

# Eight Government grants worth knowing about

By Robert Jones



Robert Jones

Assistance is available to companies who can afford to keep their fingers on the pulse, says financial expert ROBERT JONES.

With the economy in crisis new forms of funding seem to spring up out of nowhere while others are starved to death.

The trick is to tell the difference between funding that is purely for political spin and assistance that is serious about making a difference.

Here's my guide to getting a grant that's worth its weight in the paperwork you will have to process in order to obtain it.

Firstly, both Federal and State governments like to see your money at work so they will usually back you up dollar-for-dollar rather than hand over a lump sum.

It does take some effort to get grants and a sound business to receive them. They are not just handouts.

If you have a good business or a decent business proposition there might be a grant available to assist. Grants should be part of your funding strategy.

This brief guide outlines some of the current grants available. If you can't find one to suit

your business go to [www.vebiz.com.au](http://www.vebiz.com.au) where you will find a more comprehensive list.

Individual circumstances must be taken into account of course, so the following information should only be used as an approximate guide.

## Government Grants Guide

### 1. Export Funding for Market Development

Both the State and Federal Governments have programs to assist Australian export earnings – it is good for business and employment.

### 2. Austrade – Export Market Development

The Federal Government has a funding program, the Export Market Development

Grant (EMDG) providing up to \$150,000 pa (\$200,000 in 2009) to businesses that market their goods or services overseas. There are defined areas of eligible expenditure that include things like marketing and overseas representation.

### 3. State Government

The NSW Government will subsidise up to 50 per cent of the cost of a consultant preparing a business for export (up to \$10,000) and other states offer similar deals. This includes export planning, logistics and packaging.

NSW Trade Exhibition Assistance is also available to subsidise 50 per cent of tradeshow exhibition cost up to \$5000. Independent market visits assistance up to \$3000 is available to offset fees paid to an approved service providers.

### 4. Australian Technology Showcase

This is a federally sponsored program to catalogue and promote innovative Australian ideas, administered by the states. ATS promotes Australian technology and provides some development export expenditure over three years up to \$20,000

### 5. Enterprise Connect

Through Enterprise Connect, the Australian Government will reimburse your firm half the cost, up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST), of engaging consultant/s to deliver the Tailored Advisory Service. Projects identified through the review process are funded and include things like supply chain management and new product or service development.

### 6. Climate Ready

Climate Ready provides grants from \$50,000 to \$5 million on a matching funding basis to support projects that address the effects of climate change. A broad range of project applications is expected.

### 7. COMmercialisation of Emerging Technologies (COMET)

Successful applicants are required to work with a COMET business adviser to develop and implement an assistance plan through third party specialist service providers. Grants have two tiers – firstly up to \$64,000 from a project total of \$80,000, then another \$56,000 potentially funded.

### 8. R&D Tax Concession - rebate

A federal assistance program managed through the ATO; offering an additional 25% deductibility and an uplift again after 3 years.

*\* Robert Jones is the principal of VEBIZ consulting. He is a CA with a background in auditing and logistics. He has been the director of several companies and helped many different types of enterprises to achieve better business outcomes. His current focus is on export development and grant funding.*

## How to 'bullet proof' your business

Attaché Software has released a new publication entitled *Bullet Proof your Business: Debtors Reduction Strategies* a strategic business tool.

The publication gives advice on how to reduce the impact of outstanding debtor days and increase working capital.

Available free of charge, the comprehensive *Debtors Reduction Strategies* guide comes complete with a *Debtors Ready Reckoner* chart for evaluating outstanding current debtor days, along with a *Debtors Reduction Checklist* that addresses seven key areas where businesses can reduce debtors and improve relationships with key customers and suppliers.

As part of its *Debtors Reduction Strategies* campaign, Attaché is also holding seminars at major city and regional locations around Australia and NZ in April aimed at educating business owners on how they can bullet

proof their enterprises.

Attaché Software managing director, Michael Rich, said the *Debtors Ready Reckoner* chart enables a business to quickly assess its current average debtor days by matching annual revenue with outstanding debtors.

"Businesses are able to quickly evaluate how a change in average debtor days impacts on their available working capital," Mr Rich said.

Reducing debtors, particularly in tough economic times, can make a huge difference to a business, he said.

It is the logical starting place to improve cash flow and increase working capital.

For bookings to attend an education seminar or to obtain a copy of *Bullet Proof your Business*:

**Debtors Reduction Strategies contact Attaché Software Ph: 1300 288 224. [www.attachesoftware.com](http://www.attachesoftware.com)**



## The funding whizz

There are many forms of government assistance available to the manufacturing industry as well as other forms of funding.

Vebiz specialise in helping small to medium size enterprises and have a very good track record applying for state and federal funding on their behalf; even the government recommends us.

For more information please contact Rob Jones on 04 3883 2491 or [manager@vebiz.com.au](mailto:manager@vebiz.com.au).

[www.vebiz.com.au](http://www.vebiz.com.au)