

Please ensure you have read the information package and understand the program requirements and eligibility before submitting an application.

Program Description:

A comprehensive entrepreneurship development program, designed for adults launching a new business or expanding an existing business. By the end of the program participants will have received information on a variety of business related topics, completed a business plan, earned the potential to pitch for up to \$5,000 in grant funding and participated in coaching and mentorship program. This program is made possible to participants free of charge and is funded through the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

Through this program, you will:

- Participate in a series of workshops, delivered by presenters who are experts in their field
- Receive one-on-one guidance in the development of your business plan
- Earn the potential to pitch for up to \$5,000 in grant funding
- Be connected and referred to business partners, funders and entrepreneurs
- Receive mentorship from experienced professionals
- Have the opportunity to network and participate in business events
- Be better positioned to obtain future financing with your complete business plan

Am I eligible for Starter Company Plus?

You are eligible for Starter Company Plus if you are:

- 18 Years of age or older
- An Ontario resident and Canadian citizen (or permanent resident)
- Not attending school full-time or returning to school
- Not employed full time
- Starting, expanding or buying a small business
- To qualify for a grant, you must be able to make a contribution to your business in cash or in kind, equivalent to at least 25% of the grant amount
- Prepared to complete the required business training components of the Starter Company Plus program as prescribed by The Business Centre Nipissing Parry Sound Inc.
- Not enrolled in other provincial employment or self-employment related programs that include or do not include financial assistance
- Not currently enrolled concurrently in any self-employment or entrepreneurship training/financing programs offered by government funded organizations
(Note that individuals enrolled in programs as stated above may participate in the training portion of the program only)

What type of business is eligible? Almost any type of business is eligible, as long as it:

- Is a sole proprietorship, partnership or a corporation where the applicant will be the majority shareholder
- Is an independent business venture
- Operates at arm's length of family business ventures in Ontario
- Operates full-time as defined in the business plan and maintains its own books and records
- Follows government rules and regulation for operating a business
- Expanding businesses must be within 5 years of the initial start-up date

Businesses not eligible for Starter Company Plus include:

- Part-time or seasonal businesses
- Franchises, commissioned sales and distributorships
- Business ventures that are continuations of existing commercial endeavors
- Not-for-profit or charitable enterprises
- Multi-level marketing ventures
- Single event such as musical ventures bands, DJs, or dance/party event organizations
- Businesses that will strictly pay per click and 1-900 businesses
- Businesses that have been operational for more than 5 years

Application Process:

- Review Starter Company Plus Information Package, to ensure your eligibility for the program
- Complete Starter Company Plus Program Application
- **All applications are to be submitted to Kennedy Horton via email or in-person.**
- Applicants may be required to meet with program coordinator prior to approval to discuss your business idea and eligibility in further detail.
- Applicants will be notified if they are accepted into the program.

Pitch/Funding Process:

- If you complete all the workshops and your business plan, prove commitment, viability and sustainability, you may have the opportunity to pitch for up to \$5,000 in grant funding for your business. This is a competitive process and in order to pitch you must meet the above mentioned requirements, contribute a minimum of 25% (cash or in kind) of the grant value towards your business, as well as be recommended by the Program Coordinator
- Business Plans are reviewed by the Pitch Committee approximately 1 week prior to the scheduled pitch date. If you are deemed eligible to pitch, you will pitch to an independent committee. If approved for funding by the committee, the grant will be given in two disbursements.

First disbursement (75%):

- Sign a contribution agreement, outlining each party's rights and responsibilities for grant disbursement
- Within 3 weeks of approval of the grant, provide the program coordinator with a copy of your Master Business License, Proof of Insurance, ID and Social Insurance Number
- Complete the mentorship or coaching application

Second disbursement (25%):

- Operate your business on a full-time basis
- Complete the mandatory mentorship or coaching program
- Submit receipts totalling at least 75% of the value of your grant (before Taxes) as outlined in your contribution agreement and approved cost categories
- Complete the anonymous program survey and final program report

Starter Company Plus is a competitive process and not all applicants will be accepted into the program or approved for funding

If you have any questions about the program, please contact:

Kennedy Horton
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