

Guidelines

Export Growth Program

1. Program Objective

The Export Growth Program supports businesses looking to increase their export sales outside of Nova Scotia. The program provides financial incentives for projects that assist a business' ability to overcome barriers to export growth. This includes:

- Mitigating **virtual trade show/conference costs** by funding participation fees, conference fees and virtual booth space.
- Supporting **travel to market** associated with visiting a client, potential partner, or investor in another market
- Inviting a foreign client and/or potential partner to visit the Nova Scotia operation;

The program outcomes focus on improved global competitiveness leading to increased export sales and on high-growth sectors* and businesses positively impacting the Nova Scotia economy.

*Refer to the [Nova Scotia Business Inc. 2020-21 Business Plan](#)

2. Eligible Applicants

All Nova Scotia registered businesses (registered on the Registry of Joint Stock Companies) in good standing **except:**

- Franchises
- Personal service providers
- Games of chance operations, bingo halls, small scale gaming operations
- Real estate developers, agents or brokers
- Licenced liquor establishments whose primary business is alcohol sales (except production breweries, brew pubs, wineries, and distilleries)
- Distributors, agents, or traders, except where value-added products or services are part of the deliverables
- Associations
- Creative industries companies including Music, Written and Published Work, Performing Arts (touring), Visual and Applied Arts (Contemporary Art, Production Craft, Photography, and Fashion Design).¹
- Publicly funded organizations
- Non-revenue-generating not-for-profit organizations

To be eligible for the program the business must:

¹ If your business is in the Creative Industries, please refer to the [Creative Industries Fund](#).

- Be engaged or plan to engage in commercial activities outside of Nova Scotia;
- Have the ability to attract financing for growth and development;
- Have a fully developed exportable product, service, technology, or intellectual property that can be sold into a target market outside of Nova Scotia;²
- Have an export plan outlining the following:
 - The products or services you plan to market and any modifications, if any, that must be made to adapt them to the target market(s);
 - Your business' target market(s) and supporting research;
 - Customers for each market and what marketing and distribution channels will be used to reach them;
 - Challenges in the target market(s) (competition, cultural differences, import controls, intellectual property status, certifications, etc.) and how these will be overcome;
 - The strategy you intend to use to succeed in the market including timelines;
 - Planned expansion (if any) inclusive of projected increase in staff
 - Expected outcomes in the target market(s).
- Demonstrate a clear link between the requested project funding and the plan and articulate how the funding for each project will increase export sales outside of Nova Scotia.

3. Projects Assisted

The Export Growth Program contributes up to 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$15,000 CAD for a business to:

- Travel to a market outside of Nova Scotia to attend a trade show, conference or to visit clients, potential partners or investors;
- Participate in a virtual trade show, mission or conference;
- Have foreign clients, potential partners or investors visit the business' Nova Scotia facilities for the first time.

All eligible businesses are able to apply for 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$15,000 CAD per fiscal year. Businesses that have achieved revenue growth of at least 15% over the business' prior complete fiscal year are eligible for 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$25,000 CAD per fiscal year.

If a business is applying for additional funding, minimum revenue growth must be validated by providing NSBI with any one of the following:

- i. review engagement financial statements for its previous complete fiscal year;
- ii. copies of the GST 34 return showing revenue on line 101 for its previous complete fiscal year and the complete fiscal year prior; or
- iii. copies of the General Index of Financial Information form showing revenue on line 8299 for its previous complete fiscal year and complete fiscal year prior.

² If your business is not at this stage, please contact Innovacorp at www.innovacorp.ca

³ Some exceptions may apply.

Eligible costs (excluding PST/GST/HST/QST) include:

- Standard floor space cost or virtual booth space for a non-retail trade show;
- Entry-level conference registration fees (up to two representatives of the business);
- Return base economy travel or equivalent transportation (up to two representatives of the business);
- EGP calculates a **per diem rate of \$200 CAD (\$400 x 50%) for each approved traveller** to cover accommodations and in-market ground transportation/standard car rental (up to two representatives of the business). Per diem does NOT include the trip return day. **Per diem expenses are capped at 7 days per trip;**
- Fees for translators or interpreters related to the project;
- Fees for translating marketing materials for a virtual trade show/mission up to \$300.00 CAD.

Any costs not listed under the eligible costs above are deemed ineligible.

4. Ineligible Markets

Projects can take place in any country, provided Canada has not imposed sanctions against that country or against individuals/entities relevant to the proposed project.

Please see the [listing](#) of [current sanctions imposed by Canada](#).

5. Program Criteria

The EGP supports businesses looking to increase their export sales. **The applicant's historical performance, together with the tie between its export plan and future growth projections, will be used to assess a business' application.** Previous performance of the applicant (if any) and previous interactions involving NSBI and responsiveness to NSBI, as well as the demonstrated capacity to undertake the proposed project activities (financially viable company, export-ready, available resources, sufficient information, product development stage, production capacity, etc.) will be considered. The application must demonstrate a growth plan for the business to continue to be eligible for the program.

