

# TRANSFORMER

## Seed Grant Fund Criteria & Application

Transformer is an Australian-first entrepreneurship program offered as a fee-free, extracurricular option to undergraduate and postgraduate students from all faculties. Transformer's objective is to give students the courage and confidence to find their inspiration and transform their idea through to execution. Transformer aims to provide unique experiences and equip students with entrepreneurial skills and capabilities.

## Background

Bond University students and Alumni have significant potential and often require additional funding to commercialise their venture. The University's commitment to enhancing student support is evident in the establishment of a Seed Grant Fund specifically tailored for promising businesses and innovative business concepts. This initiative aims to empower Bond students and graduates, enabling them to elevate their business ventures to new heights.

Transformer nurtures students and their business ideas by providing support through multi-disciplinary coaching, workshops, and valuable industry connections.

The Transformer Seed Grant Fund aims to support student business ventures that show strong potential for success. The fund amount of \$100K is available over a three-year period, commencing in the September 2023 semester. A Panel will recommend the allocation of funds after a formal application process.

## Allocation of Funds

The Seed Grant Fund Panel convenes at least once a year to evaluate funding applications submitted by both current students and recent graduates. Eligibility criteria include, but are not confined to, the following:

1. The business is at either the conceptual stage, leveraging to the final stage, or preparing to launch, with evidence of substantial achievement to date.
2. Completion of a Bond University program within the last two years.
3. Current students must have completed at least 60% of their program to be eligible to apply.
4. The business/idea shows strong potential for success in its respective industry.
5. Applicants show unwavering commitment and possess the essential skills for achieving success.

Applicants will be required to present an investment pitch to the Panel and address the Panel's inquiries.

# TRANSFORMER

Once applications have been assessed, the Panel will recommend seed grant funding to the Executive Dean for approval.

Grants of less than \$25,000 will be approved by the Executive Dean of the Bond Business School. Funding amounts greater than \$25,000 will require the approval of the Vice Chancellor.

## Application

To apply, students/teams must submit a video (no longer than 6 minutes) that pitches their business idea or concept and explains how the funding will be used.

The video must address all nine criteria (see Application Criteria). Submissions must be made via completing the entry form:

- [Seed Funding Grant Application](#)

All entries **MUST** adhere to the following requirements:

- All applications must be submitted by completing the entry form; applications received by email will not be taken into consideration.
- Videos should be no longer than 6 minutes.
- Videos must address all nine criteria points (see Criteria).
- Please ensure your video is uploaded to an online platform (such as YouTube) and enabled for public viewing. Video attachments or links submitted via email will not be accepted.
- Please complete all fields in the entry form.
- If students wish to include a slide deck in the video, it must be limited to 11 slides, consisting of nine (9) slides of content slides (one for each of the nine criteria) and two (2) additional slides for title and closing remarks.

Applications submitted late, incomplete, inaccessible or do not align with these requirements in any way will not be considered.

## Application Criteria

The application video pitch will be assessed against the following criteria. Entrants must address all the criteria to be considered. Below is an overview of each of the criteria and the suggested amount of time you should spend on each of these during your 6-minute pitch, leaving an additional 30 seconds as a buffer for any potential overruns.

### 1. **Idea or business overview (30 seconds)**

Provide a concise description of the business, emphasising fundamental aspects such as the problem it addresses, any statistics to illustrate the issue, how your product or service will provide a solution and any other important points that you think people may want to know about.

# TRANSFORMER

## 2. **Value proposition (1 minute)**

The value proposition is the reason why customers will choose your product over another. Elaborate on the benefits your product offers, the problem it addresses, the points of difference to other similar products and why customers would buy your product instead of others. Be clear about who your target market is, their needs and wants, and the price point they are willing to pay. If you have multiple target markets, explain how your products address the different customer needs. Some examples of different value propositions are low cost, convenience, performance, design, luxury, social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and the ability to customise.

## 3. **Market opportunity (30 seconds)**

Market opportunity is calculated by multiplying the estimated number of potential customers by the projected sales price, to give the total market opportunity available in \$. This section should be based on your research of the market, existing offerings, and existing customer numbers.

