Source: <https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/innovation-stream>

Innovation Stream

The Innovation Stream supports the research, development and commercialization of new and innovative technologies in Northern Ontario.

Who is Eligible?

Private-sector businesses alone, or in partnership with a public sector academic or research institution.

For public-private partnership projects, the private-sector business is the lead applicant and the funding recipient.

For public-private partnership projects, the partnering academic or research institution must have the relevant expertise and resources required by the private-sector partner to complete the proposed project.

What Projects are Eligible?

Applied research & development projects, and demonstration & commercialization of new and innovative technologies.

NOHFC considers innovative technology projects based on the following definition: “the development or implementation of ideas to produce new or improved strategies, capabilities, products, services, or processes with a strong focus on ensuring to satisfy a market need or desire”.

Applicants have the choice to apply for support for applied research & development or demonstration & commercialization costs under separate applications or in one combined application.

* In the event that an applicant chooses to include demonstration & commercialization costs in their project, NOHFC will not accept a subsequent application for the same technology.
* For projects where the applicant elects to combine applied research & development, and demonstration & commercialization costs, before proceeding to demonstration and commercialization phase, the applicant must:
  + Own, have registered a patent for, or have the rights to exploit the intellectual property associated with the technology.
  + Be able to demonstrate that the technology has been tested and fully validated.

Eligible applied research & development activities and associated costs include, but not limited to:

* Direct internal technical labour costs
* Prototyping costs (engineering and design services and component purchase, fabrication and installation costs)
* Product testing
* Intellectual property protection costs
* Research and development services provided by public sector partners

Eligible demonstration & commercialization activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Direct internal technical labour costs
* Building or renovation costs specifically related to the commercialization of the new technology
* Prototype demonstration costs (engineering and design services and equipment purchases, fabrication and installation costs)
* Material costs
* Product certification costs
* Research and development services provided by public sector partners
* Marketing costs (in-person or virtual trade show assistance and marketing material design costs) - limited to 20% of total eligible project costs

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that will be considered during evaluation of applications will include but not limited to:

* Innovation meets the NOHFC’s definition of Innovation
* Strength of the project’s detailed business plan
* Net economic benefits for Northern Ontario
* Demonstrated market need and demand
* Management capacity
* Business’ financial position
* Supply chain impacts
* Level of Risk

Funding

Funding for Applied Research and Development only projects

* Funding is in the form of a conditional contribution of up to 50% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $500,000.

Funding for Applied Research & Development and Demonstration & Commercialization Combined or Demonstration & Commercialization only projects

* Funding is in the form of a conditional contribution of up to 50% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $2 million.

Combined Federal and Provincial government funding may not exceed 75% of eligible project costs.

Funding for each project is determined by the NOHFC Board of Directors, and limited funding is available. Not all projects meeting the criteria will necessarily receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Projects intended for internal efficiency purposes only are ineligible.

Ineligible activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Land
* Working capital
* Administrative or other indirect operating costs
* Labour costs for any person that owns 10% or more of the applicant business
* In-kind contributions
* Business Plans
* Travel, accommodation and meeting costs
* Office equipment and furnishings
* Vehicles

Program Requirements

* The applicant may be required to reimburse NOHFC if assets financed by NOHFC are sold within the first three years after project completion.

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Source: <https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/innovation-industrial-research-chair>

Innovation – Industrial Research Chair

The Industrial Research Chair (IRC) initiative is designed to establish and enhance research capacity at Northern Ontario universities, colleges, and research institutions. As capacity is developed, Northern Ontario will benefit from research leading to the transformation of Northern Ontario’s key economic sectors which, in turn, will help attract and retain highly qualified personnel.

Who is Eligible?

Northern Ontario universities, colleges, and research institutions (defined as a not- for-profit organization whose primary activity is scientific research and which is formally affiliated with a Northern Ontario post-secondary institution).

What projects are Eligible?

* IRCs are eligible for funding up to five years in duration.
* Eligible projects must fit with the applicant institution’s strategic research plan, have a private sector partner, and is focussed on business problem solving, and / or is working towards the commercialization of a product or process in Northern Ontario. Preference is given to IRCs that involve collaboration and partnerships with other academic or research institutions, Indigenous communities, municipalities and other government agencies.
* Eligible projects, activities and associated costs include but are not limited to:
  + Salary and mandatory benefits of the chair holder over the duration of the project
  + construction or renovation of laboratories or supporting facilities used directly in carrying out the research
  + Acquiring, operating and maintaining research equipment used directly in carrying out the research
  + Materials used directly in carrying out the research
  + Costs associated with publishing research findings

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that will be considered during evaluation of applications will include, but not limited to:

* Net economic benefits for Northern Ontario
* Alignment with Industrial Research Chair’s host organization’s strategic research plan
* Strength of collaboration and addressing the needs of partners in the proposal
* Strength of the project’s detailed business plan

Funding

* Financial assistance is limited to 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of $1 million as a conditional contribution for the duration of the project.
* Funding for each project is determined by the NOHFC Board of Directors, and limited funding is available. Not all projects meeting the criteria will necessarily receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Ineligible activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Compensation-related expenses of other members of the research team
* Any indirect operating or administrative costs
* Fees for professional and technical services
* Travel, accommodation and meeting costs
* Office equipment and furnishings

Program Requirements

* Industrial Research Chairs (IRCs) must involve partnerships with the private sector. Along with having a credible plan and the expertise and resources needed to exploit the research results, industrial partner(s) must contribute financial support to and be actively involved in the project.
* Chair holders must be recognized as international leaders in their field with extensive research experience and an exceptional track record of managing research programs and training researchers.

