Atlantic IP Advantage Funding Program Guidelines for

IP Strategy Development Program

IP Strategy Implementation Program

Contents

AIPA IP Strategy Development and IP Strategy Implementation Funding Program Guidelines

This guide is for Startups interested in applying for IP Strategy Development and/or IP Strategy Implementation funding through Springboard Atlantic's Atlantic IP Advantage Funding Program. Applicants are expected to have attended a virtual or in-person AIPA Awareness event, prior to seeking this funding. This guide will also be useful to Springboard Atlantic staff.

The Atlantic IP Advantage (AIPA) provides services to Atlantic Canadian Business Startups needing intellectual property education and support. Within the AIPA, the AIPA Funding Program provides funding support for the Startup ecosystem and Startups.

The AIPA Funding Program is made up of three major activities and funding categories:

1. IP Awareness Events
2. **IP Strategy Development**
3. **IP Strategy Implementation**

This guide specifically pertains to IP Strategy Development and IP Strategy Implementation funding categories.

IP Strategy Development Program

Objective

The IP Strategy Development Program provides supports for Startups to engage with professionals to develop an executable strategy, which ensures Startups will have a comprehensive understanding of the domain they are pursuing, and that IP is informing decisions along that process. The result of this work will be an executable IP Strategy. An IP Strategy is a plan for how a business start-up can develop, grow, leverage and monetize their IP assets.

Funding Amounts

IP Strategy Development: Up to $50,000

Category Awards

Stage of Support	Activities	Providers
Assessment	This will include providing basic technology, market and IP assessments to determine the value of the opportunity, the value of investing in the IP with a protective strategy	This is expected to be a contracted cost to be paid for by Springboard Atlantic, although the IP Counsellors may have some relevant ability to provide cursory support depending on their experience in that domain
Search	Provide comprehensive IP searching services including Freedom-to-Operate (FTO), and interpretation from an IP/technology practitioner (or) Provide formal legal opinions (patentability/ trademarking/trade secret)	This is expected to be a contracted cost to be paid for by Springboard Atlantic
Strategy	Support the development of an IP road map, as part of developing an IP Strategy and management framework that suits the startup	This is expected to be a contracted cost to be paid for by Springboard Atlantic

Note: Startups receiving funding to develop their IP strategy will be required to co-invest/match at a minimum 10% of eligible costs. As an example, a full $50,000 match at 90% would require a total project cost of $55,555.55, a Springboard Atlantic contribution of $50,000, and startup a co-investment of $5,555.55.

IP Strategy Implementation Program

Objective

The IP Strategy Implementation Program comprises supports for Startups to engage with experts to assist with executing their IP strategies, which includes coaching to support the internal work and processes required to ensure IP protection is part of the operation process and the organizational culture, and IP filing themselves. Prior to applying for IP Strategy Implementation Program funds, the Startup will have received in-person and/or on-line training exposure regarding IP implementation, as well as consultation from Collaborator experts, BAI advisors and/or provincially located IP Counsellors and will have finalized their IP Strategy. Applicants requesting funding **solely** for this award category must demonstrate they have a finalized IP strategy.

Funding Amounts

IP Strategy Implementation: Up to $25,000

Category Awards

Stage of Support	Activities	Providers
Consult	A contracted consultant provides support for the internal implementation as noted above, and supports the protection execution with Startup leadership	This is expected to be a contracted cost to be paid for by Springboard Atlantic, although the IP Counsellors may have some relevant ability to provide cursory support depending on their experience in that domain
IP filings	Filing costs	This is expected to be a contracted cost to be paid for by Springboard Atlantic

Note: Startups receiving funding to implement their IP strategy will be required to co-invest/match at a minimum 10% of eligible costs. As an example, a full $25,000 match at 90% would require a total project cost of $27,777.77, a Springboard Atlantic contribution of $25,000, and startup a co-investment of $2,777.77.