You could also include information on trends, future developments and external factors that may influence the market opportunity, including potential influences such as a global pandemic.

## 4. **Execution plan (1 minute)**

Present a high-level plan showing the next steps that you intend to pursue, along with approximate timeframes in weeks or months. Ideally, your plan will include the launch of the business and extend into subsequent phases; even if in-depth details may not be available for later stages, a high-level timeline would suffice. The execution plan should directly relate to activities outlined in the Need for Funding breakdown (see below). You may use a timeline, a checklist, or any other way to present your plan effectively.

## 5. **Management capability (30 seconds)**

While many businesses commence with a single founder, achieving substantial growth often necessitates an efficient leadership team. It is important to maintain a realistic outlook on the evolving workload and skill requirements as the business progresses. Initially, you may operate as a solo entrepreneur and later assess the need for management capabilities as the business grows. You could also mention assistance provided by unofficial team members such as mentors and other connections.

## 6. **Cost structure and revenue streams (1 minute)**

Provide a comprehensive breakdown of the expenses associated with delivering your product or service, as well as the income you will generate from sales. Costs need to include costs directly related to the production, delivery, and any maintenance of your offering and any significant indirect costs relating to the overall operation of your business. e.g. if you are selling a physical product, your direct costs may include raw materials, equipment and packaging, and indirect costs may include expenses like marketing and hosting a website. Revenue streams for a product may be a price per unit, bulk pricing, a

# TRANSFORMER

subscription fee, an hourly labour rate or a unique price for a custom offering based on a combination of hourly labour rate and materials.

## 7. **Traction achieved to date (30 seconds)**

Early startup traction can mean the difference between the success or failure of a startup because it indicates early momentum. Demonstrating traction is a sign that you have a solution that people want to use. It shows that your big idea is more than just an idea.

Typical examples of traction include web page visits, social media followers, registered users, endorsements, positive media coverage, MOU's with key partners, technical performance data (proof of concept), early sales figures, etc.

## 8. **The competition (30 seconds)**

Competition can come from an incumbent, indirect competition or alternatives that may solve a problem differently, as well as the most obvious direct competition.

Founders who have done their homework can talk about their sustainable competitive advantages and the barriers to entry – in other words, how they will compete in the marketplace. Clarify what sets your business apart from other similar offerings

## 9. **Need for funding (30 seconds)**

Lastly, it is essential to provide a breakdown of the funding you are seeking from investors. Clearly articulate how you intend to allocate the funds. Potential expenses might include business registration, website development, prototype production, equipment purchase and materials and other relevant expenses.

## **Finalists and Final Pitch**

All video entries will be evaluated based on the nine criteria points, and four finalists will be selected. These chosen finalists will present a live pitch to the panel. Following the pitch, the judges will pose questions that finalists will need to address.

All finalists must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The final pitch must be delivered in person in front of the judges and cannot be made by pre-recorded video or remote video link.
- The final pitch must be no longer than 6 minutes.
- If slides are being used, these must be limited to 11 slides (nine content and two slides designated for title and closing remarks). These slides must be provided to the organisers 24 hours prior to the final pitching event.
- Any supporting material used in the final pitching event must receive prior approval by the Transformer team. These materials may include, but are not limited to, video or audio files (both capped at 30 seconds), product samples or prototypes, and handouts.

# TRANSFORMER

## Re-entering the Competition

Applicants are permitted to re-enter the competition subject to the following conditions:

- Applicants who have previously won Seed Grant Funding for their business are not permitted to re-enter
- Applicants who have not previously been awarded Seed Grant Funding for their business may re-enter the competition at any time if they can demonstrate that their idea or pitch has progressed from their previous entry. Entrants are encouraged to incorporate the organisers' and/or judges' feedback in their subsequent pitch.

## Timeline

1. 27 September: Entries open
2. 29 October: Entries close (11:59 pm)
3. 1 November: Top four finalists notified by email
4. 11 November: Final pitch in front of the panel
5. 13 November: Seed Grant Fund winner notified
6. 14 November: Seed Grant Fund winner announced at Demo Day

## Judging Panel

The Judging Panel for the grant will be selected by the Executive Dean.

