

-Questions and Answers – Employment Services 2009-2012 – Innovation Fund

1. What is the timetable for the Tender process for the Innovation Fund panel?	
February 2009:	Announce Innovation Fund panel members Call for initial project proposals which can commence from 1 July 2009
Mid April 2009:	Closing date for activity proposal submissions
1 July 2009:	Start date of Funding Agreement Period
<p>Proposals for projects under the Innovation Fund can be submitted at any time, but there will be regular rounds of funding approvals.</p> <p>For comprehensive information and any updates on the Innovation Fund, the new employment services and details about the new employment services 2009-12 Purchasing Arrangements, please visit workplace.gov.au/esreview or phone the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Employment Services Purchasing Hotline on 1300 733 514.</p>	
2. Where can queries about the Innovation Fund be sent?	
<p>The Department has established a dedicated email address to respond to queries about the operation of the Innovation Fund. The email address is innovation.fund@deewr.gov.au</p> <p>Queries that relate to the appointment of Innovation Fund panel members should be sent to espurchasing@deewr.gov.au or by calling the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Employment Services Purchasing Hotline on 1300 733 514.</p>	
3. Can I find more information regarding the Innovation Fund?	
<p>The Innovation Fund provides for the funding of projects that offer place-based solutions to address barriers to employment for groups of highly disadvantaged job seekers. A panel of organisations interested in delivering Innovation Fund projects has been appointed, based on the selection criteria in the 2009 Employment Services Tender process.</p> <p>Panel members will be invited to submit proposals for funding to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for assessment.</p> <p>Read more about the Innovation Fund in the New Employment Services – in the Innovation Fund factsheet at http://workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/Purchasing/Finalised+tenders/Finalisedtenders/EmploymentPurchasingOutcomes2009.htm.</p> <p>Guidelines for the development and management of individual projects for the Innovation Fund are available at www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/PolicyReviews/NewEmploymentServices/</p> <p>Information on the Request for Tender is available at workplace.gov.au/ESPurchasing or phone the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Employment Services Purchasing Hotline on 1300 733 514.</p>	
4. How much funding is available under Innovation Fund?	
<p>The Australian Government has provided \$41 million over three years to fund Innovation Fund projects to 2011-12.</p>	
5. How much funding can be provided for individual Innovation Fund activities?	
<p>Individual projects will generally not be funded for more than \$500,000 per year from the Innovation Fund, however, this will be considered on a case by case basis and will depend on the scale of the project.</p>	

<p>6. Who is on the Innovation Fund Panel?</p>
<p>There are 196 organisations who are members of the Innovation Fund Panel. Further information on these panel members can be found at www.workplace.gov.au.</p>
<p>7. What areas will panel members service?</p>
<p>When appointing organisations to the Innovation Fund Panel, the Department took a number of factors into account including geographical coverage. Tenderers were required to indicate the states and/or territories in which they were willing to provide services.</p> <p>Successful panel members were announced in February 2009. This information and other updates on Innovation Fund will be made available on www.workplace.gov.au/esreview. Please check the website regularly for updates.</p>
<p>8. If the Innovation Fund Panel is state-wide, is there an expectation that providers will deliver the project state-wide?</p>
<p>No. The type of Innovation Fund project will determine how and where it will be delivered. There could be projects delivered in one or several locations or even state-wide.</p>
<p>9. Why are projects targeted to disadvantaged locations?</p>
<p>Place based strategies will be essential as evidence suggests that in an economic downturn, the most disadvantaged locations will suffer the most.</p> <p>We need to ensure that people in these locations will be in the best possible position when times improve by building their capacity and skills and by combating entrenched disadvantage.</p>
<p>10. What types of projects will be funded under the Innovation Fund?</p>
<p>A diverse range of innovative projects may be funded, including projects which :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish wrap-around service solutions to address health, mental health, drug and alcohol, dental, childcare, language and cultural housing and homelessness issues etc; • improve information sharing between services that assist job seekers; • involve the mentoring of groups of job seekers with specific disadvantage and the establishment of social enterprises; and • link disadvantaged job seekers with areas of skill shortage.
<p>11. When will Guidelines for the Innovation Fund be made available?</p>
<p>The Department has published Guidelines and the Proposal for Funding Form for the Innovation Fund on its website at www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/PolicyReviews/NewEmploymentServices/</p>
<p>12. Can organisations still submit applications to become a member of the Innovation Fund panel?</p>
<p>Applications to be on the Innovation Fund Panel were part of the Employment Services Request for Tender which was released on 27 September 2008. This Tender is now closed.</p> <p>In the future, the Department may call for the submission of tenders to refresh the panel membership.</p>
<p>13. If organisations are not members of the Innovation Fund Panel, can they still nominate activities for funding</p>
<p>Non-panel members may directly approach panel members to collaborate on activity proposals which a panel member could then submit to DEEWR. Alternatively, non panel members may nominate ideas for activities directly to DEEWR and if assessed as suitable by DEEWR, panel members may be sought to develop and implement these activities.</p> <p>Successful panel members were announced in February 2009 with funding for Innovation Fund activities available from 1 July 2009. This information and other updates on Innovation Fund will be made available on www.workplace.gov.au/esreview.</p>

14. What options exist for non-panel members if they are unable to find a panel member to collaborate with on their proposed activity?

Non-panel members may nominate ideas for activities directly to DEEWR and if determined to be suitable by DEEWR, panel members may be sought to develop and implement these activities. Organisations who select this option can contact DEEWR through the email or mail address detailed in the Proposal for Funding Form located on the Innovation Fund webpage which can be accessed at

www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/PolicyReviews/NewEmploymentServices/

15. How do you determine if a project could be suitable for funding under Innovation Fund?

Organisations should refer to the Guidelines for Innovation Fund Projects to see if their project complies with its requirements. A copy of the Guidelines is available on the Innovation Fund webpage which can be accessed at

www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/PolicyReviews/NewEmploymentServices/.

16. How often will proposals for activities be sought?

The Department will make its first call for submissions for initial projects which can commence from 1 July 2009 by the end of February 2009.

Proposals for projects under the Innovation Fund can be submitted at any time, but there will be regular rounds of funding approvals. DEEWR may also seek submissions for particular activities or from specific groups within the panel.