



The Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program (EBPPP)

Introduction

The Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program (EBPPP) is an expansion of the successful National Enterprise Productivity Places Program (PPP) trial conducted through 2008/9. Up to \$25 million will be provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to increase skill levels of existing workers from a range of industries.

Eligibility has been extended under the new program to include small and medium enterprises, national enterprises and enterprises operating across several states, professional associations and industry bodies.

The objectives of the program are to provide opportunities for employees to increase their skill levels and gain further qualifications. This will assist enterprises to increase productivity and meet the demand for higher skills that is a feature of today's economy. The training will be at the Certificate III to Advanced Diploma level in a range of qualifications included in the Priority Occupations List.

The program commences on 5 November 2009 and proposals for funding may be submitted on a continuous basis until 8 May 2010. A comprehensive timeline set by AgriFood Skills Australia is included below.

Eligibility

Organisations eligible to participate in the program include:

- national enterprises;
- enterprises and businesses that operate across a number of states / territories;
- small and medium enterprises; and
- national professional associations and industry bodies.

National professional associations and industry bodies can access the EBPPP in the same manner as all other enterprises. However, their role in this program will be to act as a link between smaller enterprises seeking to participate in the program and an appropriate Registered Training Organisation (RTO). This approach will enable the program to meet localised and tailored training needs.

Also, a number of small enterprises may develop a training proposal together, if their training needs are similar and if they consider it appropriate.

All eligible enterprises and organisations wishing to participate in the EBPPP must access the program through the relevant Industry Skills Council (ISC).

Qualifications

Proposals must be for qualifications from the Certificate III to Advanced Diploma level. A proposed qualification must be on the Priority Occupations List, or there must be a strong case made for its inclusion on the list. The Priority Occupations List is available here:

www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/ProductivityPlaces/Resources/Pages/DiscussionPaper.aspx



All trainees participating under this phase of the EBPPP must commence training in calendar year 2010. The length of enterprise-based training projects, and the completion of training, will be dependent on the time required to gain the qualification sought.

Funding

Funding assistance varies depending on the size of the participating enterprise. The government will provide funding as outlined in the table below.

No. of Employees	Government Contribution	Business Contribution
Less than 100	90% of the cost of training places	10% of the cost of training places
100-199	75% of the cost of training places	25% of the cost of training places
200 or more	50% of the cost of training places	50% of the cost of training places

Specific aspects of the projects could include training and skills needs analysis, creation of training pathways, recognition of existing skills of workers and provision of training places.

Funding levels for qualifications are outlined in the table below.

AQF Level	Cost Base (Maximum)
Certificate III / Certificate IV	Up to \$5,000
Diploma / Advanced Diploma	Up to \$10,000

These levels assume that the duration for completion of a course is two years for Certificates III and IV, and three years for a Diploma or Advanced Diploma. Note that the amount of the Government contribution will be the relevant percentage of the above amount (i.e. dependant on the size of the enterprise).

Overview of Funding Process

Funding will be provided by DEEWR to the ISC as per approved enterprise-based training proposals/projects. Out of the funding received from DEEWR, ISCs will pay RTOs for the cost of training they will deliver, as per approved proposals and agreement between the ISC, RTO and participating enterprise.

The amount of funding available for individual enterprise based training proposals/projects, or for each ISC, has not been predetermined or capped. It will depend on the availability of funds, industry demand and the number and cost of the projects approved for funding.

Approval of projects for funding, and distribution of funding among ISCs and industries will aim to ensure that the training funded through the program is spread equitably across all industry sectors.

The following steps will be involved in the funding process:

1. Industry Skills Councils will submit to DEEWR their recommended enterprise based training proposals/projects, including the amount of funding required for each project. (Note: AgriFood will forward to DEEWR all fully developed proposals which comply with essential criteria detailed below.)

2. DEEWR will consider the proposals according to the EBPPP program guidelines and subject to funding availability.
3. Proposals satisfying the above will be submitted to the Minister for Education for approval of funding.
4. DEEWR will advise ISC:
 - which enterprise based funding proposals/projects have been approved;
 - the amount of funding approved for each proposal; and
 - the total amount of funding to be paid by DEEWR to an ISC (which will be the total of funding for the approved proposals plus an administration fee calculated as per these guidelines).
5. DEEWR will enter into a funding agreement with the ISC. Details of payments and reporting requirements will be covered by the funding agreement.

