



Small Business
Development Corporation



SBDC STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-30



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SBDC acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as the original custodians of this country, recognising their connection to land, waters and community. We respect their cultures and Elders, past and present.

Ngala kaaditj Whadjuk moort keyen kaadak nidja boodja.

We acknowledge Whadjuk Noongar people as the original custodians of the land on which we are based.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is a fantastic time to be operating, or planning to start, a small business in Western Australia.

Our state is in a position of genuine economic strength. WA's finances maintain a AAA credit rating from both major ratings agencies, and our unemployment rate remains amongst the lowest in Australia.

Our resources and agricultural sectors continue to underpin the national economy as we export in-demand food and energy to the world. The WA Government has outlined an ambitious yet achievable plan to build infrastructure including clean energy investments and the Seven Cities Plan, that will set our state up for a bright future.

But big initiatives are only a fraction of the picture. Small businesses are central to our vision of a state where the benefits of our strong economy flow throughout our communities. Our Government's focus is on diversifying and deepening our economic base to ensure that the prosperity we have worked hard for, translates into lasting opportunity for Western Australians in every corner of the state.

The more than 250,000 small businesses across WA employ hundreds of thousands of people, contribute billions of dollars to our economy, and deliver essential products and services to our communities. They are not a peripheral part of our economy but one of its primary drivers - created and grown by entrepreneurial Western Australians who deserve our support.

The WA Government's Made in WA Plan cannot be realised without a strong and enterprising small business sector. Whether a local contractor helping to build the Seven Cities vision, an Aboriginal-owned business creating unique tourism experiences, or an allied health professional running their own practice, small businesses are the connective tissue that turns government priorities into economic outcomes on the ground.

The SBDC plays a vital role in translating the Government's commitment to small business into tangible support: helping people start and grow, providing advice, advocating for better operating conditions, and connecting business owners with the resources and networks they need to succeed. The SBDC's Strategic Plan 2026-30 builds on the Corporation's strong track record and sets a clear and focused direction for the next four years. I am confident it will serve the small business community of Western Australia well and in doing so, contribute to the broader prosperity of our state.

Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC

Minister for Small Business



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Small businesses are both the backbone and the heartbeat of our state. From the tradie starting out in the suburbs of Perth, to the tourism operator in the Kimberley; the craft brewer in the Perth Hills to the family-run supply store in the Wheatbelt: these are the people the SBDC exists to serve. And it is those Western Australian small business owners we had in mind when crafting the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC)'s Strategic Plan 2026–2030.

The Premier and the WA Government are clear on their priorities - creating a future that is Made in WA and diversifying our economy to build resilience and create jobs. With small businesses operating across every industry sector, they play and will continue to play an indispensable role in contributing to the success of these initiatives and our state's future. As such, the WA Government's vision is at the forefront of our strategic focus and our new Strategic Plan.

This plan represents both continuity and evolution, carrying forward our core strategic pillars, viewed through a new lens. It reflects everything we continue to listen and learn about what small businesses need, what government can uniquely provide, and where we as an organisation must stretch, grow and adapt. Most importantly, it is built around a clear and honest acknowledgement of our core purpose: to serve.

Serve is not a pillar in this plan - it is the foundation that underlies all our work. When we regard every decision, every service, and every engagement through the lens of how it helps WA's small business owners to start well, survive and thrive,

our focus becomes crystal clear. Whether we are helping someone navigate the process of securing licences and approvals for their enterprise, mediating a dispute, suggesting new tools they can use to run their business more efficiently, or advocating for making it easier to do business in our state, we are in service of the small business community of Western Australia.

Building on that foundation, we have outlined the four strategic pillars that will shape and direct the SBDC's work over the next four years:

- Under Grow, we will contribute meaningfully to the diversification of the WA economy, explicitly connecting our work supporting small businesses to the State Government's priorities and demonstrating the economic value of a thriving small business sector.
- In Strengthen, we will refine our advocacy agenda to continue to pursue a fair and level playing field, by being a voice to government and industry for small business operators across the state.
- Through Connect, we will deepen and expand our partnerships and alliances across all sectors, recognising that in a state as large and diverse as ours, no single body can do this work alone and our collective might lies in collaboration.
- Under Evolve, we will ensure that we remain a contemporary, agile and effective organisation that is fit for the challenges and opportunities today and tomorrow will bring in our fast moving environment.

