Study Queensland Adapt to Thrive Grant Program 2026-27

Program Guidelines

About the Adapt to Thrive grant program

The Adapt to Thrive grant program (the Program) is a competitive, application-based program designed to support eligible Queensland international education and training (IET) providers to adapt to changing market dynamics and enhance their long-term resilience and competitiveness through diversifying markets, program delivery models and/or revenue streams.

The Program forms part of the Queensland Government's commitment to ensuring the state is Australia's premier study destination. Study Queensland's (SQ) suite of initiatives supports providers across the state's IET sector to innovate, globalise, and remain competitive.

Program objectives

The Program aims to:

- support Queensland IET providers to diversify markets and reduce reliance on a small number of source countries and/or regions;
- support Queensland IET providers to establish or grow high-quality transnational education (TNE) programs through offshore partnerships, joint programs, articulation pathways, and in-market delivery models (including curriculum licensing);
- support Queensland IET providers to establish or grow new revenue streams, such as short-term study tours;
- strengthen Queensland's global education brand by supporting providers to adapt offerings to meet regulatory, cultural, and/or student expectations; and
- drive sustainable international enrolment and commercial growth across Queensland, including regional Queensland.

Grant period

Projects must be completed within 12 months of the Letter of Offer.

Upon completion, recipients will need to prove they have completed the project and contributed matched funding by submitting evidence of expenditure (see the acquittal section for further information).

Export outcomes are expected to occur within 12–24 months from project commencement and may continue after project completion. When achieved, recipients **must** provide an Export Success Form to TIQ outlining the value of the export success and number of jobs created.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applicants to the Program must:

- be a private provider of international education services, including school (P-12), English language (ELICOS), vocational education and training (VET), or higher education.
- not be a public education institution or publicly funded university
- have its headquarters and primary campus located in Queensland (as evidenced by 'Queensland' stated as the applicants 'main business location' in its entry on the Australian Business Register) [1]
- hold a current CRICOS international education and training provider registration
- have exported education services within the last 12 months
- have an active Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST
- be able to make a 50% cash contribution towards each eligible expenses
- provide a bank statement showing sufficient cash to meet matched funding requirements
- not use other government grants as matched funding
- not have received more than three prior grants from TIQ
- have fully acquitted any grants previously received from TIQ
- submit only one application per eligible entity or financial beneficiary [2]
- have at least two full financial years of trading history
- not be insolvent, under administration, or have owners/directors who are bankrupt or undischarged from bankruptcy.
- have a project capable of being completed within the grant period
- address all assessment criteria and attach all required documentation.

[1] Multi-state providers must ensure that the funding is expended for its Queensland operations only. Recipients will be required to provide evidence that grant funding and matched contributions have been expended solely for Queensland operations and activities.

[2] Only one application form can be accepted from each applicant organisation. Where two or more businesses have one director and/or shareholder in common, only one application will be accepted per round. If more than one application is received by an organisation at the close of applications, the first submitted application will be the only application assessed. Any subsequent application/s will be deemed ineligible. Recipients must maintain eligibility for the duration of the grant funded project and eligibility may be at Study Queensland's discretion.

Eligible and ineligible project costs

What is eligible grant expenditure?

The grant covers external project costs that directly support diversification of markets, program delivery models and/or revenue streams.

To provide additional support to international education and training providers, recipients may claim eligible project costs incurred up to six months prior to the Program launch, provided the expenditure directly relates to the approved project and meets all Program requirements. Costs associated with ordinary business operations or activities that would have occurred regardless of the project are not eligible.

Applicants may apply for up to $20,000 (ex GST) in grant funding. Successful recipients must provide a cash contribution equal to 50% of the grant amount towards eligible project costs. For example, a recipient awarded $20,000 (ex GST) must contribute a minimum of $10,000 (ex GST), resulting in a total project value of at least $30,000 (ex GST).