The ISC is to enter into formal arrangements with each project partner in order to faithfully discharge the financial and project obligations. An application for funding for each enterprise-based training proposal will need to be accompanied by costing of the project.

Timeline

DEEWR has indicated the EBPPP Selection Panel will meet in February and early June 2010 to consider proposals received. As AgriFood is keen for the industry's enterprises to take advantage of the opportunities EBPPP offers, initial proposals will be forwarded by AgriFood to DEEWR by early February 2010.

As this is a very tight timeline, full proposals should be submitted to AgriFood by 22 January 2010. A second group of proposals is planned to be forwarded to DEEWR by AgriFood in May.

The table below sets out the important dates for the program.

Date	Event
5 November 2009	EBPPP Commencement
22 January 2009	Fully developed first round of proposals due to AgriFood
Early February 2009	DEEWR first round selection of successful proposals
8 May 2010	Final date for submission of fully developed proposals to AgriFood
June 2010	DEEWR final round selection of successful proposals

Proposals deemed unsuccessful initially may be refined and resubmitted, but must be submitted before the final closing date of 8 May 2010.



Essential Criteria for Applications

All proposals which satisfy the essential criteria developed by AgriFood will be forwarded to DEEWR. AgriFood's essential criteria are:

- the AgriFood application form must be used (see Attachment A – the application form is available from the AgriFood Skills Australia website at www.agrifoodskills.net.au or by emailing ppp@agrifoodskills.net.au);
- all sections of the proposal must be completed;
- any proposed qualifications must be on the DEEWR Priority Occupations list, or a strong case for their inclusion should be made;
- application previously discussed with AgriFood incorporates any required amendments or enhancements;
- for applications through an AgriFood Standing Committee, the application must have attracted the Committee's endorsement as one of the committee's four proposals forwarded to AgriFood for consideration;
- the need for the training confirmed by a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) or a similar workforce development review conducted either by the enterprise or with assistance from AgriFood;
- the proposal is a joint proposal from several businesses where warranted, and is for at least eight trainees;
- the participating enterprise(s) is identified, or if the proposal is a joint proposal from an RTO and an enterprise, a covering letter from the enterprise in support of the application is included; and
- funding required to support any one application should not be more than 30% of total funds AgriFood anticipate will be made available to the industry.

Role of Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)

Industry Skills Councils have a central coordination role in the EBPPP. This includes calling for proposals, assisting enterprises to develop proposals including identifying a RTO, and entering into contract with the successful enterprises on behalf of DEEWR.

DEEWR guidelines require each ISC cast the net wide for proposals so that the applicants do not come from a small pool of known contacts. The proposals must also reflect the range of industries covered by the ISC as well as come from a cross section of the eligible enterprises/organisations

AgriFood is informing stakeholders about EBPPP through:

- AgriFood's Website www.agrifoodskills.net.au;
- State industry training councils, and
- AgriFood's five Standing Committees.

Additionally, contact officers for the regional forums held at Narrabri, Emerald and Griffith have been contacted as well as enterprises which applied for funding under the previous (2008/9) Enterprise PPP initiative



While AgriFood is particularly keen for proposals from SMEs, proposals from larger businesses including national enterprises are also invited.

Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

Developing the Proposal

Development of projects will involve identification of training needs which, in some instances, may require undertaking skills analyses or workforce development plans for enterprises seeking to participate.

In certain circumstances during the development of a proposal, AgriFood will provide some funds for the conduct of a brief Training Needs Analysis (TNA) or equivalent. This will particularly apply to organisations such as regional industry networks, state training bodies etc which are developing proposals on behalf of a number of micro-or small businesses.

As Part of the Proposal

Before seeking funding to cover the cost of such activities under an EBPPP application, ISCs have been advised to determine whether such work could be performed under their own workforce development programs and should endeavour to utilise any pre-existing material such as enterprise-produced plans or skills analyses. The EBPPP aims to fund as many training places for existing workers as possible and any necessary costs additional to the cost of actual training will be carefully considered in the context of funding decisions.

Further Information

For further information on the EBPPP, please contact Angela Petty, EBPPP Project Officer at AgriFood, on (02) 6163 7208, or email ppp@agrifoodskills.net.au.

Further information is also available on the AgriFood Skills Australia website at www.agrifoodskills.net.au, or from DEEWR at www.productivityplaces.deewr.gov.au.