



## COVID-19 Questions & Answers - 2020-2021 SEED POLICY ECONOMIC RECOVERY RESPONSE GUIDELINES

### 1. Are entrepreneurs able to apply for all of the SEED Policy sub-programs as reflected in the existing policy ([Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development](#))?

Yes. However, as reflected in the new SEED Policy Guidelines, priority will be given to supporting business development opportunities that are forward-looking, support local employment and have a plan that reflects our new economic realities.

Entrepreneurs are encouraged to contact their local ITI regional offices to discuss their concepts and how they are aligned with the priorities reflected in the new Guidelines.

Those offices can be contacted through their regional Superintendents:

DehCho Region:	<a href="mailto:Jennifer_Thistle@gov.nt.ca">Jennifer_Thistle@gov.nt.ca</a>
Sahtu Region:	<a href="mailto:Marty-Ann_Bayha@gov.nt.ca">Marty-Ann_Bayha@gov.nt.ca</a>
South Slave Region:	<a href="mailto:Tom_Colosimo@gov.nt.ca">Tom_Colosimo@gov.nt.ca</a>
North Slave Region:	<a href="mailto:ITInorthslaveloans@gov.nt.ca">ITInorthslaveloans@gov.nt.ca</a>
Beaufort Delta:	<a href="mailto:Don_Craik@gov.nt.ca">Don_Craik@gov.nt.ca</a>

### 2. Do these new principle-based guidelines supersede existing SEED Policy and guidelines?

No. The new Guidelines are intended to be applied in conjunction with the existing SEED Policy. These guidelines establish some clear priorities, but also reflect that there is some flexibility.

The intent of these guidelines is to give priority to those applications that are forward-looking, where local employment is emphasized, and where the bulk of the funds are spent locally. These priorities have always been important in the SEED Policy, but are now being emphasized, given the current economic circumstances.

### 3. How will the applications be evaluated?

As they always have, ITI's regional offices will evaluate proposals on their individual merits and in accordance to the criteria reflected in the SEED Policy for the various SEED sub-programs. As noted, the new Guidelines will act to prioritize funding decisions according to the principles reflected in the guidelines.



**4. Are regional ITI offices provided with some flexibility in responding to unique circumstances and pressures in various NWT regions?**

Yes. One of the core strengths of the existing SEED Policy is that it allows for flexibility and for regional offices to respond to local economic circumstances as well as unique opportunities within their region. Taking a principle-based approach to the launch of the 2020-2021 SEED program was done in order to maintain this degree of flexibility.

For some existing SEED sub-programs, there will be more flexibility than for others. For example, there will be little flexibility for Community Event applications due to the need for social-distancing, in compliance with the direction from the Chief Public Health Officer.

**5. Given the current economic circumstances, has the GNWT increased its SEED budget?**

The 2020-2021 SEED Policy budget approved by Members of the Legislative Assembly in the 2020-2021 Interim Appropriation totals \$3.866 million. ITI has increased this budget to \$4 million through a reallocation of internal resources.

As the 2020-2021 SEED Policy programming rolls out, ITI will continue to consider additional options and funding sources.

**6. Why is ITI just now rolling out the 2020-21 SEED program?**

It was important that the GNWT not roll out a program only to have the federal government offer a very similar program.

(For example, when the GNWT announced low-interest loans to be available through the BDIC in March 2020, the federal government announced no-interest loans about a week later. This was beneficial for NWT businesses but highlighted the reality that given scarcity of financial resources, ideally, GNWT programming would complement, not duplicate, federal programs.)

Instead, ITI focussed on taking complementary role to the business relief programming offered by the federal government.

Once the establishment of CanNor's Northern Business Relief Fund was announced on April 20, 2020, it cleared the way for the SEED program to be more forward-looking – and its funding capacity to be focussed on economic recovery for NWT businesses.