

Guidelines

Export Development Program



1. Program Objective

The Export Development Program (the “Program”) 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 cost of projects that assist a business’ ability to overcome barriers to export growth. The qualifying projects include:

- **Travel to market** – cost of visiting a new and/or existing client, potential partner, or investor in another market, or inviting a foreign client and/or potential partner to visit the Nova Scotia operation;
- **In-person trade show/conference** – cost of floor space, conference registration fees, in-market travel, and accommodations;
- **Virtual trade show/conference** – cost of participation fees, conference registration fees and virtual booth space; and
- **Consultant/service provider** – cost of hiring a professional consultant/service provider to address challenges or barriers to selling outside Nova Scotia as well as services to improve competitiveness.

2. Eligible Applicants

All applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 1) be a Nova Scotia registered business in good standing (current registration on the *Registry of Joint Stock Companies*).
- 2) have a permanent establishment in Nova Scotia.
- 3) 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. Contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) in your area to discuss.)
- 4) be engaged in, or have imminent plans to engage in, commercial activities outside of Nova Scotia, with fully developed exportable product(s), service(s), technology(ies), and/or intellectual property to the satisfaction of Invest Nova Scotia.
- 5) have a business plan and a strategy to sell products/services outside Nova Scotia outlining the business’ target market and distribution channels and challenges in the target market and how they will be overcome.
- 6) have no outstanding or pending claims/litigation, injunctions, judgments, orders, legal or administrative actions, or similar proceedings against the business, its principals and/or any related business(es) (some exceptions may apply, contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) in your area to discuss).

- 7) the business, principals and/or any related business(es) shall not be in default of any obligations under any other form of financial assistance and/or incentive program from Invest Nova Scotia, the Province of Nova Scotia, or by any agency of the Province of Nova Scotia. For purposes of this criteria, the Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program is considered a form of financial assistance provided by the Province of Nova Scotia.
- 8) businesses and their related entities may be limited to funding for one business only at Invest Nova Scotia's sole discretion.

Eligibility is at Invest Nova Scotia's sole discretion, based on the above-outlined criteria and information provided by the applicant. Invest Nova Scotia reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke an Agreement based on information discovered after the issuance of the Agreement should the information reveal that the business is not in compliance with the Program Guidelines and Terms and Conditions of the Agreement and Invest Nova Scotia will be under no obligation to pay the business the incentive as set out in the Agreement.

Businesses not eligible for the Program 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 of 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

The Export Development Program contributes up to a **maximum of \$15,000 CAD** of eligible costs for a business to:

- Travel to a market outside Nova Scotia to attend a trade show, conference, or to visit clients, potential partners, or investors
- Participate in an in-person or virtual trade show, mission, or conference
- Have foreign clients, potential partners or investors visit the business' Nova Scotia facilities for the first time

- Hire a consultant/service provider to address challenges or barriers to selling products/services outside Nova Scotia as well as services to improve competitiveness.

The Program offers two streams to support export growth.

For specific queries on eligible and ineligible expenses in either stream, please reach out to a [Regional Business Development Advisor](#).

A completed application form must be submitted online to Invest Nova Scotia prior to the commencement of the project. Only project costs incurred after the application date are eligible to be claimed.

Where businesses must incur expenses prior to submitting an application, such as booth space cost and conference registration fees, Invest Nova Scotia will consider approval based on exceptional circumstances outlined in the application. All costs incurred prior to approval of the project are at the applicant's own risk.

**STREAM 1:
TRAVEL AND TRADE MISSIONS (IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL)**

Minimum project cost is \$1,000 CAD

Eligible project costs (excluding PST/GST/HST/QST) include:

- Floor or virtual booth space fees* for a non-retail trade show (50% of eligible costs)
- Conference registration fees* (50% of eligible costs)
 - up to two representatives of the business
 - conference registration and booth fees for international trade shows/conferences held in Nova Scotia are eligible. Per diem costs are not eligible to claim if participants reside within 100 kms of the conference.
- An airfare stipend according to the following chart:

Destination	Stipend \$CAD per participant (max 2 participants)
Africa	\$1,000
Arctic	\$1,000
Asia (China, South Korea, India, Japan)	\$1,500
Australia	\$1,000
Canada - Arctic (NU, NT, YK)	\$1,000
Canada - Atlantic (NB, PE)**	Not eligible – claim per diem only
Canada - Eastern (NL, QC, ON)	\$300
Canada - Western (MB, SK, AB, BC)	\$500
Caribbean	\$500
Central & South America	\$1,500
Europe	\$750
Middle East	\$1,000
USA (United States of America) and Mexico	\$500

The airfare stipend is only eligible to claim for round trips from Nova Scotia (some exceptions may apply). Airfare stipend includes all associated flight costs: airfare, baggage, seat selection, and change fees. For projects with multiple locations, only **one** airfare stipend location can be claimed per project (highest value location will be selected). If two travellers participate in one project, the airfare stipend claimed must be for the same location. For example, a project that has a stop in Italy, France, and Spain and two travellers – total airfare stipend claimed = \$750 x 2 = \$1,500.

