appendix 2 (Outcomes-based funding model).

See Appendix 5 for details about the reporting requirements of the grant. Reported data is used for determination of outcomes and activities completed. It is an important requirement that accurate and true information is reported to the Department at all times – a failure to do so may be a breach under the Funding Deed.

Project Scope

Get in the Game (GIG) – Eligibility of young persons

For a young person to be eligible to participate in the GIG program, they must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 15-19 years old;
- resident in the Service Area (see Appendix 3 for service area regions);
- no longer be at school*, which includes
 - not enrolled in any school; or
 - with a 99-day attendance exemption in place at the time of enrolment; or
 - who have had NO attendance at school in the 3 months prior to enrolment;
- not enrolled in any post-school education or training
- not working more than 8 hours per week; and

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- not a current, active participant in any Commonwealth, NSW or any other program or service supporting youth transitions to work or study.

* A student under 17 who has not completed Year 10 of secondary schooling must remain enrolled at school or apply to transfer to TAFE or gain a full-time apprenticeship or traineeship. The Department has legal processes to ensure that young people of 'Compulsory School Age' are enrolled and attending school unless they meet specific exemption requirements. Enrolment in the GBIG program will not prevent these processes from occurring. See Appendix 6 for legislation and policy relating to school attendance.

Back in the Game (BIG) – Eligibility of young persons

For a young person to be eligible to participate in the BIG program, they must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 15-19 years old;
- a student enrolled in, and referred by, one of the participating 144 schools (see Appendix 3); and
- not a current, active participant in any Commonwealth, NSW or any other program or service supporting youth transitions to work or study.

Get Back in the Game (GBIG) – Service provider requirements

For the GBIG program, service providers will be required to provide individual client case management encompassing:

- Careers advice and provision of transition planning relevant to each participant's interests, grounded in the context of real-life employment and industry opportunities. A key requirement is the development of an individualised career transition plan for each participant, which builds on relevant exploration of career and training options, work experience, and work readiness preparation delivered or brokered by the GBIG service provider;
- Building confidence, career aspirations and understandings of real workplace and employer needs and expectations;
- Building work readiness and skills for employment opportunities and/or entry or re-entry to training or the education system;

- Exploring pathways linked to targeted individual participants career interests – including re-engagement in school, training programs available at TAFE NSW or other RTOs, and work experience and work-linked training opportunities including apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Establishing links to local or regional employers and brokering employment opportunities, including work experience, part-time or full-time, including apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Facilitate the access to wrap-around community and other services as may be appropriate to support the transitions of the participants of the GBIG program.

To achieve the specified outcomes for the GBIG program, successful grant applicants will be expected to;

- (i) liaise closely with school principals, TAFE NSW, Department of Communities and Justice, Family and Community Services, and other training providers and community organisations as appropriate;
- (ii) avoid duplication of services with organisations who are recipients of NSW or Australian Government funding supporting post school youth transitions, while encouraging use of complimentary services;
- (iii) foster genuine involvement of industry, education, training and local community partners;
- (iv) engage competent staff to deliver the contracted services who have experience working in industry and in the delivery of youth support services; career and transition advice; and identifying and brokering training and employment opportunities. All staff are required to have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC);
- (v) support participants by providing individual case management involving:
 - a. identification of barriers to engagement in education, training or employment
 - b. identification of career interests and development of a written transition plan for each student;
 - c. delivering or brokering appropriate services to support student transitions to vocational training or employment. This may involve re-engagement in schooling, alternative education provision, employability skill development and mentoring;
 - d. negotiating access to relevant further education and training with a preference for 'Smart and Skilled' funded opportunities;
 - e. brokering work placements, part-time or full-time work opportunities, including apprenticeships and traineeships;
 - f. assisting participants with health, housing or other community services as required;
 - g. mentoring the participant during their transition to training or employment
- (vi) where work experience, placements or employment are arranged:

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- a. monitoring progress of the participant and employers as appropriate to support participants to successfully transition;
 - b. ensure there is a safe and supportive workplace environment for participant, free from harassment and discrimination;
 - c. ensure there is supervision by competent and experienced persons from the host employer, briefed for the task;
 - d. ensure there is a person from the host employer who is to act as point of contact or mentor for students;
 - e. ensure accurate records of career advice, mentoring and employment placements for the participants are maintained; and
 - f. ensure appropriate arrangements are in place in relation to such issues as insurance, transport, and safety in the workplace.
- (vii) Where participants engage in education or training;
- a. monitoring attendance and progress of the participant with their education and/or training provider as appropriate to support participants to successfully transition.

