

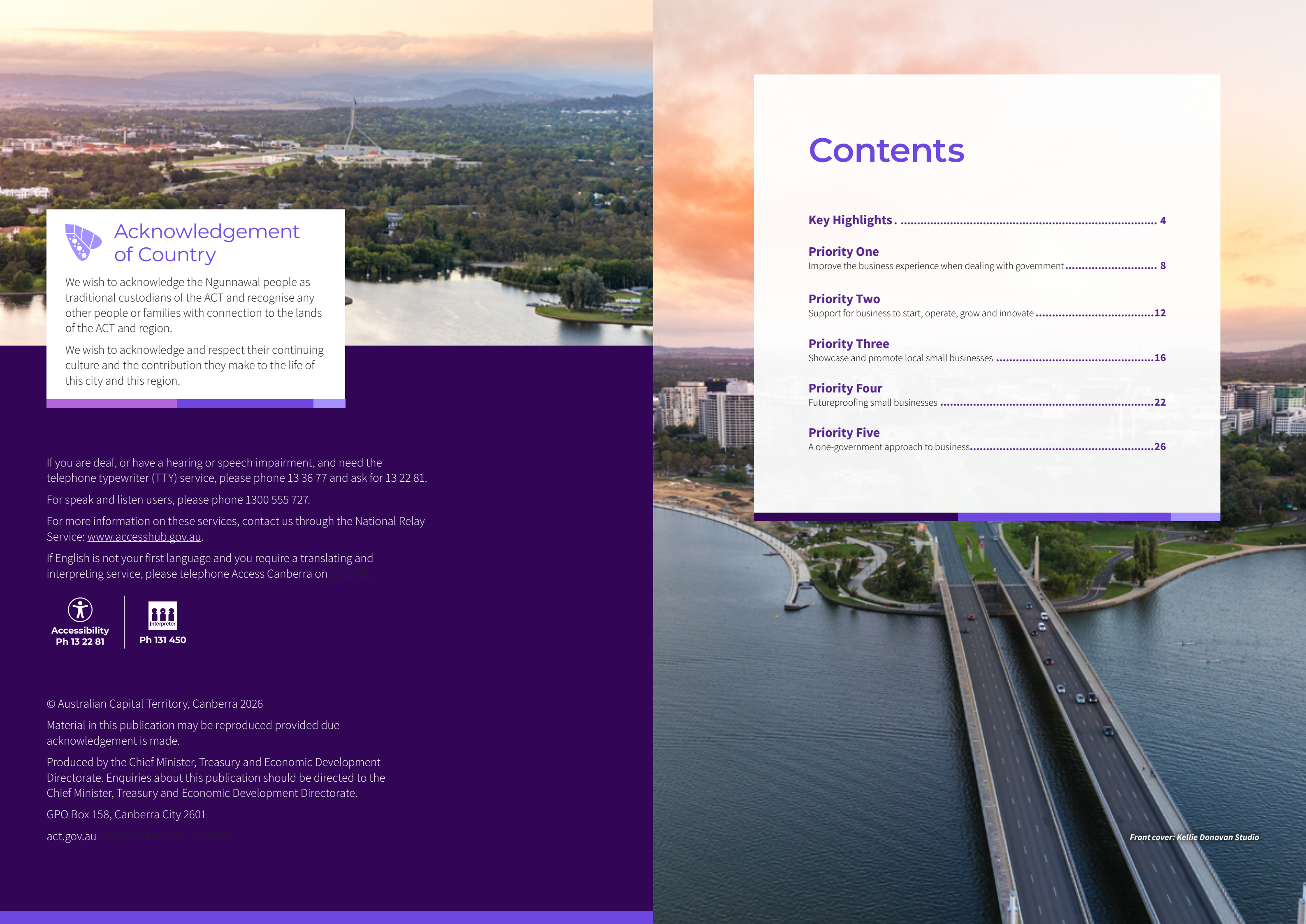
CEB

SMALL BUSINESS

ACT Small Business Strategy Progress Update 2026



ACT
Government



Acknowledgement of Country

We wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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Front cover: Kellie Donovan Studio



Key Highlights

Small businesses remain central to Canberra’s economy, communities and identity. There are more than 37,000 businesses operating in the ACT, with around 97 per cent employing fewer than 20 people. Canberra’s economy continues to perform strongly, and more than 10,000 additional businesses have chosen to operate in Canberra since 2016¹. Small businesses continue to play a critical role in creating jobs, supporting local communities and driving economic diversification.

