

FAQ

Export Development Program



1. What is the Export Development Program?

The Export Development Program (EDP) supports Nova Scotia businesses looking to increase their sales outside Nova Scotia, improve their competitiveness, and positively impact the Nova Scotia economy. The program provides financial incentives to offset the costs of projects that assist a business' ability to overcome barriers to export growth.

These include:

- Travel to market
- Inbound client visits
- Trade show/conference costs
- Trade missions
- Hiring a consultant/service provider

2. What is the application submission deadline?

Applications are accepted anytime between March 5, 2025, and March 13, 2026, at 3:00 pm ADT (or until program funding is fully subscribed).

3. What is the project/activity completion deadline?

All projects must be completed by March 31, 2026. In the case of Stream 1 projects, claims must be submitted online within 30 days of completion of each project/trip.

4. What are the categories for financial incentives under EDP?

EDP offers two streams:

- **Stream 1:** Travel, Inbound client visits, Trade shows/conference and Trade Missions
- **Stream 2:** Hiring a Consultant/Service Provider to address challenges or barriers to selling products/services outside of Nova Scotia

5. Is there a minimum project size or cost?

Yes. The minimum project cost for Stream 1: Travel, Inbound client visits, Trade shows/conference and Trade Missions is \$500 CAD. The minimum cost for Stream 2: Hiring a Consultant/Service Provider to address challenges or barriers to selling products/services outside Nova Scotia is \$3,000 CAD.

6. How much of the total cost of the project does the funding cover?

EDP contributes up to a maximum of \$15,000 CAD of eligible costs.

7. What is the maximum funding allowance my company is eligible to apply for within the fiscal year?

The maximum funding allowance for each company within a fiscal year is \$15,000 CAD total across all streams.

8. If I receive funding through other provincial government programs for this project, will this affect the maximum funding allowance?

Yes. The total amount of all Canadian government funding (federal, provincial/territorial, or

municipal) must be no more than 50% of the total eligible project cost in any single fiscal year (April 1 to March 31) to a maximum of \$15,000 CAD.

9. Can I apply for funding after I have started my project?

No. Only a project commencing **after** a completed application is submitted is deemed eligible. Costs incurred prior to submitting a completed application are **not** eligible.

10. What information is publicly released if my business is approved for funding?

The following information is released publicly if you are approved for funding:

- Name of business
- Sector of focus of the business
- Provincial region/county location of the business
- Amount of funding approved

11. How are Full Time Equivalents (FTE) calculated?

An FTE is the equivalent of one person working full time. Full time is considered to be 2,080 payroll hours for the year. To calculate the number of FTE for your organization, calculate the total payroll hours worked per fiscal year by all employees, then divide it by 2,080.

Note: FTE is not the total number of employees. Each employee is counted only once.

Examples of FTE:

One (1) employee working full time (2,080 hours) = 1 FTE

Two (2) employees, each working 4 hours per day, 5 days per week = 1 FTE

If total payroll hours for all staff is 13,200 hours, this equals 6.3 FTE
(13,200/2,080 = 6.3)

12. What is Total Payroll?

Total payroll (\$CAD) is for the operation in Nova Scotia for the fiscal year.

13. How is revenue defined?

- a) **Total Revenue:** Total gross sales (\$CAD) of the Nova Scotia operation for the fiscal year.
- b) **Export revenue outside Nova Scotia:** Total gross sales (\$CAD) outside Nova Scotia for the fiscal year. This represents your domestic (national) sales to other provinces, plus your international sales outside Canada.
- c) **Export revenue outside Canada:** Total gross sales (\$CAD) outside Canada (international sales only) for the fiscal year.

14. How do I calculate revenue for the prior fiscal years?

Revenue should be the figure from your financial statements or tax return (line 101 from GST 34 or line 8299 from the General Index of Financial Information).

15. How are capital investments and business expenditures defined?

- a) **Capital Investment:** Capital investment for the fiscal year.
- b) **Business Expenditures on R&D:** Business expenditures on research and development for the fiscal year.

16. If my project activities are not eligible under EDP, what other options are available for Nova Scotia businesses?

For more information about additional funding options, please contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) for your area.

