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## Western Australia's Small Business Growth Grants Spark Economic Opportunity

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The Cook Government's \$1 million Small Business Growth Grants program, launched in 2025, offers Western Australian businesses up to \$10,000 in matched funding to access expert services, aiming to enhance economic competitiveness.

On July 30, 2025, the Cook Government unveiled the Small Business Growth Grants, a \$1 million initiative designed to bolster Western Australia's (WA) small business sector, which contributes over \$50 billion annually to the state's economy. Administered by the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC), the program provides matched funding vouchers of up to \$10,000 to eligible businesses, enabling access to specialized services such as business planning, digital marketing, e-commerce, financial health checks, cybersecurity, tender responses, export readiness, and market

positioning. The initiative aims to drive economic growth by enhancing business capabilities and competitiveness.

The grants, fulfilling a 2025 election promise, encourage recipients to engage WA-based service providers, amplifying economic benefits within the state. Small Business Commissioner Saj Abdoolakhan emphasized the program's value, stating, "It helps businesses access specialist advice to scale up confidently." Eligible businesses, defined as those with fewer than 20 employees and an Australian Business Number (ABN), can apply through the SBDC's online portal, with applications assessed competitively based on potential economic impact, such as job creation or revenue growth. The program aligns with WA's Diversify WA framework, prioritizing innovation and economic diversification.

Business leaders have welcomed the initiative but urged caution. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCIWA) noted that while the grants support small enterprises, broader tax relief and reduced red tape are critical to sustaining growth. CCIWA Chief Economist Aaron Morey warned, "Grants are helpful, but regulatory burdens still choke small businesses." Critics argue the program's \$1 million budget is modest compared to WA's \$8.2 billion surplus, suggesting the government could do more to ease cost-of-living pressures impacting business operations.

The grants complement existing SBDC services, including workshops and advisory support, which have assisted over 30,000 businesses since 1984. Applicants are encouraged to leverage these resources to strengthen their proposals. With WA's economy outperforming other states, the program aims to maintain this momentum by fostering resilient, competitive businesses. Interested businesses can apply via the SBDC website or contact 133 140 for details, with applications open until funds are exhausted.