Since the release of the ACT Small Business Strategy 2023-2026, the operating environment for small businesses has evolved significantly. Businesses have responded to rising operating costs, workforce shortages, changing consumer spending patterns, ongoing global economic uncertainty, and the rapid emergence of new technologies, including artificial intelligence. At the same time, Canberra’s economy has continued to diversify, creating new opportunities in tourism, creative industries, advanced technology, innovation, construction and the knowledge economy.

The ACT Government has continued to invest in the growth and resilience of small businesses through initiatives including the Canberra Business Advice

and Support Service, Badji, the Canberra Innovation Network, the Canberra Cyber Hub, screen and digital games funding, tourism and events programs, and support for thriving local centres and the night-time economy. Together with significant investment in housing, infrastructure, tourism, climate action, arts and culture, these initiatives are helping to create the conditions for a productive, resilient and thriving small business sector that is central to contribute to Canberra’s future prosperity.

Through the actions in the ACT Small Business Strategy 2023-2026 the ACT Government is supporting a dynamic and thriving small business community in five priority areas:

- 1. Improve the business experience when dealing with government;
- 2. Support for business to start, operate, grow and innovate;
- 3. Showcase and promote local small businesses;
- 4. Futureproofing small businesses; and
- 5. A one government approach to business.

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits](#), Data cube 1; Table 4 Businesses by Main State, 8165.0, July 2015 to June 2019 and July 2022 to June 2026

Key Statistics

The success of this Strategy and the ACT Government’s approach to economic growth and diversification is demonstrated through these key indicators.

Increase by almost 4,000 in the number of businesses

over the past four years from June 2022 (33,811) to June 2026 (37,785) – a 2.8 per cent annual growth rate, the third highest in the country behind only Queensland and Western Australia.²

19,800 more employed persons

from July 2022 (257,000) to July 2026 (277,800).³

9.7/10 client satisfaction

Client satisfaction with the Canberra Business Advice and Support Service.

117,000 visits to the Business Hub website in the past year.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits](#), Data cube 1; Table 4 Businesses by Main State, 8165.0, July 2022 to June 2026

³ (Total Jobs) Australian Bureau of Statistics, [State and territory jobs and hours worked, by industry](#), September quarter 2011 to June quarter 2026 (Pivot Table), [Labour Account modelled state and territory estimates by industry, 2026](#), released 4 September 2026 and (Public sector jobs) Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024-25 financial year), [Public sector employee jobs and cash wages and salaries, level of government, state and territory, Public sector employment and earnings](#), released 6 November 2025



Over the past three years the ACT Government has made significant progress in delivery against the Priority Areas contained in the Strategy.

More than 94 per cent of the Strategy’s 52 Action Items are Completed or Completed and Ongoing. Two Action Items remain In progress, and work is Yet to commence on one Action Item:



Completed and Ongoing

The ACT Government has either completed or is delivering on an ongoing basis through existing initiatives **49** priority actions.



In progress

The ACT Government has commenced delivering on **2** priority actions under the Strategy which are progressing well.



Yet to commence

Work is yet to commence on **1** priority action under the Strategy.



Empowered Electrical

Thor’s Hammer

Achievements in the third year of the Strategy include:

- 1. The Canberra Business and Advice Service (CBASS) has supported more than 900 businesses since July 2023.
- 2. Continued increases in users accessing guidance and information via the ACT Business Hub.
- 3. Establishing dedicated support for business impacted by Light Rail Stage 2A construction.
- 4. Increased engagement with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business community through the Badji program, including workshops, trade show participation and community events.
- 5. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts businesses through the 2025-26 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts Program.
- 6. Updated guidance and training for businesses on supplying to the ACT Government.
- 7. Two funding rounds of the ACT Social Enterprise Grants program.
- 8. Working with the Australian Government to support Creative Workplaces and to facilitate fundraising workshops to independent artists and arts organisations.
- 9. Showcasing and promoting local businesses through targeted social media campaigns and promotional activity highlighting city centre businesses.
- 10. Continuing to engage local food and beverage vendors, performers and contractors to deliver our festivals and events.
- 11. In partnership with the Canberra Cyber Hub, deliver and promote cyber security-focused events and activities supporting start-ups and established businesses.
- 12. Through the Sustainable Business Program and Commercial Kitchen Trial, deliver events on electrification and leading sustainable business practices.

