

Editor's Welcome

Don't Fall Behind Your Competition!



Written by: Nicolas DesRoches

Nicolas is a Technical Writer and acting Editor-in-Chief at NorthBridge Consultants. Nicolas' years of writing experience with a wide range of audiences ensures he clearly expresses your project goals.



As the leaves change colour and the temperature begins to fall, thoughts begin to turn to the upcoming new year and its unlimited potential. But what about your projects and goals right now? The year may be wrapping up, but that doesn't mean that it isn't the perfect time to investigate your options to take your projects from whiteboard goals to ribbon-cutting successes. Starting your planning now can mean the difference between the 2015 you dream of and the 2015 you might have come to expect.

We here at NorthBridge Consultants are dedicated to keeping track of all new government funding programs and changes, and we strive to provide this ever-evolving information to all our clients. In this edition of our newsletter, we have detailed some new and recently changed funding programs and discussed some overlooked avenues of funding potential. We hope you enjoy this edition, and from all of us here at NorthBridge, have a safe and happy holiday season!

Canada-Ontario Job Grant: Investing in Training for Employees

The federal and provincial governments have come together to develop a new program to support training initiatives and investment in the Ontario workforce called the Canada-Ontario Job Grant. This new fund will support employers who are looking to invest in short-term training courses for their existing employees as well as new hires. This program will fund up to \$10,000 per employee for training costs. Eligible training costs include: examination fees; mandatory student fees; textbooks, software, and other required materials; and tuition or training provider fees. Training must be administered by a 3rd party provider such as:

- Colleges of applied arts and technology
- Publicly assisted universities
- School boards
- Private trainers operating in compliance with the Private Career Colleges Act
- Union-based training centres
- Product vendors

To be eligible for funding, employers must meet these criteria:

- Contribute a minimum cash investment towards training costs
- Employ the individual selected for training
- Choose training that is delivered in Ontario and is related to a job that is also in Ontario
- Comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Employment Standards Act
- Maintain appropriate Workplace Safety and Insurance Board coverage
- Have third-party general liability insurance
- Comply with all applicable federal and provincial human rights legislation and regulations



Written by: Samantha Hingley

Samantha is a Client Manager at NorthBridge Consultants. Samantha has extensive customer service experience and strives to keep her clients up to date on all new funding programs.

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You Deserve More

Trade Show Funding: Export Market Access

Changes in October 2014

Written by: Matthew Wilson

Last month, the Government of Ontario and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) enacted a series of changes to the Export Market Access (EMA) program, which provides funding for small- to medium-sized enterprises in Ontario looking to develop export sales in foreign markets. Companies that have taken advantage of this program in the past or are looking to do so in the future should review these changes to see which, if any, impact their business.

- Previously, the EMA grant allowed applicants to apply for two trade shows per application, with a maximum possible claim of \$30,000 (up to 50%) of eligible costs. While the maximum possible claim remains \$30,000, applicants may now apply for three trade shows per application.
- Applicants can now have two applications ongoing at one time.
- Lifetime eligible expenses have been increased to \$150,000 per applicant from \$100,000.
- Airfare costs can now be expensed prior to project approval.
- The OCC will cover up to \$5,000 for short-term (less than one year) in-market office rental.
- In addition to all previous eligibility requirements, applicants must have capacity to meet foreign market demand and have market-ready products to be sold in export markets.
- There is a renewed focus on applicants having \$2,000,000 commercial liability insurance and being able to submit financial statements (Notice to Reader, Review Engagement, or Full Audited) for the previous two fiscal years.
- Previous payments were made 50% on acceptance and 50% on full reconciliation. This has been changed to 40% up front and 60% after reconciliation.

NorthBridge Consultants has experience with the EMA process and will provide the necessary guidance for your application. If you have any questions regarding these changes or any other aspect of the EMA program, contact our team of business analysts and technical writers today.



Kidzpace Interactive: Entertainment for Kids of All Ages

 Kidzspace Interactive Inc. is the world's premier supplier of freeplay, electronic, interactive entertainment. Incorporating popular gaming systems, Kidzspace creates unique touch-screen systems for cabinet designs and interactive elements that include bikes, skateboards, and snowboards. Designed completely in house, Kidzspace products are built to withstand high usage, and this has helped them position their products in high-volume fast foods chains in Canada and the United States. Kidzspace's products are not restricted to the juvenile market: Kidzspace also designs and manufactures products for seniors for entertainment and rehabilitation. Kidzspace makes any environment where kids of all ages shop, work, play, or wait more relaxed and enjoyable.



NorthBridge Consultants has worked closely with Kidzspace to secure SR&ED tax credits and trade show funding, and we look forward to continuing to work with them to ensure they receive their fair share of alternative government funding.

Spooky SR&ED Projects

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1. Frankenstein's Monster from *Frankenstein*
 2. Proton Packs from *Ghostbusters*
 3. Audrey II from *The Little Shop of Horrors*
 4. Teleportation Machine from *The Fly*
 5. Sally from *The Nightmare Before Christmas*
 6. Rocky from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*
 7. Soylent Green from *Soylent Green*
 8. The Invisible Man from *The Invisible Man*
 9. The T-Virus from *Resident Evil*
 10. Dr. Jekyll's Potion from *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Happy Halloween from all of us here at NorthBridge!

