



**Minister for Industry, Science and Technology**

Min ID: MS19-000895

**For Action**

**Subject: INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) – MIGRANT AND REFUGEE EXPANSION ELECTION COMMITMENT**

**Timing:** Routine – by 5 September 2019

<b>Recommendation:</b>	
That you <b>agree</b> to the proposed changes to the ISI to implement the election commitment to assist migrant and refugee startups. <span style="color: red;">s22</span>	<b>Agreed/Not Agreed/Please discuss</b>
 <b>Karen Andrews .....</b>	<b>Date: 3 / 9 /2019</b>
<b>Comments:</b>	

**Key Points:**

1. The Incubator Support Initiative (ISI) was launched as part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) on 20 September 2016, with a funding allocation of \$23 million through to 2019-20 and an ongoing allocation of \$2 million per year thereafter.
  - a. In December 2017, ISI was re-launched with additional focus on innovation in regional areas. This included lower co-funding requirements for regional activities and the engagement of Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs).
  - b. The \$23 million funding allocation is close to being fully committed. Background on the ISI including the available funding is provided at Attachment A.
2. During the recent Federal election, you jointly announced the commitment to provide an additional \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand ISI to fund organisations that assist first-generation migrants and refugees to establish a startup business.
  - a. Your 100-day plan, as well as your Charter Letter response to the Prime Minister on election commitments, stated that consultation and implementation arrangements for the ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion will be completed by August 2019.
3. The department consulted with internal and external stakeholders including migrant and refugee support organisations such as s22 the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee, the Department of Home Affairs, and the Victorian Government's startup agency LaunchVic. Key findings from the consultations included:
  - a. Consultation participants unanimously expressed support to expand ISI to assist migrant and refugee startups, while recommending ISI grants should only support existing incubators partnering with expertise from dedicated migrant and refugee support organisations, as opposed to establishing new incubators;
  - b. Migrants and refugees have latent potential to found startups with global potential, and their ability to connect to global networks stood out as a key strength; and

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- c. Australia's migrant and refugee population is diverse in terms of language proficiency, risk appetite, aspiration and skill. Compared to standard startup incubator programs, it requires a greater mixture of knowledge, skills and networks to develop an appropriate program.
4. The department recommends making minimal program changes as part of the expansion to avoid market confusion. A similar approach was adopted with the ISI Regional Expansion.
5. The department recommends the following program changes to deliver on the election commitment:
  - a. Cease to accept new applications under existing ISI program guidelines and close the ISI New and Existing Incubator (NEI) funding component;
  - b. Re-launch of the expanded ISI program, only targeting existing high performing incubators to boost their effectiveness and expand their services to assist startups to achieve commercial success in international markets;
  - c. A weighted merit assessment process to encourage incubators supporting regional and/or migrant and refugee startups. Merit assessment will also prioritise applicants with a strong partnership model which combines startup incubator expertise with expertise from dedicated migrant and refugee support organisations;
  - d. Reduce the maximum grant size from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000 to ensure ongoing program sustainability;
  - e. Introduce an Expression of Interest process to allow RIFs to assist applicants to refine applications and to broker partnerships. The RIFs role will also expand to help build networks within Australia's startup ecosystem; and
  - f. The Expert-in-Residence funding component of ISI to remain unchanged.
6. Further details on the proposed changes are provided at Attachment B, and the proposed implementation plan with indicative timeframe is outlined in Attachment C.
7. Subject to your agreement of the proposed changes, the department will progress development of revised ISI program guidelines in further consultation with migrant and refugee organisations and your office for your approval in late September 2019 ahead of a re-launch of the expanded program in early November 2019. There are announcement opportunities either at the approval of the amended ISI program guidelines in late September 2019, or when applications officially open in early November 2019.

**Consultation:** AusIndustry; Home Affairs; Jobs and Small Business; external consultations.

Clearance Officer:  
s22

General Manager  
Commercialisation Policy Branch  
Science and Commercialisation Policy Division  
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Mb: s22

Contact Officer:  
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Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship  
Policy  
Ph: s22  
Mb: s22

**MLO Version: 22/8/2019**

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A: ISI Background
- B: Proposed changes for ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion
- C: Proposed ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion implementation plan

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**Australian Government**  
**Department of Industry,**  
**Innovation and Science**

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RECEIVED 12 SEP 2019

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology

Min ID: MS19-001087

**For Action**

**Subject: INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) – MIGRANT AND REFUGEE  
 EXPANSION ELECTION COMMITMENT – REVISED APPROACH**

**Timing:** Routine – by 25 September 2019

**Recommendation:**

That you **agree** to the proposed changes to the ISI to implement the election commitment to assist migrant and refugee startups.

