

Visitor Experience Enhancement Program



**Round Four
Program Guidelines**



Program overview

The Northern Territory Government is providing a further \$1.5 million of grant funding through the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program (VEEP), to assist the tourism industry to undertake projects that will improve the on-ground visitor experience in the NT.

Recommendations from family, friends and through social media are reported to be up to eight times more powerful than advertising in encouraging people to travel to a destination.

The VEEP supports the tourism industry to improve its customer experience so more visitors will recommend the Territory to others.

One off funding of up to \$50,000 (excluding GST) is available per business.

Businesses will be expected to provide a minimum matching cash co-contribution.



Successful projects must:

- a) Be strategic in nature by delivering benefits to an individual business, multiple businesses or to a region;
- b) Be able to demonstrate through existing customer feedback the need for the visitor experience enhancement;
- c) Demonstrate how the proposal will enhance the visitor experience, increase favourable visitor reviews and increase visitor numbers;
- d) Provide an itemised project budget accompanied by quotes. Applications without accompanying budget and quotes may not be considered. Quotes and invoices from family or other registered businesses aligned to the applicant will not be accepted;
- e) Be able to be completed by 31 December 2021; and
- f) Include at a minimum a matching cash co-contribution. This means if you are requesting a \$15,000 grant then you need to provide a minimum further \$15,000 in cash towards the nominated project. Projects with a greater Return on Investment (ROI) than 1:1 are regarded highly by the panel. Please note that in-kind contributions are not considered towards matching funds.

These grants will complement the business focused grants offered and administered by the [NT Department of Trade, Business and Innovation](#).



This is a competitive grant funding program that was oversubscribed in the previous three rounds. We encourage all applicants to ensure the guidelines are met and that your project clearly demonstrates the benefits to tourists visiting the Northern Territory.

Available

VEEP round four will have a budget allocation of \$1.5 million.

Priority will be given to projects which demonstrate the greatest need for visitor enhancement as supported by evidence and have a ROI greater than 1:1.

Applications under this program will be considered with reference to other NT Government funding which you may have accessed or be qualified for. Applicants should provide evidence that local NT suppliers and local content will be used to deliver the project.

Eligible applicants

This program is primarily designed to support tourism business enterprises. To be supported through this program, businesses must:

- have a significant Northern Territory tourism focus;
- be legally constituted;
- be Australian registered;
- currently operate in the NT and employ resident Territorians; and
- local Government, for profit and not for profit organisations are eligible to apply.

Agencies of Government and Regional Tourism Organisations are not eligible to apply.

Eligible projects and activities

As a guide only, examples of projects may include (but are not limited to):

1. Infrastructure upgrades to address shortcomings in the existing tourism visitor experience e.g. new walking trails, upgraded or additional visitor or staff accommodation, upgraded reception areas or foyers, retrofitting existing tour buses or cruise vessels.
2. Implementation of new technology to improve the on-ground tourism visitor experience in the NT.
3. Development of new tourism visitor experiences that diversify the tourism offering in the region based on customer feedback.
4. Value adding existing experiences with additional activities e.g. high quality interpretative or interactive tourism signage. Any road signage must align to national standards and requirements of the NT Department of Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics.

Successful applicants from VEEP round three are not eligible to apply.





Ineligible activities

Applications will not be accepted for:

- Activities that have commenced before the grant has been approved;
- Upgrading or developing facilities predominantly for local community use or where there is no clearly defined tourism visitor benefit;
- Marketing, advertising, product promotion activities, regular repairs and maintenance or travel;
- Administrative or running costs that are normally the responsibility of a business e.g. rent, insurances, auditing and finance costs etc., state, territory, or local council administration expenses;
- Wages or salaries for an applicant's employees or consultants;
- The purchase or lease of mobile/ portable assets including, but not limited to, computers e.g. desktops or laptops, motor vehicles e.g. cars, buses, motorcycles, or boats; and
- Purchase or lease of real estate of any type.

Applications will not be accepted where an applicant has not fully acquitted any previous funding or has debts with Tourism NT.

Please take care to ensure ineligible activities are not included in any application as this will preclude further consideration.

Indicative dates

Nomination period opens

1 July 2020

Closing date for nominations

Midnight 31 August 2020

Consideration of projects

September 2020

Notification of successful recipients

September 2020

Funding agreements finalised

October 2020

First payment

On receipt of signed funding agreement

Final date for projects to be completed

By 5pm 31 December 2021

Final acquittal and report due

28 February 2022

Second and final payment

1 March 2022 or upon receipt of acquittal and final report

These dates are indicative and may be changed if necessary (for example, if a larger than anticipated volume of potential projects received). Projects may be supported that have been identified through this or another process.



Nomination Process

The program will operate via a merit based nomination process. Assessment of projects is by a panel based on written project proposals.

All nominations will be accepted via the Grants NT portal only. Businesses can register online via grantsnt.nt.gov.au

Handwritten submissions will not be accepted.

An email confirmation will be sent within two working days of receipt of each application. In the event a confirmation is not received, applicants should phone 8999 3808 to check progress of the nomination form.

