

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016-17 Supplementary Budget Estimates
20 October 2016

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: The Coalitions Policy to Support Innovative New Businesses and Jobs

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Carr

QUESTION No.: SI-72

The government's election policy, Support Innovative New Businesses and Jobs, promises "an additional \$15 million to expand the Incubator Support programme".

- (a) What progress has been made progressing this commitment?
- (b) What is the current allocation and funding profile over the forward estimates to the Incubator Support Programme?
- (c) Has this funding allocation and funding profile changed since the announcement of the government's National Innovation & Science Agenda (NISA)?
- (d) When will applications open?
- (e) Who is eligible to apply?
- (f) How will applicants be assessed?
- (g) Who will assess applications?
- (h) Will the Minister be required to approve all funding, or will authority be delegated?

ANSWER

- a) The Incubator Support programme was launched on 20 September 2016 as a \$23 million programme. This includes the \$15 million election commitment.
- b) The allocation for the Incubator Support Programme over the forward estimates is \$23 million. The funding profile will be agreed with the Department of Finance through MYEFO.
- c) Yes, under the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) Incubator Support was announced as an \$8 million programme. An additional \$15 million was announced during the 2016 Federal Election campaign to expand the Incubator Support Programme.
- d) The programme opened for applications on 20 September 2016.
- e) To be eligible for Incubator Support, applicants must:
 - i. be an existing Incubator or establishing a new Incubator that can foster and facilitate the development of innovative start-ups focused on international trade; and
 - ii. have an Australian Business Number (ABN); and
 - iii. be one of the following:
 - i. an entity incorporated in Australia;
 - ii. an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust;
 - iii. a not for profit organisation;
 - iv. a publicly funded research organisation (PFRO), excluding government departments or agencies which undertake publicly funded research; or

v. local government.

The programme guidelines define an Incubator as a business support organisation that fosters innovative start-ups, focused on international trade, through the provision of services such as seed funding, colocation, mentoring, professional services and access to networks. It can include accelerators and germinators.

The full eligibility criteria including eligible activities and expenditure are published in the programme guidelines on business.gov.au/incubator-support.

- f) Applicants under the new and existing incubators component of the programme will be assessed against the eligibility criteria by AusIndustry. Eligible applications will be referred to the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee for assessment against the merit criteria. Applicants under the expert-in-residence component will be assessed by AusIndustry against the eligibility criteria only. Applicants are assessed against the merit criteria on a competitive basis. The merit criteria are detailed in the guidelines on business.gov.au/incubator-support.
- g) See (f).
- h) The Programme Delegate is the decision maker for expert-in-residence applications. The Minister is the decision maker for new and existing incubator applications.