17. How long does it take to process an application?

Every effort is made to get back to applicants within (15) business days.

18. What is considered an arm's length relationship?

Arms-Length Relationship Definition:

A business or interpersonal relationship where the parties involved maintain a professional or formal distance from each other, ensuring that transactions and interactions are conducted in an objective and impartial manner. This distance helps prevent conflicts of interest, undue influence, or bias. In an arms-length relationship, each party operates independently and without any special consideration or favoritism towards the other.

Some examples of Non-Arms-Length Relationships:

- **Family relationships:** Family relationships include parents, children, cousins, grandparents, siblings, aunts/uncles, in-laws, spouses – all individuals who would benefit from decisions made within a business or financial context due to their relationship. Ex. A company owned by a family member engaging in business dealings with another family-owned business, where preferential treatment or lack of standard business practices might occur.
- **Related Party Transactions:** A corporation engaging in financial transactions with a company where its executives or major shareholders have personal interests, potentially leading to conflicts of interest.
- **Close Friendships:** An employee making hiring or promotion decisions based on personal friendships rather than merit, which could lead to biased outcomes and undermine fairness.

Non arm's length includes anyone listed on the RJSC under the applicant company.

19. What happens if my application is approved, but plans for eligible activities change?

If plans for approved eligible activities change after your application is approved, please contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) immediately.

20. What happens if I have an amendment to the projects listed in my Agreement?

Three minor adjustments can be made to an approved project that does not increase the project budget or change the project scope. All requests must be made in writing **prior** to the dates listed in your funding agreement.

Amendment considerations include:

- Change to travel dates

- Add or change a travel destination within the approved market
- Decrease an approved project budget
- Extend a project completion date, as long as the amending date does not extend past March 31.
- Change in Consultant. A new Statement of Work will be required for review.

Any changes that involve attending a different tradeshow/conference or trade mission not specified in the original application **will require the submission of a new application.**

Note: Approval of your amendment request is required **prior** to making any changes to your project.

21. Who do I contact if I have questions about the application form?

Please contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) for any questions regarding your application.

22. How do I submit my application form?

Applicants must submit a completed application via the online form. Please refer to the [EDP Guidelines](#) for further information on what is required for an application to be considered completed.

23. How will the incentive be paid?

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. Payment is issued when all required deliverables are submitted and approved.

24. I do not reside in Nova Scotia. Am I eligible to travel under the program?

No. Travel expenses for representatives of the business whose principal residence is not in Nova Scotia and who are not residing in Nova Scotia are not eligible for travel support.

24. What is the per diem and how do I claim it? (Stream 1)

The per diem rate is **\$200 CAD per day for each approved traveler**. This covers costs for accommodations, mileage, and in-market ground transportation/standard car rental (up to two representatives of the business) for all days of travel to market and days within the market.

Details are to be entered into the online form, along with other eligible project expenses. For the per diem rate to be an eligible expense, you must provide proof of travel in the form of airline **boarding passes** or **hotel invoices** to validate the per diem calculation. The eligible rate of \$200 per night is calculated by the number of nights of your stay to a maximum of (7) nights. A per diem does NOT include the last day of travel and any portion of travel within Nova Scotia. All accommodation and ground transportation invoices and proof of payment should be kept for (5) years, as the information may be required in the event of an audit.

25. What expenses are covered under the airfare stipend? (Stream 1)

The airfare stipend is only eligible to claim for round trips from Nova Scotia (some exceptions may apply). The airfare stipend includes all associated flight costs – airfare, baggage, seat selection, and change fees.

For the complete list of airfare stipends per destination, please refer to Page 3 of the [EDP Guidelines](#).

26. What expenses are covered under the trade show conference and booth fields?

EDP covers registration fees for trade shows or (50% of eligible costs), and floor or booth space fees for a non-retail trade show (50% of eligible costs).

Registration fees to join missions are ineligible when Invest Nova Scotia is a funding partner

27. Now that my project is complete, how do I submit a claim?

For questions on how to complete and submit a claim, reach out to claims@investnovascotia.ca. Additional guidance can be found in the [EDP Claims FAQ](#).

For additional information, please refer to the [EDP Guidelines](#) or contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) for your region of the province.