

Business Sustainability Program

AIM Grants

For businesses and not-for-profits that AIM for a more economically and environmentally sustainable future

2021-22 Guideline

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Please contact Program staff to obtain the latest copy.



**Government
of South Australia**

Green Industries SA

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About Green Industries SA (GISA)

Green Industries SA (GISA) promotes the circular economy, best practice waste management, materials and resource efficiency, and the conservation and recovery of scarce resources. GISA is an enabler and driver of change, supporting the development of the circular economy through diverse collaborations which improve productivity, resilience, economic and environmental performance.

For more information visit www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au

About GISA’s Business Sustainability Program

The Program aims to expand South Australia’s green industry sector by supporting a range of businesses, organisations, and industries to apply sustainability and circular economy principles in the commercial production of goods and delivery of services. The objective is to support business activity that reduces reliance on virgin materials, keeps materials in use for as long as possible, and eliminates waste, pollution or harm to the environment.

By identifying and prioritising better practice materials and resource efficiency, waste management and resource recovery, and implementing circular economy principles, AIM Grant participants can improve profitability, productivity, and environmental performance. Projects also build accountability and transparency into environmental reporting; give participants a competitive advantage, and savings that can be reinvested for continuous improvement and economic growth.

For more information visit <https://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/BSP-overview>

Grant Funding Overview

Assess-Implement-Monitor (AIM) Grants

Delivered as part of GISA’s Business Sustainability Program

FOR:	TO:
<p>Businesses, not-for-profits, Australian companies seeking to identify, prioritise, and implement business sustainability improvements and help grow the circular economy in South Australia.</p> <p>Applicants must be using commercial waste collection services (in addition to, or instead of council/kerbside waste collection services), and have been operating in SA for a minimum of 2 years.</p>	<p>Assess materials and resource efficiency, waste management, and/or other options to support a more sustainable and circular economy for SA</p> <p>Implement recommendations made through an independent and impartial assessment</p> <p>Monitor progress and report outcomes, using it as a basis for continuous improvement</p>

Up to \$15,000 is available as a subsidy comprised of

ASSESS	<p>Up to \$10,000 for independent and impartial, expert advisory services (consultancy or similar) to assess and report on current practice and opportunities for improvement in one or more of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials efficiency and waste management • Resource efficiency (energy, water, trade waste) • Lean production practices • Sustainable procurement • Product and/or service design for reuse, repair, remanufacture, recycling, outcome-as-a service • Other circular economy initiatives <p>Assessments must contribute to the development of a business case for investment in one or more of the areas listed above; or development of sustainability or circular economy strategy, policy, plans and/or targets.</p> <p>Co-contribution 2:1 (GISA : Applicant)</p> <p>Energy assessments/audits 1:1 (GISA : Applicant)</p>
IMPLEMENT	<p>Following successful completion of an assessment</p> <p>Up to \$5,000 is available to implement recommendations that meet eligibility criteria including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • payback greater than 2 years • reduces materials or resource intensity for the production of goods/services; and/or increases total waste diversion from landfill • reduces reliance on virgin materials (within or external to the applicant site) <p>Co-contribution 1:1 (GISA : Applicant)</p> <p>Energy-related initiatives are ineligible for implementation funding.</p>
MONITOR	<p>Successful applicants are expected to monitor progress and report outcomes of project implementation to Green Industries SA. Program staff will be in touch following project completion to see how implementation has progressed. Successful applicants are expected to remain in contact with GISA, to monitor project outcomes, and report results and/or key achievements (also challenges and/or barriers, if applicable).</p>

Examples of acceptable ASSESSMENT project types and project components:

