

# Alberta Export Expansion Program (AEEP)

Fact sheet – April 2024

## Program changes

### Why the program was changed

The Government of Alberta reviewed the AEEP based on feedback from stakeholders.

Several changes have been made to:

- clarify the criteria for the program;
- promote increased consistency and access for qualifying Alberta small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs); and
- reduce red tape by simplifying the application and reimbursement process, while still ensuring appropriate checks and balances.

These changes will mean Alberta's entrepreneurs can use their time to build their businesses and focus on exporting to new markets instead of filling in paperwork. This will also mean companies receive their grant funding faster, so they can redeploy those resources sooner.

These changes apply to travel after April 1, 2024.

### What the major changes include

Major changes include:

Allowable costs	<p>Attendance at a formal international trade event, including conferences, trade shows, conventions, fairs, and expositions.</p> <p>Formal event attendance is supported at 50 per cent of base entry registration fee for up to two travelers to a maximum of CAD \$1,000 per organization for each event.</p> <p>Grant awards are now based on per diems and other activities and costs (e.g., booths, translation, accommodations, airfare) are no longer receipted.</p> <p>Only outbound missions are eligible for AEEP funding; inbound missions are no longer eligible.</p>
Funding	<p>The maximum award per organization is now CAD \$15,000 for each funding year (April 1 to March 31).</p> <p>A funding tracker is now available so that potential applicants can see how much funding has been requested for the current funding year to date.</p>
Application process	<p>Applicants will only need to submit one application post-travel. There is no longer a pre-travel review process.</p> <p>The program does not pre-approve or pay applicants in advance of carrying out trade activities.</p> <p>Grant agreements are developed post-travel.</p> <p>Payments are expected to be issued within thirty days of all requirements being met.</p>

Eligibility	<p>AEEP continues to support Alberta SMEs, industry associations, Indigenous organizations, economic development organizations and other non-profit organizations, while municipalities are no longer eligible for funding.</p> <p>To focus support on export-ready companies, the minimum gross annual sales requirement for eligibility has been raised to \$250,000 from \$50,000 .</p>
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## About the program

### How much funding an organization may receive

An organization can receive grants totaling up to CAD \$15,000 per funding year (April 1 to March 31). An organization can apply for funding for a maximum of two travelers per formal event.

Funding is provided based on two factors:

- a per diem of:
  - CAD \$400/day for the first traveler;
  - CAD \$200/day for the second traveler; and
- up to 50 per cent reimbursement of base entry registration conference fees to a maximum CAD \$1,000 per organization for each formal trade event (proof of registration/attendance required).

Per diems are provided for the duration of the formal event(s) attended, plus two days per person per application to accommodate travel (proof of travel required).

### Stacking with other grants

Applicants must disclose all sources of government funding (federal or provincial). All government sources of funding, including any requested AEEP funding, may not exceed 75 per cent of the total costs specified in the application.

If total government assistance exceeds to limit of 75 per cent, the department will adjust the program funding to comply with this limit.

### How many days can qualify for per diems

Per diems are provided for the duration of the formal event the applicant attends, plus two total days per application to accommodate international air travel (proof of travel required).

Regardless of travel duration, per diems are only calculated for dates of formal international trade event participation.

There is no limit on the number of days; however, per diems are limited to the overall annual funding cap of CAD \$15,000 per organization per funding year (April 1 to March 31).

### How is funding may be awarded

AEEP has a set amount of funding available for each fiscal year. Once applications are received, they are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Funding is only provided once a complete application is approved, and a grant agreement is signed. Applicant organizations may apply multiple times up to a total amount of CAD \$15,000 per fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

Submitting an application does not guarantee funding.

### How to use the funding tracker

The AEEP Annual Requested Funding Tracker will share how much funding is still available in each fiscal year and will be updated regularly.

## What happens if funding runs out

Once the program is fully subscribed, application intake will close for the remainder of the fiscal year.

