

Program Guidelines

Program Rationale

The E -tools for Exporting Program is designed to assist Atlantic-based small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to increase their exporting performance. It provides a financial contribution, in the form of a reimbursement, for the development and/or implementation of select e-tools. This program is intended to complement existing programs available through both the Federal and Provincial governments.

The E-tools for Exporting Program is managed by LearnSphere Canada with financial assistance from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

For the purposes of this program, exporting is defined as sales of products and/or services for use in regions outside of Canada. Sales to an international company, for the use of product and/or services within Canada, is not eligible.

Program Objective

Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed activity will improve export performance.

Eligible Applicants

- Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are currently exporting or plan to export
- EforE is open to many industry sectors with the exception of: retail/wholesale, real estate, government services, personal or social services and softwood lumber
- Professional services (including marketing firms and creative agencies, business or fitness coaches, as a few examples) are generally not considered eligible applicants. Professional services may be considered if the project represents a unique and/or strategic opportunity with potential economic benefit to Atlantic Canada
- Applicants must have generated revenue in the last year.

Applications will be evaluated on incrementality, potential economic benefits, the export business case, and alignment with the Atlantic growth strategy. Each application should be supported with a strong complement of information to assist in the evaluation. In addition, applicants may be asked to provide a recent export market strategy.

Priority will be given to current exporters and to applications that clearly demonstrate how the activity will impact growth of international business to business sales (B2B).

Please note that meeting the eligibility requirements does not mean that your application will be approved.

Eligible Activities and Costs

Incrementality

Eligible activities must be incremental; they must go beyond the applicant core activities, represent new initiatives and yield incremental results.

Eligible Activities	Eligible Costs	Ineligible Costs
Website development, re-design or rebranding Responsive web design conversion (ensuring mobile-friendly design) Integration of e-commerce functionality Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Paid advertising (PayPerClick, Google Adwords, etc.) Social media strategy or integration Videos, online catalogues and other online customized tools Translation of website Creation/design of language toggle Training on any of the above	Professional/consulting fees to undertake activities. Online advertising costs	Maintenance Fees Web hosting fees Recurring costs for paid advertising Travel for consultants or applicants. HST

Contribution

Applicants can receive up to 65% of eligible costs, up to a maximum contribution of **\$15,000**.

This means, for the minimum project size of \$5,000, a reimbursement of \$3,250 and for a project of \$23,077 or greater, a maximum reimbursement of \$15,000. The Applicant will pay 100% of costs and will be reimbursed when the project is finished. The net contribution by the Applicant plus other sources, if applicable, is at least 35%. All sources of funds must be identified.

COVID-19 – Change in funding formula for the period of April 2020 – September 30, 2020 *:

To better respond to the needs of SMEs during the current global situation, E for E will reimburse up to **80% of eligible project costs, up to a maximum of approximately \$18,462**.

**All approved applications received before September 30, 2020 will automatically benefit from this offer.*

Reimbursement: The Applicant will be required to cash flow the project. **LearnSphere will reimburse the contribution amount after the project is completed, all project costs have been paid, and a claim has been submitted by the Applicant.**

Program Process

Application: Applicants must complete the on-line application form posted on our website at: www.learnsphere.ca. Applications must comply with the program's objective and guidelines.

Prior to submitting the application, applicants will be prompted to complete an export readiness assessment.

Evaluation

Contract Approval: If the application is approved, a contract will be issued between LearnSphere and the Applicant. It will be the sole responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that satisfactory work is completed by any outside resources (consultants).

Applicants will be notified of the evaluation outcome as soon as possible, usually within two (2) weeks of receipt of the application form and all supporting materials (including consultant(s) proposal).

Agency or consultant: It is the responsibility of the Applicant to select the agency or consultant they will hire to complete the project activities. A sample statement of work can be found [here](#). All agencies or consultants must be at arm's-length to the Applicant, and their fees must be at fair market value.