
OAFRI Commercialization Stream

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: If I have multiple technologies/products, can I apply and receive funding for more than one project? Furthermore, is it possible to apply for both Market Validation (Project Type A) and Product Development (Project Type B) grants, where activities for each component will run in parallel?

A: Yes, organizations can apply for multiple projects. Organizations can receive funding for up to two projects, each of which will be adjudicated on a competitive basis. A specific situation where it would make sense for an applicant to put forward a project proposal for both Project Types A and B is if they have two products/technologies/services to be commercialized. Strong justification would be required to conduct both a Market Validation and a Product Development Project for the same product/technology/service, simultaneously. Each Project should have a unique set of project activities and costs. Please note that your organization must have the capacity and resources to execute both projects at the same time (if they are approved).

Q: Is stacking of funds permitted under the OAFRI Commercialization stream?

A: As this is a 100% grant funding initiative, stacking of funds is not permitted on eligible activities and project costs. However, if the proposed project contains ineligible activities and costs (i.e., expenses that will not be reimbursed through this initiative), applicants can use additional funding to cover those costs. These applicants will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

This applies in the same way to the SR&ED program. Any costs covered by a government funding initiative should not be included as part of SR&ED expenses. However, costs not incurred through the OAFRI Commercialization stream may be eligible for SR&ED tax credits. Organizations should consult the SR&ED program for further eligibility information.

Q: How do you establish if the technology is "unique to Ontario"? What info do we need to provide to prove that?

A: To be eligible for this initiative, the product/technology/service to be commercialized must be unique to Ontario and should provide benefits to Ontario. If you have direct competitors in your product/technology/service's space, please address them in your application and

explain your unique approach to solving a similar problem. There are additional questions in the application workbook that help to describe your uniqueness and the benefits that will be achieved through your project.

Q: Do you need to have an industry partner or customer in place to buy the product/technology/service once it's fully developed/deployable?

A: There is no requirement in terms of number of customers secured ahead of project completion or minimum annual revenue, but the applicant should have a strong understanding of their target customer and their competitors. In terms of project type, the Market Validation stream may be more appropriate if you need to conduct market research to determine the size and quality of the market opportunity for a new and promising technology, product, or service with the goal of determining if there is any market potential before more research funds are spent on the technology. Letters of support from prospective end-users can strengthen your proposal as well.

Q: Will proof of funds be required for an applicant to be successful/accepted?

A: The completeness and appropriateness of the proposed budget, evidence of stakeholder support, and level of available funds from eligible sources (requested and confirmed) will be required where applicable. Evidence of available funds can include proof of available operating line of credit and/or Letter of Comfort from the Applicant's bank or accounting firm. Project funding is released on a claims-reimbursement basis wherein the Applicant must provide evidence of payment of eligible project costs prior to receiving reimbursement.

Q: How much total funding is available through this Initiative, and can you share the number of projects that will be funded?

A: This initiative is supported with up to \$2 million in funding from Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) and OMAFRA. Number of projects approved will depend on the size of the projects/budgets.

In terms of project budget size, there is no preference given to applicants who request smaller amounts of money vs larger. Applicants should apply for projects with project activities and costs that are realistic and logical for them at the time of submission.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

Q: If an applicant is currently receiving funding from OMAFRA through a different funding stream, they are still eligible to apply.

A: Yes, if an Applicant is currently receiving funding from OMAFRA through a different funding stream, they are still eligible to apply to the OAFRI Commercialization stream. Please note, Applicants who have received prior funding from OMAFRA but have outstanding required reports are not eligible for funding under this Initiative until OMAFRA has received and approved the outstanding reports. The same applies to organizations who have outstanding reports due to Bioenterprise.

Q: Can an Innovation Centre (IC) or a consultant/service provider apply to the OAFRI Commercialization stream with a project on behalf of one of their clients?

A: No – The organization receiving services (for the technology/product/service in question) from an IC should be the applicant (i.e., IC is the contractor, the applicant company would pay for their services and submit those expenses for reimbursement).

The IC would be able to apply to commercialize their own internal project (i.e., commercialize a new service offering).

Q: If my company is headquartered in a different province but all our project activities take place in Ontario and will benefit Ontario long-term, am I eligible?

A: If your organization is headquartered in Ontario, it would be eligible.

- **If your organization is headquartered in North America, you would be eligible if you have a significant presence/substantial operation in Ontario.**
- **A substantial operation in Ontario means:**
 - **A plant operation with a minimum of 5 employees.**
 - **A sales office in Ontario with a minimum of 5 employees.**
 - **An administrative office with less than 5 employees is not acceptable.**

Q: If the applicant is leasing a technology/service/product, would they be eligible to receive funding? What if the applicant held the exclusive distribution rights to a country or region for a particular novel technology – would they be eligible?

A: The project being proposed under the Commercialization Stream must be led by the Applicant who will own the final technology, product, or service to be commercialized.

For Product Development projects which use a third-party owned technology, product, or service to develop their unique product, the Applicant must have the legal right to use the third-party technology, product, or service by the Application Deadline (October 29th, 2021).

For Product Development projects which require a third-party owned technology, product, or service as an integral part of their unique product, the Applicant must have the legal right to

use the third-party technology, product, or service by the Application Deadline (October 29th, 2021).

For Market Validation Projects, the Applicant must have the legal right to use any third-party technology, product, or service that will be used to conduct the project by the Project Start Date (i.e., February 15th, 2022, or later).

Q: How strict is the TRL requirement for each project type? For example, if I have a technology that is 4-5, can I still apply for a Product Development Project?

A: The TRL indicated in the Call for Proposals is a guideline only. TRL is not an eligibility criterion for the Initiative rather it will be used as part of the assessment criteria, alongside other conditions as listed in the Call for Proposals.

The technology/product that is highlighted in your proposed project should meet the TRL guidelines as closely as possible to be competitive.

Q: Are food service organizations (i.e., restaurants, food preparation, etc.) organizations eligible for this program?

A: Unfortunately, food service organizations are not eligible for this program. However, food manufacturing organizations who are commercializing a product/service/technology are eligible to apply.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Q: The Call for proposals states that “the total project budget can include eligible and ineligible project costs. The approved eligible project costs are considered the total eligible project budget.” Can you clarify what this means?

A: To properly evaluate the value and impact of the project we would like to understand the full scope and budget of the proposed project. Therefore, applicants should include all project costs, both eligible and ineligible. Please note, only eligible activities will be funded through the program.

Q: What kinds of activities are eligible under each project type?

A: Please review slides 18/19 in the info session PowerPoint or pages 7-8 in the Call for Full Proposals document.

Q: My project has already begun, am I still able to apply for this Initiative?

A: Costs incurred before the approval of the project by OMAFRA or after the project completion date identified in the Contribution Agreement are not eligible. If you have additional eligible project activities as part of your project that are scheduled to occur during the Initiative's timelines (February 15th, 2022 – January 31st, 2023), please feel free to apply!

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Q: Who will be on the review committee and/or when will it take place?

A: The review committee will be populated by external experts representing the various eligible sectors included in this Initiative. Review committee dates are TBD but will take place between October 30th and December 31st, 2021.

Q: How will my application be evaluated?

A: Applications will be evaluated based on whether the organization and project meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the [Call for Full Proposals](#). Review Panels will evaluate the proposals according to the criteria found on Page 12.

Additionally, your Application Workbook and Budget Workbook will be evaluated based on the following breakdown:

- **Section A: Organization and Technology Description (25%).**
- **Section B: Project Overview and Projected Outcomes (55%).**
- **Sections C and D: Project Milestone Plan and Budget Workbook (20%).**