Ecosystem Development Partnerships Program

October 28, 2026

Continuous Intake

About Alberta Innovates

Innovation is the catalyst for sustainable jobs, economic and community strength, improved health and environmental benefits. Alberta Innovates leads and accelerates innovation from discovery to use across all sectors in all parts of the province. As Alberta's largest research and innovation agency, we are uniquely positioned to propel great ideas forward to improve the lives of Albertans today and for generations to come.

Alberta Innovates believes the research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem is stronger and more sustainable when it is broadly representative of the overall diversity of our community. We strive to ensure that all interested and qualified parties have an equitable opportunity to participate and contribute to the ecosystem and that our processes are inclusive.

The projects that our programs invest in are critical to how Alberta Innovates achieves a positive impact for Albertans in alignment with the Government of Alberta's R&I priorities, as expressed in our corporate Business Plan. (See the most recent Business Plan on our Publications page on our website.) Accordingly, it is essential for project outcomes to align with those of the program.

The Ecosystem Development Partnerships ("EDP") Program is managed across multiple business units at Alberta Innovates, including Entrepreneurial Investments, Post-secondary Investments and Emerging Technologies, Health Innovation and Platforms, and Agri-Food Innovation.

To learn more about each business unit, please visit each of their web pages: Emerging Tech & Talent; Health Innovation; Strategic Initiatives (1. Aerospace, Defence and Advanced Materials & Manufacturing (ADAMM); 2. Energy; 3. Environment; 4. Food and Agriculture); Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

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Program Overview

Alberta Innovates' core mission is to enable research and innovation across the Province of Alberta. The province's innovation ecosystem is greater than the sum of its parts and Alberta Innovates serves as a leader, convenor, connector and influencer to develop the capacity, platforms, and networks that connect innovators with the right supports at the right time. This is a big task for any one organization, but luckily, we are not alone. We see the progress and the promise of other entities in our ecosystem, and we want to strengthen your position to benefit the collective research and innovation ecosystem.

Organizations are invited to converge services and initiatives working together to create provincial strengths, new industries and enhance value throughout the entire system and its operations. Partner with us as we build a research and innovation economy in Alberta that serves as a competitive advantage for innovators and simultaneously transforms products and services for Albertans.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- Provide communities, services, and supports for inventors and entrepreneurs traversing the client journey
- Build capacity, platforms and/or networks in areas of strategic priority

This program aims to establish a vibrant, collaborative, and growing technology, entrepreneurial, and innovation ecosystem in Alberta. The key outcomes (i.e., measurable effects) of the program are:

- Growth in technology and knowledge-based small and medium-sized businesses in Alberta
- To increase the depth of Alberta's technology and innovation talent pool and global competitiveness
- Enhance the capacity of ecosystems to support the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Priority Areas

Alberta Innovates is targeting the following priority areas for support through the Program:

- Emerging Tech & Talent projects support initiatives that strengthen emerging technology research commercialization and talent pathways from Alberta Post-Secondaries to Alberta's tech SME sector. Projects leverage provincial strengths, grow new industries and enhance value across economic sectors. **Important: Applications to the Emerging Tech & Talent Area must address an Active Call for Proposals – these are posted on the EDP program webpage. Applications are not currently accepted through continuous intake.**
- Health Innovation projects focus on advancing Alberta health innovations from validation through commercialization, implementation, adoption, and scale addressing health system priorities.
    - We are seeking partners to:
        I. enable the validation, implementation, and adoption of health innovations that create value for Alberta;
        II. strengthen commercialization and scale pathways for Alberta health technology companies, including evidence generation, market access, procurement readiness, and connections to health-system and industry partners; and

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III. accelerate data-enabled health research, clinical innovation, and evidence generation to support better health-system decisions, adoption, and improved outcomes.

- Strategic Industries projects support collaborative initiatives that strengthen Alberta's innovation ecosystem by building connections, partnerships and capacity. Eligible activities may include networking, convening, workshops and other ecosystem-development activities. Please refer to the respective portfolio overviews for more information on priorities under each focus:
  - Aerospace, Defence and Advanced Materials & Manufacturing (ADAMM);
  - Energy;
  - Environment;
  - Food and Agriculture

NOTICE: Entrepreneurial Ecosystem applications are not currently accepted through continuous intake. Please refer to the Venture Development Grant for funding that supports Alberta-based technology ventures in overcoming barriers to commercialization and growth.

***Note**, Alberta-wide initiatives are preferred. Regional initiatives and gaps should be addressed with your local regional innovation network.*

Funding

The Program provides support for up to a three-year project term.

- The funding amount for individual projects is based on the outcomes and quality of the proposed project.
- Funding is for projects with measurable outcomes within a set timeframe and not for ongoing base operations of an organization.*
- Applicant contribution is not required for the Program. However, additional consideration will be given to applicants where it is demonstrated that the applicant contributes cash or in-kind funding or leverages funding from other sources
- Funding is paid directly to the applicant and disbursed upon receipt and approval of a milestone-based report.
- At Alberta Innovates' discretion and based on the project need, a payment upon execution of the investment agreement may be considered to accelerate the project.

Alberta Innovates only funds reasonable costs incurred after an Investment Agreement is signed by Alberta Innovates and the Applicant. Any costs incurred prior to the signing of the Investment Agreement, and costs greater than market prices, are ineligible. Costs must be incurred between arm's length- entities. Please refer to Schedule B in the Investment Agreement posted on the web page for detailed information, including eligible and ineligible expenses web page for detailed information, including eligible and ineligible expenses.

