AccelerateIP

Delivered by New Ventures BC

Program Guidelines

Version 1: Nov. 6, 2023

1. Program Overview

AccelerateIP is an ElevateIP Recipient, a national program of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. The program is being delivered by New Ventures BC (NVBC), with Innovate BC as its prime delivery collaborator, alongside a network of accelerators, incubators and tech organizations.

AccelerateIP's primary goal is to break the cycle of IP scarcity by investing in the talent and capital necessary to strengthen Canada's innovation ecosystem. It aims to provide services and support to technology startups based in British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut, to facilitate their rapid scaling, growth, and long-term viability.

The program is designed to increase access to education, skills development, mentorship and professional support for startups to protect, implement and leverage their intellectual property.

2. Program Structure

AccelerateIP is an integrated, three-stream, IP capacity-building program. Eligible applicants can apply through the program portal.

1- Stream 1: IP Education

Foundational IP training through online educational modules, in-person and online webinars, and an in-depth IP Certification Program for startups led by IP experts. A Train the Trainer course is also being offered to select organizations to build IP knowledge and capacity for mentorship among Business Accelerators and Incubators (BAIs).

2- Stream 2: IP Strategies

IP guidance and covering some legal costs to develop targeted IP strategies, enabling startups to maximize their IP assets and set the stage for long-term success through effective IP strategy development.

- Tier 1: Mentorship from the program's Partners and Collaborators
- Tier 2: IP strategy support from legal service providers

3- Stream 3: IP Implementation

Facilitates the achievement of startup objectives in their IP strategies through support for strategy execution. This includes covering some costs associated with formal IP protection and implementation.

3. Stream 1: IP Awareness and Education

3.1 Eligible Activities

Stream 1: IP Awareness and Education:

- ✓ Foundational IP content through online education modules that go beyond basics.
- ✓ Educational events in person and online, delivered by NVBC with guest speakers.
- ✓ Educational events in person and online, delivered by partners and collaborators across BC, Yukon, Nunavut, and Northwest Territories.
- ✓ IP Certification Program, delivered in person and online as an in-depth, cohort program.

3.2 Eligible Recipients

All applicants must meet the following program eligibility requirements:

- A startup based in British Columbia (BC), Northwest Territories (NWT), Yukon Territory (YT), or Nunavut (NU)
- Use innovative technology and / or operate in the tech sector
- Have fewer than 500 employees
- Non-profit organizations that meet the above may also apply

3.3 Application and Selection Process

Online education

- All applicants that meet the general eligibility requirements can access resources after they register and apply to Stream 1 through the program portal.

In person and online education events delivered by NVBC and/or program partners

- Startups can visit New Ventures BC's event page for links to all event registration pages. No portal registration is required.

IP Certification Program

Eligible applicants must apply through the program portal. Applicants will need to answer an initial IP assessment and outline their learning objectives for the course.

Selection will be based on program priorities, application strength, and availability.

AccelerateIP will prioritize startups that are:

- Majority owned by underrepresented groups,
- Demonstrate involvement in priority industries for the Program's provinces and territories, including, healthtech, cleantech and data
- Are an existing client of AccelerateIP Program partners or collaborators

4. Stream 2: Developing IP Strategies

4.1 Eligible Activities

4.1.1 Tier 1: Mentorship from Partners and Collaborators

Startups can receive up to 8 hours of mentorship over the course of the program.

Eligible activities may include but not limited to:

- ✓ Reviewing commercialization strategy needs
- ✓ Assessing IP strategy within a business context
- ✓ Providing general guidance and support relative to IP
- ✓ Assessing when legal engagement is required
- ✓ Preparing to hire or meet with a legal service provider

Mentors are existing mentors, advisors, or Executives in Residence at accelerators, incubators, and other tech organizations that are partners and collaborators of the AccelerateIP program. They are not providing legal advice.

4.1.2 Tier 2: Strategy Support from IP Service Providers

Startups may be eligible for support for up to $25,000 in legal costs over the course of the program, with a matching/co-investment requirement of 25%, or 10% for startups whose majority is owned by Indigenous peoples. Startups are responsible to pay any costs over and above AccelerateIP's max contribution amount.

