

# Guidelines

## Productivity & Innovation Voucher Program



### 1. Program Objective

The Productivity and Innovation Voucher Program (PIVP) is a targeted support program designed to help businesses advance innovation projects.

The Productivity and Innovation Voucher Program (the “Program”) supports small and medium-sized businesses in improving productivity and innovation by contributing to the development of new or improved products, services, or processes. It also strengthens linkages between businesses and post-secondary academic institutions in Nova Scotia.

PIVP provides support through a credit note, paid directly to the Academic Institution, across two tiers:

- Tier 1: Up to \$15,000 to support a new project
- Tier 2: Up to \$25,000 to build on previously completed Tier 1 work

Vouchers issued in 2026 are valid until March 16, 2027.

### 2. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for the Program, the business must:

- Be a Nova Scotia registered business in good standing (current registration on the Registry of Joint Stock Companies)
- Have a permanent establishment in Nova Scotia
- Have most of its workforce residing in Nova Scotia (exceptions may apply where economic benefit to Nova Scotia can be demonstrated)
- Have fewer than 100 employees at the time of application
- Have a business plan that outlines:
  - Products or services to be marketed
  - Target market(s) and distribution channels, supported by research
  - Key market challenges (e.g., competition, cultural differences, regulations) and how these will be addressed

Pre-revenue companies must clearly demonstrate the development of a business plan. Additional information may be requested as part of the review process.

Eligibility is determined at the sole discretion of Invest Nova Scotia based on the information provided.

**Ineligible applicants include:**

- Franchisees
- Games of chance operations and bingo halls
- Personal service providers
- Real estate developers, agents or brokers
- Licenced liquor establishments whose primary business is alcohol sales (excepting 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, except where the project represents a unique and/or strategic opportunity with potential economic benefit, incremental sales outside Nova Scotia, and/or job creation. Contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) in your area to discuss.
- Creative industries companies' activities which are eligible under the Creative Industries Fund
- Tourism operators
- Publicly funded organizations
- Non-revenue-generating not-for-profit organizations

**3. Projects Assisted**

PIVP provides businesses with access to expertise and technical solutions from Nova Scotia's post-secondary institutions.

Projects must clearly demonstrate the potential to contribute to the development of a new or improved product, service, or process that enhances productivity, innovation, and competitiveness. Projects should focus on practical, applied work that leads to a clear business outcome within the program timeframe.

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Applied research
- Engineering or technical development

- Prototyping
- Product development, research, and design
- Process development or improvement
- Testing and validation (including field testing)
- Market or technical feasibility analysis
- Advanced technical development and modeling (including data-driven and artificial intelligence applications)

### **Advanced Data & AI Projects**

Projects that apply advanced data and artificial intelligence techniques to improve business operations, decision-making, or product capabilities are encouraged.

These projects often require specialized expertise, infrastructure, and resources. Where justified, they may be considered for Tier 1 funding up to \$25,000, based on scope and technical requirements.

To be considered, applications must demonstrate:

- Use of advanced data, machine learning, or artificial intelligence methods
- A clear technical approach and implementation plan
- Access to the required data, systems, and expertise
- Strong potential for measurable business impact

Projects that do not involve advanced data or AI components will be assessed within standard Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding levels.

All applications are assessed through a competitive process, and funding is not guaranteed.

### **4. Eligible Service Providers**

Eligible Service Providers are Nova Scotia post-secondary academic institutions.

For a complete list of Service Providers and their areas of expertise, please refer to the [PIVP web page](#).

The chosen researcher must be at arm's length from the business (i.e., no ownership or direct financial interest).

## 5. Program Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate how the project will improve productivity and innovation.

Projects must result in at least one of the following:

- Increased productivity, efficiency, or competitiveness
- Development or enhancement of products, services, or processes
- Improved capacity to serve markets outside Nova Scotia

Applications are assessed based on:

- Strength and clarity of the project
- Alignment with the company's business plan
- Feasibility and ability to execute
- Potential for measurable outcomes

All applications are subject to a competitive process, and not all eligible applications will be approved.

## 6. Application Process

- Applicants must contact their [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) prior to applying
- Applications must be submitted through the online form at: [https://investns.formtitan.com/ftproject/pivp\\_application\\_fy2027](https://investns.formtitan.com/ftproject/pivp_application_fy2027)

A complete application includes:

- Completed and signed Application Form

Additional notes:

- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Projects must begin after a complete application is submitted
- Costs incurred prior to approval are at the applicant's risk
- There is no application fee

## **7. Application Intake**

Applications will be accepted from **April 1, 2026 to May 15, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. ADT.**

## **8. Terms of Voucher**

### **Project Participation & Progression**

#### *Starting a Project (Tier 1)*

- A business may apply for Tier 1 funding for a new project
- A business may undertake up to two Tier 1 projects in a lifetime, providing each is demonstrably distinct

#### *Advancing a Project (Tier 2)*

- Upon successful completion of a Tier 1 project, a business may apply for Tier 2 funding in a subsequent fiscal year to advance the same project
- Each Tier 1 project may be eligible for one corresponding Tier 2 project
- Tier 2 projects must clearly build upon Tier 1 work
- Progression from Tier 1 to Tier 2 is not guaranteed and is subject to a competitive application process

### **Participation Rules**

- A business may apply for and receive funding for only one project per fiscal year
- A business may hold only one active voucher at a time
- Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding for the same project cannot be issued within the same fiscal year

### **Program Lifetime Maximum**

- A business may receive a maximum of four vouchers through the Program over a lifetime:
  - Up to two Tier 1 projects, each eligible for one corresponding Tier 2 project
- All applications are subject to a competitive process, and funding is not guaranteed at any stage

### **General Conditions**

- Vouchers are non-transferable

- Vouchers may be revoked based on new information discovered after the issuance of the Voucher
- Vouchers may only be used with eligible Service Providers
- Applicants must engage a Service Provider prior to applying
- Funding applies only to eligible project costs, as outlined in the budget section of the Application Form
- Limited equipment purchases may be permitted if clearly tied to project outcomes and included in the approved application; items not identified at application will not be eligible.

## **9. Voucher Compliance and Payment**

Service Providers must submit deliverables within 60 days of project completion.

For projects completed within 60 days of March 16, 2027, deliverables must be received no later than March 16, 2027.

Required deliverables include:

- Project Completion Report detailing work completed by the Service Provider and outcomes aligned to the approved project; and
- Claim Form submitted by the Service Provider

Failure to meet timelines may result in denial of the claim.

## **10. Other Information**

### **A) Privacy**

Information collected is subject to the [\*Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act\*](#).

### **B) Public Disclosure**

Approved applicants must consent to:

- Participation in public announcements
- Disclosure of project information (company name, sector, region)

## **C) Contact**

For more information, visit: [www.investnovascotia.ca/PIVP](http://www.investnovascotia.ca/PIVP)  
or contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#).