

Frequently Asked Questions: Consulting Grants for Women Entrepreneurs

Community Future Fraser Fort George (CF FFG), with support from Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is pleased to announce grants for businesses owned and led by women.

What is this grant for?

A grant of up to \$5,000 is available for women entrepreneurs to hire a consultant to help pivot your business.

Who is the consultant?

The consultant, aka contractor or service provider, is a qualified professional who would help implement strategies to attract customers, market a business, and/or improve profitability.

What do you mean by pivot?

Pivoting refers to new ways of moving your business forward to help you stabilize and enhance your business now and in the future. Examples include: moving from a physical location to online, revamping your website or brand, marketing strategy, new revenue streams, to name a few. You want to be able to answer “What will you have when the consultant leaves?”

Who is eligible to apply?

Women owned and led businesses. Eligible businesses include sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, social enterprise, or other similar organization, including non-profits so long as they have a social enterprise aspect that benefits the community.

What is the definition of “women owned”?

There is no minimum female ownership required. We need to be satisfied a woman leads the business and has some level of ownership. Preference will be given to those businesses with the greatest female ownership.

What are the eligibility criteria?

The business must have experienced an adverse effect on business operations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and be:

- an eligible business woman owned and led;
- be in operation for a minimum of 1 year;
- be located in an area serviced by CF FFG (Mackenzie, Prince George, McBride, Valemount and surrounding rural areas).

What if I am ineligible to apply for the consulting grant? What supports are available to me?

We encourage you to connect with CF FFG, where we provide complementary one-on-one business coaching. The Business Coach will also be able to connect the business owner with applicable resources available, professionals with specialized expertise, and women’s networking and mentoring opportunities.

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How do I apply?

Please contact CF FFG to discuss the scope of work you are considering and if it meets the eligibility criteria.

You will find an application, including checklist of the requirements, on our website: <https://cfdc.bc.ca/covid-19-information/>

The current deadline is **Thursday, December 10, 2020, 4.30pm** (another intake to open Jan 2021).

Please review all program requirements in detail as incomplete application packages will not be reviewed.

Can I use the grant for renovations or to buy safety equipment?

No. The grant can only be used for professional services.

Can I apply if I've already hired someone and the work is underway?

While retroactive projects are not eligible, you may apply if you are considering a new phase of the project. We have to understand the scope of work and how it will benefit the business prior to approving the grant.

Do I find the consultant or does Community Futures provides one?

You find your own qualified consultant but CF FFG needs to approve the consultant as well as the project. If you are uncertain on which consultant to hire, we are able to offer suggestions.

What is a "qualified" consultant?

At minimum, the consultant must have a registered business and be able to provide a business registration number along with applicable licenses and permits. We reserve the right to decline a consultant at our discretion, however approval will not be unreasonably withheld.

Is the grant actually given to the business to use when they want?

The funds are paid to the consultant. The consultant invoices CF FFG.

Is the grant only for one consultant?

You may have more than one consultant. We would have to understand each consultant's role and how the respective projects will help your business.

Is my financial performance important?

A business's financial health is important. Some financial information will be required and must be submitted with the application, such as a current balance sheet and income statement.

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What is the application process?

1. Applicant will contact CF FFG to discuss the proposed scope of work and if it meets the eligibility criteria.
2. Applicant obtains a detailed quote outlining the proposed scope of work, fees and timeline from a qualified consultant.
3. Applicant completes the application and program requirements, and submits all necessary documents to CF FFG. (See <https://cfdc.bc.ca/covid-19-information/> for application and program requirements.)
4. CF FFG will review the application and documents with the applicant.
5. CF FFG completes the due diligence process and presents the application package to a review panel for adjudication.
6. CF FFG will contact the applicant with the review panel's decision via telephone or email. This may include an approval, decline or request for further information.
7. If approved, an agreement will be sent by CF FFG to the client and consultant for signing. This agreement will review the roles and responsibilities of CF FFG, the client, and the consultant.
8. CF FFG maintains regular contact with the client to monitor how the project is going.
9. Consultant submits invoice to CF FFG for payment.

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We encourage you to reach out to us prior to applying to ensure your scope of work meets the eligibility criteria.

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