Businesses must demonstrate how the project will help achieve the business' strategic goals in their export plan, leading to an increase in their global competitiveness. The project should result in one or more of the following outcomes:

- Entering a market(s) outside of Nova Scotia
- Introducing a new product or service to a market outside of Nova Scotia
- Increased export sales outside of Nova Scotia
- Access to a new supplier(s) outside of Nova Scotia
- Participation in a global value and/or supply chain
- Identifying a possible broker/distributor/agent/shipper/freight forwarder
- Increased investment in the business
- Understanding the requirements needed (*i.e. certifications*) to enter a specific market

- outside of Nova Scotia
- A joint venture, technology transfer, and/or innovation partnership (post commercialization phase)

Projects will be evaluated based on the:

- Impact on the business' export competitiveness based on the above outcomes;
- Project rationale and the alignment with the business' export plan; and
- Potential for the project to impact the Nova Scotia economy.

Project applications are subject to a competitive process and not all applications that meet the criteria may be approved.

6. Application Process

- A completed Application Form must be submitted to Nova Scotia Business Inc. (contact information is available under Section 10c of this document).
- Applications received outside of the timeframe as set out in the guidelines will not be considered. A completed Application Form **must be submitted** to Nova Scotia Business Inc. **prior to travel or the virtual event date**. Any expenses incurred prior to application approval are at the company's own risk.
- Responses to any requests by NSBI for missing or follow up information required by NSBI for evaluation of the application must be received no later than 5 days following such request by NSBI. Non-receipt of requested information from NSBI will result in an application being declined. An application is not considered complete until all required or requested information has been received by NSBI.
- Written approval and decline of applications will be provided.
- Once approved, the Export Growth Program Agreement ("Agreement") must be signed within 10 business days to be valid. Failure to return an Agreement within 10 business days will result in NSBI cancelling the Agreement with no further notice.
- Nova Scotia Business Inc. will assign an Export Development Executive to follow up and provide advice on the application process for applications that were declined.
- There is no application fee for this Program.

7. Application Intake

- Businesses can submit up to three complete applications for the Export Growth Program anytime between **July 17, 2020 and January 15, 2021**. The maximum number of projects approved will not exceed six projects per application.
- Applications will ONLY be considered for travel between **July 17, 2020 and March 31, 2021**.

8. Terms of Incentive

- Funding is provided in Canadian dollars.
- The total amount of all Canadian government funding (federal, provincial/territorial, or municipal) is set at 50% of the total eligible project cost in any single provincial

government fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). The business must pay 50% of the total eligible project cost.

- Applicants are required to pay all invoices prior to receiving the incentive.
- The incentive is only payable against eligible project costs as outlined in the Agreement which will be sent to successful applicants.
- All approved projects must be completed in accordance with the timelines and other terms as outlined in the Agreement.
- An Agreement may be revoked based on information discovered after the issuance of the Agreement.
- All travel must be completed and claims with supporting documentation submitted before March 31, 2021.
- Projects are to be completed and disbursed within the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31) for which they are approved.

9. Incentive Compliance and Payment

- The incentive is only payable against eligible project costs as outlined in the Agreement.
- Applicants are required to pay all invoices prior to receiving the incentive. Reimbursement will occur upon receipt of the Project Activity Claim Form(s) and copies of invoices/receipts (including tax breakdown) and proof of payment.
- Per diem: Proof of payment will not be required for accommodations and ground transportation; however, **proof of travel** must be submitted (e.g. airline boarding passes or accommodations invoice, etc.) in order to validate the per diem calculation.
- Claims must be submitted within 30 days of completion of each project/trip. Failure to submit a claim within 30 days will result in NSBI cancelling funds for the project/trip, with no further notice.
- Claims for travel during the month of March must be submitted no later than March 31, 2021. Claims received after March 31, 2021 will not be processed.
- Deliverables for project completion with a date no later than March 31 and payment within the fiscal year (April 1 to March 31) include:
 - Project Activity Claim Form(s);
 - Copy of related project invoices and receipts as well as proof of travel (e.g. airline boarding passes or accommodations invoice, etc.) proof of payment; and
 - Project Final Summary Report (to accompany the final claim).

10. Other Pertinent information

a) Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Information collected in connection with this program is subject to, and will be treated in accordance with, the [Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

b) Public Announcements and Disclosure of Information

Approved businesses must consent to:

- Participate in any public announcement or public ceremony relating to the awarding of the Export Growth Program funding to the business and related accomplishments, at a mutually agreeable time; and
- The release of project information (company name, sector, region, and total Export Growth Program funding amount approved) to the media and general public.

c) Contact Information

For more information, go to www.novascotiabusiness.com/egp or email egp@nsbi.ca

Submit your completed Application Form to: egp@nsbi.ca