

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 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.

The Program provides financial support, through Invest Nova Scotia, to applicants who have successfully obtained supplier diversity certification. A company may apply for reimbursement for up to three new supplier diversity certifications offered by the partner organizations mentioned above.

Only new certifications are eligible - renewals will not be reimbursed. Invest Nova Scotia will reimburse 100% of the certification fee paid by the business, up to CAD \$1,000.00 (excluding taxes) per certification, with a maximum total of CAD \$3,000.00 (excluding taxes) per company (for three new certifications).

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 (to a maximum of three) dated between February 28, 2026, and February 26, 2027.
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 (to a maximum of three) no later than 5:00 pm AST on February 26, 2027.
- Businesses and their related entities may, at Invest NS's sole discretion, be limited to funding for only one business.
- Certification must be new to the business. Renewals, membership fees, and expediting fees are not eligible.
 - *For example, a business may become certified with one organization, such as WBE Canada, and receive reimbursement for that certification through Invest NS. The same business can also certify with CAMSC or WEConnect for the first time, provided those certifications are also new, and request reimbursement for each. A business that has not yet received reimbursement through the program may apply for a maximum of three certifications per business.*

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 CAD \$1,000.00 (excluding taxes) per certification up to a maximum of CAD \$3,000.00 (excluding taxes) for three new certifications. (excluding taxes).**

To apply for SDCP, please complete the [SDCP Application Form](#).

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.”
 - Note: The certification payment must be made using the company’s credit card or bank account, or the founder’s or CEO’s personal credit card. If that is an individual - the individual whose name appears on the payment method should be the main applicant for the reimbursement

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 the Program are accepted between **April 14, 2026, and February 26, 2027**, for certifications dated between February 28, 2026, to February 26, 2027.

Applications must be received no later than **5:00 pm AST on February 26, 2027**.

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:

Tamasha Fernando, Export Development Executive

Invest Nova Scotia

Tamasha.Fernando@investnovascotia.ca