Agreed/Not agreed/Please discuss

Karen Andrews .....

Date: / /2019

**Comments:****Key Points:**

1. The department previously briefed you on proposed changes to the Incubator Support Initiative to implement the Migrant and Refugee Expansion election commitment (**MS19-000895** refers). Following discussion with your office we have modified the approach to ensure the program will remain open to applications from both existing and new incubators.
2. The Incubator Support Initiative (ISI) was launched as part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) on 20 September 2016, with a funding allocation of \$23 million through to 2019-20 and an ongoing allocation of \$2 million per year thereafter.
  - a. In December 2017, ISI was re-launched with additional focus on innovation in regional areas. This included lower co-funding requirements for regional activities and the engagement of Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs).
  - b. The \$23 million funding allocation is close to being fully committed. Background on the ISI including the available funding is provided at Attachment A.
3. During the recent Federal election, you jointly announced the commitment to provide an additional \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand ISI to fund organisations that assist first-generation migrants and refugees to establish a startup business.
  - a. Your 100-day plan, as well as your Charter Letter response to the Prime Minister on election commitments, stated that consultation and implementation arrangements for the ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion will be completed by August 2019.
4. The department consulted with internal and external stakeholders including migrant and refugee support organisations such as <sup>s22(1)(a)</sup> the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee, the Department of Home Affairs, and the Victorian Government's startup agency LaunchVic. Key findings from the consultations included: <sup>s22(1)(a)</sup>
  - a. Consultation participants unanimously expressed support to expand ISI to assist migrant and refugee startups, while recommending ISI grants should only support existing incubators partnering with expertise from dedicated migrant and refugee support organisations, as opposed to establishing new incubators;

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- b. Migrants and refugees have latent potential to found startups with global potential, and their ability to connect to global networks stood out as a key strength; and
- c. Australia's migrant and refugee population is diverse in terms of language proficiency, risk appetite, aspiration and skill. Compared to standard startup incubator programs, it requires a greater mixture of knowledge, skills and networks to develop an appropriate program.
5. The department recommends making minimal program changes as part of the expansion to avoid market confusion. A similar approach was adopted with the ISI Regional Expansion.
6. The department recommends the following program changes to deliver on the election commitment:
- a. *why.* Pause accepting applications under existing ISI program guidelines as soon as possible, noting the original funding allocation is close to being fully committed.
- b. Develop revised program guidelines that include a weighted merit assessment process to prioritise applications from existing incubators with a strong partnership model which combines startup incubator expertise with expertise from dedicated migrant and refugee support organisations.
- i. Regional incubators will continue to receive a 1:2 matched grant funding ratio.
- ii. New incubators will continue to be able to apply for support but will not receive additional points through the merit assessment process.
- c. Reduce the maximum grant size from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000 to ensure ongoing program sustainability.
- d. Introduce an Expression of Interest process to allow Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs) to assist applicants to refine applications and to broker partnerships. The RIFs role will also expand to help build networks within Australia's startup ecosystem.
- e. The Expert-in-Residence funding component of ISI to remain unchanged.
7. Further details on the proposed changes are provided at Attachment B, and the proposed implementation plan with indicative timeframe is outlined in Attachment C.
8. Subject to your agreement of the proposed changes, the department will progress development of revised ISI program guidelines in further consultation with migrant and refugee organisations and your office for your approval in late September 2019, ahead of a re-launch of the expanded program in early November 2019. There are announcement opportunities either at the approval of the amended ISI program guidelines in October 2019, or when applications officially open in early November 2019.

**Consultation:** AusIndustry; Home Affairs; Jobs and Small Business; external consultations.

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MLO Version: 11/9//2019

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A: ISI Background  
B: Proposed changes for ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion  
C: Proposed ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion implementation plan

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**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY****ATTACHMENT A****INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) BACKGROUND**

The ISI was announced in December 2015 as an \$8 million initiative under the National Innovation and Science Agenda. It had its funding increased to \$23 million in May 2016, and was formally launched by then Minister Hunt in September 2016 as a new element of the Entrepreneurs' Programme (EP). The initial funding was allocated to fund ISI through to 2019-20. In December 2017, ISI was re-launched to better reflect the Australian Government's focus on regional development. This included lower co-funding requirements and the establishment of Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs).

