



SmartGrowth Program

Critical Project Financing for Food & Agri-Tech Businesses

2020-21 APPLICANT GUIDE II: FULL APPLICATION

- Date modified: 2020-04-02 -

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SmartGrowth Program

2020-21 Applicant Guide II: Full Application

1. Introduction

This Applicant Guide II provides instructions for preparing and submitting a Full Application to the SmartGrowth Program and provides guidance on the information to be included.

The SmartGrowth Program invites food and agri-businesses with innovative technologies that are at or beyond Technology Readiness Level 7 (TRL 7+), to lead impactful projects that will accelerate their business growth and profitability while strengthening the regional economy for Southern Ontario's innovative agri-technology industries (e.g., agri-tech, agri-food, agri-products, cleantech, and related sectors).

To be considered for SmartGrowth funding, applications must be complete and provide all the required information, as stated in this guide.

Applicants are advised to read the Program Guide in conjunction with this Applicant Guide II to obtain more information on the SmartGrowth Program, including program objectives, selection criteria and the application and assessment process. Applicants with additional questions are encouraged to visit Frequently Asked Questions and invited to contact Bioenterprise at info@bioenterprise.ca.

2. Invitation to Submit Full Proposals, Submission Process and Deadlines

Application for funding under the SmartGrowth Program is a two-phase process, consisting of an open call for Letters of Intent (LOIs) and an invitation-only Full Application. This guide focuses on Phase II: Full Application.

Invitation to submit full proposals will be issued directly to Eligible Applicants following successful review of the LOI in the form of an email, which includes the specific dates and timelines for each intake period. Applicants are encouraged to submit their Full Application in advance of this date to ensure that applications are successfully transmitted and received prior to the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted nor retained for consideration.

Full Applications must be submitted online through the Bioenterprise website (Wufoo link). **Email, mail, in-person and facsimile (fax) submissions will not be accepted.**

Applications must be received by the submission deadline posted on the Bioenterprise website.

Only proposals put forward by Applicants who have received an invitation to submit Full Applications will be accepted.

Upon submitting the Full Application, a confirmation email and a copy of the completed SmartGrowth Full Application Form will be provided. Applicants are encouraged to retain a copy of their completed form for ease of reference until funding decisions are made.

All Full Applications received on time will be reviewed and assessed. Funding awards under the SmartGrowth Program will be announced upon completion of the Full Application review process. Successful award recipients will enter into a Contribution Agreement with Bioenterprise.

3. Eligible Applicants

The SmartGrowth Program supports SMEs in activities related to scale-up and/or expansion of their businesses and innovative agri-technologies.

Eligible Applicants are:

- For-profit SMEs with **technologies at or beyond Technology Readiness Level 7 (TRL-7+) stage of development** only
- Businesses that operate in the agri-technology sector (as defined in the Program Guide)
- Businesses that have less than 500 employees and are generating a minimum of \$200,000 in sales revenues annually
- Incorporated in Canada and headquartered in southern Ontario (regions are outlined in the Program Guide)
- A member of **Canada's Food & Agri-Tech Engine** (details on how to become a member are included in the Program Guide)

The Applicant must declare other government sources of funds received within the 12-month period prior to the **application** process. Stacking of government funding programs are subject to review and approval during the LOI submission process.

4. Full Application Process and Requirements

4.1 Contents

Complete Full Applications must include the following elements, completed in full:

1. SmartGrowth Full Application Form (required)
2. Completed written proposal that contains the following sections (required):
 - a. Executive Summary
 - b. Detailed project plan outlining objectives, activities, milestones, and outcomes.
 - c. Summary of project partners and their involvement, as well as expected outcomes from their participation.
 - d. Assessment of the projected economic growth, industrial benefits, and business outcomes of the proposed project.
 - e. Implementation plan, including financial plan/budget, rationale for the funding request, activity launch, timelines, and milestones initializing activities and achieving results.
3. Appendices
 - a. Two (2) years of financial statements reviewed and reported on by an independent external accountant with a minimum “Review Engagement Report” (required)
 - b. Pro-forma financial statements for the current fiscal year (required)
 - c. Evidence of matching funding available or accessible by the Applicant (required), such as:
 - i. Proof of available operating line of credit
 - ii. Letter of Comfort from the Applicant’s bank or accounting firm
 - d. Critical Letters of Support as evidence of need and/or potential for commercial adoption of technology. (recommended)

Full Applications will expand on the initial information provided at the LOI phase but will solicit a greater level of detail.

