

# Guidelines

## Western Canada Business Strategy Fund for Linear and Interactive Digital Media Production Companies

*This fund is administered by On Screen Manitoba and made possible through a contribution from Western Economic Diversification*

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**OBJECTIVE:** the Western Canada Business Strategy Fund is intended to provide linear and interactive digital media production companies, from emerging to established, with support to increase their capacity, accelerate their growth and position them for success in the international markets. Specifically, this program will enable participating companies to access the professional expertise in regard to strategic marketing initiatives projects that are **outside normal business activities and that focus on international opportunities.**

### **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:**

Eligible initiatives include strategic planning, advertising and promotional activities, and the creation of corporate marketing materials such as websites and demo reels for international markets. Funded projects must fall within an April 1-March 31 fiscal year and have the potential to result in a significant above average impact on the company. Companies must demonstrate readiness and capacity to engage in long-term business development.

### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:**

- Applicants must be a company with a successful track record in the linear and/or interactive digital media industry that is incorporated and operating in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, or Alberta. Applications will also be considered from British Columbia companies engaged in linear and/or interactive digital media content production for French language markets. Eligible initiatives must result in international sales and investments.
  - Applicants must be producer or production company members in good standing of a recognized industry association partner for at least three months prior to application.
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**OSM CONTRIBUTION:** The Business Strategy Fund contribution effectively covers 70% of the maximum total of the actual eligible costs up to the amount approved by the jury. Successful applicants pay a Program Fee representing 30% of the total of the actual eligible costs approved by the jury. OSM will then pay invoices totaling 100% of the maximum total of the actual eligible costs approved by the jury. Lifetime contributions may not exceed \$30,000 per company. Contribution funds are non-transferable.

**ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:** Through the Business Strategy Fund, the OSM payment can offset the following eligible expenses related to the execution of the funded activities:

- Consultant fees to develop or advise on the project (business consultant, publicist, strategist etc)
- Professional services required to execute the project (website creation, demo reel production, etc)

**INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:** The following expenses are considered ineligible under the Business Strategy Fund:

- Any services deemed as regular operational, including staff or contract staff salaries or wages, accounting services, legal services pertaining to non-strategic planning, GST, administrative expenses, insurance, and expenses such as courier or shipping charges.
- Corporate development activities targeting satellite offices and staff
- Rentals, purchases and any fees for “In-house” expenses or services
- Accommodation, transportation and per diem expenses
- Fees for advertising in guides, catalogues, and directories both printed and digital
- Registration and access fees for promotional activities such as receptions and trade show participation
- Duplication expenses for marketing materials and promotional items
- Purchase of marketing resource materials
- Any food and/or alcohol expenses

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**APPLICATION DEADLINE:** The deadline is **three weeks** prior to the start of the approved activity. Applications are accepted on the 1st and the 15th of every month. Note that all funded activity must take place between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017 .

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**COST:**

- A non-refundable processing fee of \$50.00 must be paid when submitting the application.
  - In addition, *successful* applicants will be invoiced for a Program Fee representing 30% of the total of the actual eligible costs approved by the jury plus a \$500 deposit to be refunded upon approval of the Final Report.
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**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PLAN:** Applicants must submit a Business Development Project Plan with the following information to demonstrate readiness and capacity to engage in long-term business development.

- Company Vision & Mission Statement:**
  - The company's profile
  - A brief description of the company's current activities and annual work capacity/output
- Company Objectives:**
  - A brief description of the company's objectives and current plans for growth
- Company Strategies:**
  - The company's business plan
  - OR**
  - A description of the plan by which the company's mission and objectives may be achieved using a **SWOT** Analysis (Building on **Strengths**, Resolving **Weaknesses**, Exploiting **Opportunities**, and Avoiding **Threats**)
- Business Challenge or Opportunity**
  - A description of the business challenge or opportunity the company hopes to address with this project
  - A brief explanation of how addressing this challenge fits with the company's current business plans
- Proposed Business Development Project**
  - A description of the Business Development Project that the company wishes to undertake
  - Identification of the project deliverable(s) being funded (ie: a strategic/marketing plan, a demo reel, etc.)
  - An action plan to ensure the deliverables address the business challenge (ie: execution of the marketing plan, distribution of the marketing materials etc.)
  - A detailed project schedule for the activities proposed
  - A project budget or quote
- Project Team**
  - Consultant or project team resume(s)
  - A clear statement of each team member's role in the project

*Note: The Business Development Project Plan must include the engagement of a minimum of one professional consultant or service provider, salaries and fees for applicant employees or contractors working as employees for the applicant are not eligible . Team members must be recognized professionals with demonstrated expertise in the area for which they will be engaged.*

- Project Goals:**
  - Identification of specific business goals that the company expects to achieve with the initiative (ie: increase website traffic by 150%, secure at least 1 international client/sale, etc).
  - A strategy to objectively measure the success of the initiative (ie: a method of tracking and demonstrating growth from where the company is now to where it will be at the end of the project)
  - A description of the impact that reaching these goals will have on the company and the industry.

