

2025 Terms & Conditions – City of Whittlesea Next Level Growth Program

Next Level Business Growth Program 2025

The City of Whittlesea 2025 Next-Level Growth (NLG) Program is an eight-week, personalised program of business education, coaching and mentoring for up to 20 businesses, funded by the City of Whittlesea and delivered by 25 eight business consultants.

NLG is aimed at providing small and medium business leaders with the knowledge, skills and confidence to help them take their business to the next level. You start with an idea of what you want to achieve, and end with a solid and actionable growth plan, deeper insights into your market and enhanced clarity on exactly what you need to do to get results.

NLG is valued over \$3,000 per participant and free for up to 20 eligible businesses.

NLG is only open for businesses located within the City of Whittlesea.

Becoming a member of the free Whittlesea Business Network is a condition of participating in the NLG Program. You are not required to be a network member prior to submission of your Expression of Interest (EOI). However, to be considered for NLG, in this form you are required to *opt-in* to become a Business Network member. Please contact business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au if you wish to seek further clarification on this condition.

Entries will open at 9am on Wednesday 12 February 2025 and close at 11pm on Sunday 13 April 2025.

Eligibility:

- A business must be a member of the City of Whittlesea Business Network to nominate, prior or when submitting an EOI
- Each business must have a valid ABN
- Businesses must be registered and/or operate from a physical location within the City of Whittlesea
- The NLG Program is open to businesses that have been in operation for more than 18 months i.e. commenced operating before 12 August 2023
- Businesses in operation less than 18 months will need to articulate strongly for NLG inclusion and may be included at the discretion of the EOI reviewers. They are required to answer an additional question on the EOI form
- The business must hold all appropriate permits and licences; this includes but not limited to building, planning and health permits.

Business not eligible to enter:

- In breach of any Federal, state/territory or local government law or regulation
- Have any outstanding debts owing to council
- Owned by a current employee or Councillor of the City of Whittlesea
- Have any open or outstanding compliance matters with council
- The primary operation relates to the sale of alcohol, tobacco and tobacco related products i.e. e-cigarettes, shisha, hookahs and pipes, gambling and electronic gaming machines.

Expression of Interest Conditions:

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- Complete all contact details on the EOI form
- EOI and participation in the City of Whittlesea NLG is free of charge
- Once you submit your EOI, it cannot be edited. To make changes to a submitted EOI an entirely new EOI will need to be submitted
- EOI must be prepared and submitted by the business. EOI made by third parties on behalf of businesses will not be accepted
- Incomplete EOI will not be accepted
- To be eligible for the NLG 2025, businesses must have been in operation for at least 18 months i.e. commenced operating before 12 August 2023
- Businesses in operation less than 18 months will need to articulate strongly for NLG inclusion, and may be included at the discretion of the EOI reviewers
- Where a business operates from multiple locations, the EOI must reflect the initiatives related to the City of Whittlesea location
- EOI will be reviewed and entrants awarded by a selection panel. Businesses may be contacted to discuss their EOI prior to a decision made. The panel's decision is final
- EOI will be submitted through a Microsoft Forms online nomination form
- By nominating you agree to have your business name, and any photos or videos produced in relation to the NLG Program used by City of Whittlesea for promotional activity. This may include but is not limited to print publications, City of Whittlesea website and social media channels
- The City of Whittlesea will not be liable for any action or claim arising from or in connection with this EOI and its assessment
- Awarded businesses must commit to having the same one senior business representative at each of the four in-person 1 x 2-hour, and 3 x 1-hour in-person workshops held on Week 1,2,5 and 8 of the NLG.
- Businesses must commit to completing the eight-week program in full.

Submitting an expression of interest (EOI)

- EOI are only valid if made through the nomination form available at [Next Level Growth EOI Form](#)
- Once you submit your EOI you will be notified by an email confirmation, if you do not receive this email, please contact business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au or 9217 2170 to speak to the Economic Development Department.

EOI and Review Process

- EOIs will be short listed
- A review panel will assess all EOIs and use a three-level scoring matrix
- All businesses will be notified of the outcome for their EOI
- City of Whittlesea reserves the right not to issue all 20 places in the NLG if an appropriate EOI cannot be deemed.

Scoring Matrix

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Nomination responses will be scored the average across each criteria rated 1 to 3, against the criteria of:

- Commitment to the completion of the program and in-person session dates
- Enthusiasm and passion for growing their business
- The growth potential of their business.

Score Rating	Score Justification
3	Nomination clearly meets criterion
2	Nomination meets criterion, however there are still questions regarding the nomination. Business will be contacted to discuss EOI for further insight into their interest and goals from the program for inclusion or exclusion.
1	Nomination largely fails to meet the criterion.

NLG Program Period

The NLG program commences on Wednesday 14 May 2025 and concludes on Wednesday 02 July 2025. Key dates in the program are as follows:

EOI Submissions Open	9am Wednesday 12 February 2025
EOI Submissions Close	11pm Sunday 13 April 2025
EOI Submissions Reviewed	Monday 14 April 2025 – Tuesday 29 April 2025. Some businesses may be contacted during this time to discuss EOI
EOI Advised of Outcome	Wednesday 30 April 2025
Session 1 – Week 1	Wednesday 14 May 2025 2-hour in-person workshop
Session 2 – Week 2	Wednesday 21 May 2025 1-hour in-person workshop
Session 3 – Week 5	Wednesday 11 June 2025 1-hour in-person 2025 workshop
Session 4 – Week 8	Wednesday 2 July 2025 1-hour in-person workshop.