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Source: <https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/investment-launch-stream>

Investment - Launch Stream

Who is Eligible?

Businesses starting-up operations in Northern Ontario.

What Projects are Eligible?

Eligible projects, activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Capital construction
* Leasehold improvements
* New or used equipment including capital leases
* Land servicing costs
* Information & communications technology (ICT) investments
* Marketing for new products and business initiatives (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs, or $75,000, whichever is less)
* Training costs incurred with third parties (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs)

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that will be considered during evaluation of applications will include but not limited to:

* Job creation
* Level of investment from other sources to be secured by the applicant
* Strength of the applicant’s detailed business plan
* Does not unreasonably impact existing Northern Ontario businesses
* Net economic benefits for Northern Ontario

Other business activities that, in the opinion of the NOHFC Board of Directors, will result in an economic development advantage for Northern Ontario may be considered.

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Funding

Funding is in the form of a conditional contribution of up to 50% of total eligible project costs to a maximum of $200,000.

Funding for each project is determined by the NOHFC Board of Directors, and limited funding is available. Not all projects meeting the criteria will necessarily receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Ineligible projects, costs and activities include but are not limited to:

* Retail and consumer service businesses that primarily earn revenue by providing products and services directly to individuals
* Ongoing operating costs including maintenance
* In-kind contributions
* Restructuring or refinancing of existing business operations
* Accommodation & food service businesses and related business activities
* Businesses that are primarily involved in wholesale activities
* Business plans / strategic plans / feasibility studies etc.
* Assets acquired through operating leases
* Research and development
* Land purchase/lease
* Rolling stock (e.g. cars, trucks & boats and motors)
* Project management costs / consulting costs / administration costs
* Mineral exploration, mine development and milling operations
* Working capital
* Cost of inventory
* Cellular and internet service projects
* Capital projects or leasehold improvements to residential or personal properties
* Acquisitions and buy-outs of existing businesses
* Electricity generation projects

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Program Requirements

* The applicant is expected to secure balance of funding/financing necessary to implement the project.
* When launching a new business:
  + It will be expected to operate on a full-time basis and the entrepreneur/owner must work at the business on a full-time basis
  + Launch applicants are required to contribute (from their own resources) an amount equal to at least 15% of total eligible project costs towards the project.
* The applicant may be required to reimburse NOHFC if assets financed by NOHFC are sold after project completion.

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Source:

<https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/investment-grow-stream>

Investment – Grow Stream

Who is Eligible?

Businesses expanding existing operations in Northern Ontario.

Applications under the NOHFC’s Invest North - Grow stream will be evaluated in competitive rounds.

**Round 1:** Detailed business plan submission deadline April 30.

**Round 2:** Detailed business plan submission deadline July 31.

**Round 3:** Detailed business plan submission deadline October 31.

**Round 4:** Detailed business plan submission deadline January 31.

What Projects are Eligible?

Eligible projects, activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Capital construction
* Leasehold improvements
* New or used equipment including capital leases
* Land servicing costs
* Information & communications technology (ICT) investments
* Marketing for new products and business initiatives (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs, or $75,000, whichever is less)
* Training costs incurred with third parties (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs)

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that will be considered during evaluation of applications will include but not limited to:

* Job creation
* Level of investment from other sources to be secured by the applicant
* Strength of the applicant’s detailed business plan
* Does not unreasonably impact existing Northern Ontario businesses
* Net economic benefits for Northern Ontario

Other business activities that, in the opinion of the NOHFC Board of Directors, will result in an economic development advantage for Northern Ontario may be considered.

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Funding

* The NOHFC holds four application intake rounds during the year for the Grow a Business Stream.
* Funding can be provided through three options:
  + Funding in the form of a conditional contribution only of up to 20% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $400,000.
  + Funding in the form of a conditional contribution of up to 20% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $400,000, plus a term loan of up to 30% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $600,000.
  + Funding in the form of term loan only of up to 50% of total eligible costs to a maximum of $1,000,000.

Funding for each project is determined by the NOHFC Board of Directors, and limited funding is available. Not all projects meeting the criteria will necessarily receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Ineligible projects, costs and activities include but are not limited to:

* Retail and consumer service businesses that primarily earn revenue by providing products and services directly to individuals
* Ongoing operating costs including maintenance
* In-kind contributions
* Restructuring or refinancing of existing business operations
* Accommodation & food service businesses and related business activities
* Businesses that are primarily involved in wholesale activities
* Business plans / strategic plans / feasibility studies etc.
* Assets acquired through operating leases
* Research and development
* Land purchase/lease
* Rolling stock (e.g. cars, trucks & boats and motors)
* Project management costs / consulting costs / administration costs
* Mineral exploration, mine development and milling operations
* Working capital
* Cost of inventory
* Cellular and internet service projects
* Capital projects or leasehold improvements to residential or personal properties
* Acquisitions and buy-outs of existing businesses
* Electricity generation projects

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Program Requirements

* The applicant is expected to secure balance of funding/financing necessary to implement the project.
* For growing a business, it is expected that the project will result in full-time equivalent jobs creation or retention in Northern Ontario.