I am proud of the team that will deliver this plan – Team SBDC - and energised by what lies ahead. The work is meaningful, the need of our small businesses is real, their contribution to the state is essential, and the SBDC is ready to deliver.

Saj Abdoolakhan

Small Business Commissioner
Chief Executive Officer
Small Business Development Corporation



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Western Australia's small business community is as diverse as the state itself. It encompasses hundreds of thousands of enterprises across industries, regions and stages of growth, that together drive economic activity, create employment and give character to our communities. Given the central role small businesses play in our economy and job creation, supporting this sector is not a "nice to have" government function - it is essential to WA's future evolution.

On behalf of the Board of the Small Business Development Corporation, I am pleased to endorse our Strategic Plan 2026–2030. This plan has been crafted carefully, drawing on our experience and awareness of what small businesses need to support them, stakeholder insight and consideration of the environment in which small businesses operate. It sets an ambitious yet achievable course for the SBDC over the coming four years, powered by the purpose that drives the agency – to unleash Western Australians' enterprising business spirit.

The Board is particularly supportive of the emphasis on advocacy and partnership. With 97 per cent of WA businesses classed as small businesses, the operating conditions we help shape have real and direct consequences for the state's economy. Likewise, our commitment to evolving our internal capabilities - our people, technology and data - represents sound governance and a genuine dedication to delivering value for the public investment entrusted to us.

The SBDC operates in an environment that is constantly shifting. Business conditions change, technology advances, government priorities evolve,

and the needs of small business owners are never static. This Strategic Plan creates the framework that supports us to meet that change with purpose and confidence.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Executive team and staff who contributed to the development of this plan, and importantly to our small business customers that the SBDC exists to support. The Board looks forward to supporting its delivery and to seeing the positive impact it will have across Western Australia.

Sharni Foulkes

Chair
Small Business Development Corporation

WHO WE ARE

The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC), an independent statutory authority operating since 1984, fosters a strong and resilient small business sector in Western Australia. We support existing and aspiring business owners by providing practical information, guidance, workshops, and tools to start, manage, and grow successful enterprises. We work to improve the operating environment through dispute resolution, reform initiatives and policy advice that advocate for measures to strengthen the sector and support its growth, along with inquiries that identify unfair or harmful practices affecting small businesses.

Small businesses play a vital role in shaping the State's economy and communities, contributing to prosperity, diversity, and everyday life. The SBDC is committed to creating conditions in which small businesses can start well, survive and thrive by reducing barriers and providing targeted support. By offering guidance, advocacy, and resources, the SBDC helps small business owners navigate challenges and grow sustainably.

When small business owners need trusted guidance, effective advocacy or practical support, they

Turn to us.

OUR VISION

For a strong and enterprising small business sector in Western Australia.

OUR MISSION

Deliver and facilitate relevant, practical support to small businesses and advocate on their behalf.

OUR PURPOSE

Unleashing Western Australian's enterprising business spirit.

OUR VALUES

At the SBDC, the way we work shapes how we support and empower small businesses across Western Australia. Our values guide decisions, build trust, and ensure we deliver meaningful, sustainable outcomes for the sector. By living our values every day, we create a culture that drives innovation, strengthens partnerships, and upholds the highest standards of professionalism.



Enterprise

We value a solution-focused and inventive culture



Collaboration

We actively work with others to achieve shared goals



Integrity

We act with courage, honesty and respect



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Being able to seek free and valuable advice during a time of extreme financial and mental strain, has been a godsend. It now feels like we have someone in our corner.

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I love SBDC. Over my 30+ years in business I come up with situations at times where I need advice. At these times, I just contact SBDC and know the very experienced team are there to help.

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97%*

of business in WA are
Small Businesses

The small business
sector has grown by

15.3%

between
2020 – 2025*

*Statistic Source Reference: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Jul 2021 – Jun 2025). Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits. ABS

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Small businesses play a vital role in shaping Western Australia's economy and communities. They work across each industry sector and contribute to prosperity, diversity, and everyday life across the state. A strong and enterprising small business sector is essential to our state's future.

