



CREATIVE SASKATCHEWAN

Propelling Creative Entrepreneurship

Business Improvement Grant Guidelines

The Business Improvement Grant supports projects that focus on professional development, increasing workforce capacity, and technology infrastructure updates which result in growth, market expansion, and improved profitability.

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Eligible Applicants

- Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria defined in the [General Guidelines](#).

Eligible Projects and Expenses

- Activities must be in support of project(s) that would meet the criteria for Creative Saskatchewan production grants. See Appendix A for a list of production grants and criteria.

Examples of relevant projects:

Professional Development

- Workshops, conferences, seminars or training that improve business skills of yourself and/or your staff. Examples of business skills include but are not limited to:
 - Accounting, finance, and budgeting
 - Business planning
 - Distribution
 - Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility training
 - Human resources
 - Marketing, publicity, and advertising
 - Pitching
 - Sales
 - Succession planning
- Business mentorships, work teams or internships that support industry capacity and job growth in Saskatchewan.

Workforce Capacity

- Hiring paid Saskatchewan staff or interns to pilot new initiatives, new projects, or new business expansion opportunities.

Technology Infrastructure and Emerging Technology

- Hardware and software that improves business or production efficiencies.

- Training of applicant and/or company staff that accompanies a technology infrastructure purchase.
- Technology infrastructure expenses are limited to Saskatchewan residents, regardless of company ownership structure. Hardware must be physically installed for use in Saskatchewan.
- Production expenses related to prototypes or product(s) not exceeding 50% of the total project budget.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses

- Expenses related to the production of creative content or products for sale.
 - Please note that Creative Saskatchewan has a dedicated production grant for this purpose.
- Residencies.
- Projects focused on technical skill development rather than business skill development (examples of ineligible technical skill development include music lessons, jewelry making courses, acting workshops, etc.)
- Technology infrastructure expenses for non-Saskatchewan residents or for operations outside of Saskatchewan.
- Travel expenses for non-Saskatchewan residents.
- Expenses during non-travel days and non-working days.
- Core business operations or capital expenditures such as rent, purchase of real estate, office furniture, renovations, or maintenance costs.
- Technology infrastructure (hardware or software) expenses that are eligible for other Creative Saskatchewan programs.
- Start-up costs. Start-up costs are the initial expenses incurred by an organization to establish and begin operations, including but not limited to, costs for equipment, legal fees, and initial marketing. See the [Business Resources](#) webpage for resources for business start-ups and incubators.
- Please see the [General Guidelines](#) for a complete list of ineligible expenses.

Financial Participation

- Funding is in the form of a grant.
- Approved projects will be funded up to 50% of the approved project budget to a maximum of \$15,000 per applicant per fiscal year (whichever is the lesser).

Assessment

- An initial review of applications is conducted by Creative Saskatchewan program staff to ensure the project and applicant meet eligibility to the program.
- Eligible applications will then be assessed by an external assessment process against the criteria for relevance, experience and capacity, and impact as defined on the Creative Saskatchewan website [here](#).

Submission Requirements and Deadlines

- Please refer to the program-specific page on the Creative Saskatchewan website [here](#) for application deadlines and instructions.
- Applications to the Business Improvement Grant will be accepted and supported based on the availability of funds.
- Incomplete applications are ineligible and will not be considered. Creative Saskatchewan provides templates for each grant application.
 - Applications that have not used and uploaded the mandatory budget template and travel itinerary template (travel itinerary template only required for projects that include travel expenses) will be considered incomplete and the application status will be set to Information Required.
 - Note: This status requires the application to be re-submitted by the applicant by the program deadline. Please keep in mind that applications must be re-submitted prior to the project start date.
- By submitting an application for this grant, applicants confirm they have read the [General Guidelines](#).
- If awarded a grant, applicants will be required to maintain eligibility in all criteria in the [General Guidelines](#), as well as criteria specific to this grant as described herein.

Required Acknowledgements

- Successful recipients of a Business Improvement Grant must include Creative Saskatchewan's logo on all promotional materials.
- Successful recipients must acknowledge Creative Saskatchewan's support on their professional social media platforms in a dedicated post, tag Creative Saskatchewan, and include messaging that actively acknowledges our participation.
- The Creative Saskatchewan logo and guidelines for acknowledgement can be found on the Creative Saskatchewan website [here](#).