The applicant may be required to reimburse NOHFC if assets financed by NOHFC are sold after project completion.

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Source: <https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/investment-locate-stream>

Investment – Locate Stream

Who is Eligible?

Businesses locating new business operations to Northern Ontario.

What Projects are Eligible?

Eligible projects, activities and associated costs include, but are not limited to:

* Capital construction
* Leasehold improvements
* New or used equipment including capital leases
* Land servicing costs
* Information & communications technology (ICT) investments
* Marketing for new products and business initiatives (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs, or $75,000, whichever is less)
* Training costs incurred with third parties (limited to a maximum of 20% of all other eligible project costs)

Evaluation Criteria

Factors that will be considered during evaluation of applications will include but not limited to:

* Job creation
* Level of investment from other sources to be secured by the applicant
* Strength of the applicant’s detailed business plan
* Does not unreasonably impact existing Northern Ontario businesses
* Net economic benefits for Northern Ontario

Other business activities that, in the opinion of the NOHFC Board of Directors, will result in an economic development advantage for Northern Ontario may be considered.

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Funding

* Funding is in the form of a conditional contribution or a combination of a conditional contribution and term loan, on a case-by-case basis based on net economic benefit to Northern Ontario, to a maximum of $5 million.
* Combined Federal and Provincial government funding may not exceed 50% of eligible project costs.
* Applicants are required to have a pre-application consultation session with NOHFC staff prior to applying. Please contact NOHFC at 1-800-461-8329 to schedule your consultation.

Funding for each project is determined by the NOHFC Board of Directors, and limited funding is available. Not all projects meeting the criteria will necessarily receive funding.

What is Not Eligible?

Ineligible projects, costs and activities include but are not limited to:

* Retail and consumer service businesses that primarily earn revenue by providing products and services directly to individuals
* Ongoing operating costs including maintenance
* In-kind contributions
* Restructuring or refinancing of existing business operations
* Accommodation & food service businesses and related business activities
* Businesses that are primarily involved in wholesale activities
* Business plans / strategic plans / feasibility studies etc.
* Assets acquired through operating leases
* Research and development
* Land purchase/lease
* Rolling stock (e.g. cars, trucks & boats and motors)
* Project management costs / consulting costs / administration costs
* Mineral exploration, mine development and milling operations
* Working capital
* Cost of inventory
* Cellular and internet service projects
* Capital projects or leasehold improvements to residential or personal properties
* Acquisitions and buy-outs of existing businesses
* Electricity generation projects

The NOHFC Board of Directors may consider exceptions to these eligibility criteria for projects that address a priority economic need in Northern Ontario.

Program Requirements

* The applicant is expected to secure balance of funding/financing necessary to implement the project.

The applicant may be required to reimburse NOHFC if assets financed by NOHFC are sold after project completion.

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Source: <https://nohfc.ca/en/pages/programs/invest-north-program/grow-regional-tile-drainage>

Grow – Regional Tile Drainage

The Regional Tile Drainage Initiative is designed to support the agriculture sector in installing tile drainage to increase the amount and improve the quality of arable land in Northern Ontario resulting in more productive growing seasons and increased crop yields for producers.

Who is Eligible?

Not-for-profit, agricultural or community organizations that would, on behalf of an identified consortium of producers, develop and administer a project to install tile drainage within a specific region (i.e., a consortium service provider).

What is Eligible?

* Tile drainage contractor costs (materials and labour)
* Project management/administration fees of the service provider
* Land to be tiled can be in production or new acreage

Funding

Funding is in the form of a conditional contribution, and will support the following:

* 50 per cent of tile drainage contractor costs to a maximum of $500 per acre, and
* 100 per cent of the project management/administration fees of the service provider which is calculated as 10 per cent of the contractor costs to a maximum of $100 per acre.

The maximum investment from the NOHFC will not exceed the lesser of 50% or $1 million towards eligible project costs.

Program Requirements

* The individual producers must make cash contributions of at least 10 per cent of the contractor costs (materials and labour) specific to their individual acreage.
* The installation of tile drainage must be completed by a contractor licensed for tile drainage installation and that the contractor confirm that their design is in compliance with the Drainage Guide for Ontario.
* A copy of a map and identification of property showing tile installation must be provided with requests for payment to NOHFC.
* In-kind contributions (labour, farm machinery, etc.) are ineligible.
* The consortium service provider is required to maintain and present for final payment to the NOHFC a detailed GPS map of the areas tiled in a mutually agreeable format.
* Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) staff on viability of proposed projects.
* An OMAFRA technical review is a mandatory part of the due diligence process.