



INTERNATIONAL
DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
FOUNDATION

Backing International Small Restaurants Grants Program

AU\$20,000 to help your Business grow¹

Applications now open.



Tea Cosy - 2022 Grant recipient

American Express and the International Downtown Association (IDA) Foundation have launched their Backing International Small Restaurants grants program. Applications for 2026 are now open.

The grants program supports small independent restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs with food offerings as they grow, recover and support their local communities, including investments that strengthen their operations and long-term resilience.

Celebrating its fifth year, the program will award **more than AU\$2 million to over 100 independent restaurants across nine countries**, helping owners invest in their business and make an impact beyond their doors. The program is launched in partnership with Mainstreet Australia, the local program administrator, and is open for applications now.

15 x AU\$20,000 grants

Eligible small restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs with food offerings in Greater Melbourne and Greater Sydney can apply for one of 15 grants valued at AU\$20,000 each.¹

The grants can help support businesses through enhancing digital capabilities, building outdoor dining spaces, purchasing new equipment and making other physical improvements.

To be eligible, establishments need to be currently open, have been operating before September 1, 2025, and have a physical storefront (online-only or app-based businesses are ineligible). They must be independently owned, for-profit restaurant, café, bar, or pub offering food, and not part of a franchise with more than five locations. 2025 revenue needs to be below AU\$2 million. T&Cs, Eligibility and Exclusions apply. For full T&Cs, please [click here](#).

Key dates:

Opens: Fri 2 Oct 2026, 12:00am AEST

Closes: Tues 17 Nov 2026, 3:59pm AEDT

Recipients: Announced Feb 2027

Could this be your restaurant?

Share your plans and apply for a chance to receive a AU\$20,000 grant.

[LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)



Tea Cosy - 2022 Grant recipient



The grant gave us the opportunity to bring our vision to life, creating a space where people can slow down, connect, and share meaningful moments.

Ash Kinchin, Owner, The Tea Cosy, Sydney, 2022 grant recipient.



AU\$4.4 million

The value of grants awarded through the Backing International Small Restaurants program to more than 230 independent restaurants worldwide over the past four years.²

Backing the independent restaurants at the heart of our communities.

Terms, eligibility criteria and exclusions apply. For full T&Cs on the Grants Program, visit downtown.org/foundation.

¹ The Backing International Small Restaurants Grant Program is administered by the International Downtown Association Foundation. Grant amounts are in Australian dollars and inclusive of any GST payable. Grant funds must be used by 31 July 2027. Accepting American Express is not a requirement of the program. ² AU\$4.4M figure: grants awarded globally by the program over the past four years. [Click here](#) for source. American Express Australia Limited (ABN 92 108 952 085). ® Registered Trademark of American Express Company. © 2026 American Express Company. All rights reserved.