

Farm Debt Mediation Grant Program 2024

Program Guidelines



Contents

1. Aim	1
2. Funding available	1
3. Eligibility	1
3.1. Ineligible applicants	2
4. Timeframes	2
5. Contact details	3
6. How to apply	3
7. Grant funding agreement	4
8. Appealing a decision	4
9. Grant payments	4
10. Taxation and financial implications	4
11. Acquittal	5
12. Publicity of grant assistance	5
13. True and accurate information	5
14. Right to information	5
15. Information collection and usage	5
16. Disclaimer	6

1. Aim

The Tasmanian Government recognises the important role of primary producers in Tasmania. The *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2024* establishes a legislative framework for farm debt mediation, helping farmers in financial stress negotiate with creditors early. It aims to provide an efficient, affordable, and fair resolution to farm debt disputes through structured negotiations.

The Farm Debt Mediation Grant Program is designed to support farmers facing financial hardship in accessing mediation under the *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2024*.

Applications for the program open on 4 December 2024, and will close on 3 December 2025, or once the program funds have been exhausted (whichever comes first).

This program will be administered by the Department of State Growth on behalf of the Crown in Right of Tasmania.

2. Funding available

Grants of \$3,000 will be available to each eligible applicant towards mediation under the *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2024* and other costs directly associated with mediation (such as preparing accurate accounts or a legal review, travel and other incidentals).

Applications will be assessed in order of receipt and subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.

To allow time for an application to be assessed, applicants are advised to allow a minimum of 14 calendar days for notification of outcome.

3. Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant an applicant must:

1. Be registered for tax purposes in Australia with a continuously active Australian Business Number (ABN) trading for at least 12 months before the time of applying for the grant.

Exceptions to 3.1 may be considered, noting that the applicant will be required to provide relevant evidence to support their application, for example:

- a. An applicant that has purchased a business that was actively trading for at least 12 months.
 - b. An applicant that has changed their business structure which has resulted in a new active ABN issued, but the business has been in operation for at least 12 months from the time of applying for the grant.
2. Be a farmer or farm business with a farm debt that is entering into mediation as provided for under the *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2024*.
 3. Be a legal entity, for example an individual or any company or organisation that has legal rights and responsibilities including tax findings.
 4. Not have previously received any funding under this program.

5. Provide the following:

- a. a signed statutory declaration of financial hardship confirming inability to effectively participate in mediation given the financial costs;
- b. evidence that a mediation process has commenced or is likely to commence under the Act with a signed copy of Form 8: Intake Agreement for Farm Debt Mediation, which must be signed by both parties (the farmer and the creditor) and the mediator*;

*Mediators must be authorised to mediate under the *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2024* by the Farm Debt Mediation Commissioner. A list of authorised mediators is available on the Department of State Growth website <https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/farm-debt-mediation>.

Applications submitted by a third party will not be accepted without evidence of permission in the application.

An applicant may be asked to provide information or documentation to support eligibility claims, either as part of the application process, or after an application has been submitted.

The information provided may be subject to authenticity checks using third party software.

This program has limited funding, so not all eligible applications may receive a grant if funds are exhausted.

3.1. Ineligible applicants

1. Not-for-profit organisations, incorporated associations, or charities UNLESS the organisation is operating as a business employing paid staff and selling goods and services to customers that make up more than 30 per cent of its income.
2. Any public company as defined in the *Corporations Act 2001*.
3. Local, State or Australian Government entities.
4. Third party submissions, unless the applicant has provided the third party with written permission to do so on their behalf, and this permission is submitted as evidence with the application.
5. Any application without the required supporting evidence.

4. Timeframes

Description	Date/time
Program opens for applications	Wednesday 4 December 2024 10:00 am
Program closes (or when funding is fully allocated, which ever comes first)	Wednesday 3 December 2025 10:00 am
Applications will be assessed in order of receipt	

Applications will not be accepted after the program closes.

5. Contact details

Questions regarding the program can be directed to State Growth by emailing FDMTasmania@stategrowth.tas.gov.au or calling 1800 440 026 before the program closes.

6. How to apply

Applications should be submitted using SmartyGrants.

For assistance with using SmartyGrants, please see the [applicant help guide](#).

Applicants without internet access should contact Business Tasmania on 1800 440 026 to discuss alternative methods for applying prior to the program closing, noting that the program will close early if funding is fully allocated prior to the nominated closing date.