***Travel to PE and NB covered by accommodations/ground transportation per diem only.*

- Travel expenses for representatives of the business not based in Nova Scotia are not eligible.
- A **per diem rate of \$200 CAD per day for each approved traveller** to cover accommodations, mileage, and in-market ground transportation/standard car rental (up to two representatives of the business) for all days of travel to and from market and days within the market. A per diem does NOT include the last day of travel and any portion of travel within Nova Scotia. **Per diem expenses are capped at 7 days per trip.**
- Incoming client/partner/investor first time visit eligible costs (up to two visiting individuals) include airfare stipend and per diem rates, subject to the guidelines above.
- The business will follow and adhere to all health protocols in all jurisdictions(s) where the business is travelling. The business is responsible for all quarantine costs (ex: accommodations/hotel, meals, testing, etc.). International travel should adhere to federal government guidance (current guidance is available at: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>).

Any costs not listed under the eligible costs above are deemed ineligible. Examples of ineligible costs include but are not limited to: Lighting, electricity, wi-fi, refrigeration, booth construction, booth artwork, promotional materials, meals, galas, networking events, alcohol/wine tasting, golf, membership fees, shipping, sponsorships, etc.

**Floor space, virtual booth space, and conference fees are not eligible where Invest Nova Scotia is a funding partner.*

STREAM 2: HIRING A CONSULTANT/SERVICE PROVIDER TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES OR BARRIERS TO SELLING PRODUCTS/SERVICES OUTSIDE NOVA SCOTIA, AND FOR SERVICES TO IMPROVE COMPETITIVENESS

Minimum project cost is \$5,000 CAD. Contributes up to 50% of eligible project costs.

Eligible projects include:

- Business matchmaking or lead generation in new markets
- Business valuations for succession planning
- Development and design of promotional marketing materials (excluding printing costs)
- Development or improvement of an e-commerce platform for markets outside Nova Scotia
 - Businesses should first consider the [Canada Digital Adoption Program \(CDAP\)](#) for projects related to development or improvement of an e-commerce platform. Please contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) to discuss prior to applying for the EDP.

- Development of policies, business cases or implementation plans to support inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility
- Intellectual Property or Certification research or development (does not cover fees for legal defence or other legal claims)
- Market research, feasibility, or business case analysis for proposed or existing business activity
- Product research, development, and design to improve an existing product or service
- Productivity, efficiency, lean capacity improvements, sustainability
- (Re)Branding for international markets
- Reduction of carbon footprint
- Targeted market growth plans
- Technology implementation or development (e.g., Enterprise Risk Management, Inventory Control, CRM (Customer Relationship Management)).
 - Businesses should first consider the [Canada Digital Adoption Program \(CDAP\)](#) for projects related to development or improvement of an e-commerce platform. Please contact your [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) to discuss prior to applying for the EDP.

Eligible project costs (excluding GST/HST/PST/QST) include:

- Consulting fees
- Consultant transportation and accommodation costs directly related to the project

Any cost not listed under “Eligible project costs” above are deemed ineligible.

Consultants/Service Providers and Statements of Work:

Selection of the consultant/service provider is at the discretion of the applicant. The chosen consultant/service provider must be at arms’ length from the applicant.

Submission of a statement of work and proof of consultant/service provider expertise are required for Invest Nova Scotia to determine project eligibility and consultant/service provider suitability, subject to the review and satisfaction of Invest Nova Scotia.

Invest Nova Scotia reserves the right to contact any consultant/service provider directly.

The statement of work must be prepared by the consultant/service provider and must include:

- Detailed description of the work to be performed
- Timelines for the project
- Fee structures (hourly rates, cost per deliverable, etc.)
- For Canadian consultants/service providers: if no GST/HST/PST/QST is included in the cost, it must be noted that costs are either exempt, subject to, or inclusive of GST/HST/PST/QST

For a project to be assessed, sufficient information must be provided with the application to validate the consultant/service provider and their expertise. Proof of expertise may include:

- Consultant/service provider’s biography
- Curriculum vitae (CV)
- Previous work history
- Client references

4. Ineligible Markets

Projects can take place in any country, provided Canada has not imposed sanctions against that country or against individuals/entities relevant to the proposed project.