- Materials efficiency assessments
 - Review of material inputs and waste, with recommendations for avoiding and reducing waste, and optimising use of material inputs (reducing material intensity of products/services). Must include cost/benefit analysis of recommendations; and recommendations must be based on better practice waste management hierarchy and circular economy principles.
- Resource efficiency assessments
 - Review of energy and/or water consumption and trade waste, with recommendations for preventing unnecessary use, improving efficiency, reducing loss, and sustainable sourcing (reuse/recycled water, non-fossil-fuel-derived power).
 - Waste assessment and/or material efficiency assessment may be coupled with energy and/or water for a more holistic approach to improving performance.
 - Water assessments must also consider trade waste (waste water) impacts.
 - Energy audits/assessment eligible for 1:1 co-contribution (other assessments 2:1).
- Lean production reviews/assessments
 - Review of current production practice, with recommended improvements based on the principles of lean production where this leads to waste avoidance and/or reduced materials intensity in the production of goods/services.
- Sustainable procurement reviews, development of policies
 - Review of procurement policies and practices, recommending improvements that align with the principals of circular economy and lead to a reduction in waste and/or materials intensity for the applicant.
 - Developing sustainable procurement policies to enable more environmentally conscious purchasing decisions, and to support South Australia's green economy.
 - Review of current suppliers and identification of more environmentally sustainable and local options.
- Circular economy business case development for new or revised business models, including:
 - research and design of new or revised production methods / service delivery
 - pilot projects (trials) to test implementation of circular economy practices.

Other projects that align with Program aim, objectives and outcomes may also be considered.

Funding to IMPLEMENT may be provided for activities such as:

- Purchase and installation of equipment or infrastructure that is new to the site¹.
- Upgrade or modernise existing equipment or infrastructure.
- More in-depth, detailed design required prior to purchase of equipment or infrastructure; or to provide additional detail for implementation of new business model.

Where the Assessment-Grantee has full or part ownership of shared infrastructure, funds may be provided at the absolute discretion of GISA.

¹ Funds for specific training required to enable effective use of new equipment may be provided at the absolute discretion of GISA.

Conditions of Funding

Eligibility

Applications for AIM Grants will be accepted from registered businesses, not-for-profits, and Australian companies operating within South Australia that are seeking expert advice before taking the next step in their sustainability or circular economy improvement journey.

Assessment projects must be delivered in partnership with a suitably qualified and capable, independent and impartial service provider (a specialist advisory consultant, or equivalent).

To be eligible for implementation funds, activities must be undertaken by a suitably qualified and capable, external contractor or service provider with relevant skills and experience facilitating similar implementation works.

Applicants must:

- Have been operating for a minimum of two years in South Australia.
- Be using commercial waste/recycling collection services (in addition to, or instead of kerbside services provided by local council).
- Provide in-kind support for project delivery (i.e. allocate staff to ensure the project is delivered as expected, and give access to data and information required by service providers for effective project delivery).
- Be solvent, and able to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with the South Australian Government (via Green Industries SA).
- Hold a current Australian Business Number (ABN) and be registered for GST; not-for-profit organisations must be registered with an appropriate Australian and/or State-based authority as a legal entity.
- Hold and maintain Public Liability Insurance to the value of at least \$1 million for the duration of the proposed project².
- Comply with all federal and state laws, regulations, and any applicable Environment Protection Authority requirements.

Projects must:

- Be new, not already commenced or completed at the time of application (funds are not available retrospectively). Consideration may be given to assessments that build upon, or provide updated information from a previous assessment at the discretion of GISA.
- Take place within South Australia for the benefit of South Australians.
- Have a clear timeframe and project milestones.
- Be tailored to address the needs of the applicant (not provide generic advice).
- Focus on holistic solutions, taking into consideration how recommended activities may affect multiple aspects of the applicant's operations.
- Compare current practice to a range of alternative activities/technologies/solutions (not focus on a single solution).

² Applicants are encouraged to ensure service provider(s) engaged for project delivery hold and maintain both Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance valued at a minimum \$1 million each / per claim for the duration of the funded project.

- Focus on activities that are in addition to meeting minimum regulatory compliance standards.
- Meet and contribute to the [Program aim, objectives and outcomes](#), including clear links to driving a more sustainable and circular economy in South Australia; targeting activities prioritised higher on the waste management hierarchy than current practice; best practice materials and resource efficiency.
- Be 'business-led': applicants must discuss their project with Program staff prior to applying for funding, and provide explanation of the reason/need for the project.

What will NOT be funded

The following organisations are **not eligible** to apply for AIM grant funding:

- Government entities
- Schools and community groups
- Organisations that provide and/or represent the interests of waste management service providers, such as commercial recyclers, landfill operators, waste transport operators and waste transfer station operators.

Businesses that provide environmental advisory, consultancy, training and/or education services, and can deliver projects that meet Program aim, objectives and outcomes, and other eligibility criteria may partner with an eligible organisation that is willing to apply for funding and take responsibility for project management, engagement and communication with the target audience.