1. **Prepare:** Read the program guidelines and the frequently asked questions (FAQs) before starting an application.
2. **Start:** The application form is available on the Farm Debt Mediation website www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/about/divisions/ship/farm_debt_mediation_tasmania/farm_debt_mediation_grants_program.
3. **Confirm:** Ensure all required information and documentation is accurate and attached. You may not be able to change an application or provide additional information after you submit your application.
4. **Submit:** You will receive an email notification after you submit your application. Keep this notification as confirmation of your submission.
5. **Assessment:** Applications will be assessed in order of receipt and will continue until the program closes or all funding allocated to the program is exhausted, whichever occurs first. Applicants that have commenced or have submitted an application that is yet to be assessed at the time funding is exhausted will be notified that all funding has been allocated and that the program has closed.
6. **Further information:** During the assessment process the Department of State Growth may, at its discretion, require further information to support or clarify details provided in an application. This information must be provided within seven (7) calendar days, unless otherwise advised. In these instances, State Growth will re-open the application form and email the applicant with instructions about what is required.
7. **Notification:** We will notify you with the outcome of your application via email.

You may be asked to provide information or documentation after you have submitted your application.

You must provide this information within seven working days, unless otherwise advised. Failure to provide the information within the timeframe may result in the application being unsuccessful.

The information you provide may be subject to authenticity checks using third party software.

7. Grant funding agreement

If successful, these guidelines and application will form the funding agreement. There will be no separate funding agreement.

8. Appealing a decision

If your application is unsuccessful, you may appeal the decision.

The appeals process ensures that all applicants have been treated fairly.

We will consider appeals that relate to administrative process issues in grants management.

All appeal requests must be in writing and sent to FDMTasmania@stategrowth.tas.gov.au. Your request must be received within 28 days from the date of State Growth notifying you of the decision about your application.

9. Grant payments

Applicants will be asked to provide their bank account details on the application form at the time of applying so that grant payments can be processed once approved.

The bank account must be in your name. You may be asked to provide a copy of your bank statement or a letter from your bank as confirmation.

Providing incorrect bank account details may result in significant delays or not receiving your grant payment. We cannot guarantee the recovery of funds paid to an incorrect bank account.

You may be required to return some or all the funds if:

1. you do not complete the activities required under the funding agreement;
2. you do not use any or all of the funding provided;
3. your situation changes in a way that prevents completion of the grant; or
4. we find that the information provided to us is false or misleading.

10. Taxation and financial implications

Grants distributed under this program do not attract Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Grants distributed under this program may be treated as income by the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

We strongly recommend that, prior to applying, you seek independent advice from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, about the possible tax implications for receiving the grant.

Information on invoices can be found on our Business Tasmania website:

www.business.tas.gov.au/manage_a_business/invoices

11. Acquittal

An acquittal is a statement that confirms the grant was completed as per your application.

Information that is provided as part of your application process will be used for the acquittal, so a separate acquittal process is not required.

If you are unable to successfully acquit your grant:

1. you may be required to return the funding to the State Growth; and
2. you may be ineligible for other grants from State Growth.

Contact us to discuss any issue preventing you from acquitting your grant.

12. Publicity of grant assistance

State Growth is accountable for its spending of public funds, including providing grants. As part of the accountability process, State Growth may publicise, without further notice, information about the grants provided, including the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, and the purpose of the financial assistance.

If you have received a grant from State Growth:

1. despite any confidentiality or intellectual property right subsisting in the grant funding agreement or deed, a party may publish all or any part of the grant funding agreement or deed without reference to another party, and you consent to the disclosure of your name in this context.
2. all obligations under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas) still apply.

13. True and accurate information

You must take care to provide true and accurate information. Any information that is found to be false or misleading may result in action being taken and grant funds, if already provided, may be required to be repaid to State Growth.

14. Right to information

Information provided to State Growth may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

15. Information collection and usage

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it relates, on request to State Growth.

State Growth may use and disclose the information you provide for the purposes of discharging its functions under the Program Guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the program and related uses.

State Growth may also use information received in applications and during the delivery of the project for reporting purposes.

16. Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Crown in Right of Tasmania, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from anything contained in or omitted from or that may arise from the use of this document, and any person relying on this document and the information it contains does so at their own risk absolutely.

The Crown in Right of Tasmania does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by an applicant that are in any way related to the program.



Department of State Growth

4 Salamanca Place
Hobart TAS 7001 Australia

Phone: 1800 440 026

Email: FDMTasmania@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Web: www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/farm-debt-mediation

Version 1 Published 4 December 2024