● Priority One

Improve the business experience when dealing with government

● On track or completed ● Behind schedule ● Paused / Resource or Priority restrained



Evolve Midwifery

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update	
1.1	Provide dedicated individual business support through the Access Canberra Event Coordination and Business Assist (ECBA) team	Businesses get personalised service to navigate licensing and approvals	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	During 2025-26 the Access Canberra Event Coordination and Business Assist (ECBA) team supported 226 businesses to understand requirements around approvals, both new and existing. In addition, 33 businesses engaged with ECBA via the in person appointment service held at the ACT Government’s Woden Shopfront.
1.2	Deliver an expanded Business Hub website connecting business owners and operators with the information they need to start, run, and grow their business	Businesses get easy access to clear information about what to do and where to go for help	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The ACT Business Hub is a central website bringing together a range of government information for businesses. During 2025-26 a comprehensive review of website content was completed, focused on ensuring content accuracy, improving readability, and developing new content identified through previous user testing. This included the introduction of large amounts of content for health-related businesses in Canberra, including food safety. This work has had a significant impact on the number of visits to the business website over the last year. During 2025-26 the ACT Business Hub received almost 117,000 page views. This is a 192% increase on 2024-25 page views. The website also received over 80,000 unique page views, a 160% increase on the previous year. The top viewed pages are: • Get help and advice: 12,271 page views • Food business - food safety training: 7,322 page views • Food safety for businesses: 5,252 page views • Business homepage: 4,949 • Start a business in Canberra: 3,028 page views.
1.3	Provide plain English information to inform diverse audiences of business owners and operators including culturally and linguistically diverse businesses and those with lived experience of disability	Business owners from all backgrounds can access information	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The ACT Business Hub website has undergone comprehensive reviews and content upgrades during 2025-26 (noted in 1.2). The website meets accessibility standards and, in most cases, exceeds these standards. • Accessibility score of 93.7 out of 100. • The industry government benchmark is 83.8 out of 100. • Level AA conformance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1. The Google Translate function is also available on the ACT Business Hub website to assist businesses with languages other than English. The 2026 user testing (noted in 1.2) showed that the website content was very easy to read, noting it was easier than other federal websites like the Australian Taxation Office.
1.4	Explore enhancements to the supplier procurement portal, Supplying to ACT Government , to provide a one-stop-shop to allow businesses to create their business profile, access training and guidance material, communicate with the ACT Government and apply for procurement opportunities	Businesses will be supported to access government procurement opportunities, information, and real time support to set them up for success	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update .



Bruce Super Convenience

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update	
1.5	Review and streamline the ACT Government’s procurement legislation, policies, processes, and templates to ensure they are efficient, easy to understand and easy to engage with	Businesses will be supported to access government procurement opportunities	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
1.6	Provide guidance to ACT Government Buyers to assist in determining the appropriate level of insurance requirements in accordance with the risk profile of the procurement	Businesses will only need to have appropriate levels of insurance	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
1.7	Reform standard ACT Government contract terms to require contractors to extend the same payment terms to their subcontractors	Support small and micro-businesses and sole traders who subcontract	Ongoing	Completed	ACT Government contracts may be customised to specify terms to require contractors to extend the same payment terms to their subcontractors. The procuring Territory entity will determine the payment settings for the procurement contracts that it administers.
1.8	Strengthen the Local Industry Participation Policy (LIPP)	Ensure local businesses receive the intended benefits of the policy	Ongoing	In progress	The ACT Government is committed to supporting local businesses, and continues to consider a range of legislative, policy and other options for doing so. The LIPP is anticipated to be further considered as part of this ongoing work.
1.9	Review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy (ATSIPP) to ensure it continues to meet its objectives	Strengthen the policy to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	Ongoing	Completed	The Comprehensive Review of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy has been completed, with the intention to release the updated Policy in 2026.
1.10	Establish the Business Sentiment survey in collaboration with Canberra Business Chamber	Better data on businesses and their needs	2023-24	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
1.11	Establish a Measure of Regulatory Burden and Value in particular sectors	Provide a baseline to measure progress and inform future regulatory work	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
1.12	Explore a digital account for business that would allow businesses to manage their transactions with government through a single account	Businesses would only need to provide their information once	2023-26	Completed	The ACT Government recognises the benefits to local industry of simpler and more streamlined engagement with government through digital services. Action 1.12 of the ACT Small Business Strategy 2023-2026 has been progressed. Foundational design for businesses to digitally access government services has been developed. Work is continuing during 2026-27 to assess opportunities to leverage existing Commonwealth digital identity solutions, including MyID and the Relationship Authorisation Manager (RAM). This work aims to determine whether existing national capabilities can accelerate delivery and reduce implementation effort for a Territory-wide digital business account. Consultation is underway with relevant Commonwealth agencies and ACT Government Directorates to assess potential models and implementation approaches. Future phases of work will include consultation and co-design with businesses to ensure any solution meets the needs of the ACT business community. Future implementation costs will be informed by the assessment and consultation work, and any further delivery would be subject to a government funding decision.

