

## REVISED 2021 – 2022 SEED POLICY DIRECTIVE

Pursuant to section 5(2)(b)(ii) of the Industry, Tourism and Investment Establishment Policy and section 10 of the Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED) Policy, I hereby issue the following directives to the Department:

1. The Department shall evaluate applications under the SEED Policy in accordance with the following principles:
  - a. Funding should support forward-looking business proposals that are aimed at supporting employment, creating new business opportunities, or positioning businesses to recover and grow once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.
  - b. Priority will be given to those proposals that demonstrate the intent to keep as much of the funding and employment within the local community as possible.
  - c. Funding will only be considered for initiatives or events that comply with current direction and orders from the Chief Public Health Officer.
  - d. Priority should also be given to those applications that demonstrate innovative approaches, ideas or solutions to the current economic operating environment. Industries identified under the Sector Support Designation as per section 6(1)(b) of the Policy.
  - e. Business relief funding, intended to cover past losses for NWT businesses should not be considered for SEED funding. As there are numerous federal programs aimed at business relief funding, the intention is to focus on recovery initiatives.
  - f. Economic circumstances and opportunities in each region can be different and that exceptions to these principles will be considered by each region in consultation with the Industry, Tourism and Investment Director of Business Support and Trade.
  - g. A flexible approach should be taken towards the provision of SEED Strategic Initiative funding, with an allowable funding range of between \$50,000 and \$75,000.
  - h. Costs for businesses that need to pivot or supplement their operations in order to operate as restrictions are eased by the Chief Public Health Officer should be considered in every community of the NWT. Examples of such costs include but are not limited to:
    - i. Structural changes to your business that may be required to protect employees, such as Plexiglas shields;
    - ii. Capital improvements such as drive through windows or outdoor patios for restaurants;
    - iii. Investments related to shifting operations to online;
    - iv. The purchase of personal protection equipment for employees;

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- v. Implementing the use of technologies and training that may be required to protect employees and clientele, such as verifying electronic proof of vaccination.
  - vi. Cost, up to the lesser of \$7,500 or 90% of the actual cost for obtaining the financial and technical advice required to allow a business to make informed investment decisions, and better position themselves for sustainability and growth, as they pivot towards an economic recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
2. Notwithstanding sections 7(4)(c) and 7(5)(b) of the SEED Policy, Regional Superintendents and the Director of Business Support and Trade shall not include a determination of whether a proposal may cause Market Disruption, as defined in the Policy, when approving or declining a SEED application that advances the principles set out in Directive 1 (h).
  3. Notwithstanding section 8(1)(b)(ii)(a) of the SEED Policy, applications that advance the principles set out in Directive 1 are eligible for the Asset Acquisition program, as set out in section 8(1)(b)(ii) of the Policy, without regard for the community in which the applicant is located.
  4. Notwithstanding the principle set out in Directive 1 (e); assistance may be provided, up to \$25,000 of actual costs and/or losses incurred, to those businesses deemed non-essential, service establishments impacted by gathering limitations imposed through a public health measure related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This assistance is available to any similarly affected business dating to August 1, 2021. Up to \$5,000 may be accessed specifically to cover losses incurred through loss of anticipated revenues (appointments, bookings, and the like). This assistance is available to any similarly affected business dating to January 7, 2022. Airlines, air transportation companies, and businesses otherwise exempted from the public health measure are not eligible for this assistance.
  5. If an application advances the principles set out in Directive 1, the Department shall give it full consideration without regard to whether the applicant has already incurred costs associated with the project but the applicant may only receive funding for costs incurred since April 1, 2021.

These directives prevail over the SEED Policy and any other policy, procedure, or practice of the Department to the extent of the inconsistency.

These directives take effect immediately upon execution and remain in effect until March 31, 2022.