

Question on Notice
No. 105
Asked on 16 February 2017

MRS GILBERT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION:

Will the Minister update the House about any support available to small businesses in the Mackay region through the government's Accelerate Small Business Grants program?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mackay for her question.

The Queensland Government recognises the economic contribution of small business to the State including around 3,800 in the Mackay electorate, and is committed to their growth and success.

In June 2016, the Palaszczuk Government launched the *Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20* (the Strategy), allocating \$22.7 million over three years towards its implementation.

Aligned with the Working Queensland agenda and forming a component of the \$405 million Accelerating Advance Queensland package, the Strategy is the Queensland Government's plan to help small business start, grow and employ.

The Accelerate Small Business Grants Program is one of three new grants programs launched under the Strategy.

The Accelerate Small Business Grants Program provides targeted assistance to small businesses that demonstrate high-growth and employment aspirations, to engage high-level expertise in their business for an extended period. Eligible small businesses can seek funding of up to \$10,000 to engage business mentors, coaches, or an advisory board, for between six to 12 months.

For example Mackay business Airconstruct HVAC Pty Ltd, has received an Accelerate Small Business Grant. The company will use the funding to develop a new predictive maintenance system and improve its business operations, enabling it to work smarter and bid for new work to help the business to grow.

The Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program provides new small businesses access to professional advice and support in the critical early stages of establishing a business.

The Palaszczuk Government is helping Queensland small businesses check their digital readiness with a new online Digital Scorecard to help businesses identify ways to improve their digital capability and be more competitive in a global digital economy. The Digital Scorecard is available at www.business.qld.gov.au/digitalscorecard.

The Small Business Digital Grants Program assists small businesses to access the latest digital technologies to increase their productivity and competitiveness. Funding of up to \$10,000, matched by participants, is available to eligible businesses for the purchase of hardware, software and services such as digital coaching. Round 2 of the program is now open, with applications closing on 10 April 2017. Further information and eligibility criteria is available at www.business.qld.gov.au/digital.

Businesses in Mackay also have the opportunity to participate in the successful Mentoring for Growth Program which provides targeted advice to small businesses on strategies for growth, investment, export and resilience.

I encourage all small businesses in Mackay to consider the programs and submit an application. Information about these grants programs can be found on Business Queensland at www.business.qld.gov.au.

Whether starting, running or growing a business, Mackay small businesses can access a range of programs that have been designed by the Queensland Government to help them start, grow and employ.