Eligibility Criteria for Grant Applicants

To be eligible to apply for this Grant, an organisation must:

- be currently operating in NSW;
- be a legal entity with the capacity to contract;
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- be registered for the purposes of GST;
- have an account with an Australian financial institution;
- be covered by public liability insurance;
- be financially viable; and
- be one of the following entity types:
 - a company incorporated in Australia
 - a company incorporated by guarantee
 - an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
 - an incorporated association
 - a partnership
 - a registered charity or not-for-profit organisation
 - an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Corporation registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006.

Consortium applications with a lead organisation are welcomed to apply. The lead organisation must satisfy the above list of eligibility criteria, and will be required to confirm that any consortium partners also meet these eligibility criteria.

Consortium Applications

The Department recognises that some organisations may wish to form a consortium to deliver GBIG services. In these circumstances, there must be a clearly appointed 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation can apply and enter into a Funding Deed with the Department. The lead organisation will be the sole point of contact for the Department. The application must identify and provide details of all members of the proposed consortium and include a letter of support from each of the participating consortium member, including the following details:

- full details of the consortium member(s);
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise that the consortium member(s) will bring to the group;
- an overview of how the consortium member(s) will work with the lead organisation and any other; consortium member(s) in the group to deliver GBIG services; and
- the roles/responsibilities of the consortium member(s) and the resources they will contribute (if any).

The Department retains the right to seek further information on consortium members as part of the application assessment process.

Where consortium applicants are successful, they must have a formal arrangement in place with all consortium parties prior to execution of the Funding Deed by the lead organisation.

Ineligible Applicants

- Federal or State Government entities

Grant Period

Depending on the region, and the needs of the Department, the contracted commencement of the GBIG program will occur between 26 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (determined at the discretion of the Department). The GIG elements of the program will have an initial end date of 30 June 2024, whereas the BIG elements of the program will have an initial end date of 31 December 2023.

At the discretion of the Department, a Funding Deed may be extended by the Department.

For funding for the delivery of the BIG element of the program beyond 31 December 2023, this is still to be formally approved.

Grant Regions

The grant amounts available are determined based on the region and targets. Please see Appendix 1,2, and 3 for a detailed breakdown of the regions, case load targets, outcomes, and funding structures.

The GBIG program regions and grant periods are:

GIG from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024

- Richmond-Tweed
- Mid North Coast
- Central West
- New England North West
- Capital
- Coffs Harbour / Grafton

GIG from 26 April 2022 to 30 June 2024

- Central Coast and Newcastle
- Western / South Western Sydney
- South Coast (encompassing Illawarra and Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven - to be included with the Capital region from 1 July 2022)

BIG from 1 July 2022 – 31 December 2023 (with possible extension)

- Richmond-Tweed
- Grafton / Coffs Harbour

BIG from 26 April 2022 – 31 December 2023 (with possible extension)

- New England North West
- Capital and South Coast
- Central Coast and Newcastle
- Western / South Western Sydney

Grant Funding Deed Execution

On signing the Funding Deed, service providers may invoice the Department as follows:

- \$30,000 as an advance payment, which will be acquitted against outcomes achieved. This payment is not an additional payment but an advance from the

overall funding allocation. If the entire amount of the advance payment is not acquitted, the Department reserves the right to withhold further payments until appropriate outcomes have been achieved.

Outcomes-based payments in alignment with the funding model (Appendix 2) and Funding Deed (Appendix 7) will be made on a quarterly basis.

Assessment Criteria including *Mandatory criteria*

Applicants must address the assessment criteria below and provide all required information in your application response (see Appendix 4, noting that completion of the application must be done through online grants management program SmartyGrants).

Applicants that do not address the following mandatory criteria may be excluded from the application process at the Department's discretion. Each applicant, as part of an application response, must do the following:

- Must provide responses to all mandatory questions in the Application Form
- Must confirm that it meets all eligibility criteria
- Must appropriately and adequately address any conflict of interest issues (if relevant) (see Application Form)
- Must confirm that the required insurance is in place, or willingness to get the required insurance (see Application Form)
- Must attach all additional documents required as specified in the Application Form (e.g. Budget)
- Must appropriately and adequately explain any current, pending or recent legal proceedings and addressed risk mitigation as relevant (see Application Form)

The applicant must address the following assessment criteria in the response to the Application Form:

Criteria
<p>Experience</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to successfully deliver youth-focussed services in a locally-based outcomes-driven program</p>
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Demonstrated understanding of and ability to successfully collaborate and engage with local education, training and business partners and other key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Organisation</p> <p>Organisation structure, local facilities and service delivery capacity to deliver required local, youth-focussed services</p>
<p>Approach</p> <p>Effectiveness of the proposed approach in achieving the required locally-based, youth-focused outcomes.</p>
<p>Local Issues</p> <p>Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of local context and issues likely to impact effective service delivery</p>

Department Policy and Procedures

A successful applicant must comply with all notified Department policies and procedures. This will include those set out at Appendix 6 and also in the section below titled 'Legislative Requirements'. The Funding Deed will require that applicants comply with these requirements at all times during the funding period.

