

## 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) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are currently exporting or plan to export
- E for E 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.

**Please note that meeting the eligibility requirements does not mean that your application will be approved. Applications will be prioritized according to alignment with the Atlantic Growth Strategy. In addition, applicants may be asked to provide a recent export market strategy.**

## 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.

SME's exporting a product and/ or service:

Eligible Activities	Eligible Costs	Ineligible Costs
Website development, re-design or rebranding	Professional/consulting fees to undertake activities.	Maintenance Fees
Responsive web design conversion (ensuring mobile-friendly design)	Online advertising costs	Web hosting fees
Integration of e-commerce functionality		Recurring costs for paid advertising
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)		Travel for consultants or applicants.
Paid advertising (PayPerClick, Google Adwords, etc.)		HST
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		

### 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 \$23,087 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.

## Program Process

**Application:** Applicants must complete the on-line application form posted on our website at: [www.learnsphere.ca](http://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

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**Applications will be evaluated on incrementality, potential economic benefits, the export business case, and alignment with the Atlantic growth 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. Each application should be supported with a strong complement of information to assist in the evaluation.**

**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.

**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).

**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.**