● Priority Two

Support for business to start, operate, grow and innovate

● On track or completed ● Behind schedule ● Paused / Resource or Priority restrained



Her Smile

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update	
2.1	Continuing the Canberra Business Advice and Support Service (CBASS) to deliver tailored small business advice, including business planning	Professional and tailored support for businesses at all stages of the business lifecycle	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	From July 2023 to June 2026 CBASS has assisted more than 900 businesses, demonstrating an ongoing demand for the program. Just under half of these client engagements have been with women-owned businesses or intenders. Satisfaction ratings by users of the program consistently rate the services greater than 9.8 out of 10. CBASS was expanded in August 2025 to include the Business Capability Building (BCB) program for businesses in the city impacted by construction associated with Light Rail Stage 2A (LRS2A). Demand for the service is strong, with the service booked at least three weeks ahead. From early 2027 CBASS will be expanded to include support and advice for alternative business models, including social enterprises.
2.2	Deliver and evaluate the Badji Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	Culturally appropriate and tailored advice and support for businesses	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	Badji continues to deliver valuable advice and support and connections for ACT Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander businesses and entrepreneurs. Through engagement with the program, Badji clients have reported multiple instances of the benefits it has delivered. These include: • Connections with prospective clients. • Supporting government to business connections. • Securing additional capital. During October 2025 Indigenous Business Month Badji delivered a series of business workshops at Boomanulla Oval for Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander businesses: • 15 October - Indigenous Business Australia. • 22 October - Construction and engaging with Infrastructure Canberra. • 29 October - Supplying to Government with Procurement ACT. Clients consistently express strong appreciation for the pathways of support introduced through Badji’s concierge connection role, including opportunities to participate in trade show events, support with strategies to enhance their business models and develop effective marketing approaches. A program review is scheduled to be commissioned during 2026-27.
2.3	Investigate barriers to more women, LGBTIQ, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse people becoming business owners	Support the development of targeted actions to break down barriers to business ownership	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update .
2.4	Increase participation of women in CBRIN programs	Support more women to become entrepreneurs	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The Canberra Innovation Network (CBRIN) continues to deliver programs targeting women entrepreneurs such as its Female Founders program and tracks participation of women across their programs and support for founders and entrepreneurs. During 2025-26, 47 per cent of start-ups funded under the Innovation Connect Grant Program were awarded to Canberra female founders. During this period, CBRIN’s co-working facility also had 108 women co working members. Female Founders launched the year with a 24-business tradeshow which had 98 attendees – one of the largest female founder events to date.

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update
2.5 Through the ACT Arts Fund, invest in programs to enhance outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts businesses	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creatives are supported to start and grow	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	Outcomes of the 2024-25 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts Program were announced on 9 July 2025. Seven artists were awarded almost \$100,000 in funding. Media release - Strengthening cultural ties for Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate Expressions of interest for the 2025-26 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts Program opened on 1 December 2025 and closed on 9 February 2026. Stage two opened on 20 February 2026 and closed on 2 April 2026. Successful recipients of the program were advised in June 2026. Six projects were funded a total of \$81,500.
2.6 Deliver social enterprise grants to support start-ups in this sector	Provide more opportunities to start a social enterprise	Ongoing	Completed	The ACT Social Enterprise Grant Program comprises two elements both delivered by The Mill House Ventures – the Grant Program and the Scale for Impact mentoring program. The 2025-26 Grant Program round one was open from 12 December 2025 to 14 February 2026. Three applications were approved for matched grant funding to a total of \$90,000. A second funding round will be delivered in the second half of 2026. During 2025-26 applications from five social enterprises were received to participate in the Scale for Impact Program, and three participated in the program.
2.7 With the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions, explore the challenges facing business of accessing affordable and appropriate insurance	Support the understanding of businesses across a range of insurance issues	Ongoing	Completed	The ACT Government responded to the Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation <i>Inquiry into Insurance Costs in the ACT</i> in January 2026, agreeing or agreeing in principle to investigate a range of measures aimed at improving insurance affordability and accessibility. This includes examining insurance pooling models for community organisations, reviewing workers compensation scheme settings, and considering reforms that may help reduce insurance costs while maintaining appropriate protections. The Government also recognised that rising insurance costs are being driven by broader market factors, including increasing claims costs, inflation, reinsurance pressures and extreme weather events, and committed to ongoing work with stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve insurance affordability and accessibility across the Territory.
2.8 Provide information to support small businesses with Portable Long Service Leave	Improve access to clear information to support employees	Ongoing	Completed	On 3 May 2026 the Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations announced that the entry of the hair and beauty and accommodation and food services industries into the Services Industry Scheme will be delayed until 1 January 2027, in response to the challenging conditions many businesses are currently experiencing. Employers in these industries will have additional time to prepare for entry into the Services Industry Scheme, now entering the scheme on 1 January 2027. Employers must register with ACT Leave ahead of 1 January 2027. Workers will gain access to the full benefits of portable long service leave from 1 January 2027. To learn more about the scheme, visit the Services Industry Scheme pages.
2.9 Provide information to support small businesses as changes are progressively introduced to the Discrimination Act	Improve access to clear information to support business owners	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
2.10 Deliver a vision for Canberra's Night-time economy and a comprehensive and coordinated approach to making the night-time experience in Canberra better for everyone	Night-time businesses are supported through regulatory and non-regulatory actions and have clear information and opportunity to operate in the night-time	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
2.11 Deliver an ACT Venture Capital Fund to support pre-seed, seed, and Series A business in the ACT	Support for early-stage commercialisation	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
2.12 Expansion of the Canberra Innovation Network's (CBRIN) premises	Improve access to CBRIN's programs and spaces for businesses	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
2.13 Explore opportunities to allow businesses to access maker spaces	Businesses can prototype their products	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.