Assessment Dates

Activity	Timeframe
Grant applications open	Monday 21 February 2022
Grant applications close ('Closing Date')	Monday 21 March 2022
Successful applicants notified	Target date of 8 April 2022
Notification of outcome to all applicants	Target date of 11 April 2022
Signed contracts returned to Department by successful applicants	Target date of 15 April 2022
Public announcement of grant recipients	Target date of 19 April 2022
Start date for relevant contracts	Target date of 26 April 2022

How to Apply

1. Visit <https://trainingservicesnsw.smartygrants.com.au/GBIG> and select the **Get Back in the Game** Grant Round. Registration for SmartyGrants is free of charge.
2. Log in, or register if the applicant does not already have a current SmartyGrants account.
3. Complete the application, including attaching all required supporting documentation.
4. Submit the application by **10.00am AEST, Monday 21 March 2022** ('Closing Date').

Please allow sufficient time to complete the application and upload all necessary documents. The Department will not accept hard copy, incomplete or late applications. The application must include sufficient information and associated supporting documentation to enable the Grant Evaluation Team to adequately assess the application.

All applications must be submitted online via <https://trainingservicesnsw.smartygrants.com.au/GBIG>. All enquiries regarding the grants or the application process **must be in writing** and can be sent to tsnsw-rvp@det.nsw.edu.au.

How Applications Are Assessed

Applications will be assessed by a Grant Evaluation Team against the criteria listed above. The team consists of Departmental staff and may include representatives from other Government agencies.

The Grant Evaluation Team may (but does not have to) seek additional information about the applicant and/or application to assist in the assessment process.

The Grant Evaluation Team will submit final recommendations for endorsement by an authorised delegate within the Department.

Decisions related to successful or unsuccessful applications remain at the Department's discretion.

Notification of Application Outcomes

The Department will advise all applicants of the outcome of their applications in writing (target notifications will be by April 2022).

Successful Grant Applications

Successful applicants will be notified by mid-April 2022 and will be provided with correspondence and a Funding Deed for signing. The Department's required draft template of the Funding Deed is at Appendix 7.

Applicants will be asked in the Application Form to specify any areas of contention or departure where they would be seeking amendment to the Funding Deed should they be successful in their application.

The funding deed must be signed by the successful applicant and the Department prior to any grant payment. The Department is not responsible for expenditure incurred prior to the execution of the Funding Deed.

An offer for funding may lapse if parties cannot agree a Funding Deed within a reasonable time (at the Department's discretion).

Unsuccessful Grant Applications

Unsuccessful applicants may seek feedback relating to their application. The Department will provide feedback to applicants within a reasonable timeframe.

Data Collection

The Department will provide spreadsheet templates and/or bespoke Salesforce software for reporting within the GBIG program. You will be required to provide all mandatory data relating to the enrolment, engagements and activities for participants of the program. This will require regular updating and review for formal reporting purposes on a quarterly basis.

This data enables the Department to monitor service delivery, report on achievements of the program, and determine quarterly funding to be paid to service providers based on achieved outcomes.

Failure to provide ALL required data accurately at the quarterly deadlines may result in missed target attainments and payments. Any errors in reported data that are found after the quarterly deadline are to be reported to the Department as soon as possible. It is at the discretion of the Department how the errors are managed and if amendments to payments/target attainments are made.

Providers are responsible to ensure that:

1. Participants satisfy the eligibility criteria, and

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2. Data requirements for the program are collected and accurately reported from participants

For more information about reporting and evidence requirements, see Appendix 5.

Evaluation of Performance

The Department will evaluate the success of the program to understand what worked well and what lessons can be learnt for future programs. Service providers will have a role in supporting the evaluation of the program. This will include supporting the process of capturing participant feedback through participant interviews, participant surveys and program progress reports.

Access to an electronic participant survey will be provided by the Department.

Providers are required to contribute data and time for consultations to support other program evaluation activities where requested.

Complaints Procedures

The service provider must agree to have in place a user-friendly process to respond to complaints about the **GBIG** program. Participants are to be advised of their right to complain. The complaints process is to be freely accessible and actioned promptly, with participants being provided with an expected timeframe for a response by the service provider. Participants are to be advised that if they are unsatisfied with the response of the service provider they may also complain to the Department; in this instance, the Department Contract Manager details are to be provided to participants. The Department is to be provided with access to the service providers complaints records and any other material relevant to a complaint.

Legislative Requirements

In delivering the program, organisations are required to comply with all relevant laws; and Department's Policies as specified at www.education.nsw.gov.au.

Service providers must comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislation and regulations, including, but not limited to:

- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*

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- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)
 - *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth) in regards to undertaking the Activity
 - *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (NSW)
 - *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)
 - *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth), and
 - Any applicable Work Health and Safety and Equal Employment Opportunity laws.

