



# Your guide to the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

## What is the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme?

The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) can help you to become self-sufficient and independent by establishing a new small business.

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NEIS can provide training in small business management, business skills and business plan development, and if approved:

- NEIS Allowance (if eligible) for up to 52 weeks
- NEIS Rental Assistance for up to 26 weeks (if eligible), and
- business advice and mentoring support during the first year of operation.

NEIS will help you develop a business plan as part of your training. The plan will need to be approved before you can start your business with NEIS assistance.

The plan will help you if you need to approach banks or credit unions for finance. NEIS does not provide start-up funds such as loans or grants.

## Who can participate?

To participate in NEIS you must be either:

- registered as eligible for the full range of Job Network services and:
  - at least aged 18 years at the time of signing a NEIS Participant Agreement
  - be receiving an allowance specified by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) from time to time as NEIS eligible, or
- a mature age job seeker not on income support who:
  - will be aged 50 years or over at the time of signing a NEIS Participant Agreement
  - has the capacity to be financially self-sufficient while undertaking training and NEIS assistance.

### All participants must:

- be available to train and work full-time in the business
- agree to hold and maintain a controlling interest in the business during the term of the NEIS Participant Agreement
- not have received NEIS Assistance in the previous two years and not have received NEIS Assistance previously for a similar business activity
- not be an undischarged bankrupt.



**New Enterprise Incentive Scheme**

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#### **Your business must:**

- be independent, reputable and lawful
- be assessed as commercially viable by a NEIS provider
- not be operating on a commercial basis
- not compete directly with an existing business unless you can demonstrate that there is an unsatisfied demand for your product or service
- not involve the purchase or take-over of an existing business
- be established, located and operated solely within Australia.

#### **How can I apply?**

To apply for assistance contact a NEIS provider, Job Network member or Centrelink office in your area.

#### **Where can I find a NEIS provider?**

Details of NEIS providers and Job Network members are available through:

- JobSearch Kiosks at Centrelink
- online at [workplace.gov.au/neis](http://workplace.gov.au/neis) or
- by phoning the Employment Services Information Line on 13 62 68.

#### **What if I need other help with starting my own business?**

The Business Entry Point is an Australian Government service that provides free access to business information, transactions and advice.

For more information on how to set up and manage your business and how to get financial and other help, visit [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au).

#### **Your right to privacy**

Personal information is protected under the *Privacy Act 1988* and may not be disclosed unless it is authorised to do so.

If you are receiving income support, your information is authorised to be disclosed under *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*.

In providing employment services to you, your information may be shared between those contracted service providers who are assisting you, DEWR, Centrelink and other Australian Government departments and agencies.

The sharing of your information is important as it enables Australian Government departments and agencies to provide you with the most appropriate services to meet your needs.

For more information about your privacy ask your service provider, or DEWR, or visit [privacy.gov.au](http://privacy.gov.au).

#### **Your guarantee of service**

You are guaranteed to receive a high standard of personalised and professional service from your NEIS provider. These services will take into account your background, circumstances, needs and skills.

Your NEIS provider will assess your business idea and if it has potential, will guide you in applying for NEIS.

If your business idea is approved, your NEIS provider will, for the duration of your NEIS Participant Agreement, help and support you to establish your business and become self-supporting and independent.

At all times your NEIS provider will answer your questions promptly and handle your personal and business information in a confidential, sensitive and secure manner.

#### **Initial service**

**Before enrolling in NEIS, you can expect your NEIS provider to:**

- tell you about the services available under the NEIS programme
- help mature age non-allowee clients to develop a household income plan
- assess your eligibility for NEIS, including assessing household income plans for mature age non-allowee clients
- assess the potential viability of your business idea
- tell you if you are eligible before you begin training, and
- tell you about your rights and responsibilities.

**If selected for NEIS training, you will receive:**

- training (Certificate IV in Business—Small Business Management) delivered by a Registered Training Organisation using appropriately qualified trainers and assessors
- prior learning exemptions if you have relevant prior training and experience, and
- help to develop your business plan.

**You can expect your NEIS provider to:**

- consider your business plan fairly and equitably
- advise you whether your business plan has been approved or not and if not, your avenues for seeking a review of that decision
- if your business plan is approved and you would like to start establishing your business, explain your obligations while receiving NEIS Assistance
- arrange for the lodgement of the NEIS Participant Agreement and other supporting documents with DEWR.

## Keep in contact

**Your NEIS provider is there to help you while you establish your new business. They will:**

- maintain regular contact with you, at least monthly, and
- provide a minimum of five mentor support visits, as outlined in the NEIS Participant Agreement.

## Other help

**You can expect your NEIS provider to:**

- provide business guidance and counselling—where specialist business advice is necessary, your provider will advise you about specialist business professionals you could consult (at your expense)
- collect financial information from you about your business
- assess the commercial viability of your business at set points throughout the year
- discuss your options if they feel your business may not be viable, and
- notify DEWR of their assessment of your business viability and future.

If your business is assessed as being not commercially viable, your NEIS provider will recommend to DEWR that your NEIS Assistance stops.

## NEIS Allowance arrangements

Your provider will collect information from you about any income that you receive from outside your business. If this income (for example from investments or other work) is greater than the set threshold, your provider will tell you and advise DEWR as necessary. Receiving income from sources other than your business may affect the amount of NEIS Allowance you are eligible for.

**If you have any questions about your NEIS Allowance, please contact your NEIS provider.**

## Liaison with DEWR

Your provider will undertake most of the contact with DEWR on your behalf.

They are required to inform DEWR in a timely way if:

- circumstances change, which may affect your ongoing eligibility for NEIS Assistance
- you refuse mentoring support during your NEIS Assistance period
- you fail to submit the required business financial information and income statement
- you exceed the relevant income test threshold, or
- your business appears to no longer be eligible for NEIS Assistance.

Your provider should advise you about the *Code of Practice* ('the Code'), which tells you how they will deliver services to you. A copy of the Code is available from your provider.

**For more information on NEIS, including any changes to the eligibility criteria or NEIS providers in your area:**

- visit [workplace.gov.au/neis](http://workplace.gov.au/neis)
- try the JobSearch Kiosk at your nearest Centrelink or Job Network office
- phone the Employment Services Information Line on 13 62 68.

**An interpreter can be arranged on request.**

**For other business information visit [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au).**