

## Program Overview

The **Feasibility Studies** program provides up to \$20,000 in grant funding for municipalities, regional districts, First Nations bands, and registered non-profit organizations via Northern Development’s six (6) principal Trust Accounts: the Regional Development Accounts (Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet, Northeast, Northwest, and Prince George), the Cross Regional Account, and the Pine Beetle Recovery Account to undertake feasibility study projects. Projects must be focused on feasibility studies that demonstrate a strong business case for a major infrastructure project that is generally aligned with Northern Development’s [Economic Diversification Infrastructure](#) funding program.

### Features and Benefits of the Program:

- Provides grant funding for development of a comprehensive business case to support an application to Northern Development’s Economic Diversification Infrastructure program, and/or capital cost financiers.
- Preference is given to feasibility studies that are focused on informing capital projects expected to result in significant job creation and substantial new revenue generation.
- Results of studies are made publicly available to assist others undertaking similar initiatives in the region.
- Time sensitive approval process for complete and well documented applications.

## Objective

- To assess the business case and feasibility for economic diversification infrastructure

## Application Intake Deadlines

Funding applications are continuously accepted to this program on a quarterly intake cycle.

A recommendation by the Regional Advisory Committees and a decision by the Board of Directors are required for this funding program. The application intake deadlines, Regional Advisory Committee meetings, and Board meetings are publicly posted on the Northern Development website.

The following schedules are publicly available online:

- [Application Intake Deadlines](#)
- Regional Advisory Committee meetings
  - [Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet](#)
  - [Northeast](#)
  - [Northwest](#)
  - [Prince George](#)
- [Board of Directors meetings](#)



## Program Eligibility

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### Eligible Organizations

- Municipalities
- Regional districts
- First Nations bands
- Registered non-profit organizations

### Required Project and Funding Application Features

- The project is aligned with the requirements and mandate of the funding program.
- The feasibility study is focused on a project that is aligned with the [Economic Diversification Infrastructure](#) program.
- The funding request is incremental to government (local, provincial, federal) mandate and funding.
- The funding request is supported by local government through a resolution.
  - Applicants are responsible for securing a resolution outlining support for the Northern Development funding request from a municipality or regional district. The applicant must provide a certified copy of the resolution of support to Northern Development before a funding decision can be made.
- The funding request is supported by the Regional Advisory Committee through a resolution.
  - Completed applications are forwarded by Northern Development to the appropriate Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) that recommends project decisions to the Board of Directors.
  - For applications to the Cross Regional Account:
    - The funding application must clearly identify that the infrastructure project to be the focus of the feasibility study has an anticipated capital cost in excess of \$20 million and would provide direct economic benefits to more than one region.
    - Completed applications are forwarded by Northern Development to all four (4) Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) who recommend project decisions to the Board of Directors. The funding request must be supported by at least two (2) of the four (4) Regional Advisory Committees through resolutions.
  - See the [Regional Advisors](#) section of the Northern Development website for a complete list of Regional Advisory Committee members for each Northern Development region.
- For applications to the Pine Beetle Recovery Account, the funding application must clearly identify:
  - That the project will be implemented in a community or region that is economically impacted by the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic.
  - That the project directly supports economic diversification that will mitigate the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic in the community or region.
  - That there is partnership and collaboration between private business, First Nations, and local government(s) that contributes support for the project.
- A detailed quote outlining the proposed scope of work from a qualified consultant must be provided as an attachment to the funding application.

### Eligible Costs

- Consulting fees.
- Consultant travel costs directly associated with conducting the study.
- Meeting room rental costs directly associated with community and/or industry consultation.
- Printing costs directly associated with producing a final report.
- Cost of obtaining research material (industry reports, peer-reviewed journals) directly relevant to the study may be eligible.

## Ineligible Costs

- Operational costs and staff salaries.
- Travel to meetings, conferences, or workshops.
- Purchases of equipment or tools.
- Project cost over-runs.
- In-kind labour or materials.  
Volunteer labour is encouraged, but cannot be considered as a cash equivalent contribution under this program.
- GST and PST.
- Costs incurred prior to formal notification of funding approval from Northern Development.

## Funding Terms

- Northern Development provides grant funding under this program up to a maximum of \$20,000 or 28.57% of a total project budget (a minimum leveraging ratio of \$1.00 from Northern Development to \$2.50 from other sources).
- Applicants must provide confirmation of all other sources of project funding prior to Northern Development entering into a funding agreement. Applications that have confirmed other funding at the time of review by the Board of Directors are preferred. In the case of other unconfirmed funding sources at the time of application to Northern Development, applicants are required to provide the date a decision is expected for each unconfirmed funding source.
- Applications are assessed to ensure that the most appropriate sources of funding have been approached by the applicant.