Please see the [listing of current sanctions imposed by Canada](#).

5. Program Criteria

The Program supports businesses looking to:

- Increase their sales outside Nova Scotia;
- Improve their competitiveness; and
- Positively impact the Nova Scotia economy.

Projects will be evaluated based on the:

- Alignment of the project to the business' strategy to sell their products/services outside Nova Scotia;
- Potential of the project to benefit the business' Nova Scotia operations;
- Potential for the project to impact the Nova Scotia economy.

6. Application Process

- Contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) in your area to discuss Program alignment to your project.
- A completed Application Form must be submitted to Invest Nova Scotia (contact information is available under Section 10c).
- Applications received outside the timeframe as set out in Section 7 of these guidelines will not be considered.
- A completed application form **must be submitted** online to Invest Nova Scotia **prior** to the commencement of the project. Only project costs incurred after the application date are eligible to be claimed. Where companies must incur expenses prior to submitting an application, such as booth space cost and conference registration fees, Invest Nova Scotia will consider approval based on exceptional circumstances outlined in the application. All costs incurred prior to approval of the project are at the applicant's own risk.
- Responses to any requests by Invest Nova Scotia for missing or follow up information required by Invest Nova Scotia for evaluation of the application must be received no later than 5 business days following such request by Invest Nova Scotia. Non-receipt of requested information from Invest Nova Scotia may result in an application being declined. An application is not considered complete until all required or requested information has been received by Invest Nova Scotia.
- If approved, the Export Development Program Agreement ("Agreement") will be issued and must be accepted within 10 business days to be valid. Failure to return an Agreement within 10 business days may result in Invest Nova Scotia cancelling the Agreement with no further notice.
- Written decline of applications will be provided.
- There is no application fee for this Program.

- Invest Nova Scotia reserves the right to close any draft applications not submitted within 60 days of application creation.

7. Application Intake

- Businesses can submit completed applications for the Export Development Program anytime between **March 21, 2023, and January 12, 2024, at 5:00 PM AST** (or until program funding is fully subscribed).
- Applications will be considered for projects started and completed between **April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024.**

8. Terms of Incentive

- Funding is provided in Canadian dollars.
- 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.
- Applicants are required to pay all invoices prior to receiving a claim under the incentive.
- The incentive is only payable against eligible project costs as outlined in the Agreement.
- All approved projects must be completed and claimed in accordance with the timelines and other terms as outlined in the Agreement.
- An Agreement may be revoked based on information discovered after the issuance of the Agreement.
- An Engagement Survey per project must be completed prior to the claim incentive being paid out.
- Businesses must complete the Engagement Survey for the Program and participate in Invest Nova Scotia's annual corporate data collection process for two years following the project's completion.

9. Incentive Compliance and Claim Payment

The incentive is only payable against eligible project costs as outlined in the Agreement. Deliverables for project completion must be submitted online no later than 30 days from project completion. In the case of Stream 1 projects, claims must be submitted online within 30 days of completion of each project/trip.

Failure to adhere to these timelines will result in the project claim being denied, with no further notice.

STREAM 1:

Deliverables include:

- A signed Invest Nova Scotia claim form
- An electronic Excel (not pdf) version of the claim form worksheet
- Copies of related project invoices/receipts as well as proof of payment for conference/booth expenses such as credit card/bank statements, 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”

- Per diem: Proof of travel must be submitted (i.e., airline boarding passes, or hotel invoice(s), etc. to validate the per diem calculation
- Airfare Stipend: Proof of airfare in the form of a detailed itinerary and / or invoice

STREAM 2:

Deliverables include:

- A signed Invest Nova Scotia claim form
- Company Declaration Form (on website) confirming project completion
- Related project invoices from the consultant/service provider
- Proof of payment such as credit card/bank statements, copies of the front and back of cleared 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”

10. Other Pertinent 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 businesses must consent to:

- Participate in any public announcement or public ceremony relating to the awarding of the Export Development Program funding to the business and related accomplishments, at a mutually agreeable time; and
- The release of project information (business name, sector, region, and total Export Development Program funding amount approved) to the media and general public.

c) Contact Information

For more information, visit www.investnovascotia.ca/edp, or contact the [Regional Business Development Advisor](#) in your region.