Approved legal costs will be paid directly to the legal service provider chosen by the applicant. Legal service providers must be from the program's registered list, which is provided via a link in the application form. Applicants may also request that a provider be registered by the program.

Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ IP audits
- ✓ IP budget review
- ✓ IP competitive analysis
- ✓ IP strategy
- ✓ IP valuation
- ✓ Analysis of IP landscaping
- ✓ Common contracts and document templates ie: employment agreements, contractor agreements, IP assignment or transfer agreements or NDAs
- ✓ Freedom to operate or infringement searches
- ✓ Legal contractual analysis–ie: commercialization of IP opportunities
- ✓ Out-licensing strategy development
- ✓ Patentability analysis
- ✓ Prior art search
- ✓ Trademark and branding strategies
- ✓ Trademark clearance searches

Litigation is not an eligible expense.

4.2 Eligible Recipients

In addition to meeting general program eligibility, applicants must fall into <u>one of the following categories:</u>

- Have completed a minimum of one education offering from Stream 1 or equivalent
- Be an existing client of a Program Partner or Collaborator
- Be eligible based on the IP Assessment through the program platform

For Tier 2: Strategy Support applicants, in addition to the criteria above, applicants must:

- Agree to meet co-investment requirement of 25% of the service provider cost. Co-investment is 10% for indigenous-led start-ups.
- Obtain a quote from legal service provider(s) who meet service provider criteria prior the application. AccelerateIP does not expect that startups are required to pay for quotes to apply for the program.

4.3 Application and Selection Process:

Selection will be based on the following.
Program Priorities:

- Majority owned by underrepresented groups,
- Demonstrate involvement in priority industries for the program's provinces and territories, including, healthtech, cleantech and datatech

- Are an existing client of AccelerateIP Program partners or collaborators

Evaluation Criteria:

- Clearly demonstrate how the services would benefit their startup
- Complete an initial IP Assessment
- Provide business and technology details
- Demonstrate intention to grow their business in Canada

4.3.1 Stream 2 – Tier 1: Mentorship

Step 1 – **Application**: Eligible applicants fill out the application forms on the program portal, including the Initial IP Assessment.

- Applicants that already worked with a partner or collaborator associated with the program can indicate that in the application form.
- Applicants have the option to add a mentor or a BAI staff member as a 'collaborator' to help with the application process. Collaborators can access all the information entered during the application process. They are not impacting the selection process.

Step 2 – Reviewing process:

- Application review by the program team and the partner or collaborator organization.
- Applications are accepted throughout the duration of the program and reviewed ongoing basis based on program priorities, evaluation criteria and BAI / mentor availability.

Step 4 – Selection**:**

- Applicants will receive an email from the program team regarding the result of the reviewing process.

Step 5 – Starting mentorship:

- Approved applicants will be contacted by their associated BAI for starting the mentorship hours.

Step 6 – Completion and final survey:

- After completing the mentorship hours, applicants will mark their completion of the program in the portal and complete a survey.

4.3.2 Stream 2 –Tier 2: Strategy Support from IP Service Providers

Step 1 – Quote:

- Eligible applicants determine the services required from a legal Service Provider and get a quote, either from their existing service provider, or a registered service provider with the program
- If their existing service provider is not on [the registered list](), the program will use the program vetting criteria to determine if they are eligible.
- If startups are not sure which services they need, it is recommended that startups apply to Stream 2- Tier 1 mentorship services and/or the IP Certification program prior to applying to tier 2.
- Retroactive applications are eligible so long as invoices have not yet been paid. The start date must be after April 1, 2023.

Step 2 – Application:

- Eligible applicants will complete their application, including the IP Assessment form and upload a quote on the program portal.
- Applicants have the option to add a mentor or a BAI member as a 'collaborator' to help with the application process. Collaborators are can access all the information entered during the application process, though they are not impacting the selection process.

Step 3 – Recommender:

- Applicants that are existing clients of a program partner or collaborator will add them as a Recommender as a part of the application process.

Step 4 – Reviewing process:

- Applications are reviewed by the program team. Applications will be accepted and approved on a rolling basis throughout the duration of the program.

