

Business Tech Solutions Program FAQs

What is the Business Tech Solutions Program?

NATI's Business Tech Solutions Program is in response to the impact on businesses from the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and the need to assist firms to respond and adjust. The program is made available through funding provided by ACOA and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The program will support businesses to acquire technology solutions and processes, pivot their business/delivery models, and generate online sales. Participating commercial entities will receive a 90 per cent non-repayable contribution towards eligible project costs up to a maximum of \$15,000.

What is its objective?

The program aims to:

- Enable businesses to develop new ideas for how they can increase or enhance their online sales revenue and service offerings.
- Provide the necessary financial support to help purchase and implement technologies/digital solutions.
- Enable access to the necessary expertise to create an effective, efficient online sales system that generates new revenue streams.

Who is eligible?

- Sole proprietors, partnerships, companies, cooperatives, social enterprises and commercial enterprises operating within Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Proposed projects or initiatives should not be in direct competition with local market entities.
- Should demonstrate capacity to undertake and complete the project or initiative proposed with the submission of a supplier or vendor quote if applicable.
- Should be able to pay for the project upfront. Applicants will be reimbursed once the project is completed and paid.
- Applications for businesses that are main revenues for the owner will be prioritized.

Who is not eligible?

- Not for profit organizations.
- Business that is a registered charity.
- Business that does not conduct and operate in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Startup's who have been in operation for less than a year.

What are the eligible costs?

Eligible expenses include:

- Capital costs, including software, equipment and other infrastructure required to implement the project.
- Consultants' fees and technical support.
- Skills upgrading and training pertinent to project.

- Planning related costs.
- Travel that is considered fundamental to the implementation of the initiative or that facilitates customer interaction and end-user research (provincial government rates and per diems must be applied).
- Project-related materials and any costs necessary to undertake an approved project.

Ineligible Costs

The following activities are not eligible expenses:

- Core administrative functions of any organization.
- Administrative costs. This includes internal salary costs for employees.
- Regular business expenses.
- Development/launch of a new product/service.
- Subscription renewal, subscription for more than a year.
- Entertainment.
- Project activities such as website development or other professional services must not be done by a related company for the applicant’s project. The project must not have any relation to the applicant whether in affiliation or relative of the owner.
- Under normal circumstances, eligible costs will go back to the actual application date. Any costs prior to that date will be ineligible unless approval is given from BTS Team.

Application Requirements

- Read the Application Information Package on our website [here](#).

Application Process

The NATI team will screen and analyse all submissions. A weighted scoring matrix will be used to help the evaluation process.

Assessment Criteria

Vision	Do the project objectives advance strategic priorities of the company? (evidence that the project has been devised on evidence of a clear and quantified need or demand.)
Demand/Market	Is there substantial evidence of demand for the programs and services the project will deliver?
Impact	Will the project generate a positive impact on the company top-line and bottom line?
	Will this project also benefit local stakeholders such as govNL or local tech vendors?
Timeframe	Is the project plan/implementation plan detailed enough to gauge project success?
	Is the timeframe to realize the project realistic given the scope of work and budget available?
Budget	Does the budget provided align with the objectives of the project? (are they reasonable? are management costs or overheads

high? Are the budget line items clearly specified and aligned with the objectives?)

Process

- The applicant fills out an application form and submits the application with the necessary attachments to the program team.
- The program team will review the application and conduct due diligence.
- The program team will inform the application of the funding decision.
- On approval, a formal letter and agreement is emailed to the applicant for signature.
- The applicant submits an expense claim form for reimbursement at the end of the project.
- On completion of the project the applicant must submit the required reporting (see below). Report will be reviewed prior to claim payment.

Reporting Requirement

- Evidence of work completion (Letter indicating the usefulness of the service provided by the consultant and an attachment including the project deliverable i.e. business plans, studies, reports, documented procedures. All submissions will remain confidential).
- Completion of online surveys.
- Provision of paid invoices to suppliers for the project.

Project Execution Timeline

- You must complete your project and submit your claims and report on or before September 30, 2021.

Project Final Reports and Claims

- A final report must be completed once the project has finished. A link will be provided for the final report. Once submitted and approved by the BTS team, a claim link will be sent.
- The final claim link will be provided to outline your expenses and attached paid invoices and other relevant information for the claim.
- Once the project claim has been reviewed and approved, payment should be made within 30 days.

Project Financing Examples

- If your total project costs are \$20,000 (net of GST/HST), then 90% of that is \$18,000. However, you will receive a non-repayable contribution of \$15,000 from us since maximum funding is \$15,000.
- If your total project costs are \$15,000 (net of GST/HST), then 90% of that is \$13,500. You will receive the full 90% non-repayable contribution of \$13,500 from us since it's within the maximum funding of \$15,000.

- Note: When submitting your final claim form, you can claim up to \$15,000 of Eligible Costs, before applicable taxes of GST/HST. The GST/HST cost will also be reimbursed. Any out of country costs incurring foreign taxes are treated differently and the foreign taxes are considered part of the cost of the item/service. Import Taxes are treated the same as GST/HST. Note that if you are a Social Enterprise and you are not reimbursed 100% of the HST, in which case when claiming please put 50% of HST in as a cost)

Application Deadline

- Applications for the program along with supplier / vendor quotes must be submitted by June 28, 2021.

Contact

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June 9, 2021