

Queensland Connects: Cohort 3 Frequently Asked Questions

About the program

What is Queensland Connects?

Queensland Connects is a regional entrepreneurship acceleration program. Through the 12-month program regional/sectoral leaders are supported to develop a detailed understanding of the strengths of their region or sector and implement initiatives to build and connect the innovation driven entrepreneurship ecosystem. By identifying local solutions to strengthen their region or sector's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, the aim is to accelerate economic growth and job creation through innovation-driven entrepreneurship.

Queensland Connects leverages learnings from the internationally regarded Massachusetts Institute of Technology [Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program Framework](#). As a locally developed program specific to Queensland needs, teams are supported to develop strategies and initiatives to build a strong and cohesive innovation driven entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Queensland Connects is a program within the Advance Queensland [Regional Futures initiative](#). This \$5 million investment seeks to accelerate regional economic growth through innovation. Queensland Connects is part of the Ecosystem Development stream that provides direct support for local leaders to strengthen local innovation networks and connections, grow investment, and help build new jobs in current and emerging industries through a range of entrepreneurial actions.

What is a good topic/project to consider for Queensland Connects?

A good project area for Queensland Connects is regionally significant and globally relevant. It should leverage your regional or sectoral natural competitive advantages to develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This means a good Queensland Connects projects can be:

a regional or sectoral challenge (a '*must win battle*') that involves stakeholders across the ecosystem and has not yet been successfully able to be addressed, and/or

a key regional or sectoral opportunity (such as a future industry or sector) that can be unlocked to help connect and grow the region.

Notes:

- Regions have natural advantages, including natural resources, geographical location, cities, population and land area which create a foundation for prosperity, but regional competitive advantage comes from productively using those characteristics in ways others cannot replicate but which attracts and sustains new and existing ventures while improving livelihoods.
- Entrepreneurship is more than creating startups. Broadly defined it is 'the pursuit of opportunity beyond the resources currently controlled' (Stevenson, 2003).

Who has done this before and what do they think?

Three teams were part of Queensland Connects Cohort 1: Team Mackay, Team Gladstone, and Team Toowoomba.

Visit the [Advance Queensland website](#) to learn more about this cohort of teams in the Queensland Connects program and hear about their experiences.

What is the timeline?

Teams commit to attend three highly interactive two-day workshops over the coming year and work directly with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and alongside other regional teams who provide peer feedback and support. Between workshops, each team engages in ongoing development of their strategy and activities in their region and leverages coaching along the way.

The dates for the workshops are:

- 30 November - 1 December 2022
- 9 - 10 May 2023
- 1 - 2 August 2023

What is involved in the program?

QUT will bring in subject matter experts from industry, government, academia, the community and faculty members to help teams work through the program. Where possible, input from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology faculty members will be sought for a global perspective to develop a deeper understanding of economic development around the world.

The following provides an outline of program requirements and dates:

1. Action Phase 1 requires the following milestones to be completed by Workshop 1:

- 1.1 Team formation and diarised team (regional/sectoral) meeting dates
- 1.2 Regional comparative advantage identified and evidenced
- 1.3 Agreed regional/sectoral vision
- 1.4 Agreed regional/sectoral financial commitments

Workshop 1: All at QUT for 2 days (30 November – 1 December 2022)

2. Action Phase 2 requires the following milestones to be completed by Workshop 2:

- 2.1 A map of regional/sectoral ecosystem produced with strengths and weaknesses identified
- 2.2 Identification of three strategic initiatives and event plans to advance the team vision
- 2.3 Identification of 10 key stakeholders and plan for engagement

Workshop 2: Online or in South East Queensland or in a regional location (9 – 10 May 2023)

3. Action Phase 3 requires the following milestones to be completed by Workshop 3:

- 3.1 Plan for program sustainability

3.2 Implementation of one initiative, engagement of five stakeholders, production of one regional publication (such as press, website, newsletter) and review of learning to date

Workshop 3: Online or in South East Queensland or in a regional location over two days (1 – 2 August 2023)

4. Action Phase 4 requires the following to be completed three months after Workshop 3:

4.1 Implementation of two further initiatives, engagement of five new stakeholders, production of one regional/sectoral publication (such as press, website, newsletter)

4.2 The production of a regional/sectoral case study must be submitted no later than six months after Workshop 3 evidencing the effect of the program and any regional changes caused by the team.

Eligibility

Who should be part of the team?