● Priority Three

Showcase and promote local small businesses

● On track or completed ● Behind schedule ● Paused / Resource or Priority restrained

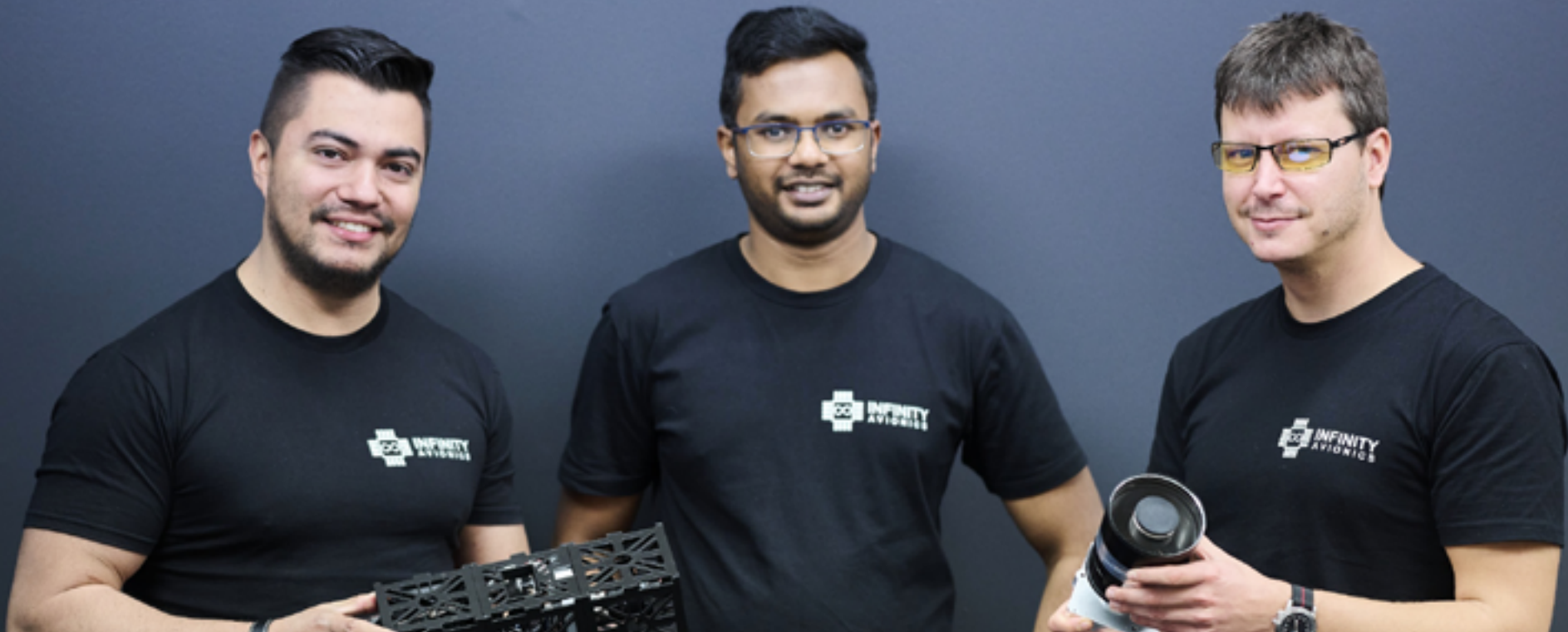


Corella & Crow

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update
3.1	Pilot hosting a Small Business Expo codesigned with business and industry groups	2023-24	Completed	Completed. See 2024 Progress Update.
3.2	Through our promotion, reflect the diversity of business owners including those living with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse owners, women and LGBTIQ+ business operators	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	During 2025-26 the ACT Government has delivered two social media campaigns that featured, female, male, culturally diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. The Government has also worked with a husband and wife culturally diverse business, another male-led CALD business and a sibling-run Aboriginal business for photography work, which will be used in future marketing communications, further promoting the diverse nature of Canberra business owners. The Government has been working with Canberra City businesses to help increase awareness and promote their services during the impacts of Light Rail Stage 2A construction. Published examples include: The Canberra city businesses keeping old-school craftsmanship alive HerCanberra and Sip, Sing, Dance, Repeat: your guide to a night out in the city HerCanberra The 2025 round of Badji's Pitch on a Page micro-grant program supported three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses with initiatives focused on capability building, wellbeing and peer networking across the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector. During 2025-26, 47 per cent of start-ups funded under the Innovation Connect Grant Program were awarded to Canberra female founders. During this period, CBRIN's co-working facility also had 108 women co working members. In February 2026 Female Founders launched the year with a 24-business tradeshow which had 98 attendees – one of the largest female founder events to date.
