



10 November 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 25 September 2025, requesting information about Ministry of Social Development's Business and Support products.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

1. *A breakdown of the standard financial support available through MSD for beneficiaries starting a business, including (but not limited to):*
 - *The maximum amounts available for business establishment grants, mentoring, advertising, and other support;*
 - *Eligibility criteria and conditions for each component*

You can find information regarding financial support to help with starting a business in the below links.

- Flexi-Wage Self Employment – www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/flexi-wage-self-employment.html
- Self-Employment Start-Up - www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/self-employment-start-up-payment.html.
- Business Training and Advice Grant - <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/business-training-and-advice-grant.html>
- Assistance to enter self-employment - <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/employment-and-training/employment-and-work-readiness-assistance/assistance-to-enter-self-employment-01.html>

2. *The number of recipients who received business start-up funding in the last five financial years, broken down by year and fund.*

The attached **Appendix** provides you with table one which shows the number of distinct clients who received Flexi-wage self-employment (FWSE) or business training and advice grant (BTAG) during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025, as at 12 October 2025 broken down by financial year and agreement type

3. *The number of businesses that received this funding and were later recorded as:*

- *Ceasing to operate within 12 and 24 months*
- *Declared unsuccessful or resulting in a return to benefit*

Table Two in the attached **Appendix** provides you with the number of distinct clients who received FWSE and were subsequently granted a main benefit within 12 or 24 months from FWSE approval date, broken down by financial year.

Your request for the number of businesses that were declared unsuccessful or ceased to operate within 12 or 24 months is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as substantial manual collation would be required to collate this information. If held, this information would only be contained within individual client files, which would each require manual review to respond to your request. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake this would still be prejudiced.

4. *The total cost to MSD of the business start-up support programme over the last three financial years, broken down by year and by funding type.*

The information you have requested is provided in the below table.

	2023	2024	2025
Flexi-Wage Self Employment	13,926,278.68	11,287,350.86	8,505,009.43
Business Training & Advice Grant	366,895.38	2,349,420.94	2,077,600.40
Self-Employment	30,650.00	0.00	0.00

5. *Any internal reporting, reviews, or evaluations measuring the success or failure rates of businesses supported through this programme, including how outcomes are tracked.*

Please find two links below to reports published on the Ministry Website evaluation FWSE:

- The effectiveness of Flexi-Wage Self-employment programme, August 2024: <https://msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/flexi-wage-expansion/effectiveness-of-flexi-wage-self-employment-impact-evaluation.pdf>
- Evaluation of the Flexi-Wage Expansion Product, November 2023: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/flexi-wage-expansion/evaluation-of-the-flexi-wage-self-employment-product.pdf

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp.



Anna Graham
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Ministerial and Executive Services