

Enhancements to the Small Business Friendly Program

We are evolving the Small Business Friendly (SBF) Program to better support councils in fostering a thriving small business ecosystem. These enhancements are guided by human-centred design principles, ensuring that the needs and experiences of our members drive meaningful change. Through a dedicated working group and member surveys, we have gathered valuable insights to shape the future of the program.

Key Enhancements

1. A Shift to a Small Business Friendly Commitment

To reflect our renewed focus on accountability and continuous improvement, we are transitioning from a 'charter' to a Small Business Friendly Commitment. This change reinforces the importance of an active, ongoing pledge rather than a static agreement.

2. Stronger Strategic Foundations

For councils who have an Economic Development Strategy, we encourage them to align the strategy with small business needs.

An annual Small Business Action Plan will replace the existing Accelerator Action Plan, ensuring clear and structured steps for improvement.

3. Simplified and Clear Commitment

The revised program will ensure that the commitment remains accessible, straightforward, and practical, making it easier for councils to adopt and implement.

4. Measurability and Accountability

The commitment must include measurable actions, allowing members to track progress and demonstrate tangible benefits to their small business communities.

An enhanced reporting framework will support councils in showcasing their efforts through performance tracking, meaningful metrics, and real-world case studies.

5. Encouraging Continuous Improvement

The program will not be a static framework but will encourage members to consistently elevate their small business support efforts, pushing for innovation and excellence.

6. Scalability for Different Organisations

Recognising the diversity of councils, the program will be adaptable to suit varying sizes, capabilities, and resources, ensuring every member can participate effectively.

By embedding these enhancements, we aim to create a program that not only supports small businesses more effectively but also provides councils with a clear and structured pathway to drive economic development and community prosperity.