Refer to the Bioenterprise website for a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

4.2 Templates

Templates include:

- An electronic version of the SmartGrowth Full Application Form.
- A Microsoft Word template is provided for the written proposal. Refer to section 5 below for information to be provided in the written proposal.

All templates are accessible in the Application Toolkit.

4.3 Formatting

- Document type: All applications, including the SmartGrowth Full Application Form, must be typed.
- Font: Must be easy to read (12-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- Figures, Graphs, Images and Pictures: Must be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
- Line Spacing: Single
- Margins: One (1) inch top, bottom, left and right.
- Page Limit for written proposal: Twenty-five (25) pages excluding the required appendices
- Paper Size: Letter (8 ½ inches by 11 inches)
- Application Language: Official Language (English or French) of choice. Applications will not be accepted in any other languages.

5. Written Proposal for the Full Application

Written proposals for the Full Application must be completed by providing information that corresponds to each of the sections listed below. The Full Application proposal template containing the required information must be submitted as an attachment to the SmartGrowth Full Application Form.

Section A) Executive Summary

The executive summary provides a description of the Applicant business and its technology innovation (including Technology Readiness Level), as well as long and short-term growth plans. It should also include details on the Applicant's proposed vision, including rationale for the project and an overview of key aspects of the proposal, including project focus, geographic location, core technologies to be advanced or scaled-up, sector(s) of activity and main project participants. An overview of the project benefits for the business and project partners, as well as its overall economic impact for southern Ontario and for Canada should also be included.

Section B) Detailed Project Plan

The detailed project plan provides a description of the proposed project's requirements, deliverables and outcomes. It should outline objectives, activities to be done, when and by whom, milestones and expected outcomes.

This plan will outline and describe in detail:

- a clear explanation of the scope and required resources in order to achieve desired outcomes

- how the proposed project will create a competitive advantage, increase competitiveness or improve productivity
- how the proposed project will have a positive impact on the region's economy

Section C) Projected Benefits

An assessment of the projected economic growth, industrial benefits, and business outcomes of the proposed project must be provided. At a minimum, this section should highlight opportunities for job creation, revenue generation and add-on investment.

Section D) Project Partners

Project partners must be identified including the nature of their involvement, highlighting the capabilities, technology expertise and sector strengths. Applicants must explain how their involvement/participation strengthens the proposal and impacts expected outcomes.

Section E) Implementation Plan

Applicants must provide a detailed implementation plan, including:

- a financial plan/budget
- rationale for the funding request
- activity launch and timelines
- milestones initializing activities and achieving results
- risk assessment and proposed mitigation strategies
- long-term, post-project completion goals for continued growth and prosperity

6. Appendices for the Full Application

Required appendices must be attached, along with the written proposal template, to the SmartGrowth Full Application Form so that they are submitted simultaneously.

Financial Statements

Applicants must provide two (2) years of financial statements reviewed and reported on by an independent external accountant with a minimum "Review Engagement Report". Applicants must also provide pro-forma financial statements for the current fiscal year.

Evidence of Matching Funds

Applicants must provide evidence of matching funding available or accessible, such as proof of available operating line of credit or a Letter of Comfort from the Applicant's bank or accounting firm.

Critical Letters of Support

Applicants are encouraged to provide Letters of Support from value chain stakeholders as evidence of need and/or potential for commercial adoption of technology. Although these are not a requirement, letters of support demonstrate risk reduction and potential for success.

7. Important Considerations

When naming attachments for the SmartGrowth Full Application Form, refrain from using the following characters: “ # % & * : < > ? / \ |. Otherwise, the form will not submit to Bioenterprise for review.

The SmartGrowth Full Application Form will only submit successfully once the questions are completed and the required attachments have been inserted.

Applicants should clearly mark as “proprietary” any information contained in their applications that they believe is a trade secret or proprietary business information. Proprietary information also includes details of the Applicant, their financial information provided and their project. This information is to be maintained confidential and will not be shared with other Applicants nor on public sites.

Proprietary information contained in applications will be used or disclosed only for the purposes of project evaluation and assessment. Funded projects under the SmartGrowth Program are subject to the federal [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#).