**Industry Associations are expected to demonstrate leverage contributions towards the proposed project. The program does not support projects and project funding for base operational activity and costs.*

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Eligibility

We designed this program to support services and initiatives that are strategically relevant and will support innovation in Alberta. This program is not intended to support the individual needs of the applicant, but rather support the applicant's ability to enable the success of innovators in Alberta and drive collaboration and opportunity in the ecosystem. This program does not support research projects, sponsorship or product development projects at companies or post-secondary institutions.

Applicant Eligibility

The Program is open to entities that support technology and knowledge-based businesses, inventors, and entrepreneurs. Eligible applicant entities include:

- Post-secondary Institutions
- Non-Profit/Not-for Profit Organizations
- Associations/Consortia/Societies
- Government Entities, provided that financial assistance will not be used to fund the corporation's capital or ongoing operational requirements.
- For-Profit Organizations, depending on the nature of the services provided*

**For-Profit Organizations will be considered based on the nature of the services provided; however, non-profit is preferred.*

In addition, to qualify for funding, the Applicant must:

- Exist as a corporate person, with up-to-date corporate filings
- Be authorized to undertake the proposed project, and execute a grant with Alberta Innovates on our standard terms
- Not otherwise be prohibited from receiving Alberta Innovates funding, for instance, due to a past bad debt or otherwise not be in good financial standing with Alberta Innovates or its subsidiaries, InnoTech Alberta and C-FER Technologies
- Applicants are not required to be based in Alberta but must demonstrate a clear value proposition for Alberta.

Please note: For Applicants that are **not** post-secondary institutions, Alberta Innovates may perform corporate, bankruptcy and litigation searches, and conduct other forms of due diligence on the Applicant company and its principals.

Project Eligibility

To qualify for funding, all Projects must:

- Demonstrate a clear alignment to one or more of the Program's priority areas
- Serve the needs of the ecosystem and demonstrate measurable impact for Alberta

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- Address a significant gap in the market
- Have an effective governance structure and management team in place to execute to the project
- Actively seek engagement with current ecosystem partners including the Regional Innovation Network and Alberta Innovates as appropriate.
- Include critical “go/no go” milestones
- Be completed within a maximum of 39 months
- Comply with other criteria that Alberta Innovates may develop from time to time

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How to Apply

The Program accepts applications on a continuous basis.



PHASE 1

Engagement and Expression of Interest

1) **Register** on the Alberta Innovates Application Portal ("Portal").
2) **Connect** with appropriate priority area contact prior to completing an Expression of Interest:
3) **Access, complete and submit** the Expression of Interest form within the *Funding Opportunities* tab on the Portal dashboard.
4) The **Expression of Interest Form** will be reviewed to determine if the proposed project will be invited to submit a Full Proposal.
   - Note, successful EOIs will have up to four (4) weeks* to submit a Full Proposal for funding consideration.

   **Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.*



PHASE 2

Full Proposal

This Phase is by invitation only. The review process is highly competitive and only the highest-quality projects will be considered for funding. Applicants may be requested to present their proposed project and/or provide additional information throughout the review.

If the review is positive, a funding recommendation will be made to senior management and may include adjustments to the funding request and/or funding conditions.



PHASE 3

Agreement

Successful applicants will execute an agreement with Alberta Innovates to proceed with the Project. Agreement will include details regarding:

- Reporting on progress to milestones and budget on an agreed timeline during the term of the Agreement; and
- Reporting on progress to outcomes on an agreed to timeline during and following the term of the Agreement.
- Project payments are based on milestone achievement and progress reporting.

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Evaluation Process

All applications are reviewed and evaluated to determine fit with the Program objectives and intended outcomes. Alberta Innovates staff and external expert reviewers are engaged to evaluate Applications.

Alberta Innovates evaluates submitted Applications to the Program based on merit and the ability of the opportunity to achieve the program outcomes.

Alberta Innovates retains the sole right to determine the evaluation process and assessment criteria and does not disclose the names of its reviewers to ensure their objectivity and impartiality. Internal and external parties involved in the evaluation are subject to confidentiality and conflict-of-interest policies set by Alberta Innovates.

All investment decisions are at the sole discretion of Alberta Innovates.

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Performance Measurement

Alberta Innovates invests in research and innovation activities on behalf of Albertans to help build a healthier, more sustainable and prosperous future for the province.

To maximize the impact of these investments, our funding is tied to achievement of results and outcomes. For this reason, Alberta Innovates funds on a milestone completion basis. This means the Applicant must submit a Progress or Final Report and demonstrate sufficient progress before Alberta Innovates advances the next milestone payment.

The Investment Agreement outlines the responsibilities the Applicant has in reporting Project outcomes to Alberta Innovates over the course of the Project and following completion of the Project. Outcomes of the Project may be monitored for up to five years after Project completion, so Alberta Innovates can evaluate the economic, social, health and/or environmental benefits to Alberta resulting from our investments.

Alberta Innovates has a common set of performance metrics it monitors, both at the individual Project level and for the aggregate Program. These metrics may evolve over time.

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Terms and Conditions

Once we have evaluated and approved an application for funding, Alberta Innovates will require the Applicant to sign our standard-form Investment Agreement. A copy of the Investment Agreement is available on the Alberta Innovates website for your reference.

The Investment Agreement sets out in detail the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the various Parties to ensure a successful Project. Alberta Innovates will not provide any funding until the Investment Agreement has been signed by all Parties.

Alberta Innovates will only fund Applicants who have satisfied all eligibility criteria. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee access to funding, and all funding decisions will be made by Alberta Innovates at its sole discretion.

Alberta Innovates will only correspond in writing and provide copies of the Application to the person named in the Application form as the one authorized to speak for the Applicant.

Should you have any questions about this guide or what is expected, please contact Alberta Innovates (see contact information below). Please note that Alberta Innovates may modify this guide from time to time in keeping with any changes to the program.

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Contact Information

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