## Eligibility

### Which missions qualify for AEEP

Missions that are organized by Jobs, Economy and Trade (JET), as well as other events may qualify for AEEP.

### How to participate in a JET-led trade mission

The JET [trade missions calendar](#) lists all JET-led missions for the fiscal year. These events fill up quickly and participation is limited.

Organizations must reach out to the contacts for each JET-led mission to be considered. When choosing participants for JET-led missions, consideration is given to export readiness, the focus of the markets and their sectors of interest, and how the company's attributes tie into the trade mission.

Participation in a JET-led mission must be mentioned in the AEEP application.

### Sole proprietorship eligibility

No. Sole proprietors are not eligible for AEEP. An eligible for-profit applicant must be an incorporated legal entity in Alberta, operating in Alberta, and with a permanent establishment in Alberta.

### Emerging technology companies

Emerging technology companies may be eligible for AEEP at a lower annual gross sales amount of \$50,000, if they can show that they have an exportable product or service. These applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Applying for AEEP

### Applications for multiple events and travelers

Multiple formal events can be submitted in one application if they are all within two months from the first day of formal event participation. Additional events outside of the two-month window will need a separate application.

If two people from your organization travel, both must be included in one application. Multiple applications cannot be submitted from the same organization for the same travel and trade event.

### Which documents must be submitted

#### All applicants:

- Detailed proof of purchase for each formal event registration fee (highlight/note which fees are being submitted for AEEP funding)
- Flight receipts

#### SMEs:

- Latest business plan, annual report, market entry plan and/or market entry strategy demonstrating the target market(s) is/are part of the organization's long-term planning

#### Non-profit organizations:

- Latest business plan, annual report and/or strategy demonstrating a focus on trade promotion and export development

## **When will I know if I have been approved**

The Government of Alberta strives to provide funding decisions within 60 business days of application submission. You can log into your alberta.ca profile to learn about your including application status, next steps and additional requirements.

## **I have applied, now what?**

### **My application was approved, what's next**

If your application is approved, you will be notified and sent a grant agreement outlining the responsibilities and legal obligations of the Government of Alberta and the applicant organization.

You will receive an email with a link to sign the grant agreement document via a secure and verified cloud-based, third-party platform. The grant agreement must be reviewed and signed by an authorized officer of the applicant organization within 30 days of receipt.

Once received, the Government of Alberta will sign the grant agreement and return a copy of the fully executed agreement for your records.

### **What if I don't sign the grant agreement in 30 days**

If the grant agreement is not signed within 30 days of receipt, the application will be considered forfeit, and you will not be eligible for the grant.

### **How to receive the grant payment**

To receive a payment:

- complete the trade-related travel in accordance with the program terms and grant agreement;
- complete and submit all required documentation through the application portal;
- execute the grant agreement and return it within 30 days of receipt; and
- provide banking information for electronic payment to the program area (instructions will be sent with the grant agreement).

Once all requirements are met, your payment will be processed via electronic fund transfer within approximately 30 business days.

### **Reporting on the outcomes of AEEP grant agreements**

Organizations are required to submit an export outcomes report no later than one year after travel is complete.

A grant agreement is closed once the reporting has been submitted and approved by the Government of Alberta. If reporting is not submitted within 30 days of the deadline or is incomplete, the Government of Alberta may request a return of the grant.

### **Denied applications**

Applications are denied if they do not meet AEEP requirements or if all available funding has already been requested.

Applications will also be denied if they are not submitted within two months after the start of the first travel activity and within the corresponding fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

### **Resubmitting applications**

Yes, an application can be resubmitted to address the identified issues.

If you are considering resubmission, check the AEEP Annual Requested Funding Tracker for how much funding is still available.

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-export-expansion-program>

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**Can I apply for another grant if I've already received one in the same fiscal year?**

Yes, keeping in mind that funding is capped at \$15,000 per organization within each fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). Please refer to the program guidelines for additional information on applying for more than one event within one application.