General Submission Guidelines

Funding Amounts

Funding amounts are suggested to be up $50,000 for IP Strategy Development and $25,000 for IP Strategy Implementation, however start-ups are permitted flexibility to apply with justification for greater or lesser amounts in each category provided that the total request for support from Springboard Atlantic does not exceed $75,000.

Eligible Expenses

- Costs related to filing, prosecuting and/or registering IP with IP offices, including, but not limited to, IP landscape search and analysis, drafting of IP applications, filing of IP applications, requesting examination of IP applications, prosecuting IP applications and filing and registration fees for formal IP protection
- Contract services to conduct IP Assessments, including basic searches, market intelligence and technology scans
- Contract services to conduct detailed formal IP search reports
- Contract services to develop an IP Strategy and IP Management plan

Ineligible Expenses

- Litigation costs, including enforcement of IP rights against a Third Party and those that are an outcome of the filing process
- Ongoing licensing fees of Startups
- Costs related to maintenance or renewal fees on IP applications or registrations
- Infringement and enforcement related costs
- Costs associated with the repayment or refinancing of an existing debt
- Costs associated with the purchase of any assets for more than the fair market value of said asset
- Costs of amortization
- Costs of land, building or vehicle acquisition
- Costs of goodwill

Application Criteria

The applications are evaluated after a complete application is submitted and the following criteria remain true:

Potential for Technology/Knowledge Transfer and Commercial Benefit

- Protection, support and creation of existing or future commercially viable IP
- Anticipated commercial and social benefits and anticipated benefits for Atlantic Canada
- Identification and evaluation of potential markets and market applications
- Demonstrated understanding of a commercialization plan and impact on company growth

Intellectual Property

- Understanding of the potential benefits of IP protection (patent/copyright/trade secret)
- Understanding of IP positioning benefits in terms of commercial strategy

Scientific/Technical Merit

- Scientific/Technical/Social basis for the expected commercial application
- Project is feasible - technical complexity, technical risk
- Potential for intellectual property protection (existing searching efforts described)
- Likely benefit from intellectual property protection

Company

- The company is positioned well to utilize IP protection in commercialization efforts
- There is adequate personnel and material resources allocated to support IP
- Applicants have a background in the area of the proposed project
- There are arrangements to secure requisite experience for commercialization (if needed)

Budget

- Budget details are included, explained, and supported
- The request for support is accompanied by a quote from a professional service provider on their letterhead

Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion: Springboard Atlantic is committed to promoting equitable and inclusive participation in its' programming and will provide applicants the opportunity to disclose if they belong to an underrepresented group, defined as those start-ups majority owned by women, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2S+ individuals, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. Applications will be evaluated to promote participation in the program from underrepresented groups.

Eligibility Requirement

"Startup" means a young innovative business with strong growth potential that is of interest to investors and providing an innovative solution to a particular target audience.

The startup is:

- Less than 10 years old
- Has less than 499 employees
- Headquartered in Atlantic Canada (i.e. majority of senior team located in region)
- Has an affiliation to an Atlantic Canada Business Accelerator or Incubator. (AIPA may request verification of this affiliation from the BAI).

Start-ups must have attended an awareness event to receive support.

The maximum award per company is $75,000 until March 31, 2026.

Application Submissions

As of January 2025, the application form is online.

Submissions **are due by 5:00 PM (AST) on the quarterly dates below.**

Friday, February 14, 2025
Friday, May 16, 2025
Friday, August 15, 2025
Friday, November 14, 2025

The online submission form is at **https://form.jotform.com/Springboard_Atlantic/IPadvantage**

Evaluation Process

An AIPA Funding Program Evaluation Committee meets quarterly. Applications are processed and reviewed by the Evaluation Committee. If additional information is needed, applicants will be contacted prior to the Committee meeting or if requested by the Committee following the Committee review.

Ownership of Intellectual Property

Springboard Atlantic makes no claim to ownership of any Intellectual Property generated by the Startups solely by virtue of the Startup having been provided IP support through the Funding Program. **Applicants are encouraged not to disclose any IP.**

Conditional Approvals and Re-Submissions

Conditionally approved applications usually involve minor clarification of missing information, or other minor, administrative confirmations like budget clarification/justification. Conditional approvals allow for confirmation of the conditions being met and the subsequent issue of a funding award without any further AIPA Funding Program Evaluation Committee review.

