

# Media Release

## **EVALUATION OF GRANTS ADMINISTRATION PHASE ONE: COMMERCIAL GRANTS TABLED**

28 November 2023

Grants programs directed to supporting commercial industries and private businesses come with heightened corruption risks due to the financial interests and opportunities involved. The interplay of profit motives and the public interest, coupled with increased interactions between public officials and private entities, increase the prospect of conflicts of interest and generate opportunities for corrupt conduct.

For this reason the Commission has focused the first phase of its evaluation of grants administration on two departments extensively engaged with the private sector, the *Department for Industry, Innovation and Science* and the *Department for Trade and Investment*. These agencies administer grants to commercial, entrepreneurial, and research entities, involving significant financial incentives.

Despite the corruption risks associated with grants of this nature, the Commission noted commendable features in the practices, policies, and procedures governing grants management in each department.

While the agencies showed some variation in the management of their programs, the approach to administration was broadly consistent and evidently conscientious.

The Commission has made 29 recommendations aimed at minimising vulnerability to corruption. These focus on managing conflicts of interests between public officers and recipients, protecting sensitive information, and protecting against the formation of improper relations between public officers and recipients. The Commission has also recommended process changes to manage risks associated with secondary employment and other financial interests, and gifts and benefits.

*Evaluation of grants administration phase one: Commercial grants* is available on the Commission's website: [www.icac.sa.gov.au/evaluations-and-reviews](http://www.icac.sa.gov.au/evaluations-and-reviews)

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