ISI provides grant assistance to new and existing incubators delivering high quality services to Australian startups to help increase their chances of achieving commercial success in international markets and assist them to realise their economic potential faster than they otherwise would. It also provides incubators with access to top quality research, managerial and technical talent through incoming and outgoing secondments of national or international experts.

ISI provides support through two funding components:

1. **New and Existing Incubators (NEI)** – offers grants up to **\$500,000** to help develop new incubators in regions or sectors to assist Australian startups succeed in international markets, and to expand the services of existing high performing incubators. You are the decision-maker for this component.
2. **Experts-in-Residence (EIR)** – offers grants up to **\$100,000** to provide access to top quality research, managerial and technical talent, through incoming and outgoing secondments of national or international experts. The Programme Delegate (a departmental employee) is the decision-maker for approving EIR applications.

To date, a total of 125 applications worth over \$19.7 million have been approved under the initiative, comprising 41 NEI applications worth over \$16.6 million and 84 EIR applications worth over \$3.1 million.

The Initiative is funded at \$2 million per year from 2020-21 (ongoing). The \$5 million election commitment to expand ISI to support migrant and refugee founded startups is profiled at \$1.25 million per year for four years. The below table shows the program budget, grant commitments to date, and the available funding which includes the \$5 million expansion.

**Incubator Support Initiative - budget implications**

<b>ISI Allocations</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Initial program budget (\$m)	3	5.5	7.25	7.56	2	2	2
Grants approved to date (\$m)	1.48	3.6	8.65	6.39	1.88	0.09	-
Migrant and Refugee Expansion additional funds (\$m)	-	-	-	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
<b>Revised budget available including expansion (\$m)</b>				<b>2.42</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>3.25</b>

- Noting the reduced funding profile from 2020-21 onwards, the department recommends to reduce maximum grant size from \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- The department's experience to date suggests that the reduction in maximum grant size can still achieve meaningful impact with greater value for money.

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## ATTACHMENT B

**PROPOSED CHANGES FOR THE INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) MIGRANT  
AND REFUGEE EXPANSION**

- Combine existing ISI ongoing funding of \$2 million per year with the ISI expansion commitment of \$5 million, bringing total ISI funding to \$3.25 million per year over four years to 2022-23 inclusive.
- Maximum grant size to reduce from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- Existing high performing incubators with regional and/or migrant and refugee focus to receive additional points through the merit assessment process. This will reflect the election commitment to target the support for regional, migrant and refugee startups.
- The new ISI merit assessment will focus on the demonstration of a partnership between an organisation with startup expertise and an organisation with migrant and refugee expertise.
- New incubators will continue to be able to apply but will not receive additional points through the merit assessment process.
- The Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs) will expand their responsibilities to also assist building partnerships. RIFs will assist to broker partnerships between startup incubators and specialised migrant organisations. RIFs to also help build networks between incubators and the broader community.
  - The expanded ISI will include an Expression of Interest process so RIFs can work with potential applicants early to help broker the partnership.
- The Expert-in-Residence (EIR) funding component of ISI to remain unchanged.
- Maintain current 1:1 matched fund ratio, and regional incubator applicants also maintain 1:2 matched funding ratio.
- Targeted ISI marketing in regions with prioritised refugee resettlements, e.g. Armidale, Wagga Wagga.
- Update ISI data matrix to include program performance indicators to reflect the inclusion of migrant and refugee focus.
- Applications will be considered by the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee four times per year.
- Approval of ISI applications to be delegated to the departmental Program Delegate instead of current Ministerial approval due to smaller grant size, and to enable more efficient administration process. The department will continue to work with your office to ensure that the Minister is consulted on ISI grant announcement opportunities prior to any public release of grant assessment outcomes.