3.3	Team Canberra events – industry showcases and major conferences and business events	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The ACT Government partnered with the Canberra Cyber Hub to continue delivering Team Canberra representation at industry events including: • International Aeronautical Congress 2025 – 14 institutions/companies supported. • Indo Pacific International Maritime Exhibition 2025 – 15 institutions/companies supported. • Military Communications and Information Systems 2025 – 12 companies supported.

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update
3.4	Support and feature small businesses through ACT festivals and events including the Multicultural Festival, Enlighten and Floriade	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	Floriade 2025 • 64 per cent local food and non-alcohol beverage vendors (engaged by Events ACT) • 100 per cent local Alcohol vendors • 43 per cent local market stall holders (engaged by Events ACT) • 88 per cent local contractors • 90 per cent individual local performers – 69 schools involved – 185 community groups involved – 47 Indigenous performers Enlighten 2026 • 90 per cent local food and beverage vendors (engaged by Events ACT) • 100 per cent local beverage producers featured through Bar Berra (12 local producers) • 12 per cent local vendors in the ‘Food Park’ precinct (engaged by partners Motti & Smith) • 90 per cent local contractors • 82 per cent individual local performers – 46 Indigenous performers – 23 LGBTQIA+ performers Lights! Canberra! Action! 2026 • 66 per cent local food and beverage vendors (engaged by Events ACT) • 89 per cent local contractors • 100 per cent local performers Symphony in the Park 2026 • 100 per cent local food and beverage vendors (engaged by Events ACT and the local event contractor) • 100 per cent local market stall holders (engaged by Events ACT and the local event contractor) • 83 per cent local contractors • 86 per cent individual local performers Canberra Balloon Spectacular 2026 • 100 per cent local vendors (engaged by Events ACT) • 93 per cent local contractors • No performers engaged Canberra Day Celebrations 2026 • 100 per cent local food and beverage vendors • 90.6 per cent local contractors • 100 per cent individual local performers National Multicultural Festival 2026 • 83 per cent (approx.) local stallholders • 73 per cent (approx.) local performers • 77 per cent (approx.) local suppliers/contractors

