



AVANT GROUP

Grants and funding update

Kate Whitehead



10+ years

Manufacturing & defence experience

20+ years

Grants experience

14+ years

Managing Director, Avant Group – 2012+

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor Business
- Grad Diploma Business MBS
- Masters Business Marketing MBS
- Grad Dip Applied Tax Law, Tax Institute
- Dip Mech Eng, Swinburne University
- GAICD
- Registered Tax Agent
- **Winner – 2026 Australian Woman in Defence SME**

BOARD & ADVISORY ROLES



Chair
Export Chamber Australia Inc.



Fight Cancer Foundation™
Giving hope. Saving lives.

Deputy Chair
Fight Cancer Foundation, CBB,
BMDI



GAMMA CAPITAL

Board Member
Gamma Capital

About Avant Group

\$2.2B

in funding unlocked

14

years of unlocking funding

30

staff across the East Coast (hopefully Perth soon!)

- **Australia's largest independent grants and incentives consulting firm**
- **STEM expertise**
Mechanical Engineers, Mechatronics, Medical, Nuclear Medicine, Scientists and more. Teamed with legal, accounting, tax and policy/advisory specialists.
- **Work as the conduit between government policy and business**

HOW WE WORK

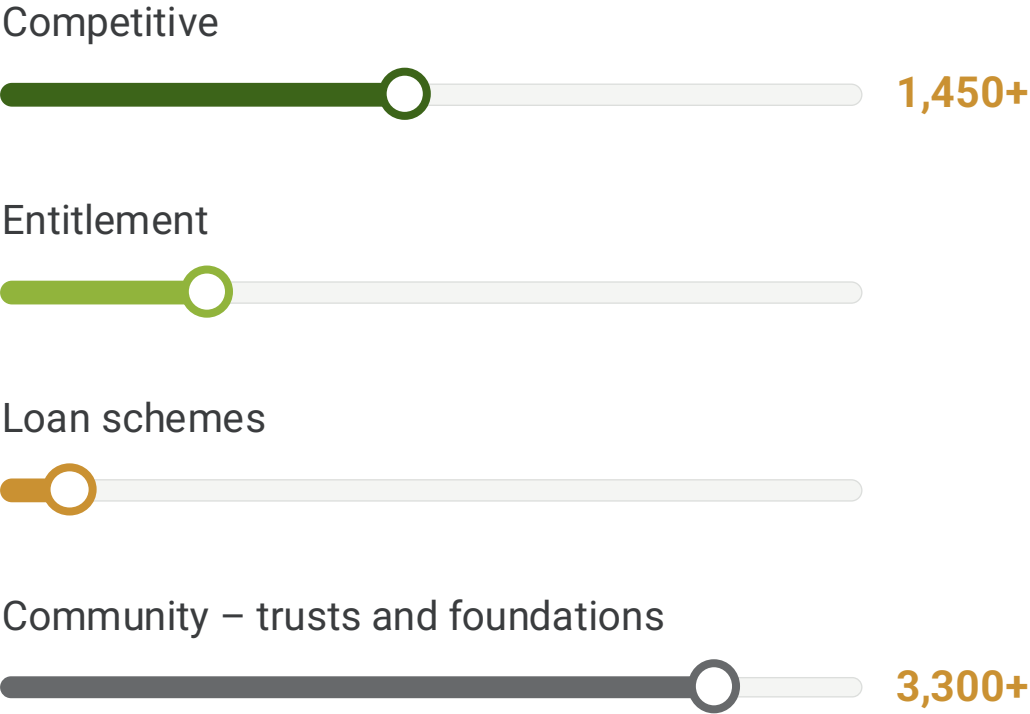
We advise on what fits.

We prepare what stacks up.

We defend what we file.

We are here when the next round opens.

Grants overview



A woman and a man wearing hard hats are standing on a construction site. The woman is holding a tablet and pointing at it, while the man looks on. The background is a blurred construction site with scaffolding and building structures.

Grants Landscape

National Defence Strategy & Industry Support



Interested in any of these programs? Scan the QR Code to find out more.