*Never*

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## ATTACHMENT C

## PROPOSED ISI MIGRANT AND REFUGEE EXPANSION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Milestone	Expected completion date
Program Guidelines – Department of Finance approval	By end of September
Announce on business.gov.au that new applications under current guidelines to cease in October	By end of September
Program Guidelines – Ministerial approval	Early October
Potential Media Release to announce program expansion	Early-mid October
Cease accepting new applications under current guidelines	From mid-October
Finalise business.gov.au website content, application forms, and contact centre script	Late October – early November
Re-launch and opening applications to incorporate Migrant and Refugee Expansion	Early November
Potential Media Release on program re-launch	Early November





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**Minister for Industry, Science and Technology**  
**For Action**

Min ID: MS19-001087

**Subject: INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) – MIGRANT AND REFUGEE  
 EXPANSION ELECTION COMMITMENT – REVISED APPROACH**

**Timing:** Routine – by 19 October 2019

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Agreed/Not agreed/Please discuss</b>
That you <b>agree</b> to the proposed changes to the ISI to implement the election commitment to assist migrant and refugee startups. <span style="color: red;">s22</span>	
Karen Andrews .....	Date: 19 / 10 / 2019
<b>Comments:</b>	

**Key Points:**

1. The department previously briefed you on proposed changes to the ISI to implement the Migrant and Refugee Expansion election commitment (MS19-000895 refers). Following discussion with your office, we have modified the approach to ensure the program will continue to support proposals from both existing and new incubators.
2. The ISI was launched as part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) on 20 September 2016, with a funding allocation of \$23 million through to 2019-20 and an ongoing allocation of \$2 million per year thereafter. Background on the ISI including the available funding is provided at Attachment A.
3. During the recent Federal election, you jointly announced the commitment to provide an additional \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand ISI to fund organisations that assist first-generation migrants and refugees to establish a startup business.
4. The department consulted with internal and external stakeholders including migrant and refugee support organisations on the challenges migrant and refugee founders face in establishing and growing startup businesses.
5. The department recommends the following program changes to deliver on the election commitment:
  - a. Pause accepting new applications under existing ISI program guidelines as soon as possible. This will allow the department to process applications that have already started or recently submitted applications based on the current guidelines;
  - b. Develop revised program guidelines that include a weighted merit assessment process to prioritise applications from existing incubators with a strong partnership model which combines startup incubator expertise with expertise from dedicated migrant and refugee support organisations; and
  - c. Reduce the maximum grant size from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000 to ensure ongoing program sustainability.
6. Further details on the proposed changes are provided at Attachment B.



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7. Subject to your agreement of the proposed changes, the department will pause accepting applications under the current guidelines and progress development of revised ISI program guidelines. The proposed implementation plan with indicative timeframe is outlined in Attachment C.
8. There are announcement opportunities either at the approval of the amended ISI program guidelines in October 2019, or when applications officially open in early December 2019.

**Consultation:** AusIndustry; Home Affairs; Jobs and Small Business; external consultations.

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**MLO Version: 4/10//2019**

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A: ISI Background
- B: Proposed changes for ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion
- C: Proposed ISI Migrant and Refugee Expansion implementation plan

## ATTACHMENT A

**INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) BACKGROUND**

The ISI was announced in December 2015 as an \$8 million initiative under the National Innovation and Science Agenda. It had its funding increased to \$23 million in May 2016, and was formally launched by then Minister Hunt in September 2016 as a new element of the Entrepreneurs' Programme (EP). The initial funding was allocated to fund ISI through to 2019-20. In December 2017, ISI was re-launched to better reflect the Australian Government's focus on regional development. This included lower co-funding requirements and the establishment of Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs).

ISI provides grant assistance to new and existing incubators delivering high quality services to Australian startups to help increase their chances of achieving commercial success in international markets and assist them to realise their economic potential faster than they otherwise would. It also provides incubators with access to top quality research, managerial and technical talent through incoming and outgoing secondments of national or international experts.

ISI provides support through two funding components:

1. **New and Existing Incubators (NEI)** – offers grants up to **\$500,000** to help develop new incubators in regions or sectors to assist Australian startups succeed in international markets, and to expand the services of existing high performing incubators. You are the decision-maker for this component.
2. **Experts-in-Residence (EIR)** – offers grants up to **\$100,000** to provide access to top quality research, managerial and technical talent, through incoming and outgoing secondments of national or international experts. The Programme Delegate (a departmental employee) is the decision-maker for approving EIR applications.

To date, a total of 125 applications worth over \$19.7 million have been approved under the initiative, comprising 41 NEI applications worth over \$16.6 million and 84 EIR applications worth over \$3.1 million.

The Initiative is funded at \$2 million per year from 2020-21 (ongoing). The \$5 million election commitment to expand ISI to support migrant and refugee founded startups is profiled at \$1.25 million per year for four years. The below table shows the program budget, grant commitments to date, and the available funding which includes the \$5 million expansion.