AIM grant **funds are not available** for projects that focus on:

- solutions prioritised lower on the waste management hierarchy than current practice
- gaining development approval
- achieving certification or meeting regulatory standards (such as NABERS ratings, environmental protection standards or licencing conditions)
- solutions for waste managed through kerbside systems
- community-focused initiatives such as repair cafes and tool libraries.

AIM grant funds are **not available** for:

- Implementation of energy-related initiatives / improvements, including but not limited to:
 - Solar and wind power systems and components
 - Lighting replacement, repair and upgrade
 - Power factor correction, HVAC systems
 - Other recommendations made through an energy audit (or assessment).
- Applicant travel costs, wages, salaries, and other operating costs (such as rent, electricity, water, waste and other utilities).
- Subscription, lease or licensing fees (consideration may be given to funding these elements if they are required as part of a funded-trial or pilot program, and applicant is willing to accept ongoing future costs if the trial/pilot is successful).
- Vehicle purchase, hire, lease, and/or repair.
- Fees associated with the protection or patenting of intellectual property.
- Fees for legal and accounting services.
- Fees associated with any insurances held in relation to a grant application, whether such costs are required by the funding agreement or otherwise.
- Any project that GISA deems to be inconsistent with the Program aim, objectives and outcomes.
- Any project deemed more appropriate to fit under an alternative grant funding program (administered by GISA or another organisation).

Funding Availability

The total annual budget allocated to the *Business Sustainability Program* is outlined in the 'Green Industries SA Business Plan' (published on the GISA website), and is subject to change. The total budget incorporates all costs required to run the Program including grants (LEAP Grants and AIM Grants), development and publishing of case studies and other resources, staff (salaries and wages) and administrative costs.

Allocation of funds is at the absolute discretion of GISA, and GISA may set a limit on the amount of funding approved per applicant. GISA may request and/or vary the amount of a financial co-contribution to be supplied from an applicant, particularly in cases where the applicant is, or has been responsible for more than one project.

How to Apply

Before an application form is supplied, **you must contact Program staff** and discuss key elements of the project including:

- Reason for the project (motivating factors, key drivers, benefits etc.).
- Project scope, methodology, and resourcing (including how service providers will be engaged, whether this is through a selection process or direct engagement).
- Project deliverables (outcomes and outputs) and timeframes.
- Level of contribution from the applicant and GISA (in-kind and financial).

Following discussion and any subsequent refinements to project scope (if requested by GISA), if it is determined that the applicant and project are likely to be eligible, the applicant will be invited to apply for a grant and an application form will be issued (via email).

Details of arrangements between applicant and service provider (consultant, or equivalent) must be enclosed with the application. This includes the relevant project proposal from the service provider(s).

Project proposals from service providers must include (as a minimum):

- project scope, methodology, and milestones
- deliverables (outputs) clearly documented / listed
- anticipated timing of delivery (based on availability and client/applicant needs)
- breakdown of project costs by activity and personnel
- evidence of relevant knowledge, experience and capability to deliver the project (such as relevant staff CVs and examples of other similar work).

Assessment Process

Applications must be delivered by email and will be acknowledged as 'received' (via return email) within 10 working days of receipt. Applications are reviewed to confirm eligibility, and evaluated for alignment with the Assessment Criteria (below). Consideration will also be given to the level of funds remaining in the Program budget to determine which applicant(s) are provided a Grant Offer.

During the assessment process, additional information may be requested to clarify aspects of the application. Failure to provide the information requested by GISA in a timely manner may terminate the assessment of the application.

The duration of the assessment process varies depending on the nature of the project, the completeness of the application, and GISA staff availability. As a guide, the duration between the submission of the application (and any additional supporting information requested by GISA) and the decision regarding funding approval should take no longer than 4 weeks (20 working days).

All applications will be treated as commercial-in-confidence. GISA reserves the right to include third party evaluations as part of the assessment process and has the ultimate discretion in relation to publicity for successful applications.