As the Western Australian Government's primary agency for supporting and advocating for small businesses, we recognise the importance of updating our strategic plan to align with the evolving needs of our customers, stakeholders, and the state.

Our Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is built on four strategic pillars, supported by our foundation commitment – to 'Serve'.

Serve represents our core commitment to providing contemporary and practical services that support small businesses across Western Australia. It forms the foundation of everything we do, ensuring that all aspects of our work are grounded in delivering value and support to the small business sector.



SERVE

Offer contemporary and practical services and support for small businesses across Western Australia



GROW

Contribute to the growth and diversity of the WA economy



STRENGTHEN

Drive improvements to the operating environment for small business



CONNECT

Build and leverage strategic alliances and partnerships



EVOLVE

Evolve our business to be agile, future-focused, effective and efficient



GROW

Contribute to the growth and diversity of the WA economy

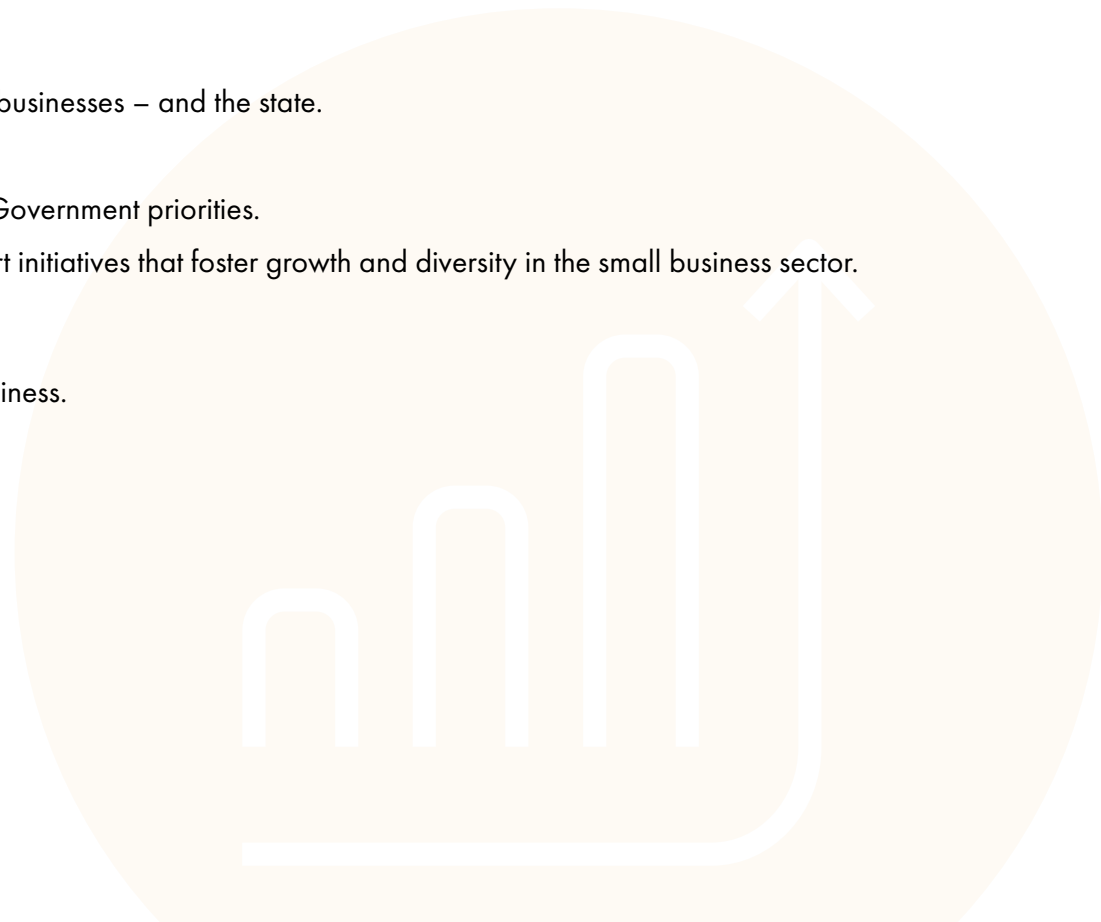
We understand that the work we do directly contributes to the WA Government's key priorities: to diversify our economy and make more things in WA. As part of this objective, we look to clearly define, measure and communicate the benefits of our work in supporting the small business sector as a key economic contributor.