**Incubator Support Initiative - budget implications**

ISI Allocations	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Initial program budget (\$m)	3	5.5	7.25	7.56	2	2	2
Grants approved to date (\$m)	1.48	3.6	8.65	6.39	1.88	0.09	-
Migrant and Refugee Expansion additional funds (\$m)	-	-	-	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
<b>Revised budget available including expansion (\$m)</b>				<b>2.42</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>3.25</b>

- Noting the reduced funding profile from 2020-21 onwards, the department recommends to reduce maximum grant size from \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- The department's experience to date suggests that the reduction in maximum grant size can still achieve meaningful impact with greater value for money.



## ATTACHMENT B

**PROPOSED CHANGES FOR THE INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) MIGRANT AND REFUGEE EXPANSION**

- Combine existing ISI ongoing funding of \$2 million per year with the ISI expansion commitment of \$5 million, bringing total ISI funding to \$3.25 million per year over four years to 2022-23 inclusive.
- Maximum grant size to reduce from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- Existing high performing incubators with regional and/or migrant and refugee focus to receive additional points through the merit assessment process. This will reflect the election commitment to target the support for regional, migrant and refugee startups.
- The new ISI merit assessment will focus on the demonstration of a partnership between an organisation with startup expertise and an organisation with migrant and refugee expertise.
- New incubators will continue to be able to apply but will not receive additional points through the merit assessment process.
- The Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs) will expand their responsibilities to also assist building partnerships. RIFs will assist to broker partnerships between startup incubators and specialised migrant organisations. RIFs to also help build networks between incubators and the broader community.
  - The expanded ISI will include an Expression of Interest process so RIFs can work with potential applicants early to help broker the partnership.
- The Expert-in-Residence (EIR) funding component of ISI to remain unchanged. The department will work with your office to develop a process for announcement of projects supported under this component.
- Maintain current 1:1 matched fund ratio, and regional incubator applicants also maintain 1:2 matched funding ratio.
- Targeted ISI marketing in regions with prioritised refugee resettlements, e.g. Armidale, Wagga Wagga.
- Update ISI data matrix to include program performance indicators to reflect the inclusion of migrant and refugee focus.
- Applications will be considered by the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee four times per year.
- Due to the reduced grant size and early stage businesses involved in the program the department will continue to work with your office to ensure timely approval and public announcement of ISI grants. Any delay in approval or announcement could impact the ability of applicants to deliver on their project.

## ATTACHMENT C

## PROPOSED ISI MIGRANT AND REFUGEE EXPANSION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Milestone	Expected completion date
Program Guidelines – Department of Finance approval	By end of October
Program Guidelines – Ministerial approval	Early November
Potential Media Release to announce program expansion	Early-mid November
Cease accepting new applications under current guidelines	From mid-November
Finalise business.gov.au website content, application forms, and contact centre script	Late November
Re-launch and opening applications to incorporate Migrant and Refugee Expansion	Early December
Potential Media Release on program re-launch	Early December





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RECEIVED 29 NOV 2019

**Minister for Industry, Science and Technology**

Min ID: MS19-001493

**For Action**

**Subject: APPROVAL OF PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR THE INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE FIRST-GENERATION MIGRANT AND REFUGEE EXPANSION**

**Timing:** Routine

<b>Recommendations:</b> That you	
1. <b>Note</b> the contents of this brief.	Noted/Please discuss
2. <b>Approve</b> the revised Program Guidelines for the Incubator Support Initiative (Attachments B and C). <i>s22</i>	Approved/Not Approved/Please Discuss
<b>Karen Andrews .....</b>	<b>Date:</b> 13/12/2019
<b>Comments:</b> Pls fix errors as marked.	

**Key Points:**

1. During the 2019 Federal election, the Australian Government committed \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand the Incubator Support Initiative (ISI) to specifically support migrant and refugee startups.
2. The department had previously advised you on the proposed changes to ISI Program Guidelines to implement the migrant and refugee expansion (MS19-001087 refers). The key changes to the ISI Program Guidelines are listed at Attachment A.
3. The revised Guidelines, New and Existing Incubator component and Expert in Residence component, have since received approval from the Department of Finance on 27 November 2019 (see Attachments B and C).
4. The department now seeks your approval for the revised Guidelines.
5. Following your approval of the revised Guidelines, the department will prepare for the program's re-launch under the new Guidelines in early 2020. The department will provide a separate brief on the re-launch in early 2020.