Confidentiality of Information

- Please refer to the [General Guidelines](#) for details of Creative Saskatchewan's Confidentiality Policy.
- If you are not awarded a grant, all information in and about your application is held in confidence.
- If you are awarded a grant, your name, a description of the project and the amount of funding will be made publicly available.

Appendix A

Activities must be in support of project(s) that would meet the criteria for one of Creative Saskatchewan's production grants.

The intent of this Appendix is to provide a snapshot of the production grant's eligible and ineligible activities. It is the applicant's responsibility to read complete grant guidelines before applying.

Book Publishing Production - This grant assists eligible Saskatchewan book publishers in the production and marketing of titles intended for commercial release.

Eligible Projects:

- Applications must be in support of the production of book publication.

Ineligible Projects:

- Titles commissioned or paid for by an individual, group, political party or company where the publisher does not have complete and independent editorial control.
- Titles for which the author or illustrator does not receive compensation.
- Magazine, newspaper, industrial sales catalogues, calendars, maps or books of maps, loose-leaf updates, sticker books and activity books, games, agendas, sheet music and periodical publications.

Craft and Visual Arts Production Grant - This grant supports craft persons and visual artists in the production of creative products intended for the commercial marketplace. (This criterion does not apply to eligible commercial galleries).

Eligible Projects and Expenses:

- Applications must be in support of the production or refinement of commercially viable, creative products.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses:

- Personal hygiene items (examples include bath bombs, perfume, and soap).
- Candles where the applicant is not creating their own molds.

Digital Game Development Grant - This grant provides eligible Saskatchewan applicants with financial investment in support of the production of innovative and original digital games and eLearning properties.

Eligible Projects and Expenses:

- This program supports expenses related to creating digital games and eLearning properties that are market-ready and aimed for commercial exploitation.
- eLearning projects must include gamification (game mechanics that add interactivity, engagement, and motivate the user in learning).
- The core product must be intended to entertain or educate the user.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses:

- Projects developed exclusively for corporate use (where the applicant no longer owns the IP).
- Video content creation for streaming services, broadcast, or theatrical release.
- Games with real or simulated gambling.
- Projects primarily intended to sell products or services.
- Projects primarily intended for interpersonal communication.

Feature Film and Television Production Grant - This grant provides financial support to eligible applicants for feature film and television productions that have secured a relevant market trigger or distribution agreement of fair market value.

Eligible Projects:

- Applications must be in support of the production of feature films or television production.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses:

- Projects that have received funding through the Creative Saskatchewan Micro-Budget Production Grant or Web Series Grant programs.
- Genres of production NOT eligible for funding include:
 - News, current events or public affairs programming, or a program that includes weather or market reports.
 - Programming created for community cable providers (Access Communications, Shaw, SaskTel, etc.)
 - Talk shows.
 - Productions in respect of a game or contest (other than a production directed primarily at minors).
 - Sports event or activity.
 - Productions that solicit funds.
 - Pornography.
 - Advertising contracted by Saskatchewan Government Entities, or projects distributed only within Saskatchewan.
 - Advertising projects with budgets under \$100,000. Productions produced primarily for industrial, corporate, or institutional purposes.
 - Productions, other than documentary, that consists of more than 25% stock footage.
 - Video distribution platforms or aggregators.

[Live Performing Arts Production Grant](#) - This grant assists eligible Saskatchewan individuals and companies in the production of a series of performances intended for paying audiences.

Eligible Projects and Expenses:

- Applications must be in support of commercial productions.
- Production and streaming of live radio plays.
- Tours of live performances

Ineligible Projects and Expenses:

- Applications to host fringe festivals or theatre festivals.
- Community theatre productions.
- Expenses related to script development, writing and workshopping.

[Sound Recording Grant](#) - This grant supports the production of commercially viable sound recordings for commercial release.

Eligible Projects:

- Applications must be in support of the production of a commercial sound recording.

Ineligible Projects and Expenses:

- Projects that do not have commercial intent as their primary purpose and focus.
- Podcasts.