Applicants may choose to proceed with work that has been conditionally approved, but the expenses requested will only be paid if the required conditions are met and the application is confirmed as awarded, received in writing from Springboard Atlantic.

The Evaluation Committee can request re-submissions and may postpone a decision to award the funding until the next Committee meeting. If agreed by the Evaluation Committee, it may also be put to e-vote if additional information is required, and time constraints have been indicated. If the Evaluation Committee has more involved questions or concerns, applicants will be encouraged to clarify and re-submit their applications. Applications can be submitted up to three times and re-submissions must address the concerns and questions raised by the Committee.

Terms and Conditions

- All expenses must comply with the Springboard Contribution Agreements.
- The Applicant is responsible for any expenditures and commitments greater than the amount awarded.
- The Applicant acknowledges that funds shall only be used for activities carried out after the date of submitted application to Springboard Atlantic.
- The Applicant and/or provider must provide a proof of payment including receipts or other documentation to show that Startup co-investment/match was completed. Proof of expenses must be retained in case of a request from auditors.
- Project changes must be pre-approved before expenses occur. Extensions for project time and project cost increases must be requested in advance of the costs being incurred and are not automatically granted.
- Applicants acknowledge that any information which has been shared in engagements with Springboard Atlantic including any personal information contained in any records, information, audit and evaluation and other reports provided may be provided to the federal government for evaluation, audit and other programmatic purposes.
- The Applicant must provide survey responses on all follow up reporting.
- A Final Project Report is required by three months after project completion. Any press coverage or success stories regarding the event is to be included.
- Appropriate acknowledgment of financial support provided by Springboard Atlantic and ISED will be included in any information relating to the project issued the award recipient. The participants also agree that Springboard Atlantic may publish the award amount and company title in external communications. Companies may be approached for other media related or outreach efforts.
- Applicants agree to receive Springboard Atlantic newsletters and emails. Applicants may opt out at any time.

Note: Application guidelines and application may be updated periodically. Always refer to the Springboard Atlantic website for the most current versions.

AIPA Contact Information

Niraj Shukla	AIPA Program Manager	709-689-9907	nshukla@springboardatlantic.ca
Libby Carew	Regional IP Counsellor, NL	709-725-7627	lcarew@springboardatlantic.ca
Shelley Hessian	Regional IP Counsellor, NS	902-220-2031	shessian@springboardatlantic.ca
Andre Pelletier	Regional IP Counsellor, NB	506-470-3698	apelletier@springboardatlantic.ca

Appendix A: Application Form Questions

Atlantic IP Advantage Funding Program
IP Strategy Development & IP Strategy Implementation Award Application

General Information

- As of January 2025, the application is submitted via an online form. This document provides an overview of the content in the form.
- The online submission form can be accessed at **https://form.jotform.com/Springboard_Atlantic/IPadvantage.**
- Total project costs must be supported by a completed provider quotation form signed by a professional service provider.
- Make sure all fields are complete. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- The IP Strategy Development Program provides supports for Startups to engage with professionals *to develop an executable strategy*, which ensures Startups will have a comprehensive understanding of the domain they are pursuing, and that IP is informing business decisions. The result of this work will be an executable IP Strategy.
- The IP Strategy Implementation Program comprises supports for Startups to engage with experts *to assist with executing their IP strategies*, which includes coaching to support the internal work and processes required to ensure IP protection is part of the operation and the organizational culture, and includes the IP filings identified in the IP Strategy. Startups cannot access the IP Strategy Implementation support without providing an IP Strategy and describing IP searching work completed to date.
- A minimum co-investment of 10% is from the startup required at all stages of program support, paid directly to the professional service providers.

