

# GAP Go-Ahead Program

Helping small and medium-sized businesses complete an export sale.

## GUIDELINES

**The Go-Ahead Program (GAP)** plays a key role in helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) realize their export and revenue growth potential by supporting firms to pursue export opportunities. GAP provides support to SMEs in Nova Scotia to develop export sales outside the Maritime provinces. The program will help SMEs cover the costs of follow-up market visits to prospects identified or pursued during a previous provincial government or export agency initiative, including trade missions, shows or conferences.

### Who qualifies?

- Incorporated businesses, partnerships, proprietorships, or educational institutions based in Nova Scotia;
- Applicants must possess, manufacture, or produce an authentic exportable product or service, technology, or intellectual property;
- Applicants must have sufficient management and marketing capability to pursue the opportunity, as well as sufficient financial capacity to undertake the project;
- A written trade strategy may be required;
- Applicants must have participated in a provincial government sponsored trade mission, trade show, or conference within one year (12 months) of applying for funding. The identified opportunity being pursued must be as a result of participation in the government sponsored activity;
- No top-up of programs will be allowed.

### Shared eligible costs include:

- Return economy airfare or equivalent transportation to visit a client in another market or for a foreign client to visit the organization's Nova Scotia facilities;
- In-market ground transportation;
- Standard-class accommodations;
- Certain fees of arms-length cultural consultants, translators, or interpreters;
- Costs to produce marketing materials and presentations specifically designed for this sales visit, including writing and design;
- Car rental.

Applicants are responsible for 100 per cent of all other costs.



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### Cost and activities that are not eligible:

- Early stage prospecting
- Marketing research/marketing plans
- Trade missions, trade shows, fairs and exhibitions
- Transportation of goods or equipment
- Salaries, commission or per diem expenses
- Meals, entertainment and hospitality costs
- Phone/Fax/Internet
- Travel immunization, insurance or medical expenses
- PST, GST/HST and VAT

### Application evaluation

Each application will be reviewed on its own merits and the extent to which it meets the overall goals of GAP. The trade officer will assign particular weight to the following considerations:

- Is this project a follow up from a past trade initiative?
- Does the applicant possess the capabilities to undertake the project?
- Is the proposed activity clearly identified and deemed to be a follow-up meeting(s)?
- Will the majority of benefits be accrued in Nova Scotia?
- Are submitted costs reasonable and in accordance with the program guidelines?

### How is reimbursement made for costs incurred?

- All disbursements under the program are made on a reimbursement basis for direct costs incurred (advances are not provided).
- Clients must submit a GAP Claim Form and Report, available from the program administrator, within four weeks of completing all project activities. This must be supported by the project report and copies of receipts for all eligible expenses claimed. Disbursements, wherever possible, will be requisitioned within two weeks of receiving an acceptable claim.
- Clients will be contacted by a trade officer six months after their return from market to report on the final results of the project.

### How do I apply?

Contact Brenda Baker at 902.424.5054, or by fax: 902.424.6823, or by email: [bbaker@nsbi.ca](mailto:bbaker@nsbi.ca)

[www.gov.ns.ca/econ/trade](http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/trade)

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## FAST FACTS

### Supported activities

- The maximum contribution is \$20,000 per fiscal year (April 1–March 31).
- Non-repayable contributions will not exceed 50 per cent of approved eligible costs, to a maximum contribution of \$5,000 per project application.
- The minimum project cost that can be considered in any single application is \$500.
- A decision can normally be expected within 10 to 15 working days.
- A maximum of two follow-up visits per initiative.

### Typical activities

- In-market follow-up meetings with prospective partners, clients and foreign officials.
- Development of proposal, presentations or materials specific to the export application.
- In-bound visits by potential clients.