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update
3.5 Enable small businesses to connect to Brand Canberra resources via an online toolkit and reflect their Canberra connections	Small businesses will have tools to help them express the unique Canberran qualities of their business	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
3.6 'After Dark' events listing – enhancing the Events ACT and VisitCanberra websites to better highlight Canberra's nightlife along with industry resources	Provides an opportunity for small and large night-time venues to advertise performances and events to Canberrans and visitors	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
3.7 Sponsor a range of awards programs including the Canberra Women in Business Awards	Local small businesses are celebrated and recognised	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The ACT Government was a Gold Sponsor of the 2025 Canberra Women in Business Awards. This sponsorship supported the 2025 ACT Government Small Businesswoman of the Year awarded to Sophie Mclean of Your Property Profits. The ACT Government supported the nomination process via promotion through ACT Government business communication channels including the CBR Business Update e-newsletter. The ACT Government has committed to support the 2026 Canberra Women in Business Awards. Other industry event sponsorships supported by the ACT Government in 2025-26 included: • 2025 Canberra International Riesling Challenge • 2025 ACT Chief Minister's Pearcey Award
3.8 Deliver Arts and Cultural Tourism Capability workshops to the arts sector on storytelling, marketing and providing a quality tourism experience	Increase capability to attract visitors	2023	Completed	Completed. See 2024 Progress Update.
3.9 Develop a future arts precinct in Kingston as a destination for Canberra's visual arts and culture. This will include working with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Network and community on the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Space in the precinct	Artists and arts businesses will showcase their work as part of a premier arts precinct	Ongoing	In progress	The Kingston Arts Precinct and surrounding development will be delivered in a staged way to ensure continuity of parking and access for the existing arts and community facilities and the broader Foreshore precinct. The ACT Government has recently secured approval for the subdivision of Section 49 at the Kingston Foreshore, which represents an important milestone. The Government will now move forward with the first stage, focusing on the delivery of housing, replacement carparking and artist accommodation. Work on dedicated arts facilities is intended to follow completion of the residential and parking elements in the adjacent block.



Infinity Avionics

● Priority Four

Futureproofing small businesses

● On track or completed ● Behind schedule ● Paused / Resource or Priority restrained



Waste Check

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update
4.1	Commission research to better understand the survival rates of businesses in Canberra including the success factors and the range of reasons businesses close	2023-26	Yet to commence	Specific commissioned research has not progressed due to resourcing constraints and prioritising other actions in consultation with stakeholders. The ACT Government continues to monitor national data sources and engage with stakeholders about issues affecting businesses in the ACT.
4.2	Explore the development of micro-credentials for small business owners in areas such as business administration and digital skills	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update .
4.3	Create opportunities for businesses to increase awareness and knowledge about cyber security and data security and how to protect their business and their customers	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The Canberra Cyber Hub continues to be at the forefront of accelerating Canberra's cyber economy, working to harness the region's strengths in cyber expertise, education, and national security. The Canberra Cyber Hub delivers and promotes a range of cyber security-focused events and activities supporting both start-ups and established businesses through strategic initiatives and partnerships - https://canberracyberhub.com.au/news-and-events
4.4	Developing more free resources for businesses to learn, including webinars, workshops, and case studies	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The Tools and Resources page of the Business Hub website continues to be updated with new information as it develops. The CBR Business Update e-newsletter is published on a fortnightly basis and distributed to more than 8,000 subscribers, providing free and updated links and information resources to subscribers. The Canberra Business Advice and Support Service (CBASS) continued to provide free networking workshops throughout the period including: • Networks Not Networking Workshop – February 2026 • Dealing with Uncertainty Peer Group - March 2026 • 10 Tiny Experiments for Smarter Business Decisions - April 2026 • Marketing Clinic – May 2026 CBRIN's bi-monthly Female Founder events feature inspirational keynote speakers, tradeshow events featuring women-led businesses, and access to sharing share valuable advice and experiences with supportive colleagues who share their entrepreneurial journeys. During October 2025 Indigenous Business Month Badji delivered a series of business workshops at Boomanulla Oval for Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander businesses: • 15 October - Indigenous Business Australia. • 22 October - Construction and engaging with Infrastructure Canberra. • 29 October - Supplying to Government with Procurement ACT. The Sustainable Business Program provides advice and training to workplaces, either in-person or online. The Program held various events on electrification and showcased leading businesses, including: • Open Kitchen Tour – all-electric commercial kitchen demonstration - August 2025 • CBR Business Connect - guidance to help businesses grow and thrive - August 2025 • Bluebell Sustainable Business Awards - showcasing local leaders - September 2025

Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update	
4.5	Under the Arts Action Plan, partner with Creative Australia to increase the capacity of local artists, arts organisations and creative businesses to engage with philanthropy, develop private sector partnerships and make connections	Professional development to support arts and creative businesses to learn and grow	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	artsACT hosted ‘In conversation with Creative Workplaces and Arts Law’ in June 2026. It was well attended with approximately 25-30 people including independent artists and representatives from arts organisations. In August 2026 artsACT hosted ‘Fundraising in the Arts: A cultural and creative industries exchange’, delivered by Creative Australia.
4.6	Work with the Australian Government to ensure our skilled migration needs are met	Businesses are supported to build, attract, and retain the right workforce	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	In the 2025-26 period, the ACT Government nominated 1,600 skilled migrants across a diverse range of occupations to support local businesses and industries. This includes 133 nominations for migrants with small businesses. Migrants with occupations in the health, teaching, hospitality, IT, engineering, and finance were most likely to be nominated. The ACT Government has continued its collaboration with the Australian Government on the implementation of the Migration Strategy. This includes the development of a Territory Migration plan to inform migration planning and the introduction of the National Innovation Visa (NIV). The ACT is in the process of designing its nomination process for the NIV.
4.7	Under the Skilled to Succeed: Workforce and Skills Agenda for the ACT, implement specific industry skills and workforce action plans for priority industries, Building and Construction, Technology, Experience (hospitality, tourism, recreation and creative industries), Renewable and Sustainable energy and Caring industries	Specific and tailored actions to support businesses with workforce challenges	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
4.8	Expand the workforce attraction online Toolkit and provide resources to promote the distinct benefits of working and living in Canberra	Businesses will have tools and resources to help them market Canberra to help attract potential employees	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
4.9	Continue supporting small businesses with emission reduction and electrification by delivering the Sustainable Business Program.	Businesses can contribute to the government’s policy and actions	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The ACT Government’s Integrated Energy Plan 2024-2030 was released in 2024, detailing support for businesses through programs such as the Sustainable Business Program and Commercial Kitchen Trial. Businesses can access: • free onsite assessments from technical experts to consider opportunities to improve energy and water efficiency, waste management, independent advice and a tailored action plan; • access to resources, training and rebates of up to \$13,000, comprised of up to \$10,000 for energy and water efficiency upgrades and up to \$3,000 for an EV charger; and • technical advice for commercial fleets to accelerate the adoption of zero emissions vehicles.
4.10	Develop an action plan for the Circular Economy with stakeholders and the community, including business and industry	Businesses can influence actions to achieve a circular economy	2023-24	Completed	Completed. See 2024 Progress Update.
4.11	Releasing updates to the ACT Infrastructure Plan, setting the vision for the short, medium, and long term, and outlining a pipeline of infrastructure projects to support the building and construction industry	Businesses have visibility of and can respond to government’s future infrastructure plans	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.

● Priority Five

A one-government approach to business

● On track or completed ● Behind schedule ● Paused / Resource or Priority restrained



Action	How this will help business	Timeframe	Status	2026 Update	
5.1	Support an Economic Development Business and Industry Consultative Forum for consultation and engagement with business leaders	Provides a regular forum to discuss and inform issues of importance to all small businesses	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The Business and Economic Development Industry Consultative Forum (BEDICF) met three times during 2025-26 – September 2025, March 2026 and June 2026. The BEDICF provides a structured mechanism for industry representatives to raise emerging economic, regulatory and business issues directly with government, and engage on key government initiatives.
5.2	Support an Inter-Directorate Committee of senior ACT Public Servants to lead and coordinate initiatives for business and Canberra’s economic development	Supports coordination of strategy and policy across government	Ongoing	Completed	This Inter-Directorate Committee remains in abeyance. However, ACT Government Directorates and agencies work together to support a One Government approach to business where appropriate.
5.3	Explore a government to business secondment program	More ACT Government employees understanding the business context and experience	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
5.4	Co-design a ‘small business awareness’ training module with business and industry stakeholders for the ACT Public Service and guidance material for engaging with business	More ACT Government employees understanding the small business experience	2023-25	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
5.5	Improve the understanding of business within government by further mapping the business user-experience for priority regulated industries	Supports the creation of user-centred programs and information	Ongoing	Completed	Completed. See 2025 Progress Update.
5.6	Host an annual ‘Women in Business meets Women in Government’ speaker and networking event	Will create an opportunity to build connections and awareness between government and business	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The 2025 Women in Business meets Women in Government event was delivered in May 2025. The Minister for Business, Arts and Creative Industries met with finalists and winners of the 2025 CWB Awards.
5.7	Establish stronger connections with the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments	Will support more consistency and opportunities for improvement – this includes sharing resources, data where appropriate, and insights to better service business.	Ongoing	Completed and Ongoing	The Australian Government’s Small Business Ministers’ Meetings were held in August and November 2025. Australian Government Minister for Small Business, The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP released a Communique following each meeting: August 2025 Communique from Small Business Ministers Meeting November 2025 Communique from Small Business Ministers Meeting

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