Defence Industry Development Grant - Funding streams

Sovereign Industrial Priorities	Export Stream	Skilling Stream	Security Stream
GRANT Up to \$1 million at 50% funding OBJECTIVE Increase manufacturing capability and capacity for the Australian defence supply chain WHAT IT FUNDS • Capital equipment • Labour costs relating to capital equipment acquisition • Minor building modifications relating to capital equipment acquisition	GRANT Up to \$250,000 at 50% funding OBJECTIVE Facilitate companies to secure export opportunities WHAT IT FUNDS • Capital equipment • International certifications and accreditations	GRANT Up to \$250,000 at 50% funding OBJECTIVE Upskill existing staff WHAT IT FUNDS • Formal courses at university or TAFE • Registered training courses • Apprenticeship supervision by an accredited supervisor	GRANT Up to \$100,000 at 50% funding OBJECTIVE Uplift physical and cybersecurity of applicant's facility in support of DISP accreditation WHAT IT FUNDS • Physical security infrastructure such as cameras, security doors, fences etc • Employment of a security officer • Cybersecurity enhancement relating to the Essential 8 framework

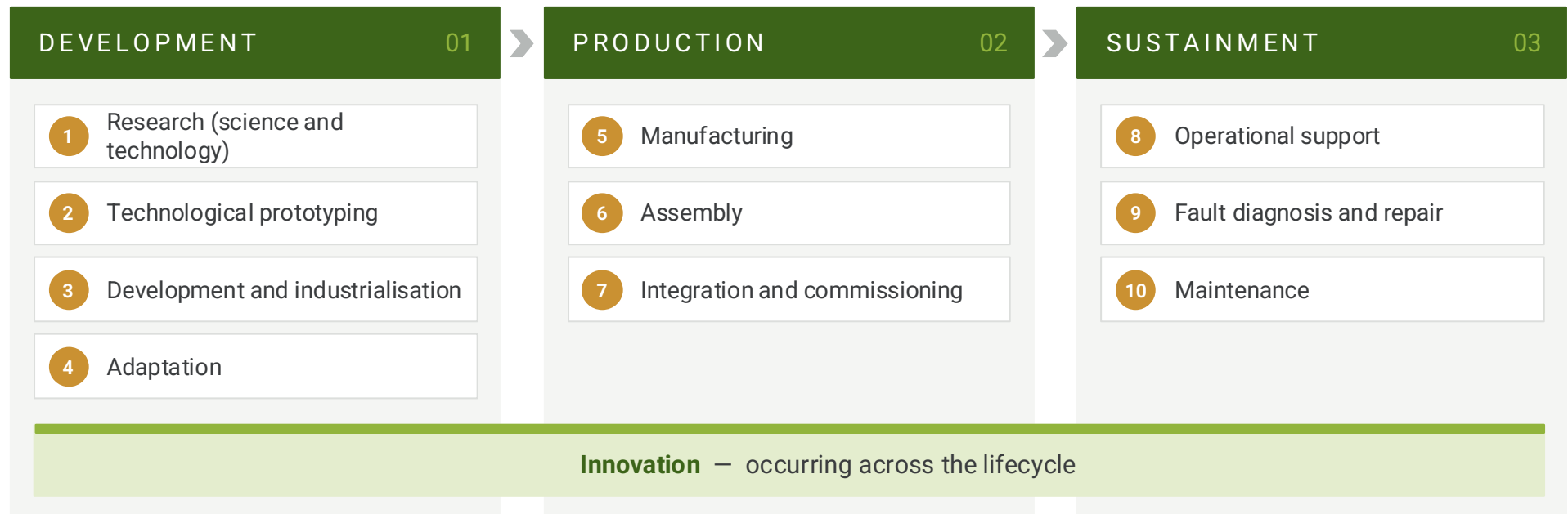
Defence Strategy Funding

A \$53 billion commitment over ten years highlights Australia's focus on national security and military capability. \$250M in grants committed to 2030.

- CgAll streams remain on normal 2-3 monthly batch cycle
- SIP and Skilling streams currently closed to allow updates
- SIP batch 9 being assessed as normal (late October)
- Revised Grant Opportunity Guidelines target of 03 November
- SIP batch 10 closes 30 November

Industrial capability lifecycle (DIDS26)

FIGURE 1: INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITY LIFECYCLE FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



Note: this industrial lifecycle may occur in full or in part at any point throughout the life of a Defence capability, as required to achieve continuous capability development and delivery.

KEY INSIGHT

In a competitive program, probability of Defence utilisation is key to justify grants investment, hence later stages in the process are more likely to be supported.