Further discussions with applicants may be required to confirm details in the nomination form and/or supporting documents. The NT Government may conduct credit checks and other due diligence processes as part of the assessment process.

Assessment criteria

Eligibility of projects will be assessed based on alignment with the criteria detailed at section 1 on page 2.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate how the nominated project will enhance the tourism visitor experience, increase favourable visitor reviews and increase visitor numbers. This could be through providing evidence of customer feedback via social media or other platforms (e.g. Tripadvisor, hotel review websites, customer satisfaction surveys) where there is a documented product gap or identified upgrade.

In accordance with its Buy Local policy, the NT Government is committed to the development of business and industry in the NT and supporting Territory enterprises. Except where it is impractical for technical reasons, projects should use labour available within the

NT and source services, supplies and materials from within the NT.

Tourism operators who operate on Aboriginal Freehold Land will be required to provide a copy of the relevant S19 lease documentation as part of their application.

Funding Agreement

A legally binding funding agreement will be entered into between the Northern Territory Government and successful applicants. The terms and conditions of the agreement will be determined based on the nature of the activity proposed. The agreement will set out:

- The rights and obligations of the Northern Territory Government and the funding recipient.
- Requirements with respect to “buy local” provisions and cash co-contribution, noting if these conditions where applicable are not met during project acquittal, applicants will be required to repay grant funding to the Department.
- Agreed project plan and budget as per application.
- Half way progress report requirements.
- Reporting and funding acquittal requirements.
- Requirements for recognising NT Government support and promotional obligations arising from receipt of funding. Applicants should note details of successful funding recipients will be advised publicly and recorded in the Department’s annual report.
- Professional indemnity insurance requirements.

Payment of funding

Successful recipients will receive their funding via two payments. The payments will be made as follows:

First payment

Successful recipients will have 30 days from notification to accept the funding offer.

Half of the funding will be paid to the successful recipient on receipt of the signed funding agreement and a signed statutory declaration to confirm the applicant is project ready and will meet the guidelines of the grant program.

Second payment

The remaining funding will be paid on receipt of accepted acquittal documentations including a final report attaching photos and images of the project/s, copies of invoices, permits and insurances.

The panel may include special conditions such as evidence of financial contribution, permits in place or project support from third parties (such as Parks & Wildlife) which may be imposed as a condition of releasing any funding payments.

Requests for variations

Once a funding agreement has been signed, successful recipients may find that their project needs to alter. Any variations to approved funding recipients must be requested in writing.

The panel will consider minor variations to successful projects such as:

- minor variation to the project completion date
- minor variation to the materials used
- minor total budget variations

Requests for a major variation to successful projects will not be considered. For example if a project is approved to build new cabin accommodation the project cannot be varied to build an ablution block.

Requests for a major variation to successful projects budgets may be considered. For example, if a project is approved to build new cabins and the recipient is granted \$50,000 based on a total project spend of \$200,000. If the project is revised to only be a total spend of \$100,000 the panel reserves the right to review the funding offered.



Further information

For further information contact strategy.tourism@nt.gov.au or telephone 08 8999 3808.

A copy of these Guidelines is available at: <http://www.tourismnt.com.au/en/industry-resources/grants-and-funding>.

Tourism NT's corporate website www.tourismnt.nt.gov.au is a valuable resource for accessing information to support applications including tourism research and strategies.



Oasis Tourist Park - VEEP Round 3 - Camp kitchen upgrades - Darwin region.



World Expeditions - VEEP Round 1 - Larapinta Camp Upgrades - Alice Springs region.



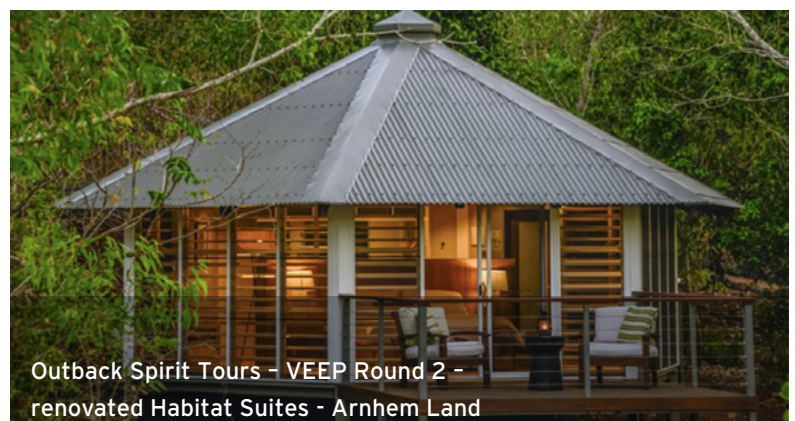
Squeakywindmill B&B - VEEP Round 3 - guest access paths upgraded - Alice Springs region



Manbulloo Station - VEEP Round 2 - new accessible ablution facility - Katherine region



Mary River Houseboats - VEEP Round 2 - new viewing area and reception - Darwin region



Outback Spirit Tours - VEEP Round 2 - renovated Habitat Suites - Arnhem Land

