

Ontario Shop Local - Application Guidelines 2021

Application start date is from Friday, June 25, 2021 until July 27, 2021.

Lead applicants MUST be members of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Program Overview

Small businesses are the backbone of Ontario's economy and their success is integral to local economic prosperity and vibrant communities. Covid-19 has had significant impact on communities and small businesses throughout Ontario. In an effort to support business and communities across the province, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, with the support of Government of Canada, has launched the Ontario Shop Local Program to help stimulate Canada's economic recovery, by encouraging consumers to shop at local businesses. The campaign will bring together people and business leaders, chambers of commerce/boards of trade, not-for profits, municipalities and other stakeholders to create and implement shop local initiatives.

Key principles of the initiative include:

- To encourage campaigns that represent the diverse and unique circumstances and demographics of regions, communities, and neighbourhoods;
- To support collaboration with key stakeholders including small businesses, municipalities and organizations and associations that are representative of local communities;
- To facilitate coordination with and /or enhance existing buy local campaigns to avoid duplication or competing messaging and leverage established branding; and,
- To access local suppliers such as media, graphic designers, printers, etc., whenever possible in the design and implementation of Shop Local campaigns.

Eligible Applicants

- Lead applicants: Chamber of Commerce and Boards of Trade.
- Only one application per community will be considered.
- Regional applications encompassing more than one community and multiple Chambers are also eligible and encouraged.
- Have \$1,000,000 of commercial general liability insurance (self reported).
- Be in full compliance with all applicable government laws, rules, regulations, guidelines and other legally binding measures (self declaration)

Note: Geographic distribution of funds will be taken into consideration when making funding decisions. Whenever possible, lead applicants must demonstrate collaboration and partnership with local business and other community stakeholders such as municipalities and other organizations reflective of their community(ies).



Eligible Activities and Costs

Typically, the grant amount is up to \$150,000. However, higher amounts will be considered based on the following: rationale provided, budget, size of the community, the strength and reach of partnerships, as well as scope of the proposal.

There are four main categories of eligible activities:

- **Shop Local campaign branding**
 - Developing and rolling out overall campaign theme.
 - Creating and deploying logos and common campaign, website content.
 - Promoting seasonal approaches intended to drive shoppers to local small merchants.
 - Creating and distributing promotional templates for shared use.

- **Marketing and promotion**
 - Developing and posting short videos.
 - Creating and distributing marketing tool kits/templates.
 - Social media buys and creative visuals.
 - Purchasing Ads, talk radio spots.
 - Creation of printed/ e- guides, signage and maps.
 - Developing and sharing content and presentations that explain the economic, civic and environmental importance of the local businesses in the community.

- **Building consumer confidence**
 - Promoting awareness of safety measures to protect consumers.
 - Promoting local purchasing options.
 - Developing and sharing featured stories that highlight difference makers in the community.

- **Partnership development**
 - Implementing activities to build local capacity through community engagement.
 - Encouraging collaboration and best practices to achieve support for the local campaign.
 - Collaborating with local education institutions, colleges or universities to plan hack-a-thons or contests to develop digital or marketing materials.

Note: Expenses must be part of an overall shop local campaign and will not be considered as stand-alone activities. All expenses are subject to the program administrators' discretion.

Eligible Expenses

- Salary and wages.
- Travel (in accordance with the following standards [LINK](#)).
- Audit.
- Partnership development.
- Advertising/marketing.
- Supplies.
- Professional fees related to activities.
- Contracting costs related to activities.
- Rent.

Ineligible Costs and Expenses

The following costs are ineligible and will not be considered:

- Business plans/strategic plans/feasibility studies/strategies, etc.
- Inventory costs.
- Existing operating costs.
- Laptops, headphones, printers, cables, etc.
- Renovations.
- Items purchased for resale.
- Recurring subscription fees/services.
- Capital expenses and lease hold improvements.

How to Submit an Application

All applications and supporting documentation must be completed and submitted online.