Step 5 – Selection:

- Applicants will receive an email from the program team regarding the result of the reviewing process.

  If approved:

  o Startups will receive an email indicating their approved services and amount costs covered by AccelerateIP.
  o Approved applicants will need to sign an agreement on the portal to accept the award.

  If declined:

  o Applicants may be referred to Stream 1 or 2 prior to being eligible to re-apply in future.

  If waitlisted:

  o The program will notify the startup when another round of funds become available.

Step 6 – Services

- Applicants receive services from the service provider selected.

- Services must be completed within 3 months of expected start date.

Step 7 – Invoicing and payment:

- Once services are complete, startups will add their legal service providers as "Recommenders" to the program portal. The legal service provider will be asked to upload separate invoices for AccelerateIP and for the startup amount to pay, as per the agreement (step 5)
- Startup uploads a receipt as a proof of payment to the Portal for their co-investment.

Step 8: Payment:

- Once the uploaded documents are verified by the AccelerateIP team, payment will be made to the service providers and applicants will be notified through the program portal.

Step 9: Survey:

- Startups are required to complete a satisfaction survey after completion of the stream.

5. Stream 3: IP implementation support from legal IP service providers

5.1 Eligible Activities

Eligible startups can receive up to $60,000 in legal cost over the course of the program, with a co-investment structure where the program covers 75% of the service provider's quote, and startups contribute the remaining 25%. This structure is 90% - 10% if startups majority is owned by indigenous peoples.

Startups are responsible to pay any costs over and above AccelerateIP's max contribution amount.

Approved legal costs will be paid directly to the service provider chosen by the applicant. Service providers must be within the list provided by NVBC or approved by NVBC via the same process.

Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

IP registration
Legal contractual drafting – ie: commercialization of IP opportunities
Patent applications
Patent registration
Trademark application
Industrial design application
Trademark registration
Industrial design registration

Filing Fees

5.2 Eligible Recipients

All applicants must meet the general eligibility requirements of the program. In addition, startups need to meet the following requirements:

- As with Stream 2, the startup must agree to meet co-investment requirement of 25% and 10% for indigenous-led start-ups.
- Obtain a quote from legal service provider(s) that are registered by the program
- Must have an existing IP strategy
- Incorporated in BC
- Must prove IP knowledge or demonstrate the intention to improve IP knowledge. Must have:
    - Completed or agree to complete IP Certification Program or equivalent.
        - If completed, provide a proof, certification copy, screenshot of email communication
    - Completed Stream 2 of AccelerateIP or IP Assist – Level 2 program
        - If completed, provide a proof, certification copy, screenshot of email communication
    - Have at least 1 IP expert as internal staff member
        - Provide LinkedIn page, title, cv etc.

5.3 Application and Selection Process

All startups that meet the General Eligibility Requirements will create a profile on the program platform and submit an application. Selection will be based on:

Program Priorities:

- Startups that are majority owned by underrepresented groups
- Existing customers of program partner BAIs or collaborators
- Sectors prioritized: Cleantech, health tech, data

Evaluation Criteria

- Clearly demonstrate the needs and how the services would benefit their companies
- IP capacity and commercialization potential
- Company info
- IP readiness and strength of existing strategy
- Selection Committee consisting of IP experts

Step 1 - Quote:

- Eligible applicants determine the services they need from a legal Service Provider and get a quote, either from their existing service provider, or a registered service provider with the program.
- If a service provider is not on [the registered list](), the program will use the program vetting criteria to determine if they are eligible.
- If startups are not sure which services they need, we recommend applying to Stream 2- Tier 1 mentorship services and/or the IP Certification program prior to applying to tier 2.
- Retroactive applications are eligible so long as invoices have not yet been paid.

Step 2 – Application:

- Eligible applicants will complete their application, including the IP Assessment form, on the program portal. A quote will need to be uploaded as a part of the application.
- Applicants have the option to add a mentor or a BAI member as a 'collaborator' to help with the application process. Collaborators can access the information entered during the application process. They are not impacting the selection process.