The team should include regional leaders representing the key stakeholders of the region's innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem (such as entrepreneurs, corporate, university, government and investors/risk capital representatives).

In constructing the team, you need to include representatives from each of the following groups:

- **Government/Economic Development Representative**
Typical Profile: Currently in an economic development leadership role promoting entrepreneurship and innovation and able to make or significantly influence policy and strategic programs. Often this person is Team Champion taking on a clear leadership role.
- **Entrepreneur Typical Profile:** Current or former founder who is a respected leader in the local entrepreneurial community and able to work collaboratively with other key stakeholders.
- **Corporate Representative Typical Profile:** Employed by a large, influential corporation in your region and responsible for or interested in developing relationships with startups, regional innovation, or helping entrepreneurs through mentorship, partnerships, or investment.
- **University Representative Typical Profile:** An influential administrator or academic who is responsible for interacting with technology transfer, research and innovation, entrepreneurship education, and/or the university's engagement with the entrepreneurial ecosystem and the process of bringing ideas to market.
- **Risk Capital Representative Typical Profile:** A representative of the landscape of risk capital or investment in the region who understands its challenges and opportunities. A leader of a local investment fund, an angel investor or high net worth individual/company with an interest in building/investing in regional entrepreneurs.



Your team should also include a Project Manager from one of these stakeholder groups, or a key ecosystem leader, who will be responsible for team logistics through the onboarding process and help coordinate meetings and plans throughout the program.

Who should be our Team Champion?

Your Team Champion should be an influential regional leader and/or decision maker who has a key role in transforming your regional economy and accelerating your region's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

How many people can be part of the team?

You can have up to 10 people on your team. You can have additional people from key stakeholder groups. For example, you may have two corporate representatives covering two key sectors with an interest in the team project/challenge.

What if we haven't identified all of the members of our team?

If you are still in the early stage of team planning, you can note your preliminary plan and options for who you would engage on your regional team to represent the five stakeholder groups – Government/Economic Development, Entrepreneur, Corporate, University, Risk Capital.

This should represent clear thinking about key stakeholders and leaders in your region necessary to make participation in this effort a success, and how you are able to engage them.

Note: it is OK to include organisations or draft names in your Expression of Interest (EOI).

Do all team members need to be from the same Queensland region?

No. Members from more than one region can come together to tackle a challenge or explore an emerging industry or opportunity for Queensland.

Applying for Queensland Connect Cohort 3

Can I submit more than one application?

No. Multiple applications will not be accepted from the same applicant or related parties.

When will I find out if my application is successful?

Applicants will be advised within four weeks of the closing date whether their application was successful.

Funding

What funding is available?

Funding of \$30,000 is available for each team to help cover modest costs to participate and to help support immediate priority initiatives that the team wants to get under way.

Will I receive the funding?

Funding will not be provided directly to individuals but can be accessed during the ongoing attendance of the workshops.

Is there follow-on funding?

There may be an opportunity to put forward key initiatives for matched funding as part of the [Regional Futures – Collaborative Projects](#) funding. This funding supports regional innovators to come together to address challenges of local significance and global relevance.

What does the funding cover?

The funding covers:

- Workshop costs comprising economy flights and reasonable accommodation costs for regional team members to attend three two-day workshops, where the team member/s are unable to cover these costs.
- Venue and equipment hire to support action planning and focus group activities if required (up to \$1,500 in total).
- Facilitation of regional focus group and action planning activities, if required.
- Report costs, including the development, design and e-publication of the final report, including case studies (up to \$5,000 excluding GST).
- Key action item/s outlined in the regional pilot strategy.

This funding is not required to be matched.

Conditions of award

What if I cannot meet the time commitments of the process?

If a key regional leader is interested in being involved but unable to meet the overall time commitments, your team can opt to:

- include an alternative representative from that stakeholder group and include the key regional leader as an additional team member in the EOI form to enable them to attend where possible so the team can benefit from their contribution
- find two representatives to share the role over the duration of the project.

Do I have to attend every workshop?

Yes. Each team must commit to having at least half of the team attend each workshop in-person to gain the most value from the process. While at the workshop, participants must be 'at the workshop'!

If required due to COVID-19 restrictions, the workshops will be a hybrid event with both in-person and online attendees.

Unsuccessful applicants

Can I obtain feedback on my application if it is unsuccessful?

Yes. Feedback can be requested from unsuccessful applicants outlining the key strengths of the application and the areas where the application could be improved.