Eligible costs include external expenses that support entry into, or expansion within, a new market, as well as diversification of program delivery models and revenue streams. These include:

- TNE partnership development, including:
  - in-market partner due diligence
  - curriculum alignment or mapping
  - regulatory approvals
  - quality assurance processes
- Program adaptation, including:
  - cultural adaptation of curriculum
  - translation of materials
  - digital delivery adaptation
  - student experience enhancements required for offshore delivery
- Market diversification activities, including:
  - market research
  - in-market representation
  - development of new pathways or articulation agreements
- Study tour pipeline development, including:
  - in-market school engagement
  - development of tailored programs
  - compliance documentation
- Travel expenditure (flights, accommodation and in-market ground travel) for:
  - partnership negotiations
  - TNE program approvals
  - study tour contracting
  - in-market training or onboarding
- Participation in international education fairs, where booth costs, travel to the market and entry fees are directly linked to TNE or market diversification outcomes

NOTE – Travel expenditure must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis between the TIQ contribution and the recipient contribution. Travel expenses are capped at 15% of the TIQ funding amount. For example, if an applicant receives $20,000 ex GST and contributes $10,000 ex GST to the project, up to $3,000 of the TIQ contribution may be used for travel expenditure and this must be matched by $3,000 from the recipient contribution, resulting in a maximum travel budget of $6,000. Travel expenses may be reviewed at TIQ's discretion. (Please see FAQs for further information on travel.)

Recipients may claim eligible project costs incurred up to six months prior to the Program launch date, and for eligible costs incurred during the project period. Any expenditure incurred prior to grant approval is undertaken at the applicant's own risk, as there is no guarantee an application will be successful. This provision is intended to support applicants that have already commenced activities directly related to the proposed project. Costs associated with ordinary business operations are not eligible.

Eligible expenditure must directly support the objectives and intended outcomes of the Program.

What is ineligible grant expenditure?

Ineligible costs include:

- maintenance of existing digital technologies
- website hosting as a stand-alone cost
- wages, salaries or other internal staff costs, including internal consultancy (any supplier or consultant engaged for the project must be external to the organisation; an invoice for services will be required at acquittal)
- routine business operations and overheads, including marketing, salaries, superannuation, wages, rent, insurance, utilities, and food and beverage expenses
- administration costs such as obtaining project resources, advertising and recruitment, project management, and staff training and development
- domestic recruitment activities
- marketing and advertising campaigns aimed at Australian audiences
- advertising via an influencer and other related expenses
- third-party logistics (3PL) storage costs
- the purchase of alcohol
- attending trade shows, conferences or seminars as an attendee only, or general conference attendance unless directly tied to TNE outcomes (a booth that directly supports export activities is eligible)
- purchase, leasing or depreciation of property, assets, IT, equipment, or other physical assets (such as photography or video equipment, or laptops)
- loans and debt-financing expenses, including interest and bank fees
- costs already funded by another government program
- using a subsidiary, parent company, partner or other related entity as a supplier where they share the same parent company, management and/or address
- costs incurred more than six months before the Program launch.

Note: These lists are not exhaustive and apply to both the grant funds and the recipient's cash contribution. TIQ may determine that other costs are eligible or ineligible depending on whether they directly support the program's objectives and intended outcomes. Any expenditure incurred before grant approval is at the applicant's own risk, and there is no guarantee that an application will be successful.

Applicants should direct any specific questions regarding eligible or ineligible expenditure to TIQ before applying.

Assessment criteria

This is a merit-based, competitive process with a finite budget, and only a limited number of applicants will receive funding. Applications are assessed against the three weighted criteria below. The weightings reflect the priority of this round: export outcomes and Queensland benefit potential (40%); the strategic impact and alignment (30%); and the project quality, sustainability and capability to deliver (30%). The criteria below are numbered and listed in order of weighting.

Assessment criteria	Weighting
Export outcomes and Queensland benefit potential — the diversification and economic benefit the project will deliver	40%
Strategic Impact and Alignment	30%
Project Quality, Sustainability and Capability to Deliver	30%

The Assessment Panel scores each criterion from 0 to 5 using the guide below. Each score is then multiplied by the criterion's weighting, giving a weighted total out of 5 (also expressed as a percentage for ranking).

Score	Score guide
0	Not addressed — the criterion is not addressed, or no evidence is provided.
1	Poor — claims are asserted rather than evidenced; major weaknesses when addressing the criterion.
2	Limited — weak evidence with major gaps when addressing the criterion.
3	Satisfactory — some credible evidence, but incomplete when addressing the criterion.
4	Strong — good evidence and a realistic approach when addressing the criterion.
5	Excellent — strong, compelling evidence; high confidence that the project will be delivered.

