

Rural and Remote Employment Initiatives Fund – Business Advisory Supports Application Guide



Program Overview

The objective of the Rural and Remote Employment Initiatives Fund (RREIF) is to fund initiatives that support people, businesses, communities and the workforce navigate potential and realized impacts of tariffs and other economic impacts. Programming has been designed with the goal of addressing current economic gaps and potential economic impacts created by tariffs (e.g. increased raw materials costs, lost export contracts, delays in the supply chain etc.), intending to help support people, businesses, communities and the workforce in rural and remote communities of Northern British Columbia.

The Business Advisory Supports program is designed to offset the costs associated with obtaining third-party professional supports for small businesses. The intent of the program is for applicants to be able to access professional supports for addressing specific tariff related impacts and for sustaining and/or creating employment opportunities.

The Rural and Remote Employment Initiatives Fund is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

Funding Terms

Northern Development provides a rebate under this program to eligible applicants up to **\$30,000** to a maximum of **85%** of the eligible project budget.

- Projects must have a minimum budget of \$1,000
- A project must be completed, reporting submitted and funding disbursed before a subsequent project applicant may be submitted
- Applicants must apply and receive notification of approval prior to beginning the project
- Projects must be completed as approved to receive funding and any change in the project scope must be communicated to Northern Development. Incomplete or partially completed projects may not be eligible for funding

*Funding up to **\$50,000** towards a maximum of **85%** of the eligible project budget may be available for projects of a more complex nature that demonstrate:

- A higher degree of economic complexity or risk due to tariff impacts
- Strategic importance of the industry to the local or regional economy
- Additional deliverables that support long-term job creation, diversification, or capacity-building

Application Intake Deadlines

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis until the program funding is fully allocated. The program will be available until December 31, 2026, or until all funds have been fully allocated, whichever comes first.



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and the Province of British Columbia.

Applications to the Business Advisory Supports program will be reviewed on a first-come-first-served basis. Northern Development aims to have a decision to applicants within 30-business days of receiving a completed application.

Eligibility

Northern Development retains discretion over which projects and costs will be considered eligible and ineligible.

Eligible Applicants

All applicants must be located/headquartered within the [Northern Development Initiative Trust region](#).

- Small and medium sized businesses that are
 - Privately owned
 - Incorporated businesses, or sole proprietorships that have been established for two or more years with more than \$30,000 in annual revenues
 - Less than 500 employees
 - Revenues less than \$100 million
- First Nation businesses in eligible industries
- First Nation development corporations
- *Not for profit organizations whose sole purpose is to create jobs and economic benefit in their industry, i.e. community forests
- Community contribution companies

Eligible Industries

Applicants must be operating within one of the following industries

- Agriculture
- Aquaculture
- Distribution
- Energy
- Forestry
- Industrial supply chain (services and suppliers)
- Innovation/technology
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Oil and gas
- Transportation

Eligible Consulting Projects

- Business planning, strategic planning and management
- Business development feasibility studies (eligible for a 50% contribution to a maximum of \$20,000)
- Market development
- Human resource management
- Operations/operational efficiency
- Quality and safety management
- Innovation, automation and digital adoption
- Accounting
- Legal
- Project scoping (i.e. gap analysis)

Eligible Costs

- Consulting fees. Consultant(s) must be in Canada* (*see Ineligible Costs*)
 - Consultant contract must be fixed fee (i.e. not on time and material, hourly or contingency)
- Consultant travel costs directly associated with the project. Only travel costs within Canada are eligible
- Legal and accounting services
- Other costs directly associated with the project (to be approved on an individual project basis)

Ineligibility

Northern Development retains discretion over which projects and costs will be considered eligible and ineligible.

Ineligible Businesses/Organizations

- Businesses that do not have a major facility and key decision makers in the [Northern Development Initiative Trust region](#)
- Small and medium sized businesses that are
 - Start-ups without revenue
 - Publicly traded
 - 500 employees or more
 - Annual revenues of \$100 million or more
- Non-profit organizations* (*see Eligible Businesses/Organizations*)
- Municipalities, regional districts, First Nation bands

Ineligible Consulting Projects

- Website upgrades
- Staff training courses (external)
- Consulting contracts that exceed 12 months
- Outsourced operational duties

Ineligible Costs

- Operational costs and staff wages
- Management or staff travel costs
- Consultant administration/management fees
- *Fees for consultants outside of Canada unless it is demonstrated that the service is not available in Canada
- Meeting costs (equipment rental, refreshments, etc.)
- Purchases of equipment or tools
- Project cost over-runs
- In-kind volunteer labour or donated services/materials
- GST
- Costs incurred prior to formal notification of funding approval from Northern Development

Application and Program Requirements

Only applications that meet these requirements will be processed. All applicants are required to confirm the following information.

