

Overview

The **SIDIT Grant Program** provides non-repayable funding for municipalities, regional districts, First Nations, registered non-profit societies, institutions, and industry associations to support regionally strategic investments in economic development projects that will have long-lasting and measurable regional benefits for the Southern Interior. Please note that proposals from private interests do not qualify for grants. Private interests include all forms of business ownership such as corporations, partnerships, joint ventures and sole proprietorships.

Strategic Priorities

The following were identified as the strategic priorities that will be considered by the SIDIT Board of Directors in their review of grant project proposals.

- Contribution towards economic sustainability of small communities
- Regional impact
- Realistic measurement criteria established to assess project outputs
- Job creation, job preservation, or enhancement
- Economic diversification
- Leveraging other funds
- Filling funding gaps
- Avoiding overlap and duplication
- Economic merit
- Research and Development leading to commercialization
- Strategic initiatives
- Ensuring geographic sensitivity in the disbursement of SIDIT funds

Fund Disbursement:

Annual Grant Funding will be determined based on SIDIT's investment returns and operational performance. Grant maximums are \$50,000 per applicant.

Grant Eligibility

The following areas are mandated targets for SIDIT grant funding support:

- Agriculture
- Economic development
- Energy
- Forestry
- Mining
- Olympic opportunities
- Pine beetle recovery
- Small business
- Tourism
- Transportation

With Emphasis on:

- The development of strategic alliances
- Research and development initiatives that lead to increased commercial activity
- Arts and culture initiatives that demonstrate measurable economic impact
- Initiatives that contribute to small community sustainability
- Initiatives that have a regional impact
- Initiatives that result in sustainable job creation, job preservation, or enhancement
- Initiatives that contribute to the diversification of the economy
- Public/private sector partnerships (P3s)

Ineligible Projects

The Trust has identified the following as being ineligible for financial support from the Trust:

- Stand alone feasibility and marketing studies
- Health studies
- Education facilities and infrastructure
- Religious institutions
- Activities which do not comply with local, provincial or federal legislation
- Major sponsorships of events in which SIDIT is not directly involved
- Political donations
- Controversial initiatives with moral, social, religious or public safety concerns
- Projects that primarily fund social initiatives (community beautification projects, downtown revitalization projects, signs, trails, pedestrian bridges, etc)
- Projects that benefit a narrow geographic area or have a limited impact.
- Projects where the primary economic impact is the construction of the project.
- Projects that fund community infrastructure that would normally be funded by government.

SIDIT funds will not be used for infrastructure projects that would normally be funded by government, for example: roads, water and sewer projects, recreational facilities, health or education facilities and social housing.

Exception to Policy

Communities with a population of under 25,000

SIDIT may consider exception to policy for projects that are ineligible from communities with a population of under 25,000. Such requests will be limited to projects that demonstrate measurable economic impact.

Multi-Year Grant Funding

SIDIT may consider requests for multi-year funding for initiatives or activities that may take longer than one year to fully develop, or to achieve or document results that are meaningful, or to build sustainability. Applications of this nature should not exceed a three-year time frame. Funding will be limited to 3 outstanding multi-year applications per fiscal period.

Multiple Requests for Grant Funding

SIDIT may consider multiple requests for distinct projects and initiatives from a single applicant organization within one year, or for more than one project or initiative being funded, **by exception only**. Exceptions may be made for organizations that represent a coalition, partnership or collaborative initiative. Such requests must be compelling, strategic in nature and in line with SIDIT priorities.

Capital Grants

SIDIT does not generally fund capital projects. **Exception to policy** may be made and the Board may consider small-scale capital funding requests from smaller organizations located in rural and remote communities. Such requests will be limited to equipment or improvements that enhance service delivery or community access for projects that demonstrate measurable economic impact.

The intent of this policy is to ensure equitable and fair distribution of funds to communities in the Southern Interior.

Application Intakes

- Funding applications are continuously accepted to this program.
- Evidence of support by the Regional Advisory Committee(s) and a decision by the Board of Directors are required for grant funding.

Funding Terms

- SIDIT provides grant funding under this program up to a maximum of \$50,000 or a maximum of 25% of a total project budget (see Key Deliverables - Leveraging Preference below).
- Applicants must provide confirmation of all other sources of project funding prior to SIDIT entering into a funding agreement. Applications that have confirmed other funding at the time of review by the Board of Directors are preferred. In the case of other unconfirmed funding sources at the time of application to SIDIT, applicants are required to provide the date a decision is expected for each unconfirmed funding source.

Qualifying for Funding

While a project or organization may be eligible for funding, projects must propose to deliver specific economic outcomes to qualify for funding approval.

Key Deliverables

The following key deliverables are reported on by successful applicants for a five (5) year period to demonstrate the direct economic benefits of the project.

➤ **New Employment (Job Creation)**

Projects funded under this program must propose direct full-time equivalent job creation. Applications are assessed for the total full-time equivalency of jobs created for the following classifications:

- ✓ Direct permanent full-time jobs.
- ✓ Direct permanent part-time jobs.
- ✓ Direct seasonal jobs.
- ✓ Direct temporary jobs (construction or consulting).

