

SSAS FAQ's

1. Which applicants qualify for assistance through the SSAS programme?

Export councils registered with **the dtic**; Industry Associations and Joint Action Groups (JAGs): representative of sectors or sub-sectors of industry recognised for development and promotion by **the dtic**, as determined by the relevant sector desk and export development unit; Provincial Investment and Economic Development Agencies; Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA).

2. What happens if there is non-participation from one or more approved entities on the approved and paid events?

Project coordinator and the approved participants will be jointly and severally held liable for costs incurred for non-participation at the event. The project coordinator will cover any additional costs incurred by the service provider without approval by **the dtic**.

3. What is the SSAS application process and how long does it take to get a decision?

Once a complete and signed application forms with the relevant supporting documents are received from the coordinator/applicant by **the dtic**, they are allocated to officials who pre-screen, process and verify all documents. The project will then be presented for Peer Review, final checking and verification, then to the **Adjudication Committee** where a final decision is made. The process takes an average of 30 working days.

4. How do I submit the SSAS application?

The application should be submitted to **the dtic** via email to ssasapps@thedtic.gov.za.

5. When can I submit the SSAS application?

For an exhibition, at least 3 to 8 months before the show and for missions, 4 months before the show.

6. How does the SSAS program assist me?

SSAS program will assist you with upfront payments on your economy class air ticket, hotel, ground transport, marketing materials, transport of samples, specialized training (not provided by project coordinators), interpretation fees (only for non- English speaking countries) and exhibition cost. The total maximum grant is R2 million per show for physical trade.

For virtual trade the total maximum grant is R500 000 covering marketing materials and digital content, transport of samples including insurance (where relevant), exhibition participation and platform costs, specialised exporter training, bank charges and interpretation fees (only for non-English speaking countries).

7. How does SSAS programme assist people with disabilities who attend physical trade events?

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to the clients who have disclosed their disability at application stage.

8. Why does the dtic demands refund from the coordinators in case of failure of attendance by participants?

All approved disbursements are subject to very strict requirements governed by the relevant guidelines. National Treasury regulations and the Auditor General are mandated to safeguard tax-payers money as outlined in the PFMA. Where spending is not traceable to the approved activities and their costs, this constitutes fruitless or wasteful expenditure and **the dtic** will be held liable for such expenditures. As **the dtic** does not initiate, plan, co-ordinate and execute these events, the legal obligation resides with the coordinator that submitted the application.

9. Can a company that has traded for less than one year apply for SSAS?

No. Only entities that have been in operation for more than 12 months can apply for SSAS. This is required because of the highly competitive nature of export markets requiring potential exporters to have reached a minimum critical mass to produce and sell their manufactured products to the global market. This also allows them to establish their local market before they can explore the international market. It further ensures that the exporter can undergo the necessary training and development programmes offered by **the dtic** to be well prepared when starting to engage with the global buyers.

10. Does the dtic have a database of preferred service providers?

No, coordinators/applicants are allowed to use service providers they prefer and they must ensure that the choice of service providers has a direct impact on the quality of event or project outcomes.

11. Can the coordinator remove/replace the company after the approval of the SSAS application?

The coordinator is allowed to send the application to exclude/remove the approved company or forward the replacement. Before such request is done, the coordinator must make sure that the process of removing a company does not affect the qualifying criteria/requirements as per the SSAS Guidelines. The coordinator must also take into account that the amendments might take time, which can affect the success of the project and/or the payments.

NB: Amendment of applications will be presented to the Adjudication committee for consideration.

12. How long does it take for a claim to be paid out?

All claims for international service providers are paid within 14 working days after submitting to **the**

All claims for domestic service providers are paid within 10 working days after submitting to **the dtic**.

13. What happens if the approved service provider withdraws from providing the services?

The coordinator should provide **the dtic** with the withdrawal letter from the approved service provider.

The coordinator will be advised to choose from the service providers already submitted to the dtic to render the service as per approved amount.

14. Who does the dtic pay after the SSAS approval?

The dtic pays the approved service provider(s) as listed on the approval letter.

In order to expedite the claim process, it is important that the coordinator ensures that local service providers comply with all the requirements of the dtic when submitting the quotations, invoices and claims.

15. Does the dtic pay the coordinator's services?

No, **the dtic** does not pay the coordinator for the service rendered.

16. Does the dtic pay for the coordinator's expenses?

No. Expenses related to coordinators are excluded.

17. What happens if the approved company/companies does not attend the exhibition?

It is the responsibility of the coordinator to make sure that all approved companies attend the exhibition. The project coordinator and participants will be jointly and severally liable for the costs incurred for non-participation at the event.

18. What happens if the requested grant amount is more than the grant maximum limit?

The dtic will approve and pay the project to the maximum limit. It is the responsibility of the coordinator together with individual companies to cover the shortfall.

19. What happens if the claim amount is more than the approved amount?

The dtic will only pay the amounts approved as per the approval letter. The project coordinator will cover any additional costs incurred by the service provider without the approval by **the dtic**.

20. What happens if the coordinator/applicant submits incomplete, non-compliant and late application?

Incomplete, non-compliant and late applications will be rejected at receiving stage. It is the responsibility of the applicant (coordinator) to ensure that the application submitted to **the dtic**, is accurate, timely and complete.

21. Is it possible that SSAS could consider bank statements as it is a bit difficult for small companies to gather financial statements?

No, bank statements are not allowed. The enterprise must be registered in line with the Companies, Cooperatives or Close Corporations Act (as amended), and have traded locally for at least twelve (12) months and must have audited or independently reviewed financial statements.

22. When can Sole Proprietor apply for SSAS funding after registering as a Proprietary Limited?

After 12 months of operating as a Proprietary Limited.