

Starter Company *plus*

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Starter Company Plus Program Guidelines

The Starter Company Plus Program is aimed at entrepreneurs aged 18 and older who are not returning to school and are interested in starting, purchasing, or expanding a business as their full-time occupation.

This program is free for all participants and provides a valuable opportunity to develop their business ideas while drawing on a variety of experienced and professional resources.

Starter Company Plus is funded by the provincial government as part of the 'Ready. Set. Work.' Campaign and the Youth Jobs Strategy. The program is delivered by Enterprise Temiskaming in our catchment area, which includes all communities from Virginiatown to Latchford, as well as communities between Matachewan and the Quebec border.

The program offers:

Mentoring

Talk about your business with local business professionals, entrepreneurs, and other program participants and benefit from their knowledge and experience.

- Business mentoring
- Technical mentoring
- Financial mentoring
- One-on-one mentoring

Consultations

Meet one-on-one with the Business Consultant a minimum of 3 times to discuss your business.

Present at the Pitch Session

Pitch your business idea to a panel of business professionals. Receive guidance to help you move forward.

Apply for Funding/Financing

Submit your application for the Starter Company Plus micro-grant of up to \$5,000 towards your business.

Note that only 3 business plans will make it through to the grant application per intake, and only 1-2 participants per intake might receive funding.

WHERE DO I START?

Contact your local program provider to register your interest in the program, confirm your eligibility and obtain the required application and business plan template. You can also take advantage of the business consulting services and resources available through the network of program providers.

AM I ELIGIBLE FOR STARTER COMPANY?

You are eligible for Starter Company if you are:

- A youth 18 years of age or older as of program intake date;
- Proposing a new company, expansion of an existing company or buying an existing business;
- Not a full time student and not returning to school full time;
- A resident of Ontario;
- A Canadian citizen or a permanent resident;
- Prepared to complete the business training components of the Starter Company Program as prescribed by your Small Business Enterprise Centre Program Provider;
- Prepared to commit to a minimum average of 35 hours a week running the business;
- Can demonstrate 25% matching funds in cash or in-kind assets
- Prepared to attend monthly meetings for at least six months after acceptance into the program;
- Have not received a Starter Company grant in the past; and
- Not currently enrolled in the Self Employment Benefits (SEB) Program.

If you have any questions about your eligibility call your local program provider.

WHAT TYPE OF BUSINESS CAN I START?

Almost any type of business is eligible, as long as it is:

- A sole proprietorship or a corporation where the applicant will be the majority shareholder
- A partnership*
- An independent business venture
- Social enterprise
- Fits the Canada Revenue Agency definition of being self-employed
- Operates at arm's length from family business ventures
- Operates in Ontario
- Operates full-time as defined in the business plan
- Maintains its own books and records
- Maintains a separate business bank account
- Follows government rules and regulations for operating a business

*If only one partner is eligible for Starter Company he/she must demonstrate 51% ownership of the company.

BUSINESSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR STARTER COMPANY INCLUDE:

- Distributorships
- Incorporated businesses that are controlled directly or indirectly by a person who would not be eligible for a Starter Company Award
- Commissioned sales
- Not-for-profit or charitable enterprises
- Multi-level marketing ventures
- Single events such as a theatrical production, a DJ gig, a music concert, a dance/party event, a fundraiser, a sporting tournament, etc.
- Businesses that are strictly pay per click
- 1-900 businesses

HOW DO I APPLY FOR STARTER COMPANY?

To apply you must:

- Contact your local program provider to register your interest in the program and obtain the required eligibility checklist and application.
- Confirm your eligibility and send in application to program provider. Program provider will contact your for an interview and then recommend you on training business plan completion.
- Complete training and business as prescribed by your program provider
- Submit your completed documents to the program provider and prepare for presentation to grant committee

HOW DOES STARTER COMPANY WORK?

Your application will be reviewed and evaluated by your local program provider. If your business plan is sound and meets the program's criteria, you may qualify for the next step. Selected candidates will be invited to present their business idea to the Grant Committee. After the presentation, if your application is approved by the program provider and grant committee, you will be required to:

- Sign an agreement with your program provider outlining each party's rights and responsibilities
- Agree to comply with the program guidelines and implement the business substantially in accordance with the business plan and cash flow included with your application
- Show your business name registration and any required licensing documents to your program provider for verification
- Open and operate a separate business bank account for the business
- If operating a partnership, provide copies of the partnership agreement and proof of joint signing authority on the business bank account
- Operate your business on a full-time basis, minimum average of 35 hours a week
- Meet with your local program provider/mentors at least once per month for a minimum of 6 consecutive months
- Maintain appropriate business records of income and expenditures including receipts
- Participate in business training provided by the program provider
- Attend an exit interview with your program provider

You will receive up to 75% of total eligible funding upon approval. The remaining amount will be received when you achieve the mutually agreed upon milestones/targets laid out in your business plan and have successfully completed the program according to the program requirements.

NOTES

1. Funds from Starter Company award cannot be used for the purchase or lease of a vehicle.
2. Failure to successfully complete the program will result in default as specified in the Letter of Agreement.
3. Funding must be used to implement all components outlined in the business plan. Certain restrictions will apply.

TAX TREATMENT OF AWARD

The Starter Company grant is considered taxable under the Canada and Ontario Income Tax Acts. A T4A slip will be issued to the recipient of the Award.