A weighted score of at least 3.0 out of 5 (60%) is the competitive benchmark for the funding shortlist, and an application that scores 0 or 1 on any criterion is flagged as high-risk and is unlikely to be recommended. Meeting the benchmark does not guarantee funding in this capped, competitive round.

1. Export outcomes and Queensland benefit potential — the diversification and economic benefit the project will deliver (40%)

This criterion covers the extent to which the project is expected to deliver export diversification, international education outcomes and economic benefits for Queensland. It evaluates the anticipated return on investment, including:

- expected export revenue and commercial outcomes
- projected international student enrolments or study tour participants
- new (TNE) partnerships, pathway agreements or offshore delivery opportunities
- entry into new or under-represented international markets
- diversification of enrolment sources and reduced reliance on existing markets
- ongoing or repeat business opportunities beyond the grant period
- employment, capability-building or broader economic benefits for Queensland

High-scoring applications will demonstrate clear, realistic and measurable outcomes that contribute to long-term export growth, market diversification and benefits for Queensland.

2. Strategic Impact and Alignment (30%)

This criterion assesses the extent to which the project supports the objectives of the Program. Applicants should demonstrate:

- how the project will diversify international markets, products, delivery models and/or revenue streams
- how the project reduces reliance on existing source markets or strengthens long-term business resilience
- the potential to generate new export revenue, including student enrolments, offshore partnerships, study tour activity or TNE outcomes
- evidence of a proposed TNE partnership, a new market entry plan, a confirmed study tour pipeline, or a formalised intent to collaborate (e.g., MOU, LOI, partnership proposal)

High-scoring applications will demonstrate strong alignment with the Program objectives, a compelling diversification rationale, and clear evidence that the project will strengthen the organisation's international competitiveness and long-term resilience.

3. Project Quality, Sustainability and Capability to Deliver (30%)

The Assessment Panel will consider the extent to which the applicant has a credible and achievable plan to deliver the project and the future sustainability and mid to long-term impact. Applicants should demonstrate:

- a clear project plan with realistic activities, milestones and timelines
- evidence of market demand, partner engagement or commercial opportunity
- organisational capability, experience and resources to successfully deliver the project
- identified risks and appropriate mitigation strategies*
- experience in delivering international programs or partnerships
- capacity to deliver the proposed project within the 12-month grant period
- ongoing benefits beyond the grant period, such as repeat cohorts, long-term partnerships or scalable delivery models

High-scoring applications will demonstrate a well-developed project plan, strong organisational capability, realistic timelines, effective risk management and a high likelihood of successful delivery.

** This includes ensuring proposed project/s adhere to and comply with all relevant state and federal legislative frameworks relating to IET.*

The Panel will also consider the general outcomes to Queensland, including regional impacts and any other benefits that would not otherwise be achieved. This may include:

- employment (full-time-equivalent or casual jobs created and/or retained)
- export revenue projected to be generated because of the project, and
- inward investment opportunities through market diversification.

The highest-scoring applications are likely to be those that present a highly feasible, well-planned new-market diversification project, deliver strong export diversification outcomes, show significant Queensland economic benefit, and demonstrate low risk in achieving those outcomes.

How to apply

You must read and understand these guidelines before applying. The program is expected to generate strong interest and a high number of applications. It is a competitive grant with capped funding — not all applicants will receive funding.

To apply, applicants must:

- address and meet all eligibility criteria
- complete an application form via SmartyGrants
- include all required documentation in the application form
- submit a completed application before the closing date, and
- demonstrate that the project can commence and be completed within the program timeframes.

Applications open on 15 September 2026 at 9:00am and close on 9 October 2026 at 1:00 pm.

Applications are only accepted online. The application link can be found on the TIQ website.

Required documentation

The following documentation is mandatory and must be attached to the application:

- financial statements for the 2025–26 financial year in the name of the applicant organisation, or, where final accounts are not yet available, an interim profit and loss statement or draft financial statements generated from accounting software (e.g. Xero or MYOB). Statements do not need to be audited.
- financial statements for the 2024–25 financial year, including a profit and loss statement and balance sheet in the name of the applicant organisation. Statements do not need to be audited.
- a balance sheet. If one is not available, provide a list of assets and liabilities. If final statements for 2025–26 are not available, provide an interim statement, covering as much of the year as possible, and
- a bank statement in the name of the applicant organisation. Do not submit a statement showing less than 50% of the amount applied for. Overdraft accounts are acceptable; if an overdraft account is provided, include supporting evidence confirming the overdraft limit.