Our focus for the next four years:

- Enable and support activities that facilitate economic benefits for small businesses – and the state.
- Refine our knowledge of key target segments and their needs.
- Ensure our services and programs address small businesses and State Government priorities.
- Develop and leverage our platforms, channels, and networks to support initiatives that foster growth and diversity in the small business sector.

How we measure our impact:

- The extent to which our guidance supported clients to start or buy a business.
- Number of new and returning clients.
- Usefulness of our information/guidance.
- Customer experience score.





STRENGTHEN

Drive improvements to the operating environment for small business

With 97 per cent* of businesses in Western Australia defined as small businesses, their success makes a big impact on the state's economy. Our work to advocate for and represent the interests of small business is an essential part of ensuring Western Australians can start and grow their businesses in a fair operating environment, where they have the best opportunity to succeed and grow.

Our focus for the next four years:

- Prioritise and pursue a focused advocacy agenda to address activities that adversely impact small business.
- Undertake targeted inquiries and investigations to identify activities that have a detrimental and unfair impact on small businesses.
- Proactively work with other government agencies to improve the operating environment for small businesses.

How we measure our impact:

- Number of dispute resolution services delivered.

*Statistic Source Reference: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Jun 2025). Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits. ABS



CONNECT

Build and leverage strategic alliances and partnerships

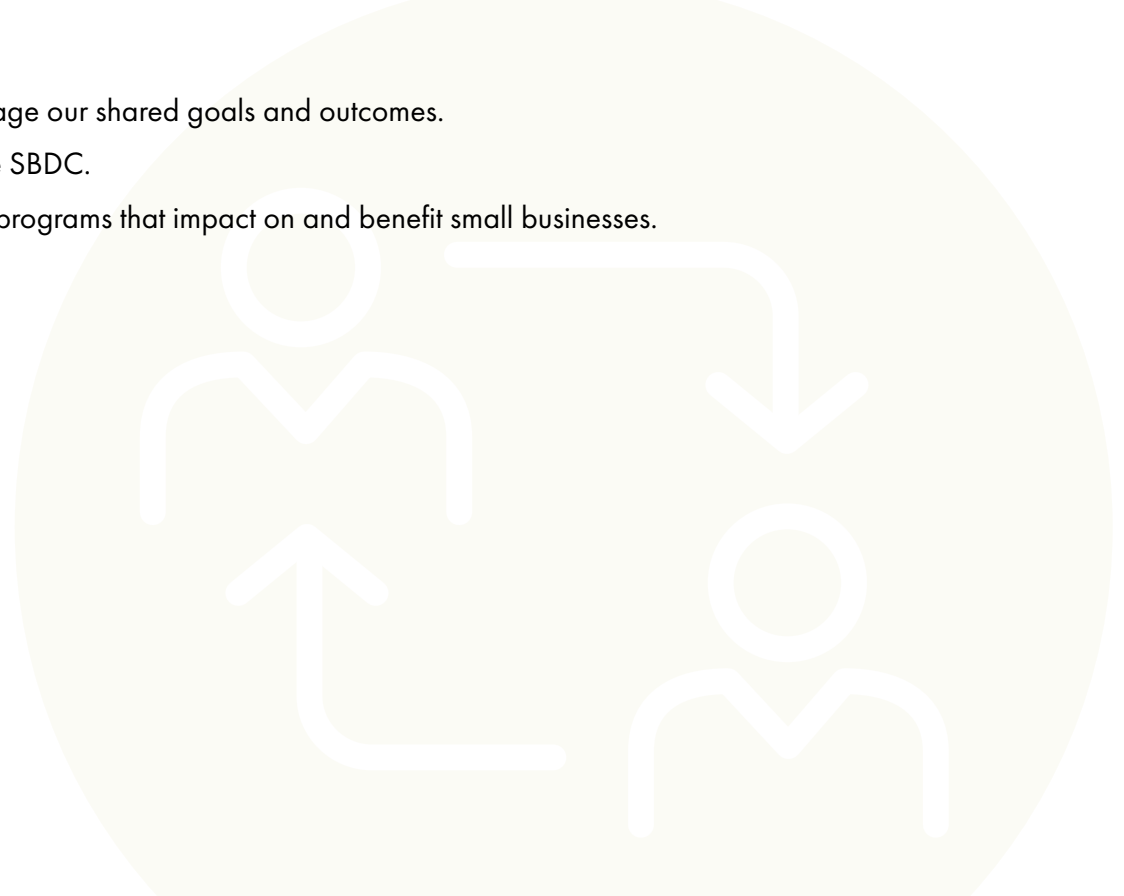
As a small but dynamic agency, we know that we can amplify our work and make it stronger by partnering with others. The diversity of the small business sector – spanning industries, regions, and business types – and the size of our state, makes it essential to work with others to ensure our support is relevant and far-reaching. We will focus on building and strengthening our relationships with a variety of stakeholders and partners to discover opportunities to work together to help the sector.