Assessment Criteria

Applications must be assessed as sufficient in the following areas - in addition to meeting the *Conditions of Funding: Eligibility* - to be considered eligible for potential grant funding:

- A clear and credible:
 - reason for undertaking the project
 - reason for selecting the proposed service provider
 - explanation as to how the applicant intends to implement recommendations arising from assessment project
 - description of the proposed project, including a succinct and clear description of each major task (activity) to be performed, with associated budget for each; and clearly defined outputs (deliverables).
- Evidence of the service provider(s) relevant knowledge, experience and capability to deliver the project (to be included as part of the service provider's project proposal).
- Capability and capacity of the applicant to manage the project (considering relevant experience in grant and/or project management), and sufficient level of commitment to deliver the project in partnership with GISA and their chosen service provider.
- Appropriate project risk management (identification of the main risks associated with the project and the proposed mitigation measures).
- Appropriate measurement, evaluation and data capture to achieve project objectives.

GISA may take into account other aspects of the application it regards as relevant, and preference may be given to applications that meet one or more of the following:

- Clearly demonstrates applicability of the project to other sites owned / operated by the applicant, or to other businesses / industry sectors.
- Clearly demonstrates applicant's commitment to implementing circular economy practices and/or environmental sustainability.
- Assessment results likely to be a useful foundation (or evidence-base) that the applicant can use to leverage funds from other sources (such as other State or Commonwealth grant programs).
- Clearly demonstrates and provides relevant explanation as to why the project would not go ahead without the grant.

Funding Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement (provided as a *Grant Offer*) with Green Industries SA. This agreement will set out the terms of the grant, conditions, payment schedules, project deliverables, key performance indicators, reporting requirements and other matters (based on the information provided in a grant application). A copy of a standard funding agreement can be provided on request.

Timeframe

GISA aims to be flexible with regard to timeframes for project delivery and funding periods. Grant funds may be provided for eligible project costs incurred for up to 24 months from the date of execution of the funding agreement, or as otherwise negotiated and agreed by GISA.

As a guide, funded-assessment projects usually take a minimum of 3 months (covering project inception, data collection and analysis, report drafting and finalisation, and project close), and may take as long as 6-12 months depending on staff and data availability. Timing of implementation projects vary.

Reporting

GISA requires successful applicants to provide reporting on the project progress and outcomes. Requirements of reporting will be specified in the *Grant Offer*, and may vary on a case by case basis in accordance with project type and deliverables.

Assessment reports should be provided to the Grantee by the service provider (consultant or similar), and copies must be provided to GISA in draft (for review and feedback) and when finalised (based on feedback from GISA and Grantee to the service provider).

To be deemed satisfactory, assessment reports must include the following, as a minimum:

- summary of project methodology and timeframe; any key assumptions made during data analysis or report preparation; and referenced data sources
- relevant baseline data, used as a basis for recommending improvements (this should include quantity and costs for a minimum 12 month, consecutive period)
- prioritised list of all improvement opportunities identified, clearly indicating how prioritisation was applied
- summary of key recommendations that form the basis of a business case for investment, considering:
 - implementation activity(ies) required for effective improvement
 - opportunities, benefits, barriers and challenges (if applicable) associated with implementation activity(ies)
 - how the recommendation(s) are likely to impact other aspects of operations (such as labour, maintenance, replacement timeframes, staff training requirements etc.)
 - estimated capex, opex (per annum), annual savings (financial and material), simple payback (years).

Case Studies and Promotion

Applicants are not permitted to publicise their projects without the written approval in the first instance of Green Industries SA. GISA has ultimate discretion about publicity of successful applications.

All successful applicants must be willing to cooperate and participate in the development of case study materials based on funded projects (using information of a non-sensitive nature) if requested by GISA. The purpose of case studies is to encourage other organisations to undertake similar

initiatives, and may be used as an educative resource by GISA and/or the successful applicant. Case study materials are usually made publicly available and may be used by successful applicants for their own promotional and/or educative purposes.

All successful applicants must, if requested, supply a high-resolution logo and authorise its use on the GISA website and to be listed as a Program participant. The value of grants will also be listed against successful applicant name on the GISA website, with a short description of the funded project.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please visit <https://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/aim-grants-faqs> for the latest list of FAQs on:

- Applicant eligibility
- Project eligibility
- How to apply
- What to include in an application
- The assessment process
- Funding agreements
- What to include in consultant proposals

Contact Us

For further information about the *Business Sustainability Program*, and to discuss your AIM project, please contact one of the following Program staff:

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