Evidence of the applicant's financial viability is required. The grant must be matched by a minimum 50% cash contribution of the funding requested. In-kind and other non-cash contributions do not count towards this contribution. Applicants who cannot support the 50% cash contribution will not be considered.

Optional supporting documents

You may also attach documents that strengthen your application. These documents are optional; however, TIQ may request any of them, or other supporting evidence, to verify your eligibility or assess your application. They fall into two groups.

Evidence of financial capacity — for example:

- any parent-company or investor guarantee that shows the applicant's ability to fund the project
- financial statements of the company, parent business or investor that show the ability to fund the project
- a loan statement indicating the project was the reason for the loan

- an accountant's letter confirming the company is operating and able to provide the required funding and finalise the project, and
- any other documentation that validates the financial position.

Evidence of projected export outcomes — for example:

- buyer enquiries and solid market research (as a minimum)
- email evidence of negotiations or agreements with clients or student recruitment agents in the new market
- meetings with clients and student recruitment agents in-market
- trade-show attendance and leads
- a letter of intent, and
- contracts.

Applicants that provide evidence of the projected export outcomes are likely to score higher and improve their chances of receiving funding.

Selection process

All applications are first assessed against the eligibility requirements, and only eligible applications proceed to assessment. If any mandatory documentation is missing, this may affect your eligibility.

Eligible applications are then assessed against the weighted assessment criteria in a merit-based approach by an Assessment Panel of representatives with relevant experience. Any assessor who is not a Queensland Government representative must perform their duties in line with the Treasury Handbook. Each assessor completes a scorecard for every eligible application, and scores are moderated by the Panel. Following assessment and moderation, funding recommendations are made to TIQ's Program Delegate.

Notification of application outcomes

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application within 12 weeks of the closing date, following assessment, due diligence checks and formal approvals.

Successful applicants will receive a formal Letter of Offer and agreement package. Unsuccessful applicants may seek feedback from TIQ within 10 business days of being notified. Unsuccessful applicants may re-apply in a future round.

The decision to award funding is at the discretion of the Queensland Government and all decisions are final.

Conditions of funding

Successful applicants must enter into a legally binding Financial Incentive Agreement (the agreement).

Financial Incentive Agreement

Successful applicants have 10 business days from the Letter of Offer to sign and return the agreement to TIQ. It is the applicant's responsibility to read and understand the terms and conditions before signing. The package of legally binding documents includes:

1. the Letter of Offer
2. the Financial Incentive Agreement
3. the Program Guidelines, Terms and Conditions and Frequently Asked Questions document
4. a copy of the successful application relating to the grant project, and
5. any special terms negotiated and agreed in writing between the parties (if applicable).

How we pay the grant

Recipients must issue TIQ with a valid tax invoice for payment within 10 business days of the agreement being executed. The grant is paid in two instalments:

Payment	Milestone
First payment (50% of project funding)	Paid as soon as practicable after the Financial Incentive Agreement is executed by both parties and TIQ has received an invoice for payment.
Final payment (50% of project funding)	Paid once TIQ has reviewed and approved the final acquittal report and an invoice has been submitted.

Monitoring and reporting

Keeping us informed

Recipients must advise TIQ of anything likely to affect delivery of the project or the export outcome, including key changes to the organisation or its business activities. All projects are monitored by TIQ and recipients must comply with all reporting, record-keeping and audit obligations under the agreement. TIQ will request project progress updates before the specified reporting period to help identify and manage risks early and keep the project on schedule.

Acquittal reporting

Acquittal reports detail how grant funding was used to complete the project. Reports are due at the end of the program, as specified in the Letter of Offer, and must be submitted online via SmartyGrants. Recipients will receive a submission link prior to the due date. Each acquittal report includes:

- A project summary with a detailed account of the completed project activities;
- A financial reconciliation comparing actual project expenditure against the project budget submitted in the grant application, and
- A signed declaration confirming that grant funds were expended in accordance with the approved program guidelines and funding agreement.

The grant recipients must retain all supporting documentation, including supplier quotations, invoices, receipts and bank transaction records, for seven (7) years and make them available upon request for audit or compliance purposes.