## Qualifying for Funding

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*While a project or organization may be eligible for funding, projects must propose to deliver specific economic outcomes to qualify for funding approval.*

### **Key Deliverables** *see section 6 on page 4 of the Application Form*

*The following key deliverables are reported on by successful applicants for a five (5) year period to demonstrate the direct economic benefits of the project.*

Projects funded under this program must propose the following direct outcomes of the proposed capital project that the feasibility study will inform:

- Proposed capital project budget.
- Potential annual operational revenues.
- Potential direct permanent jobs created.
- Potential direct construction jobs created.

### **Leveraging** *see section 12 on page 7 of the Application Form*

- Preference for projects that partner Northern Development funds with multiple other funding sources.
- Preference for projects where the applicant organization makes a significant financial investment in the project.

- Preference for projects that secure significant financial investment from other funding sources relative to the amount requested from Northern Development.

## Strategic Factors

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Studies funded under this program are assessed for their alignment with a number of strategic factors:

- Supporting market research for the proposed future capital project is attached to the funding application.
- Implementation of the proposed future capital project will decrease the cost of doing business.
- The proposed future capital project is expected to involve a P3 partnership.
- The study involves multiple groups and community collaboration.
- There is direct First Nations participation in the study.
- There are direct economic benefits to First Nations as a result of the proposed future capital project.
- Quote(s) supporting the study's budget are attached to the funding application.
- The proposed future capital project is expected to provide broad regional economic impact(s).

## Application Assessment

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Northern Development staff undertake comprehensive due diligence of each funding application received, which may include contacting relevant agencies and organizations as part of the review process.

All projects are assessed and scored on the Key Deliverables, Leveraging, and Strategic Factors identified in the funding application submitted to Northern Development. Applicants can request a copy of the Scorecard Assessment for submitted funding applications that are under review.

## Application Process

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1. Applicant contacts an Economic Development Manager at Northern Development to discuss the proposed project scope and potential alignment with the funding program. See Northern Development's [Staff](#) webpage for the key contact in your region.
2. Applicant obtains a detailed quote outlining the proposed scope of work from a qualified consultant.
3. The applicant completes a funding application and submits the application with the detailed consulting quote to Northern Development.
4. Once Northern Development confirms alignment between the application and the funding program, the applicant submits the complete application to a municipality or regional district with a request for a resolution of support.
5. The municipality or regional district determines whether it will provide a resolution of support for the funding request from the appropriate account. The resolution of support must clearly state the amount of the funds requested, that the request is for a grant, and the allocation of the appropriate Regional Development Account, Cross Regional Account, or Pine Beetle Recovery Account that the funds will be provided.
6. An official copy of the resolution of support from the municipality or regional district is obtained by the applicant and forwarded to Northern Development.
7. Northern Development staff conduct due diligence of the application, and forward the funding request to the appropriate Regional Advisory Committee for recommendation.

- For applications to the Regional Development Account, Northern Development staff conduct due diligence of the application, and forward the funding request to the appropriate Regional Advisory Committee for recommendation.
    - The Regional Advisory Committee determines whether to support the funding request.
  - For applications to the Cross Regional Account, Northern Development staff conduct due diligence of the application, and forward the funding request to all four (4) Regional Advisory Committees. Each Regional Advisory Committee independently determines whether to support the funding request.
    - At least two (2) of the four (4) Regional Advisory Committees support the funding request in order for it to move forward to the Board of Directors.
  - For applications to the Pine Beetle Recovery Account, Northern Development staff conduct due diligence of the application, may consult with appropriate Pine Beetle Action Coalition(s), and present the funding request to the Board of Directors at their next scheduled meeting.
8. Once a recommendation supporting the funding application is provided by the Regional Advisory Committee(s), Northern Development staff finalize due diligence, incorporate the Regional Advisory Committee(s)' recommendations, and present the funding request to the Board of Directors at their next scheduled meeting.
  9. Following the Board meeting, Northern Development staff will notify the applicant of the Board's funding decision by phone. A formal letter is mailed to the applicant.
  10. A funding agreement (enabling Northern Development to disburse funding for the project) can be provided to the applicant for signature once the applicant has provided documentation confirming of all other funding sources in writing to Northern Development.
  11. Annual reporting for five (5) years on Key Deliverables (see page 3 of this guide) specific to the funding program is a requirement of applicants with approved funding agreements.

For program enquiries contact: **Northern Development Initiative Trust**  
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