Attachments

All applicants are required to submit the following information/documents.

- Complete application (to be submitted through the [Online Application System](#))
 - Detailed project budget
- Detailed consultant proposal (should include proposed scope of work, fees, and timelines)
- If applicable: Verification of approval from funding sources other than the applicant (*e.g. approval letter or contract; required prior to approval*)
- If applicable: Other relevant supplemental documentation

Application Assessment

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

All projects are assessed on the strength of the application, key deliverables, requested funding percentage, applicant contribution, and additional questions identified in the funding application package.

Each application will be assessed on the following:

- The extent of Northern Development's financial contribution to the eligible project budget
- The extent of the applicant's financial contribution to the eligible project budget
- Is the business within one of the eligible industry sectors outlined in the Application Guide.
- Has the applicant clearly outlined the tariff related impact being faced by the business and how the project will address this impact?
- Has the applicant demonstrated the key deliverable(s) that will result from the project?
- Has the applicant outlined if a successful project will result in requiring up-skilling and/or specialized training of employees?
- The current, new and sustained employment opportunities as a result of the proposed project.
- The anticipated revenue generation and operational cost savings as a result of the proposed project.
- Has the applicant provided a detailed proposal from the selected consultant?

Reporting

Applicants must submit a completed Northern Development reporting form along with the following required attachments:

- Copies of all invoices and proof of payment
- Evidence of work completed (i.e. COR health and safety certificate, marketing plan, etc.)
 - Applicants must make project deliverables (i.e. business plans, studies, reports, documented procedures) available to Northern Development in order to undertake quality assurance. All documents will remain confidential

If approved, upon signing an agreement with Northern Development applicants may request an advance to cover any front-loaded costs related to the project (ie. deposit required by consultant). Advances will be assessed on a per-project basis. To request and advance, please email finance@northerndevelopment.bc.ca and include a copy of the invoice and the Advance Request Form.

To Apply

Please review all program documents in detail as incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Completed application forms with all supplementary materials are to be provided electronically through the [Online Application System](#).

Questions?

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Application Requirements – Step by Step

Applicant and Project Information

- Information about you and the organization you are applying for will populate automatically. You will input the name of the project, the project's proposed start and end date, a concise description of the project and its rationale.
 - Please be sure to clearly outline the specific tariff related impact being faced by the business, and how the project addresses this impact in the project description and rationale.
- You also have the option to include additional milestones/dates related to your project.

Project Funding Information

- Enter the detailed project budget, including all relevant expense items, into the budget section. You will have the ability to upload any quotes in this section that support the budget.
- Enter the grant amount you are requesting from Northern Development. Please refer to the Funding Terms section on page 1 of this application guide for information about program funding parameters.
- Enter all other funding sources. For funding sources that are confirmed, you will need to provide the date the funding was confirmed and upload a confirmation document. For funding sources that are NOT confirmed, you will provide the expected date of the funding decision. This information is required to proceed further with the application.
- *Please note that the application will not proceed further if the project budget and funding are not balanced.*

Attachments

- Upload the detailed consultant proposal
- Upload any additional supporting documents such as letters of support or other relevant information

Program Specific Information

- Outline the key deliverables (ie. business plans, digital adoption or automations, etc.) of the project
- Describe if the successful completion of the project will result in the requirement of up-skilling and/or specialized training of employees (and if so what training)

Economic Benefits - Employment

- Provide the current employment numbers for the business (full-time, part-time, and seasonal)
- Provide the projected job numbers anticipated to be created, or sustained, as a result of the project (full-time, part-time, and seasonal)

Economic Benefits – Revenue Generation and Operational Cost Savings

- Provide the organization’s current revenue
- Provide the projected revenue anticipated to be generated over the next two years
- Provide details on how the completion of the project is anticipated to influence revenue
- Provide the organization’s current operating costs
- Provide the projected operating costs over the next two years
- Provide details on how the completion of the project is anticipated to influence operational costs

Economic Benefits – Other

- Outline any other economic benefits or potential outcomes as a result of the project

Consultant Information

- Provide information about the selected consultant