Grant agreement variations

Requests to vary the original project may be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be submitted via SmartyGrants (contact the TIQ Grants team at grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au for the form). Variations must be approved and executed before any change is made, and there is no guarantee a request will be approved. In assessing a variation, TIQ will consider:

- how the variation affects the project outcome
- whether it still aligns with the program objectives and intended outcomes, and
- whether it requires funds to be available in a different financial year.

The following variations are only considered in exceptional circumstances, with support from your client manager and international office as required and supporting evidence:

- extensions of time to complete the project and provide the acquittal report, and
- a change of export market and/or activities.

Evaluations and feedback

Program outcomes are measured through the acquittal form and the TIQ Export Success Form, which capture the export outcomes, regional benefits and jobs achieved as a result of the funding. Recipients are required to complete and submit Export Success Forms as requested by TIQ following project completion. Recipients may be asked to provide additional feedback to assist with future program development.

Acknowledgement, media and publication

Recipients must acknowledge the Queensland Government funding in all relevant published material, media releases and public statements. Recipients are expected to:

- actively promote their projects
- attend meetings with TIQ as requested to discuss grant progress
- provide information to TIQ and attend media or promotional events facilitated by TIQ, if requested
- connect with their TIQ client manager to support their export pathway
- report on sales into the identified market in the application, acquittal report and export success forms for at least two years following the project, and
- participate in client surveys as required.

The Queensland Government has the right to publish recipient information on government websites and in media releases while publicising the program's outcomes. Published information can include the business name, funding amount, suburb or postcode, and outcome details. Confidentiality can be accommodated where genuine competitive or intellectual-property considerations apply.

Program administration and privacy

Enquiries

For information on export opportunities, contact your SQ client manager.

Grant enquiries can be directed to the TIQ Grants team at grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au.

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest — actual or perceived — could affect the performance of the program. A conflict may exist where TIQ staff, an Assessment Panel member, an applicant, or an applicant's staff has:

- a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application process, such as a panel member
- a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation likely to interfere with or restrict a recipient from carrying out the proposed activities fairly, or
- a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation that will gain personally because it receives a grant under the program.

Applicants must declare any perceived or actual conflict of interest on the application, or confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, none exists. If a conflict is identified later under the agreement, the recipient must inform the TIQ Grants team at grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au.

Privacy

The Queensland Government collects and collates information from the application form to assess applications for the program. Only authorised agency officers and approved grant assessors have access to this information.

Recipients should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress, the organisation name, ABN, location, industry, product/service and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government. Some information may be used to promote funded projects.

Personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without receiving prior consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of the Information Privacy Act 2009 or The Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023.

The provisions of the Information Privacy Act 2009 (including any amendments that came into force on 1 July 2025 through the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023) apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

For audit purposes, the Queensland Government is required to retain the applications and other supporting material supplied for 7 years.

To find out more about how TIQ collects and handles personal information, review TIQ's privacy policy which is published at

https://www.tiq.qld.gov.au/about/privacy-policy

Confidential information

Financial and commercial information included in an application will be kept strictly confidential and treated as commercial-in-confidence. Information provided in an application, report or survey will only be reported as part of aggregated data that does not identify any individual response or organisation, unless otherwise permitted in writing by the organisation.

General conditions

TIQ reserves the right to:

- amend or withdraw the Adapt to Thrive grant program at any time;
- reject any application that does not meet the eligibility or assessment criteria; and
- request repayment of funds if the recipient breaches the Financial Incentive Agreement.

TIQ accepts no liability for any costs incurred by applicants in preparing or submitting an application.

These Terms and Conditions are governed by the laws of Queensland.

Summary

The Queensland Government has committed funding to the Program, and TIQ is responsible for administering it. TIQ publishes the opening and closing dates and any other relevant information on the TIQ website and at www.grants.services.qld.gov.au. You must read and understand these guidelines, and meet the program requirements, to be eligible for a grant. Further information is available in the Frequently Asked Questions and Terms and Conditions document that accompanies these guidelines.

Together, these documents set out:

- the purpose of the grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how applications are considered and assessed
- how applicants are notified, and how agreements and payments are made
- how a recipient's performance is monitored and evaluated, and
- the responsibilities and expectations that apply.

Disclaimer

Trade and Investment Queensland
Level 10, 1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000, Australia
Grant enquiries: grantsmanagement@tiq.qld.gov.au
Integrity and complaints: Integrity@tiq.qld.gov.au
tiq.qld.gov.au | www.grants.services.qld.gov.au