

Executive summary



A NSW Government Business Hub will give businesses easy access to the right government services.

The NSW Government provides a wide range of business services, support and programs from several agencies. The Commonwealth and many local governments also offer business support services. These business services include an extensive array of targeted support for businesses with innovative systems, products and services, including startups, whether they are already operating or domiciled in New South Wales, or they are considering or intending to do so.

For businesses themselves, the result can be difficult and confusing to navigate. Some NSW businesses now face a choice of more than ten separate services seeking to take them through the assistance process. Within NSW Government, there are around twenty potential entry points for a prospective new business.

Businesses should not need to decode which of the NSW Government services to approach, or what assistance they can and cannot expect to receive. They should be able to have the government respond to their needs with a seamless and responsive experience. The challenge is made harder because of the other levels of government that may also be involved.

Many overseas jurisdictions have implemented a 'business hub' solution to this problem. New South Wales, too, should implement such an approach.

There are at least two variants on this hub approach.

- The first provides a business 'front door' that helps businesses to access the services on offer. It connects businesses to services.
- The second provides not just a door but the whole shop — a service that itself assists businesses with growth, innovation and finance. It originates business services.

To explore how NSW Government might provide a one-stop-shop connector to improve innovation support for businesses, the Innovation and Productivity Council (IPC) has examined local and international business hub models which provide firms with a central entry point to government and access to a responsive business concierge service.

Overseas jurisdictions have had success with both models. However, a consideration of risks and rewards suggests that initial investment should be directed to creating a successful connector service.

The service will inevitably continue to evolve beyond its initial construction.

Successful implementation will rely on five crucial variables:

- commitment from government
- the right institutional setting
- appropriate processes for evolving and evaluating the service
- buy-in from a group of stakeholders
- implementation capability

Demonstrated service capabilities make Service NSW for Businesses the leading candidate to commence this journey and run the proposed Business Hub. The Business Hub can act as the front door for all businesses in New South Wales (with small business in particular benefiting) and provide a triage role to more specialised services — be it exploring exports, specialised support for high growth firms such as startups and scaleups or the collaborative opportunities enabled by NSW Government as a connector.