

RAPID RESPONSE TO BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE GUIDELINES



Grand River
Agricultural Society

BACKGROUND

The Grand River Agricultural Society (GRAS) launched the Rapid Response to Business Development Initiative (RRBDI) to support their commitment to impact investing by creating long-term sustainability and fueling innovation in the Agriculture and Environmental sectors. The GRAS RRBDI will provide up to \$10,000 to support Ontario-based, agriculture, agri-food and agri-products businesses, as they work with established business connections to advance market opportunities and secure sales for their innovative products, processes or technologies.

RRBDI OBJECTIVES

- To enable businesses, with preference to those located in Wellington, Waterloo and Perth counties, to respond quickly to global market opportunities.
- To assist businesses that have developed new and innovative products, processes and technologies in the agri-food and agri-products sector to move quickly to secure sales and market opportunities.
- To provide support for eligible travel and associated costs that are required to work with clients where there is a high potential to “close the deal” with real and established business connections.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- Eligible applicants will be Ontario-based businesses in the agriculture, agri-food and agri-products sectors that are legal entities.
- All projects must address the RRBDI Objectives above.
- Prior contact and interaction between the business and another organization/company must have occurred. This prior interaction has required time, effort and investment on the part of the Ontario business and can be demonstrated.
- There is a high potential to close business agreements based on the prior interaction between the companies and there is a need to move quickly (otherwise the opportunity may be lost).
- The opportunity must be innovative (e.g. innovative products, process, technology, service or new markets) in Ontario’s agri-tech, agri-food and agri-products sector.
- There are no other more appropriate funding mechanisms.
- Preference will be toward applicants who have not previously received funding through GRAS.

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

- The products, processes and technologies have sufficient level of innovation.
- The products, processes and technologies should result in tangible benefits to the broader agriculture/agri-product industry.
- If there are regulatory barriers, the applicant has addressed the challenges.
- The immediate or longer-term potential of this opportunity is significant.
- The costs and activities appear appropriate to address the company’s sales requirement.
- GRAS funding will have an incremental impact on supporting sales goal.
- The applicant is making use of the existing network (trade commissioners, etc.).
- The applicant is sufficiently aware of the financing required to grow the company.

TIMELINES AND FUNDING

The application intake will open on April 11, 2023, and remain open until all funds are allocated. [Canlead Solutions](#) will administer the GRAS RRBDI. **Application materials are available by emailing info@canleadsolutions.ca.**

All applications will be screened for the eligibility of the applicant and application evaluation criteria. Applicants will be notified of the funding decision within three business days and successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement. All expenses must be incurred between April 11, 2023 and March 31, 2024. Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis, whereby the business incurs all expenses and submits the required claim form and documentation after they incur the expenses. Eligible expenses (see below) will be reimbursed at a 100% funding level.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES INCLUDE:

- The funding will cover expenses associated with provincial, national or international travel, accommodations and meals to build business.
- Transportation
 - Base Economy airfare (including seat selection and baggage check, not including preferred seat fees or upgrades), taxis, train travel, public transportation, car rental (including gas), personal vehicle mileage if used as primary mode of transportation (at a rate of \$0.57.5 per km.), mileage to/from airport (at a rate of \$0.57.5 per km.), airport shuttle service, travel insurance, parking, tolls, entry visas.
- Accommodations (including hotel parking)
- Hospitality Meals (business entertainment) with description (**excluding** alcohol)
- Shipping costs for business relevant items with description
- Fees of required consultants with description (translator, region guide, etc.)
- Intellectual property registration and licensing fees related to commercialization.
- Meal per diems are expensed at the current [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#).

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES INCLUDE:

- Tradeshow attendance/booth space
- Trade Mission registration fees
- Expenses incurred by non-business related individuals, or anyone not named in the application
- “Cost of Doing Business” items (photocopying, office supplies, gifts, etc.)
- Marketing/promotional materials
- In-room movies/laundry service
- Personal items (toiletries, cell phone, etc.)
- Salaries
- Any costs realized prior to the approval date of the project/trip (prepaid hotel/air is OK)

The Rapid Response to Business Development Initiative is administered by