Privacy

Information collected from participants is personal¹ and/or health information² as defined by *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW), the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), collectively referred to as privacy legislation.

When collecting participant information privacy legislation requires service providers:

- Only collect information that is reasonably necessary to perform a function or activity of the service provider.
- Collect information directly from participants unless they are under 16 years of age or do not have capacity to understand the purpose for collection in which case it can be collected from a parent/carer.
- Notify participants of the following:
 - o The fact the information is being collected,
 - o The purpose for the collection,
 - o The intended recipients of the information,
 - o Whether the supply of the information is required by law or voluntary and any consequences for the individual if the information is not provided,
 - o The existence of any right of access to and correction of the information,
 - o The name and address of the agency that is the collecting the information and the agency that is to hold the information.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the information is relevant to the purpose for which it is collected, is not excessive, is accurate, up to date and complete and does not unreasonably intrude on the personal affairs of the individual.

Privacy legislation requires participants to give consent for the collection of their health information.

A collection notice and consent form must accompany all collections.

The consent form must identify the participant and be signed and dated by the participant or their parent/carer. A copy of the consent must be kept on the participant's file.

¹ Personal information is information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.

² Health information is personal information or opinion about an individual's mental or physical health or the provision of a health service.

To maintain currency, participant consent should be renewed on a regular basis. When there is to be a change in the use or disclosure of participant information participants must be notified and consent obtained.

Additional Terms and Conditions

1 Disclaimer

- 1.1 The information set out in the GBIG Grant Guidelines (Guidelines) is, unless expressly stated otherwise, provided on a 'best endeavours' basis.
- 1.2 Unless expressly stated otherwise in the Guidelines, Training Services NSW (TSNSW) gives no warranty nor makes any representation as to the currency, reliability or completeness of the information contained in the Guidelines.

2 Application Costs

- 2.1 All costs incurred by any organisation responding to or participating in the Grant Opportunity will be borne by that organisation.

3 Corrupt or unethical conduct

- 3.1 If an Applicant or any of its officers, employees, agents or subcontractors is found to have:
 - a) offered any inducement or reward to any employee, agent or subcontractor of TSNSW or the NSW Government in connection with the Grant Opportunity or the submitted Application;
 - b) engaged in corrupt conduct within the meaning of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988;
 - c) a record or alleged record of unethical behaviour; or
 - d) engaged in collusive or anti-competitive conduct with respect to the Grant Opportunity,
 - e) then TSNSW may in its discretion reject the Application, either forthwith or, at TSNSW's option, after obtaining further information from the Applicant about its conduct.
- 3.2 Applicants are required to notify TSNSW in its Application of any information concerning findings of dishonest, unfair, unconscionable corrupt or illegal conduct against the Applicant, its directors or management. Lodgement of an Application without such information is taken to mean that no such relevant information exists.

4 Late Applications

- 4.1 Late Applications will not be considered except where TSNSW, at its discretion, is satisfied that the integrity and competitiveness of the tendering process has not been compromised.

5 Evaluation of Applications

- 5.1 A failure by the Applicant to obtain a score deemed acceptable by TSNSW for any one or more of the assessment criterion may result in exclusion of the Applicant without further consideration.

6 Clarification of Applications

- 6.1 TSNSW may seek clarification in writing of certain matters to obtain a better understanding of aspects of an Application. Generally, Applicants will be expected to respond to clarification requests in writing within a reasonable timeframe dependent on the nature of the clarification request and the information required.
- 6.2 If in TSNSW's opinion the information provided in response to a clarification request has the effect of substantially altering the Application and providing an unfair advantage to the Applicant, then TSNSW may in its discretion, either:
- a) disregard the information and either issue a revised clarification request or notify the Applicant that its offer as originally submitted will be assessed; or
 - b) provide the same opportunity to all Applicants.

7 Exchange of Information between Government Agencies

- 7.1 By Tendering for this Contract, the Applicant authorises TSNSW to make available to other NSW Government departments or agencies information including, but not limited to, any information provided by the Applicant to TSNSW and information relating to the Applicant's performance or financial position.
- 7.2 The Applicant acknowledges that any information about the Applicant, from any source, including but not limited to substantiated reports of unsatisfactory performance may be taken into account by TSNSW and other NSW Government departments and agencies in considering whether to offer the Applicant opportunities for NSW Government work including but not limited to assessment of suitability for registration, pre-qualification, selective tender lists, grants, or the award of contract.

Appendices

1. Regional targets and funding
2. Outcomes-based funding model
3. Regions and schools
4. Grant application form
5. Reporting requirements
6. Key legislation and policy relating to school attendance
7. Draft template of Funding Deed (will be available the week of 21 Feb 2022)