Functional Ingredient Removal: SR&ED Opportunities in the Food Industry



In July, Health Canada proposed changes to nutritional labeling that reflect a growing concern among consumers about sugar. The government's proposed changes include making a distinction between sugars naturally present in food and added sugars, such as fructose, and including a % Daily Value listing for Added Sugar, with an upper limit of 100g. Before these changes are enacted, companies in the food industry might consider changing product recipes in order to lower added sugar content.

Removing a functional ingredient, such as sugar, is a familiar process to food industry professionals. Over the past few years, many companies have looked to remove ingredients such as lactose and sodium from their products in order to meet consumer demands for healthier or allergen-free food, improved taste, or a simpler ingredient list. Unfortunately, removing an ingredient from a food product or altering its chemical composition often results in unintended changes that can include reduced moisture content, difficulties binding ingredients together, and an unappealing texture. The quality assurance activities undertaken to address these issues can lead to SR&ED-eligible work in the food industry.

Unanticipated changes in product quality as a result of ingredient removal may require a company to perform additional testing or change existing processes, which can generate additional expenses. For example, an attempt to remove gluten, a binding agent, from a product might mean introducing an alternative binding agent, but introducing that binding agent could cause issues with moisture retention and texture that then require further recipe alterations and testing. These tests would, in turn, generate additional labour expenses, testing fees, and materials costs. Because these additional tests are non-routine procedures, these costs can be offset through SR&ED tax credits.

Functional ingredient removal is just one example of work in the food industry that can qualify for the SR&ED program. Recognizing the SR&ED potential of these activities is key to enabling further product and process development.

Written by: Matthew Wilson

Matthew is a Technical Writer at NorthBridge Consultants. Matthew has experience writing in a multitude of diverse fields and has a strong understanding of technical processes.



NorthBridge Welcomes New West Coast Manager: Jaap Siekman

Jaap Siekman recently joined the NorthBridge team as our Regional Manager for Western Canada. Jaap resides in Surrey, BC, and has taken up the task of expanding our presence in BC and Alberta. His first efforts involve getting to know our existing customers and building relationships with new customers and NorthBridge Referral Partners (NRPs). Key to the strategy, and the part Jaap is most excited about, is continuing to grow our presence on the West Coast and connecting clients with the funding they need and deserve.

Jaap has a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Delft, The Netherlands. He is a registered Professional Engineer in BC and a Project Management Professional. Jaap brings 25 years of Engineering & Management experience, in a wide variety of industries ranging from electrical equipment for submarines and trains in The Netherlands to Ontario's steel industry to state-of-the-art daylighting technology in BC.

Two teenage kids and his beloved wife keep him busy enough, but beside that, Jaap stays fit by going to the gym, swimming, running, and fencing (foil being his weapon of choice); he plays Djembe (an African hand drum) with the Delta Drummers; and he is the Treasurer for his daughter's water polo club. He can be reached at jaap@northbridgeconsultants.com.



Southwestern Ontario Development Fund:

Supporting Expansion and Development

Written by: Samantha Hingley

Southwestern Ontario companies that are looking to undertake an expansion and development project should consider the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund (SWODF). This fund supports new investment in the local region, the creation of new jobs, and the promotion of innovation and collaboration. The SWODF awards funding to projects that involve four main aspects: job creation, innovation, development of new products or services, and entering new markets. SWODF will fund up to 15% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$1.5 million.

The eligible sectors are tourism, cultural industries, advanced manufacturing, life sciences, processing (primary and secondary), and information and communication technology. The program eligibility criteria stipulates that the company has at least 10 employees, is looking to create at least 10 new jobs, the total project cost is at least \$500,000, and the project extends over a two to four year period. If the company is investing over \$10 million and creating more than 50 new jobs, a loan of up to \$5 million may be available.

NorthBridge Consultants has experience with the SWODF application process and will provide the necessary guidance for your application. Our team of business analysts and technical writers can assist with the completion of application information, the preparation of financial information, the creation of business plans, and the required reporting after application submission.



Investing in Business Growth and Prosperity: Financing Your Expansion Plans

Written by: Nicolas DesRoches



If you're looking to grow your Southern Ontario business, finance your growth and development, and take your company to the next level, federal government financing through the Investing in Business Growth and Prosperity (IBGP) program should be an option you strongly consider. This financing program provides loans of up to \$20 million (25% of project eligible costs) for established small- to medium-sized companies who have the opportunity to be strong global players in order to diversify their market, expand facilities, or increase business capacity.

The focus of this program is to promote job creation and to accelerate Southern Ontario's growth. Administered by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, IBGP's repayable loan funding could be that final bridge financing that makes your project go from goal to reality. NorthBridge Consultants has experience with IBGP applications and can help with building a business case, presenting company goals, establishing project viability, communicating with the government, and ensuring that your company is supported every step of the way.

Contact:

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About Us:

NorthBridge Consultants has been assisting companies access government funding for over 20 years. As one of the largest independent government funding consulting firms in Canada, our objective is to maximize the government funding potential for our clients.