Step 3 – Recommender:

- Applicants that are existing clients of a program partner or collaborator will add them as a Recommender as a part of the application process.
- Applicants that are not existing clients of a partner BAI can be matched with a BAI based on criteria including industry, location, stage of startup. If no suitable match is available, they can be matched to AccelerateIP.

Step 4 – Reviewing process:

- Applications are reviewed by the program team and a selection committee. Applications be reviewed based on program priorities and evaluation criteria.

Step 5 – Selection:

- Applicants will receive an email from the program team regarding the result of the reviewing process.

  If approved:

  - Startups will receive an email indicating their approved services and amount costs covered by AccelerateIP. Approved applicants will need to sign an agreement on the portal to accept the award.

  If declined:

  - Applicants may be referred to Stream 1 or 2 prior to being eligible to re-apply in future.

  If waitlisted:

  - The program will notify the startup when another round of funds become available.

Step 6 – Services:

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- Once services are complete, startups will add their legal service providers as "Recommenders" to the program portal. The legal service provider will be asked to upload separate invoices for AccelerateIP and for the startup amount to pay, as per the agreement (step 5)
- Startup uploads a receipt as a proof of payment to the Portal for their co-investment.

Step 8: Payment:

- After the uploaded documents are verified by the AccelerateIP team, payment will be made to the service providers and applicants will be notified through the program portal. No funds can be paid directly to startups in the program.
- Service providers must sign up for Sparcpay to be paid via the program. They will receive this information in their onboarding to the program.

Step 9: Survey:

- Startups are required to complete a satisfaction survey after completion of the stream.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

- Partners, collaborators and applicants may be asked to collect metrics on behalf of the Program that are reported to ISED.
- Participants will be required to complete satisfaction and/or other surveys as are required by the program.
- AccelerateIP will report quarterly to ISED on program participation in each stream.
- Success stories may be shared as marketing materials, with the startup's consent.

7. FAQ

What is your definition of underrepresented group?

- For this program, according to ISED, underrepresented groups refer to those who identify as women, Indigenous, visible minorities, LGTBQS2I+, and/or persons with disabilities.

My startup is a non-profit, am I still eligible?

- Non-profit organizations are eligible if they meet the general eligibility requirements.

Is this program only for BC, Yukon, Nunavut, NWT?

- Yes. However, if you're in another part of Canada, you may apply with a different [ElevateIP recipient](#).

Can I apply for both AccelerateIP and IP Assist at the same time?

- So long as the services are not overlapping. You must disclose what other funding sources or applications you are completing relating to IP in your application form.

Do I need to work with a partner or collaborator organization?

- No, anyone can apply. Priority will be given to those who apply with a partner or collaborator organization. You also have the option to be paired with New Ventures BC or another partner organization.

I already have an existing external IP mentor. Can I apply to Stream 2: Mentorship program with my mentor?

- Yes, you can, so long as they are eligible and working at a partner or collaborator organization associated with the program.

Can I apply to any of the streams or do I have to do them in order?

- You don't have to do them in order, but you must meet eligibility requirements for each stream to qualify.

Can I apply to multiple streams simultaneously?

- You can, but you need a strong strategy to apply to Stream 3, so likely you want to complete Stream 2 first.

Can I apply to Stream 2-2 and Stream 3 more than once, throughout the program's duration?

- Yes, so long as you don't go over the total max amount of funding of $25,000 for Stream 2-2 and $60,000 for Stream 3.

Is grant stacking possible?

- Yes, but the startup must show they paid their 25% co-investment.

Can I apply to Stream 2 and 3 with an activity that is not listed within the Eligible Activities?

- You can apply under "other" and it will be reviewed, but it might not be approved.

Can I file an international patent?

- Yes, you can file an international patent.

Do you accept retroactive applications for Stream 2 & 3?

- Yes, if the invoices have not yet been paid. We cannot reimburse startups for invoices; the program can only pay service providers directly.

 How does the co-investment structure work?

- The startup must pay either 25% or 10% to the service provider for services. AccelerateIP can cover up to $25,000 or $60,000 per stream. If the bill is higher than the max amount AccelerateIP can cover, the startup must pay the rest to the service provider.

If you did not find the answer to a question you have, please email accelerateip@newventuresbc.com