National Defence Strategy & Industry Support

Research and Development Tax Incentive (R&DTI)

Designed to strengthen the Australian innovation economy. Businesses can receive a tax rebate on eligible R&D activity.

ONGOING

Export Market Development Grant (EMDG)

Covers 50% of eligible marketing costs into international markets, with the potential to receive up to \$770K over eight years.

Available to Australian SME manufacturers & service providers planning to export goods & services globally.

ONGOING

Export Finance Australia

Loans from \$20K–\$350K to cover 80% of expenses to secure an export contract or international purchase order for SME exporting businesses. Plus larger capital and other investment loans / securities / guarantees.

ONGOING

National Reconstruction Fund

Large-scale investments into business, backed by superannuation funds. Not a grant program and really focused on larger programs. \$15B fund for investment.

Also provides a short-term lending program in response to fuel shocks – very strict ANZSIC criteria to apply.

NOT A GRANT PROGRAM

ASCA

ASCA has a focus on accelerating the development and acquisition of innovative defence capabilities.

Funded with \$3.4 billion from the Defence budget, ASCA does not develop technology itself but connects and streamlines the defence innovation ecosystem, enabling faster adaptation, testing, and acquisition of disruptive technologies. Its priorities are guided by the National Defence Strategy and the AUKUS Pillar II Advanced Capabilities.

STATE

State Defence Strategy & Industry Support

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Defence Ready Initiative

Provides funding support to Western Australian SMEs that operate in the defence sector to enhance their business capability, capacity and competitiveness to participate as suppliers of products, services and works to the Defence market across all domains.

Grant funding is for 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum of \$20,000. Individual businesses are limited to one application per grant round.

CLOSED – NEXT ROUND HOPED CIRCA NOV 26

AUKUS SME Readiness Fund

Grants of up to \$100,000 per project. Funding support to Western Australian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to improve their capacity and capability to secure work in the AUKUS supply chain, specifically for AUKUS Pillars 1 and 2. A minimum 50% cash contribution is required from the applicant.

HOPING FOR ANOTHER ROUND LATE 2026

Regional Economic Development (RED) Grants

Grants of up to \$250,000 per project. Funds a diverse range of projects from various industries that contribute to economic growth objectives in regional WA.

A minimum 50% cash contribution to the project is required from the applicant.

NEXT ROUND EXPECTED LATE 2026

TASMANIA

TAS Defence Industry Tender Support Program

Up to \$30K in co-funded grants to support Tasmanian advanced manufacturers and technology enterprises to secure specialist bid and tender writing consultants for defence traders.

CLOSED – NEXT ROUND HOPED CIRCA NOV 26

VICTORIA

Victorian Land Systems Fund

Supply Chain Uplift Program (SCUP)

The SCUP backs Victorian defence industry businesses in collaboration with Hanwha Defence Australia, part of its supply chain, providing grants from \$2K to \$100K.

ONGOING



Interested in any of these programs?

Scan the QR code to find out more.

STATE

State Defence Strategy & Industry Support

QUEENSLAND

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

\$1.5M

Transforming Queensland Manufacturing Grants Program

For Qld manufacturers to invest in capital equipment for growth and scale (not necessarily only for defence) – linked to jobs creation.

Ongoing 6-monthly for the next two years.

CURRENTLY OPEN

CERTIFICATION

\$5K–\$30K

Defence and Aerospace Industry Development Fund Grants

For Queensland SMEs to acquire recognised certification to participate in new or existing supply chains in the defence, aerospace and space industries.

Matched funding up to 50%, although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses may apply for up to 75% funding.

NEW ROUND EXPECTED FY27

INVESTMENT FUND

\$5M

Qld Sovereign Fund

Investment fund for Qld businesses in the priority areas (defence included).

POSSIBLE REOPENING TBA



Interested in any of these programs?

Scan the QR code to find out more.

A woman wearing a white hard hat and a high-visibility safety vest is shown in profile, holding a tablet computer. She is looking towards a blurred background of industrial structures, possibly a power plant or refinery, at night. The scene is dimly lit, with some lights visible in the background.

Export Market Development Grant

Export Market Development Grant

GRANTS OF UP TO

\$770,000

per applicant

8

years (not necessarily consecutively)

Small to medium enterprises (SMEs) will be able to apply for grants of up to \$770,000 per applicant, over up to eight years (not necessarily consecutively), for eligible promotional activities.

