

The New Business Innovation Access Program Elliot Schiller

The newly announced Business Innovation Access Program (BIAP) is a \$20 million funded program from the federal government with the objective of providing entrepreneurial small- to medium-sized companies (SMEs) with resources, both intellectual and monetary, to help them move past barriers, various hurdles and capital constraints to bring a new product or service to market.

This funding will enable SMEs to access business services or technical assistance at Canada's learning institutions and publicly-funded research organizations with the stated objective "to bring bigger and better innovations to market faster." The program will be delivered by the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP).

BIAP will offer SMEs up to \$50,000 per project or 75% of the total cost of the project, to access business and technical services carried out by Canadian researchers and students. This is an incredibly high percentage paid for by NRC-IRAP. As David Lisk, Executive Director for IRAP in Ontario explained, "as this is a new program, we wanted to de-risk the opportunity for SMEs."

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible projects for the Business Innovation Access Program (BIAP) include short-term projects for which a business service or technical assistance would clearly demonstrate the potential to contribute to quicker commercialization of products or academic research.

Some examples of eligible technical services are:

- Product optimization
- Process development, analysis or optimization
- Specialized testing

Some examples of eligible business services are:

- Market research
- Marketing strategy development
- Competitive analysis
- Business strategy development

The new business services component of the program is especially exciting. Unlike most other funding programs that focus on the innovation component (technical services), BIAP will provide funds to help develop the marketing/business strategy portion of bringing a product to market. BIAP is an exciting opportunity for SMEs who think they might have the idea for a brand new product, but lack the resources or funds to develop the product and develop a strategy to bring that product to the right market at the right time at the right price.

As explained by the Honourable Greg Rickford, Minister of State (Science and Technology), "the benefits, however, are not only one-sided. While entrepreneurial SMEs will find commercialization and innovation busi-

ness solutions, post-secondary researchers will be able to offer their students real-world business problems to tackle, preparing them for the actual business world. These hands-on learning opportunities for college students are irreplaceable."

HOW TO PREPARE FOR CONTACTING NRC-IRAP

As with all funding opportunities, you, the recipient, need to be prepared before formally contacting the funding representative – in this case, an Industrial Technology Advisor (ITA) from NRC-IRAP. Specifically, it's important that you can enunciate a focused problem that needs to be solved right away – and if solved successfully will result in business improvement, growth, increased sales and/or employment opportunities. In other words, with the help of NRC-IRAP funding, you can make a case for revenue and hopefully profitability growth.

You will further need to explain to the ITA that you have done your due diligence before contacting NRC-IRAP. For example, if you believe that the successful implementation of a new piece of machinery will give you access to a much broader market – but you don't actually know the size of the potential market and have approached market research firms for assistance, but have discovered that the cost of said study is impractical – you will be in a much stronger position to approach NRC-IRAP for financial assistance with that project. Their confidence in your due diligence is an important positive.

Once handed a project, your ITA will work with you with the objective of a quick turnaround to either confirm your solution provider(s) or suggest new solution provider(s). It's your project and while you are only responsible for 25% of the costs, it's your responsibility to choose the solution provider(s) who you think is the right choice for the project.

As the total funding for this program is only \$20 million, if every applicant requests \$50,000, there is only enough funding for 400 projects. If you want your project to be financially supported by government funding, the maxim of government funding applications is "the early bird gets the worm." Better it should be your business rather than your competitor who gets the \$50,000 innovation support.

To learn more about this program, you can consult <http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/irap/index.html> – and of course you can always contact me personally by email at eschiller@teegerschiller.com or phone at 1-888-816-0222 Ext. 102.

Elliot Schiller is a Director at Toronto's Teeger Schiller Inc., a company that specializes in obtaining government funding. His clients receive over \$5 million annually to support their ongoing business innovation. E-mail eschiller@teegerschiller.com or visit www.FundingHelp.ca.



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David Teeger

Director

David Teeger C.A., C.A. (S.A.) graduated as a Chartered Accountant in South Africa, and upon arrival in Canada he obtained his Canadian C.A. designation and joined Richter & Associates, a management consulting firm, where he concentrated his practice on various business sectors including household goods, fashion, automotive parts, public associations, and retail chains. He performed many roles in his 15 years at Richter, including managing the professional services organization in North America and all business operations throughout Europe.

David's professional capabilities include computer audits, feasibility studies, system analyses and assistance in the selection, negotiation and implementation of computerized solutions.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused his practice on consulting to management. His team of professionals has helped businesses select and successfully install a variety of ERP business solutions and add-on systems including business intelligence solutions to give new life to existing computer systems. David's clients not only rely on him to successfully manage the implementation of their new systems, but to manage the change that occurs in their organizations as a result of the use of these new tools.



Elliot Schiller

Director

Elliot Schiller, Ph.D., C.M.C. began his career as a Chemical Engineer working for Grumman Aircraft, in Long Island, New York. He obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh with funding from the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and, after being awarded a Presidential Fellowship, he went on to perform research and development activities at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Since coming to Canada, he has primarily assisted consumer products and retail organizations in a variety of strategic management initiatives, traveling around the globe on behalf of his clients. In 1987, Elliot joined Richter & Associates, and it is here that he first met David Teeger.

As a founding partner of Teeger Schiller Inc., he has focused the SR&ED / Grant Division on obtaining grants and tax incentives for over 100 companies in the small to medium sized business sector. His team has provided services to the discrete / processing manufacturing, material development, textiles, apparel, automotive and computer sciences sectors. Annually, Teeger Schiller Inc. secures more than \$5 million in government funding to assist its clients in having their business initiatives supported by government funding.



304 Richview Ave., Toronto, ON M5P 3G5

Tel: 1.888.816.0222

info@teegerschiller.com • www.teegerschiller.com
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