Judges will be announced prior to the final pitching event.

## Use of Funds

The Seed Grant Funding will look for opportunities where the funding will help applicants take their idea/business to the next stage of development. The Seed Grant Fund accommodates applicants at various points in the business lifecycle, Including:

Any use of funds must be directly related to the business activities outlined in the application and approved by the Transformer Program Manager. Any deviation from the proposed use without prior approval may result in forfeiture of the remaining funds.

1. Conceptual stage
2. MVP / Prototype development
3. Beta Testing phase
4. Commercialised Product launch
5. Scale Up

# TRANSFORMER

The applicant or team must demonstrate how they intend to use the funding to accomplish at least one of the following objectives:

- Validate a Proof of Concept
- Develop a Prototype
- Product development
- Conduct Market research
- Product launch
- Secure a major contract or customers
- Increase capability
- Reduce other investment risks

Our goal is to provide support throughout the entire lifecycle; the successful applicant will have access to Transformer Coaches throughout this journey.

## Fund Restrictions

It is recommended that you discuss each item for reimbursement with the Transformer Program Manager prior to purchase to ensure it aligns with the fund's guidelines.

Funds will not be awarded for:

- Reimbursement for activities that have already occurred.
- Applications that are late, incomplete, inaccessible or fail to meet application requirements in any way
- The purchase of alcohol for events or activities
- Academic program expenses
- Funds cannot be used to purchase any technology-related items, as these are subject to university procurement policies
- Living expenses not related to a specific project or activity
- Food expenses associated with travel
- Groceries and personal expenses (e.g. toiletries)
- Ongoing financial commitments to an activity (grants are provided as a one-off payment)
- Course fees
- Student Exchanges through the University's Exchange Program.
- Higher Degree Research (HDR) students are eligible for the fund only for activities unrelated to their PhD candidature.

## Accessing Funds

Any single item purchase exceeding \$3,000 requires prior approval from the Transformer Program Manager.

Misuse or unauthorised use of funds will lead to the immediate termination of the grant, and the misused funds will be required to be reimbursed.

# TRANSFORMER

Any aggregate expenditure exceeding 50% of total funds within 6 months must be pre-approved, in writing to ensure the funds are being used sustainably.

Funds are non-transferable and must be used exclusively for the approved purpose.

Funds will be provided via reimbursement for eligible business activities that have taken place after the winners have been announced. Recipients must submit an expense claim form along with receipts for approval from the Transformer team. Upon approval, funds will be reimbursed to the seed grant recipient's nominated account. Only approved items on the expense claim will be reimbursed.

A portion of the funds must be used within 2 semesters of receiving the grant. The successful seed grant recipient will be required to submit a monthly Project Status Report and include all tax receipts for payments made.

If, for any reason, you are unable to proceed with the planned activity, please notify the Transformer team immediately.

Additionally, you may be invited to participate in up to four public relations activities each year to help promote the Transformer program over the next three years.

Any funds that remain unspent after three years from the date of the grant award will be forfeited and returned to the Bond University seed funding grant account.

## Reporting

The Project Status Report must be submitted to the Transformer Program Manager ([transformer@bond.edu.au](mailto:transformer@bond.edu.au)) by the 15th of each month, starting one month after the recipient has been awarded the grant.

Monthly reports must be submitted on time, and any delays could result in suspension of funding until compliance is met.

Paid tax invoices associated with your activity and your Project Status Report must be provided. Transformer will provide the Project Status Report template.

Any significant changes to the business plan or objectives (as outlined in the original application) require written approval from the Transformer Program before proceeding.

The grant is non-transferable and must be used solely by the original recipient for the specific, approved purposes. Any involvement of third parties or changes in how the funds are used must receive prior written approval.

## Information and Advice

# TRANSFORMER

Any questions regarding the grant are encouraged to contact the Transformer team at [transformer@bond.edu.au](mailto:transformer@bond.edu.au) or 5595 5604 to ask questions or seek advice.