Evaluation Criteria

Potential for Commercial Benefit

- Protection, support, and creation of existing or future commercially viable IP
- Anticipated commercial and social benefits and anticipated benefits for Atlantic Canada
- Identification and evaluation of potential markets and market applications
- Demonstrated understanding of a commercialization plan and impact on company growth

Intellectual Property

- Understanding of the potential benefits of IP protection (patent/copyright/trade secret/etc.)
- Understanding of IP positioning benefits in terms of commercial strategy

Scientific/Technical Merit

- Scientific/Technical/Social basis for the expected commercial application
- Project is feasible - technical complexity, technical risk
- Likely benefit from intellectual property protection

Company

- Is the company positioned well to utilize IP protection in commercialization efforts?
- Adequacy of personnel and material resources allocated to support IP
- Do the applicants have a background in the area of the proposed project?
- Are there arrangements to secure requisite experience for commercialization (if needed)?

Budget

- Ensure budget details are included, explained, and supported.
- Each request for support must be accompanied by a completed provider quotation form signed by a professional service provider.

1.0 Startup Information

1.1 Demographic Information

Legal name (REQUIRED):	
Operating name (if different):	
Contact name:	
Position:	
Address:	
City, province/territory, postal code:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Website:	
Business Registration Number:	
Industry:	Choose an item.
Year Established:	
Incubator/Accelerator Affiliation:	
Have you attended an IP 101 session? If yes, what date did you attend?	
Is your company headquartered in Atlantic Canada?	
(Optional) Is your company majority owned by a member of an underrepresented group (women, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2S+ individuals, visible minorities, or persons with disabilities)?	

1.2 Startup Description

1.2.1 Please provide a SHORT business overview (non-confidential, 150 words or less).

1.2.2 Briefly describe your company's primary products or services., What is the technology stage of development (i.e. idea, proof of concept, prototype, pilot/testing, in-market). What problem are you solving?

1.2.3 Briefly describe your market. Who are your customers? What is your market size estimate? Any indication of customer traction (i.e. customer discovery, sales, leads, investment, pilots, letters of intent, etc.)?

1.2.4 Briefly describe who your main competitors are; what is your competitive advantage?

2.0. Understanding IP

2.1 Work to Date

Please describe in detail the work your company has done to date to learn and explore intellectual property protection. Please also note any searches, professional consulting work and education and awareness efforts you have undertaken.

2.2 IP Assistance

2.1.1 Are you an NRC-IRAP client? Yes_____ No _____

If yes, please name your NRC IRAP Industrial Technology Advisor.

_____

2.2 Please detail if you have previously received assistance for IP protection. This can be but not limited to participating in NRC IP Assist, Can-Export or Springboard Atlantic IP Advantage funding.

2.3 IP Alignment with Business Strategy

2.3.1 Please describe how developing and implementing an intellectual property strategy will impact your company's growth, commercialization, and market potential and overall business strategy. Provide detail on how Springboard Atlantic's Atlantic IP Initiative funding support may impact areas such as:

- Improving the company's ability to leverage its IP.
- Improve the company's IP management practices.
- Increase the company's business capabilities.
- Develop new product(s) and/or services.
- Allow the company to secure additional investment.

2.4 Scientific Technical Capacity for IP Utilization

2.4.1 Please provide an overview of founder(s) and key team members (including company employees, Board members, mentors or advisors) and their ability to execute. Without disclosing any confidential information, please demonstrate how the company's scientific and technical expertise can support the company's IP strategy now and into the future.

2.5 Commercial Capacity for IP Utilization

2.5.1 Clearly state who has ownership of the intellectual property. Does your company have rights to the IP or was it developed or licensed from other partners?

2.5.2 Are you currently in any litigation regarding your intellectual property? If yes, please describe.

2.5.3 Do you have resources (current or planned) that will support commercialization of IP and technology?

2.5.4 Do you plan to fundraise? If yes, provide some details.

3.0. Funding Request

3.1 Funding Summary

3.1.1 Please provide a rationale for your strategy development and implementation funding request. Why these forms of IP? Which countries and why? Do you have any pressing deadlines?

3.1.2 IP Strategy Development Program

Total Cost for IP Strategy Development (including sales tax)	
Total Amount Requested from Springboard Atlantic's AIPI Funding Program (including sales tax).	
Amount contributed from Applicant (including sales tax)	

3.1.3 IP Strategy Implementation

Applicants requesting funding **solely** for this award category must demonstrate they have a finalized IP strategy. Without disclosing any confidential information, please demonstrate that an IP strategy has been finalized. This may include:

- Previous invoices showing completed work
- Redacted IP strategy report, and/or
- Detailed summary of steps taken to finalize an IP strategy

Total Cost for IP Strategy Implementation (including sales tax)	
Total Amount Requested from Springboard Atlantic's AIPI Funding Program (including sales tax).	
Amount contributed from Applicant (including sales tax)	

Overall Request Summary

Total Cost (including sales tax)	
Total Amount Requested from Springboard Atlantic's AIPI Funding Program (including sales tax)	*This cannot exceed $75,000 including sales tax*
Amount contributed from Applicant (including sales tax)	

3.2 Detailed Funding Request for IP Strategy Development

The IP Strategy Development Program provides supports for Startups to engage with professionals to develop an executable strategy, which ensures Startups will have a comprehensive understanding of the domain they are pursuing, and that IP is informing decisions along that process. The result of this work will be an executable IP Strategy. Funding is up to $50,000. If funds beyond $50,000 are requested, please provide a rationale (above). No total award will exceed $75,000 in support for a Startup.

Eligible activities for support include:

- **Assessment**: This can include providing basic technology, market and IP assessments to determine the value of the opportunity, the value of investing in the IP with a protective strategy.
- **Search:** Provide comprehensive IP searching services including FTO, and interpretation from an IP/technology practitioner (or) Provide formal legal opinions (patentability/ trademarking/trade secret).
- **Strategy:** Support the development of an IP road map, as part of developing an IP Strategy and management framework that suits the Startup.

Please complete the below table with the proposed activities, listing the provider of the activities and the funding amount. **Each request for support must be accompanied by a completed provider quotation form signed by a professional service provider.**

Proposed Activities	Provider Name	Total Cost including Sales Tax	Amount Requested from Springboard Atlantic (up to 90%)	Amount contributed from Applicant (minimum 10%)	Anticipated Completion Date (MM/DD/YY)
Totals					

3.3 Detailed Funding Request for IP Strategy Implementation

The IP Strategy Implementation Program comprises supports for Startups to engage with experts to assist with executing their IP strategies, which includes coaching to support the internal work and processes required to ensure IP protection is part of the operation process and the organizational culture, and the IP filings themselves. Prior to applying for implementation funds, the Startup will have received in-person and/or on-line training exposure regarding IP implementation, as well as consultation with Collaborator experts, BAI advisors and/or provincially located IP Counsellors and will have finalized their IP Strategy. Funding is up to $25,000. If funds beyond $25,000 are requested, please provide a rationale (above). No total award will exceed $75,000 in support for a Startup.

Eligible activities for support include:

- **Consulting**: A contracted consultant provides support for the internal implementation as noted above, and supports the protection execution with Startup leadership.
- **IP Filings:** Direct filing costs associated with protecting IP.

Please complete the below table with the proposed activities, listing the provider of the activities and the funding amount. **Each request for support must be accompanied by a completed provider quotation form signed by a professional service provider.**

Proposed Activities	**Provider Name**	**Total Cost including Sales Tax**	**Amount Requested from Springboard Atlantic (up to 90%)**	**Amount contributed from Applicant (minimum 10%)**	**Anticipated Completion Date (MM/DD/YY)**
Totals					

4.0. Provider Information

Please complete the below for each provider. Copy and paste for each additional provider.

Legal name (REQUIRED):	
Operating name (if different):	
Contact name:	
Position:	
Address:	
City, province/territory, postal code:	
Phone:	
Contact Email:	
Website:	
Accounts Receivable - Contact name:	
Accounts Receivable - Phone number:	
Accounts Receivable - Email address:	
Total Value of Services Requested (including sales tax)	

5.0. Terms and Conditions

5.1 General Terms and Conditions

- All expenses must comply with the Springboard Contribution Agreements.
- The Applicant is responsible for any expenditures and commitments greater than the amount awarded.
- The Applicant must provide a proof of payment including receipts or other documentation to show that Startup co-investment/match was completed. Proof of expenses must be retained in case of a request from auditors.
- Project changes must be pre-approved before expenses occur. Extensions for project time and project cost increases must be requested in advance of the costs being incurred and are not automatically granted. Awards must be spent within the awarded timeframe unless otherwise approved.
- Applicants acknowledge that any information which has been shared in engagements with Springboard Atlantic including any personal information contained in any records, information, audit and evaluation and other reports provided may be provided to the federal government for evaluation, audit and other programmatic purposes.
- The Applicant must provide survey responses on all follow up reporting.

- A Final Project Report is required by three months after project completion. Any press coverage or success stories regarding the event is to be included.
- Appropriate acknowledgment of financial support provided by Springboard Atlantic and ISED will be included in any information relating to the project issued the award recipient.
- The participants also agree that Springboard Atlantic may publish the award amount and company title in external communications. Companies may be approached for other media related or outreach efforts.

Springboard Atlantic makes no claim to ownership of any Intellectual Property generated by the Startups solely by virtue of the Startup having been provided IP support through the Project. **Applicants are encouraged not to disclose any IP.**

5.2 Funding Amounts

Funding amounts are suggested to be up $50,000 for IP Strategy Development and $25,000 for IP Strategy Implementation, however start-ups are permitted flexibility to apply with justification for greater or lesser amounts in each category provided that the total request for support from Springboard Atlantic does not exceed $75,000.

5.3 Eligible Expenses

- Costs related to filing, prosecuting and/or registering IP with IP offices, including, but not limited to, IP landscape search and analysis, drafting of IP applications, filing of IP applications, requesting examination of IP applications, prosecuting IP applications and filing and registration fees for formal IP protection
- Contract services to conduct IP Assessments, including freedom to operate and other basic searches, market intelligence and technology scans.
- Contract services to conduct detailed formal IP search reports.
- Contract services to develop an IP Strategy and/or IP Management Plan.

5.4 Ineligible Expenses

- Litigation costs, including enforcement of IP rights against a Third Party and those that are an outcome of the filing process
- Ongoing licensing fees of Startups
- Costs related to maintenance or renewal fees on IP applications or registrations.
- Infringement and enforcement related costs
- Costs associated with the repayment or refinancing of an existing debt.
- Costs associated with the purchase of any assets for more than the fair market value of said asset
- Costs of amortization
- Costs of land, building or vehicle acquisition
- Costs of goodwill

6.0. Declarations

6.1 Conflict of Interest

Outside of an appropriate business-client relationship, do you have any current or previous relationships, ownership, influence, positions (whether salaried or not) or circumstances with the provider organizations or other program participants that could contribute to a conflict of interest, or to the appearance of a conflict of interest?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please complete the Conflict of Interest Declaration in Appendix A.

6.2 Acknowledgement of Program Guidelines

I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions above that relate to any award made pursuant to this request.

☐ Yes ☐ No

6.3 Applicant Signoff

Name:	
Department:	
Title/position:	
Legal name of organization:	
Signature:	
Date:	
I hereby confirm that I as the undersigned have the legal authority to sign this application. ☐ Yes ☐ No	

Appendix A
Conflict of Interest Declaration

Please indicate your previous or present relationship with the provider or other program participants:

☐Previous or current employment with any provider or program participant
☐Ownership or equity in any provider or program participant
☐Familial or intimate relationship with any provider or program participant
☐Other

Please describe in more detail your relationship to the provider organization or other program participants.

Please provide the steps that you as the applicant intend to take to avoid or manage the conflict.