Applications are only open to members of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. If you are a member and require a link to the application or have questions about the application process please email shoplocal@occ.ca

Description of Shop Local Campaign

Lead Organizations must describe the proposed campaign, list the partnerships and expertise they bring to the project, the proposed activities, timelines, metrics and associated costs. Proposals must also include information that demonstrate how the campaign will:

Avoid duplication of efforts/overlap

Applicants should ensure that each proposal is aligned with the local needs and priorities of their community or region. To reduce the risk of overlap with other shop local initiatives, applicants must detail how requested funding is complementary to other funding that may have been made available and does not duplicate existing activities.

Reflect local/regional demographics

The Applicant should ensure campaigns reflect their region's diverse populations and demographics. The project should embrace all local businesses and apply a diversity lens in the development and implementation of activities. This would also include ensuring that products and services are available in both official languages, as appropriate.

Metrics:

- Number of local partnerships created.
- Number of resources developed.
- Social media impressions.
- Number of participating businesses.
- Number of local businesses that received funding/contracts assisted with development and delivery of their shop local campaign.
- Number of consumers reporting awareness of SL campaigns (based on reach of ad-buys in legacy media other promotional activities).
- Approximate number of consumers reached through each of the campaign activities.
- Number and types of sectors promoted through Shop Local projects.

Application Frequency

Communities are only permitted to submit one application under the program. Priority will be given to applications with multiple partners. Regional applications encompassing more than one community and multiple Chamber of Commerce and Boards of Trade are also eligible and encouraged.

Please note: As funds are limited, applications will be reviewed on a first-come-first-serve basis. Once funds are exhausted, all other applications will not be processed. We reserve the right to close the application window when the application allotment is reached.

Conditions of Participation for All Eligible Applicants

- Application forms must include all required information and be signed/endorsed by a senior officer or senior manager of the applicant organization certifying that the information is accurate and verifiable.
- Application forms will become the property of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.
- Contact information (mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, as well as e-mail and website addresses) will be included in the OCC client management system for correspondence purposes. Applicants agree that the OCC shall have the right to make available and/or to publish, in print or electronically, certain analyses, reports or studies that are based upon aggregate data which is derived from information contained in the application forms and results achieved for those applications that are funded. At the OCC's discretion, these studies and aggregated data may be released to selected groups including government entities or to the public at large.
- Applicants agree that their names and level of funding, if approved, may be published.
- Once received by the OCC, all applications will be at all times the property of the OCC, and none will be returned. The OCC will not be responsible for applications that are lost, misdirected, or delayed.

- All decisions are final.
- The OCC reserves the right to limit the amount of funds requested by the applicant. Applicants will not necessarily receive the full amount of funds requested. The OCC reserves the right to limit the award amount regardless of the requested amount and the information contained in the application to ensure a broad distribution of funds among regions and communities.
- Applications providing incorrect information or not providing enough information to enable a decision will be rejected.
- Funding decisions are based on the timeliness and quality of applications. Applicants meeting all eligibility criteria will not automatically receive funding.
- At the point of application submission, applicants are required to agree to the Terms and Conditions. Applicants approved for funding are required to enter into an agreement and abide by the conditions outlined in the Terms and Conditions.

Evaluation Criteria for All Eligible Applicants

Funding decisions will be subject to a 20-business day turnaround time provided the application is complete when submitted and all requirements have been met. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Applications are processed on a first come first serve basis.
- Grant funds are limited. Once funds are exhausted, all other applications will not be processed.
- Eligibility of lead applicant and capacity of applicant or applicant group – demonstrated previous campaigns, resources available.
- Strength and reach of the partnerships developed – are partners representative of community, number businesses, communication vehicles available.
- Quality of activities directly related to deliverables – do activities directly link to outcomes, engagement plan.
- Budget requested – in line with program parameters, directly related eligible activities
- Metrics directly contributing to overall project deliverables – are they measurable, clearly defined and align to overall program objectives.
- Completeness of the application.
- A broad number of communities and regions of Ontario benefit from the program

Payment Terms and Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will be provided with three payments during the project. An initial payment on signing the recipient agreement. A second payment linked to receipt of a report detailing milestones achieved. A third payment will be subject to a hold back based on receipt of a final report satisfactory to the OCC. Successful applicants will be required to comply with audit requirements as noted in the MOU or contribution agreement.