**Consultation:** AusIndustry, Business Grants Hub.

Clearance Officer:

*s22*

Manager  
 Commercialisation Policy Branch  
 Science and Commercialisation Policy Division  
 Ph: *s22*  
 Mb: *s22*

Contact Officer:

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 Ph: *s22*  
 Mb: *s22*  
 ation and Entrepreneurship

MLO Version: 29/11/2019

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A: Key changes to the ISI Program Guidelines
- B: Revised ISI Program Guidelines for New and Existing Incubator component
- C: Revised ISI Program Guidelines for Expert in Residence component

## ATTACHMENT A

**KEY CHANGES TO THE ISI PROGRAMME GUIDELINES**

During the 2019 Federal election, the Australian Government committed \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand the Incubator Support Initiative (ISI) to fund organisations that assist first-generation migrants and refugees to establish a startup business. The changes build on the current initiative, and will provide greater support to migrant and refugee startups to achieve commercial success in international markets.

The key changes include:

- Maximum grant size to reduce from the current \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- Existing high performing incubators with regional and/or migrant and refugee focus to receive additional points through the merit assessment process. This will reflect the election commitment to target the support for regional, migrant and refugee startups.
- The new ISI merit assessment will focus on the demonstration of a partnership between an organisation with startup expertise and an organisation with migrant and refugee expertise.
- New incubators will continue to be able to apply but will not receive additional points through the merit assessment process.
- The Regional Incubator Facilitators (RIFs) will expand their responsibilities to also assist building partnerships. RIFs will assist to broker partnerships between startup incubators and specialised migrant organisations. RIFs to also help build networks between incubators and the broader community.
  - The expanded ISI will include an Expression of Interest process so RIFs can work with potential applicants early to help broker the partnership.
- The Expert-in-Residence funding component of ISI to remain unchanged. The department will work with your office to develop a process for announcement of projects supported under this component.
- Maintain current 1:1 matched fund ratio, and regional incubator applicants also maintain 1:2 matched funding ratio.
- Targeted ISI marketing in regions with prioritised refugee resettlements, e.g. Armidale, Wagga Wagga.
- Update ISI data matrix to include program performance indicators to reflect the inclusion of migrant and refugee focus.
- Applications will be considered by the Entrepreneurs' Programme Committee four times per year.
- Due to the reduced grant size and early stage businesses involved in the program the department will continue to work with your office to ensure timely approval and public announcement of ISI grants. Any delay in approval or announcement could impact the ability of applicants to deliver on their project.





Minister for Industry, Science and Technology

Min ID: MS20-000014

For Information

Subject: **ENTREPRENEURS' PROGRAMME INCUBATOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE (ISI) FIRST-GENERATION MIGRANT AND REFUGEE INCUBATORS LAUNCH**

Timing: Routine

Recommendations: That you:

- 1. Note an amendment has been made to the ISI Guidelines, since your approval. Noted / Please discuss
- 2. Note that the first-generation migrant and refugee incubators expansion will come into effect on 4 February 2020. Noted / Please discuss
- 3. Note the opportunity for you to promote the expansion, and the success of ISI to date. Noted / Please discuss

Karen Andrews .....

Date: 31 / 1 /2019

Comments:

Key Points:

- 1. During the 2019 Federal election, the Australian Government committed \$5 million over four years from 2019-20 to expand the ISI to specifically support first-generation migrant and refugee start-ups.
- 2. On 13 December 2019, you approved the new ISI Guidelines to implement the expansion (MS19-001493 refers). Since this time, a minor administrative change has been made to the Guidelines to amend the description of the Entrepreneurs' Programme (EP), ensuring consistent wording is applied across all EP elements in line with the head of power.
- 3. Following your approval of the new Guidelines, the department advised all stakeholders (via [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au), social media, and email) that the expansion will come into effect in February 2020, and that applicants wishing to lodge an application under the current guidelines need to do so by 31 January 2020.
- 4. ISI will be closed to applications for three days before the department releases the new Guidelines on 4 February 2020. All stakeholders will then be advised and the department will commence promoting the expansion.
- 5. There is an opportunity for you to promote the expansion (and the success of ISI to date). A media release will be provided to your office separately (including a template media release for use by other MPs), should you wish to do so.
- 6. Please note that due to the time required for proponents to properly develop their proposals, it is likely to be some months before applications from incubators focused on supporting first-generation migrant and refugee start-ups are received.

Consultation: Corporate and Digital Division (media team).

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**MLO Version:20/01/2020**