

Guidelines

Supplier Diversity Certification Program

1. Program Objective

The Supplier Diversity Certification Program (“the Program”) offers diverse-owned businesses (defined as businesses at least 51% owned, operated and controlled by 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous, Women, Veterans, People living with Disabilities, Black Nova Scotians, African Nova Scotians, and other Racialized People) financial support to obtain supplier diversity certification through one of the five following certifying bodies in Canada:

1. [CAMSC](#) (Canadian Aboriginal & Minority Supplier Council)
2. [IWSCC](#) (Inclusive Workplace & Supply Council of Canada)
3. [CQCC](#) (Canadian Queer Chamber of Commerce)
4. [WEConnect](#) International Canada
5. [WBE Canada](#) (Women Business Enterprises Canada)

The expected outcome of the Program is to elevate the business’ national and international competitiveness through certification as a diverse-owned business which can provide access to specific supplier diversity procurement programs within private sector corporations and government departments.

The Program provides financial support, through Invest Nova Scotia (Invest NS) to applicants that have successfully obtained supplier diversity certification. Upon successful completion of certification, 100% of the one-time fee paid by the business (up to \$1,000.00 excluding taxes) to the certifying body will be reimbursed to the business by Invest NS.

2. Eligible Applicants

All applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Have an approved, first-time certification from one of the five above noted agencies dated between January 1, 2025, and February 27, 2026.
2. Be a diverse-owned (per definition in Section 1) Nova Scotia registered business in good standing (current registration on the Registry of Joint Stock Companies).
3. Have a permanent establishment in Nova Scotia.
4. Have a product/service with the potential to be sold outside of Nova Scotia.
5. Have most of its workforce currently residing in Nova Scotia (some exceptions may apply where it can be demonstrated that the economic benefit can be accrued to Nova Scotia).
6. Have no outstanding or pending claims/litigation, injunctions, judgements, orders, legal or administrative actions or similar proceedings against the business, its principals and/or any related business(es).
7. The business, principals and/or any related business(es) shall not be in default of any obligations under any form of financial assistance and/or incentive program from Invest NS, the Province of Nova Scotia, or by any agency of the Province of Nova Scotia. For the purpose of these criteria, the [Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program](#) is considered a form of financial assistance provided by the Province of Nova Scotia.

Businesses NOT eligible under the program:

- Franchisees
- Games of chance operations and bingo halls
- Personal service providers
- Real estate developers, agents or brokers
- Licensed liquor establishments whose primary business is alcohol sales (except production breweries, brew pubs, wineries and distilleries.)
- Distributors, agents or traders including retailers, except where value-added products or services are part of the deliverables or for the purpose of selling Nova Scotia products/services abroad.
- Associations
- Professional service providers, unless certification represents a unique and/or strategic opportunity with potential economic benefit, incremental sales outside of Nova Scotia and or job creation.
- Businesses eligible to receive funding under the [Creative Industries Fund](#)
- Tourism operators
- Publicly funded organizations
- Non-revenue-generating not-for-profit organizations

3. Program Criteria

- Certifications must be approved by one of the agencies noted above no later than 5:00 pm AST on February 27, 2026.
- Businesses and their related entities may be limited to funding for one business only at Invest NS's sole discretion.
- Certifications must be new. Renewals are not eligible. Certifications must be with a new-to-the-business organization (*i.e.*, a business can be certified with one organization like WBE Canada and then use the Program to certify with CAMSC for the first time).

4. Application Process

Once certified, businesses submit the documentation below to Invest NS and are then reimbursed 100% of the one-time certification fee paid, **up to \$1,000.00** (excluding taxes).

To apply for SDCP, please complete the application form via the [submission form page](#).

If this is your first time applying to a program with Invest Nova Scotia, please contact Tamasha Fernando to request your Customer Number. You will need this number to submit your application online.

Documents required are as follows:

- A completed application form;
- Confirmation of successful awarding of certification from one of the five certifying bodies noted above;
- Invoice from the certifying body;

- Proof of payment of the above invoice such as credit card/bank statement, copies of the front and back of cheques (indicating that they have been cashed at a financial institution) or a wire or e-transfer receipt that shows the status of the transaction as “completed” or “confirmed.”;

There is no application fee for this Program.

Application approvals will be subject to budget availability, and the Program may close at any time prior to the application intake closing date.

5. Application Intake Period

Applications for SDCP will be accepted between September 22, 2025, to February 27, 2026. **This program is subject to funding availability.** SDCP program will close on **February 27, 2026**, or immediately once all funding has been allocated, whichever occurs first. We strongly recommend applying early.

Certifications must be approved by one of the five certifying organizations in Canada no later than **5:00pm AST on February 27, 2026**.

6. Additional 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 applicants must consent to participate in any public announcement of public ceremony relating to the Program and related accomplishments, at a mutually agreeable time and the release of Program information (company name, sector, region) and total Program funding amount being approved to the media and public.

c) Program Survey

Businesses must complete the feedback survey for the Program and participate in Invest NS's annual corporate data collection process for two years following the project's completion.

d) Contact Information

For more information, visit www.investnovascotia.ca/sdcp.

e) Application / Document Submission

All documentation must be submitted via the website. For questions, please contact:

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