*Note: Goals should be quantifiable, consistent, realistic, achievable and measurable by tangible indicators of success. Applicant must demonstrate to the jury's satisfaction that the funded business development activities have the potential to result in a significant above average impact on the company.*

**Any changes made to the project plan after submission must be approved by On Screen Manitoba. Failure to carry out the Project Plan initially approved in the Western Canada Business Strategy Fund may result in a denial of support under the program, and/or a cancellation of the agreement.**

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**SELECTION CRITERIA:** In reviewing applications, the Jury will apply the following considerations to the selection process, in order of priority:

1. The substance of the Business Development Project Plan and the business case made;
2. The potential impact, benefits or opportunities afforded by the Business Development Project for the growth and sustainability of the applicant's company; and,
3. The extent to which the company has demonstrated capacity to engage in long-term business development as well as readiness to implement the plan and benefit from the proposed initiatives.
4. Other considerations to be taken into account by the Jury:
  - The project's potential impact on the community;
  - The commitment of the company to the growth of the industry;
  - Other sources of funding accessed; ad,

In accordance with the objectives of the program funder, the Jury will look favorably upon projects that demonstrate a reasonable expectation of:

- Long-term job creation for the linear and interactive digital media industries;
  - The growth and development of Aboriginal or French language companies; and,
  - An increase in the number of companies owning their own intellectual property.
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**JURY COMPOSITION:** Each jury is composed of three to five autonomous jurors drawn from a pool of representatives of cultural industry organizations and senior professional linear and interactive digital media industry representatives with knowledge of business development (jury members are not eligible to apply to the fund). Efforts will be made to include representatives from more than one province. *All jury decisions are final.*

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#### **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

1. Fill in the electronic application forms available on our website. Handwritten applications will not be accepted.
2. Submit an *electronic* copy of the application and support materials to [Samuel@onscreenmanitoba.com](mailto:Samuel@onscreenmanitoba.com). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application package is detailed and complete. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
3. The application-processing fee: \$50.00 is to be paid by cash, cheque or credit card and mailed or dropped off at the On Screen Manitoba office (003-100 Arthur Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 1H3).
4. Upon receiving the application fee, applications are reviewed for completeness and eligibility before submission to the jury. OSM reserves the right to adjust the applicant's budget to ensure its accuracy according to the guidelines. The jury may choose to award less than the requested amount.

*NOTE: In no case will an applicant be eligible for OSM support until any outstanding amounts or reports in default have been completed in full. Applications from applicants in default will not be accepted. (DEFAULT POLICY: Applicants will be found in default if they do not disclose other government support received; do not satisfactorily meet their reporting requirements; do not carry out the project as proposed; or breach a material condition of a contribution agreement. Under On Screen Manitoba's default policy, OSM will impose a penalty or cancel its contribution, and prohibit an Applicant from accessing On Screen Manitoba access funds.)*

5. Applications will be sent to jury twice a month, on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month. The applicant will receive the jury's decision within 10 working days after the application has been sent to the jury.

6. *Successful* applications will be processed within ten (10) working days of the final decision by the jury. Upon signature of the Contribution Agreement, the recipient will:
- Pay the Program Fee (30% of eligible costs) plus a \$500 Deposit.
  - Instruct vendors to invoice OSM c/o the recipient. Recipient will then authorize and forward all invoices to OSM for payment.

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**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** Successful applicants are required to submit copies of any materials created as a result of the project as well as a Final Report using the Business Strategy Fund template within 3 weeks after the completion of the funded activity or by the end of the fiscal year (March 31 of the year in which the project was approved for funding), whichever comes first. The typewritten final report must demonstrate the completion of the business development activities and report on the measurable results as detailed in the contribution agreement.

In addition, participants agree to a follow-up evaluation, 6-12 months after the final report deadline to inform project staff of their corporate-business development progress. Complete and accurate reporting ensures that OSM can successfully maintain government support for this fund and other market access activities.

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**For more information on the Western Canada Business Strategy Fund or if you need assistance in preparing your application, please contact [samuel@onscreenmanitoba.com](mailto:samuel@onscreenmanitoba.com) or [Louie@newmediamanitoba.com](mailto:Louie@newmediamanitoba.com).**