To be eligible, SMEs will need to be:

- ✓ Export-ready
- ✓ Turnover of less than \$20 million, with revenue of \$100K (or \$250K TBC) in the financial year prior to applying
- ✓ 2 years trading history and proof of capacity to spend \$20K on eligible activities
- ✓ Complex upfront process

Flexible structure: more flexible than other programs – can be sole trader, trust, NFP etc.

Products and services

- Australian content
- Export principle
- Some exclusions apply: visa migration services, property development, Australian assets and X-rated activity, for example.

NEXT CYCLE 2027/28 – MOST LIKELY

Benefits

To be eligible, your business must fall within 1 of the 4 tiers and be export ready.

TIER 1

Suitable for companies with a turnover of less than \$20 million that are new to exporting.

\$20,000 – \$30,000
per financial year

TIER 2

Suits those who plan to expand their presence in current markets, with a turnover of less than \$20 million.

\$20,000 – \$50,000
per financial year

TIER 3

For those who are making a shift to new markets and have a turnover of less than \$20 million.

\$20,000 – \$80,000
per financial year

REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

Bodies that assist SMEs can also apply for funding to support their members' export efforts.

Up to \$50,000
per financial year

A business is eligible for up to 8 years of EMDG claiming.

Eligible expense categories



Overseas representation



Marketing consultants



Marketing visits

\$350 per day incidental, economy flights



Free samples

COGS and freight



Trade fairs, seminars and in-store promotions



Promotional literature and advertising



Overseas buyers

Some limits



Registration and/or insurance of eligible intellectual property

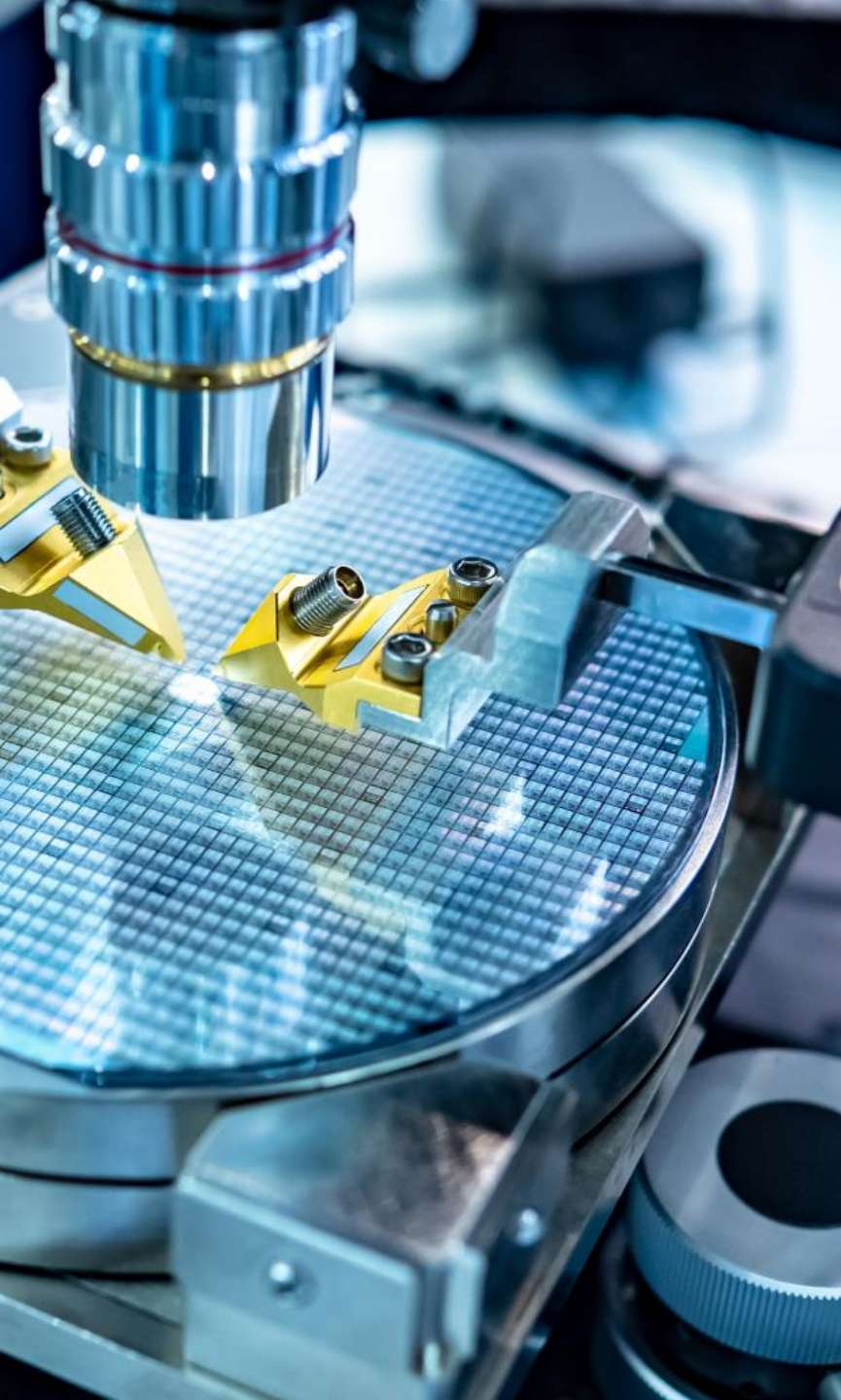


Training

For export development



Research & Development Tax Incentive



R&DTI - INTRODUCTION

Research & Development Tax Incentive (R&DTI)

RDTI aims to support innovative projects.

Eligible businesses can receive substantial financial assistance.

What is R&D?

Research & Development Tax Incentive (R&DTI)

This program provides incentives for companies engaging in research and development (R&D) in Australia. It provides eligible companies with a tax offset for expenditure on eligible R&D activities undertaken during the year.

CURRENT RULES To 30 June 28

Under \$20M turnover

43.5% refundable

Over \$20M turnover

38.5% – 46.5% non-refundable

Based on intensity (2% of expenses)

PROPOSED CHANGES 1 July 28 onwards

Under \$50M turnover

43.5% refundable

Only if company is less than 10 years old

Over \$50M turnover

38.5% – 46.5% non-refundable