Our focus for the next four years:

- Embed and integrate the stakeholder management framework to leverage our shared goals and outcomes.
- Build alliances and partnerships to expand the reach and impact of the SBDC.
- Offer expertise across government in the development of policies and programs that impact on and benefit small businesses.

How we measure our impact:

- Number of stakeholder engagements.





EVOLVE

Evolve our business to be agile, future-focused, effective and efficient

We will invest in our people, systems and technology to ensure the agency has the appropriate capabilities and capacity to deliver this strategic plan. In a rapidly evolving business and technological landscape, including advances in AI, we will strengthen the foundations of our organisation and build the agility needed to keep pace as we grow.

Our focus for the next four years:

- Implement, evolve and adapt a more collaborative, agile and future-focused operating model.
- Ensure our agency delivers value for money, accountability and efficiency.
- Evolve our technological (ICT) capabilities to meet current and future business requirements.
- Support and develop our people to be a skilled, motivated, resilient and diverse workforce.
- Strengthen our data analytics capability to anticipate and respond to emerging trends with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

How we measure our impact:

- Numbers of services delivered in house, and via third party.

SBDC Strategic Plan 2026-2030

Objectives	 SERVE Offer contemporary and practical services and support for small businesses across Western Australia			
	 GROW	 STRENGTHEN	 CONNECT	 EVOLVE
Initiatives	Contribute to the growth and diversity of the Western Australian economy	Drive improvements to the operating environment for small business	Build and leverage strategic alliances and partnerships	Evolve our business to be agile future-focused effective and efficient
	1.1 Enable and support activities that facilitate economic benefits for small businesses and the state. 1.2 Refine our knowledge of key target segments and their needs. 1.3 Ensure our services and programs address small business and State Government priorities. 1.4 Develop and leverage our platforms, channels and networks to support initiatives that foster growth and diversity in the small business sector.	2.1 Prioritise and pursue a focused advocacy agenda to address activities that adversely impact small businesses. 2.2 Undertake targeted inquiries and investigations, to identify activities that have a detrimental and unfair impact on small businesses. 2.3 Proactively collaborate with other government agencies to improve the operating environment for small businesses.	3.1 Embed and integrate the stakeholder management framework to leverage our shared goals and outcomes. 3.2 Build alliances and partnerships to expand the reach and impact of the SBDC. 3.3 Offer expertise across government in the development of policies and programs that impact on and benefit small businesses.	4.1 Implement, evolve and adapt a more collaborative, agile and future-focused operating model. 4.2 Ensure our agency delivers value for money, accountability and efficiency. 4.3 Evolve our technological (ICT) capabilities to meet current and future business requirements. 4.4 Support and develop our people to be a skilled, motivated, resilient and diverse workforce. 4.5 Strengthen our data analytics capability to anticipate and respond to emerging trends with greater efficiency and effectiveness.
Measures	• Extent to which guidance provided supported clients to start or buy a business • New and returning clients • Usefulness of information/guidance provided • Customer experience rating	• Number of dispute resolution services delivered	• Number of stakeholder engagements	• Number of services delivered



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Absolutely a marvellous Corporation with very helpful caring people. You are not talking to a bot but a real person who is understanding in stressful times.

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As a very small business owner, I'm usually self reliant and balk at asking for help. But SBDC is always so helpful especially when I'm frazzled and overwhelmed.

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**Small Business
Development Corporation**

CONTACT US

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