

FAQ

Export Development Program



Applications for the Export Development Program (EDP) are open until **March 10, 2027**, subject to budget availability.

1. What is the Export Development Program?

The Export Development Program (EDP) supports 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's ability to overcome challenges 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 until **March 10, 2027, at 3:00 PM ADT**, or until program funding is fully subscribed.

3. What is the project/activity completion deadline?

For the current intake period, all projects must be completed by March 31, 2027.

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

EDP offers two streams:

- **Stream 1:** Travel, inbound client visits, trade shows/conferences and trade missions
- **Stream 2:** Hiring a consultant/service provider to address challenges 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/conferences and trade missions is \$500 CAD. The minimum cost for Stream 2: Hiring a consultant/service provider to address challenges 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. The maximum contribution is increased by \$10,000 (to \$25,000 CAD) for eligible companies in Nova Scotia's six priority sectors with more than \$100,000 in revenue that are actively entering new export markets.

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. The maximum annual contribution is increased by \$10,000 (to \$25,000 CAD) for eligible companies in Nova Scotia's six priority sectors with more than \$100,000 in revenue that are actively entering new export markets.

8. What are Nova Scotia's priority sectors under EDP?

Nova Scotia's priority sectors are listed below. Priority-sector eligibility is determined by Invest Nova Scotia, in its sole discretion, based on the applicant's primary business activities (i.e., the core products/services the business provides), not solely on the sectors of its clients, partners, or end-users. Applicants may be required to provide supporting information to confirm priority-sector alignment.

- Energy
- Defence and Aerospace
- Natural Resources
- Fisheries and Agriculture
- Housing and Construction
- AI and Digital Economy

9. What does "actively entering a new export market" mean?

For the purposes of EDP, a business is considered to be actively entering a new export market when it is pursuing new business opportunities in a specific market outside Nova Scotia where, in its most recent fiscal year, sales represented less than 10% of the applicant's total combined domestic and international sales. The new market must be a specific country, province or territory, and cannot be defined as a continent, region, or grouping of countries.

10. 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, or \$25,000 CAD for eligible priority-sector exporters entering new markets.

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

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

12. 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

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

An FTE is the equivalent of one person working full time. Full time is considered to be 2,000 payroll hours for the year. To calculate the FTEs for your organization, calculate the total payroll hours worked per fiscal year by all employees, then divide by 2,000.

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

Examples:

One employee working full time (2,000 hours) = 1 FTE

Two 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 6.6 FTE (13,200/2,000 = 6.6)

14. What is Total Payroll?

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

15. 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.

16. 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).

17. 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.

18. 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.

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

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

20. 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 favouritism towards the other.

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 parties include anyone listed on the RJSC under the applicant company.

21. What is a trade mission?

A trade mission is a structured, organized visit to a target market outside a company's home jurisdiction, designed to support business-to-business engagement and export growth. It typically includes coordinated in-market meetings, matchmaking with potential buyers or partners, participation in industry events or trade shows, and on-the-ground support to help companies explore sales, partnership, or investment opportunities.

22. 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.

23. 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/service provider; 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.

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

Contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) for questions regarding your

application.

25. How do I submit my application form?

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

26. 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.

27. 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.

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

The per diem rate is **\$200 CAD (\$400 x 50%) per day for each approved traveler**. This contributes towards 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 apply to the day you depart the approved destination 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.

29. 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 3-4 of the [EDP Guidelines](#).

30. What expenses are covered under the trade show / conference and booth projects?

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

Booth/floor costs and conference registration fees are not eligible when Invest Nova Scotia is a funding partner.

Registration fees to join trade missions are **not** eligible.

31. 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.