Based on intensity (reduced to 1.5% of expenses) to enable more firms to qualify for higher offset rates

ALSO PROPOSED

+4.5 percentage points

Core R&D offset rates will increase by 4.5 percentage points

\$200M maximum threshold

Lifted from \$150 million, with the minimum expenditure threshold rising from \$20,000 to \$50,000

BIG change

Supporting R&D expenditure no longer eligible

Who/what is eligible: Companies can apply if they have engaged in core R&D activities. These include experiments involving tests being undertaken to investigate a proposition about something unknown, or the effectiveness of something previously untried.

A woman and a man wearing hard hats are looking at a tablet together on a construction site. The woman is holding the tablet and pointing at the screen, while the man stands next to her, also looking at the screen. They are both smiling and appear to be engaged in a collaborative work task. The background is a blurred construction site with scaffolding and building structures.

The Grants Landscape

More competitive, tightening eligibility and flatlining some budgets

The landscape



AI is changing the game – more competition than ever before – applicant numbers are increasing as everyone now has the tools.



Loss Refundability And ESIC

New loss refundability for eligible startups

WHO QUALIFIES



Start-up companies



Tax loss

generated in the first two
years of operation



Less than \$10 million

aggregated annual
turnover



THE OUTCOME

**Convert these
losses into a
refundable tax
offset**



THE LIMIT

The value of the offset will be limited by the amount of PAYG withholding and fringe benefits tax paid in respect of Australian employees.

ESIC benefits – good to be across it

The tax benefits include:

20%

non-refundable tax offset

On new equity investments, capped at \$200,000 per sophisticated investor, per year.

10-year

capital gains tax exemption

For profits realised on such investments held for at least 12 months.

KEY RULES



Can't dilute shares – must be new



Test for eligibility must be met – best if claiming RDTI

WHAT THE GOVT GIVETH, THE GOVT TAKETH

It should be noted though that the investor must disregard a capital loss made from a CGT event happening to the shares during this period.



Other Programs



EXPORT FINANCE AUSTRALIA

Export Finance Australia: loan programs



Quick access

Export Finance Australia offers low documentation loans for quick access.



Larger loan programs

Their larger loan programs support significant export projects.



Tailored solutions

The agency provides financial solutions tailored to business needs.

GET IN TOUCH

Questions?

info@avantgroup.com.au



SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE