

The logo for Springboard, featuring the word "Springboard" in a white, sans-serif font. The letter "b" is stylized with three curved lines above it, resembling a spring or a stack of books. The logo is set against a dark green background.

Springboard

Innovation Mobilization (IM) Program Refresher

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IM Program Objective and Goals

Objective

- Advise and advance knowledge transfer in any form (technologies and knowhow), both push or pull, and facilitate industry engagement.

Program Goals

- To advance technologies and/or product development where the intellectual property (IP) is held by the institution.
- To mobilize the knowledge/skill-based expertise from the member institutions into industry, helping industry engage with researchers and commercialize institutional opportunities.

IM Program

Funding: Phase 7 (2023-2026)

- \$1.2M available (total ACOA contribution & institutional contribution)
- ACOA Agreement stipulates:
 - The maximum amount to be committed under the IM Program in Phase 7, Year 1 is \$600,000.
 - The maximum amount for Industry Engagement (IE) projects supported is initially set at \$600,000, with approval required by the Agency for any increase above 10%.
- Status – February 21, 2024
 - \$423K committed/spent (\$246K in IE, \$177K in IP streams)
 - 64 total IM projects awarded funding (52 IE, 12 IP streams)

IM Program

Funding: Phase 7 (2023-2026)

- Industry Engagement (IE) (events, travel, sponsorships)
 - Up to \$10,000 in funding
- Intellectual Property (IP) Development:
- Total per technology: \$50,000
 - Proof of Concept (PoC): up to \$20,000 in funding
 - Patent & Legal (P&L): up to \$15,000 in funding
 - Market Validation (MV) up to \$25,000 in funding

IM Committee

Committee Structure:

- Up to 10, no less than 7 voting Members (2024 – Kevin Buchan, Sarah Conrod, Veerle Hellemans, Marc Richard, Annette Rushton, Shawn MacDougall, Juan Perez Casanova, Jake Arsenault (Chair, voting), Daryl Genge (President/CEO, votes in a tie), Program Manager (non-voting), Tania Jones (non-voting))
- Optional Committee Attendees: Observer(s) (non-voting) – Provides new network members exposure to the program, how applications are reviewed and the committee rationale

General IM Program Information

- IM forms and applications are on the website (Member Portal).
- Applications **are due to Central Office by the 1st business day of each month for consideration at the monthly IM meeting.***
- Program Manager works with member to ensure that the applications meet basic submission guidelines.
- Program Manager will provide a high-level review of the application if submitted 3 working days before the month submission deadline.

General IM Program Information

- If application is approved, SB will provide 63% of the project funds and the matching 37% need to be provided by the applicant/ applicant's institution/researcher/etc.
- Matching funding can come from the institution's budget, and/or external funds from interested and supportive organizations if they allow it (e.g., NSERC, IRAP, NGOs, individuals, donors, companies, registration fees, etc.).
- Springboard FTE/MIS Funds are NOT eligible matching funding.
- Funds are reimbursed after the project is completed.

Small Project Review and Decision

- IM applications under/up to \$2,000 (events, travel, IP Development stream projects):
 - To take advantage of opportunities with short notice.
 - Submitted on short-notice and will be reviewed by the President & CEO, and the Committee Chair. Turn-around typically 2-3 business days.
- Also applies to IM Travel applications for members up to \$5,000 by car or air **within the region** for industry meetings, events and connectors, etc.

General IM Committee Procedures

- Applications are reviewed once a month by the IM Committee generally in the 3rd week of the month (virtual meeting).
- Each application is assigned to 2 reviewers (1st and 2nd), although all Committee members review all submissions.
- At the meeting, the Chair invites the two reviewers to speak to the applications – strengths/weaknesses. The Chair invites other Committee Members to offer comments. There's general discussion.
- At some point the Chair will ask for a motion and a seconder, and the vote takes place. A project must be approved by the majority of votes present in order to be funded.

IM Committee Decision Options

- Approval (may include comments or recommendations)
- Conditional Approval - Involves clarification of missing information, confirmation of IP assignment, the indication that an inter-institutional agreement is progressing and nearing signature, or other minor, administrative confirmations like budget clarification/justification. Conditional approvals allow for confirmation of the conditions being met and the subsequent issue of the award without any further IM Committee review.
- Rejection

IM Committee Decision Options

- Re-Submission - If the Committee has more involved questions or concerns, applicants will be encouraged to clarify and re-submit their application. Applications can be submitted up to 3 times and re-submissions must address the concerns and questions raised by the committee.
- The Committee may require postponing a decision to award the funding to the next IM Committee meeting date. If agreed by the IM Committee, it may also be put to e-vote if additional information is required, and time constraints have been indicated.
- Appeals Process: applicants with evidence that an error has occurred during the process, and that it resulted in a negative decision, may submit an email outlining the error to the Program Manager and the Chair.

IM Industry Engagement Stream

- For the development of effective partnerships between academic institutions & industry, locally, provincially or regionally.
- Promotes increased awareness of industry academic collaborative programs & institutional resources that facilitate interactions between industry & Network Members.
- Raises public awareness of SB's role in the region, supports regional economic development activities & increases Network Member institution technology/knowledge transfer & industry engagement activities & thereby increase Atlantic & Canadian economic development.
- Up to \$5,000 (sponsored) or \$10,000 (IE events or travel). This includes matching funding.

IM IE Applications (General)

The Committee is looking for:

- Complete applications. Make sure it's signed, boxes are ticked, all questions are answered/sections filled out, page length is followed (6 pages), appendices are included (agendas, quotes, etc).
- Strength in sections on impact, networking, profile for Springboard.
- Complete agenda for travel/events might not be available, but some indication of the schedule (last year's schedule, framework, high-level).
- Budget table completed correctly. Identifying other funds/matching funds is good. Eligible expenses.
- On time! Get applications in as early as possible – at least two months ahead of time (sponsorship, large events, large travel).

IM IE Applications (Travel)

The Committee is looking for:

- At least one industry partner/prospect must be involved in activity (e.g., travel to a company, company visiting, company presenting to faculty/students, or group of IEPs).
- IEP should be project lead/involved in travel unless a valid rationale is provided.
- A project team may consist of an IEP, appropriate authority including contractor or staff member, experienced faculty, student, or post-doc.
- If it's a conference, specific industry meetings identified (by name).
- How Springboard will be acknowledged (the stronger the better).
- Rationalization if unusual circumstances of some kind.

IM IE Applications (Travel)

The Committee is looking for justification/additional information if they see (“flags”):

- Academic conferences (generally no, but....)
- IEPS requesting funding to travel at this stage of Phase 7. It is expected that IEPs should largely be drawing from their Member Institutional Support Programs (formerly FTEs) to support their own travel. If they are not tapping into their MIS Program and are seeking IM funding support, the IM application must include strong justification as to why.

IM IE Applications (Events)

The Committee is looking for:

- Alignment with SB themes of industry engagement & innovation mobilization.
- Engagement with your Springboard colleagues/institutions/researchers on events. Most hosted events should be open to SB members across the Network (this is considered a condition of funding).
- If there are start-up events for students – looking for strong industry involvement, more than 2-3 industry representatives “invited”, and good networking time built in.
- Multiple funders (particularly for large events/large asks).
- Innovative approach to events (particularly virtual).

IM IE Applications (Events)

The Committee is looking for justification/additional information if they see (“flags”):

- Not enough detail.
- Student involvement without Project leaders/Professors.
- IEP is not attending/engaged.
- Applicants re-applying for the “same” event year-after-year (good details and strong outcomes/wins).
- Industry involvement not well explained.
- ACOA funding an event.

What Expenses are Eligible?

All expenses need to follow the Springboard Eligibility Expense Guide.

Events:

- Facility costs, AV, Security.
- Nutritional breaks and receptions – no alcohol can be claimed.
- Name badges, event related promotional material (need to be itemized and justified) and photography/videography and printouts.
- Keynote speaker(s) honorarium and travel – but rationale and importance to outcomes need to be explained.
- Monetary event prizes – need to be reasonable, cannot be the majority of funds applied for and need to stipulate that they have to be used for an entrepreneurial activity or in case of student prizes should not exceed a total prize amount of \$500.
- Gift cards are not an eligible expense.
- * Online virtual tools and platforms for networking and event delivery will be considered on an individual basis.

IM IE Applications: Event Sponsorships

- A maximum request of \$5,000 per sponsored only event (total request).
- Event that will provide awareness of institutions and Springboard.
- Who: important partners in the Innovation Ecosystem/important collaborators with institutions.
- Alignment with SB themes of industry engagement & innovation mobilization.
- May be involvement from IEPs in events, but not hosting.
- Key: good promotion opportunities, application in on time.

IM IE Applications: Event Sponsorships

- Springboard-sponsored event should generally not be sponsored by a Member institution using IM funds. Check with Central Office in advance of applying. Exceptions: e.g., specific competitions.
- Sponsorships for events that already have ACOA funding may not be eligible through the IM Program. Check with Central Office in advance of applying (rule-of-thumb: if ACOA is not the key sponsor/not the only sponsor/less than 60% funder, probably ok)

IM IP Development Applications

Who Qualifies for IM-IP Funding?

- Researchers/Research Teams associated with a post-secondary institution in Atlantic Canada*
- The technology/innovation must be past ideation stage and at least Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 4.
- The IP for the technology must be disclosed and assigned to the post-secondary institution.
- There must be a source of matching funds (cash).

Proof of Concept Project Applications

Investment in a new discovery technology or knowhow to verify & validate the IP's commercial potential

- To support development towards a commercial opportunity:
Refine & implement designs; verifying applications; field studies; demonstrations/building engineering prototypes; performing beta trials & simulations; demonstrating proof of concept
- IP needs to be assigned to the Member Institution.
- Funding is NOT available for ideas still in basic research phase. Ideas must be past 'basic research phase' (i.e., past TRL 1-3).

Patent & Legal Project Applications

Early stages of commercial development planning for a new discovery, assessing the ability to protect the IP

- IP Assessment.
- Filing of IP protection (patents, industry designs, copyright, trademarking etc.).
- IP needs to be assigned to the Member Institution.
- Protecting IP to attract early-stage investment for transferring the technology/knowledge to a new or established company.

Market Validation Project Applications

To showcase and validate the commercial value and potential of the created IP to potential commercial partners and investors

- To provide market assessment, market research, beta testing, market demonstration to prepare the IP for the successful market entry.
- IP needs to be assigned to the Member institution.

IP Development Applications (General)

Potential for Technology/Knowledge Transfer and Commercial Benefit

- Creation of commercially viable IP; potential for licensing, spin off or creation of R&D partnership; anticipated commercial and social benefits/anticipated benefits for Atlantic Canada.

Intellectual Property

- Potential of IP protection (patent/copyright/trade secret); IP filings/registrations or IP plan; and IP assigned.

Scientific/Technical Merit

- Scientific/Technical/Social basis for the expected commercial application; merit of project to reach a measurable outcome; novelty, technical complexity, technical risk, & feasibility; & potential for IP property protection.

Team Expertise and Project Management

- Adequacy of personnel and material resources allocated.

IP Stream: Evaluation

- Considerations as to how well the IP is explained – i.e. what is licensed to date (if applicable) versus new work – background vs foreground IP
- Consideration of proposed IP protection.
- Considerations: how well the commercial opportunity is explained?
Company engaged?
- Budget Considerations – Adequate? Quotes for IP assessment/patenting fees are NOT needed.
- PoC & P&L together: needs to be clearly explained and applicant (IEP) can show this is the best path to protect the IP (i.e. Provisional Patent). Further P&L costs can be applied for at a later date.

Return Contribution for IP developed projects

- Implemented in Phase 4 and intended over time to renew a portion of the IM funds available.
- Applies to PoC, P&L and MV funding only.
- Is based on 5% of the institution revenue portion per year, to a maximum cap of 5X the IM award amount for the project started in Phases 4 and thereafter.
- The Return Contribution of revenues generated is based on the institutional portion only and not on the faculty portion.

After the Project is Completed

- Final Reports (IE: 3 months from event/travel; IP: 12 months after funding approval)
 - Financial Report (from your Financial Services unit)
 - Activity Report (from IEP)

IE Reports: Highlights, Impact, Outcomes, Lessons learned

IP Reports: Technical results, Milestones, Progress was made toward the Commercial and/or Business Objectives, Impact, Next steps

Attach/direct us to agenda/materials/any press coverage or success stories regarding the event/project.

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Questions?