➤ **Increased Revenue Generation**

- Project funded under this program must propose a direct increase in revenue generation. Applications are assessed for projected revenue generation over a five (5) year period.
- Preference for projects that generate revenues from outside the Southern Interior region (for instance, foreign exports, international trade, trade with other provinces, trade with other regions in British Columbia, events and amenities that drive tourism from other regions).
- A business plan should be attached to funding applications that propose significant revenue increases.

➤ **Leveraging**

- Preference for projects that partner SIDIT funds with multiple other funding sources.
- Preference for projects where the applicant organization makes a significant financial investment in the project.
- Preference for projects that secure significant financial investment from other funding sources relative to the amount requested from SIDIT.

➤ **Sustainability**

Projects funded under this program are assessed for their positive impacts on community and environmental sustainability. The following sustainability factors are assessed for each funding application:

- The project can demonstrate revenue generation to sustainably operate for a minimum of five years.
 - Annually to provide to SIDIT Fiscal Year End Accountant Prepared Financial Statements
- The project contributes to environmental sustainability.
- The project will result in a direct increase in taxable property values.

➤ **Strategic Factors**

Projects funded under this program are assessed for their alignment with a number of strategic factors:

- The project involves a new product, technology, or patent.
- Implementation of the project will generate revenues to provide for sustainability.
- The project involves a P3 partnership.
- The project involves multiple groups and community collaboration.
- The project includes direct First Nations participation.
- There are direct economic benefits to both local governments and First Nations as a result of the project.
- The project provides broad regional economic impact(s).
- New products/services will be marketed outside the SIDIT region.
- New products/services will be provided within the local/regional economy.

Application Assessment

SIDIT staff undertake comprehensive due diligence of each funding application received, which may include contacting relevant agencies and organizations as part of the review process.

All projects are assessed and scored on the Key Deliverables, Leveraging, Sustainability, and Strategic Factors identified in the funding application submitted to SIDIT.

Assessment includes, but is not limited to, review of the following:

- A business plan that includes a profitability projection and a project budget.
- A strategic plan that clearly defines the applicant's strategy, goals and performance targets.
- Project milestones and key deliverables.
- Supporting market research for the project.
- Quote(s) supporting the project budget.
- Previous years' financial statements.
- Constatng documents.
- Written confirmation of funding from all other sources.
- Management capacity and ability.
- Real benefits as measured by increased tax base, new job creation, incremental revenue generation and economic diversification in addition to non-financial benefits.

Guiding Principals

The following principles will guide the Board in making its evaluation and should be considered by prospective proponents in determining the eligibility of their projects for SIDIT funding. These principles may also be supplemented by other considerations by the Board in making its funding decisions:

- Consistent with the Act, Vision and Mission of the Trust.
- Open and transparent processes, decisions and reporting.
- High standards of financial management and accountability.
- Judicious management of public resources.
- Sound strategic and operational planning.
- Leveraged investment with maximum Trust participation rate of 50% (see Key Deliverables leverage preferences).
- Investments made in the context of a long-term strategy.
- Grants are not available to projects considered to be commercial interests.
- Preference for initiatives with regional benefits.
- Bias for investments offering long-term, sustainable benefits.
- Diligent professional evaluation of proposals' feasibility and risk.
- Real benefits as measured by increased tax base, new job creation, incremental revenue generation and economic diversification in addition to non-financial benefits.
- Evaluation and reporting of success against clear performance measures.

Application Process

1. Applicant may contact SIDIT to discuss the proposed project scope and potential alignment with the Grant Funding program. Contact information is available online at the Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust website, www.sidit-bc.ca.
2. The applicant completes a funding application and submits the application to SIDIT. Application forms are available online at the Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust website, www.sidit-bc.ca. All applications should be completed electronically in PDF format and emailed to the Trust office at admin@sidit-bc.ca. All supporting information must be submitted electronically. Signed Authorization should be emailed to admin@sidit-bc.ca.
3. SIDIT staff conduct preliminary due diligence of the application, and forward the funding request to the Regional Advisory Committee(s) for review.
4. Once the funding application has been reviewed by the Regional Advisory Committee(s), SIDIT staff finalize due diligence, incorporate the Regional Advisory Committee(s) comments, and present the funding request to the Board of Directors for their vote.
5. Following the Board vote, SIDIT staff will notify the applicant of the Board's funding decision by email.
6. A funding agreement (enabling SIDIT to disburse funding for the project) will be provided to the applicant for signature once the applicant has provided documentation confirming of all other funding sources in writing to SIDIT.
7. Annual reporting for five (5) years on Key Deliverables specific to the funding program is a requirement of applicants with approved funding agreements. (Fiscal Year End Accountant Prepared Financial Statements)
8. Disbursements will be subject to satisfaction of all conditions being met including proof of funding from other sources.

For Grant Program Enquiries contact:

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