

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

1 Program Objective

The **Scale Up Hub Benelux** program ('the program') will help small to medium-sized businesses (SMEs) throughout Atlantic Canada unlock new partnerships, gain market access, and position themselves for long-term growth across the European Union (EU), using the Benelux region as their launchpad for market expansion and trade diversification.

2 Program Offerings

The program supports will include:

Strategic Market Entry Services

- Dedicated business development services with expertise in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.
- Sector-specific insight and partner/buyer identification according to specific SME needs.
- Regulatory and procurement guidance for the EU and CETA (Canada's trade agreement with the EU), and IP strategy development and advice for Europe.

Landing Pad & Operational Hub

- 10–12 months in-market execution (plus planning and follow-up).
- 2 in-market trade missions between March 2026 / March 2027. Trade missions will be customized and cater to the needs and opportunities of the SME cohort.
- On-the-ground base for meetings, collaboration, and client engagement in strategic locations.

Market Activation & Lead Generation

- Lead generation, investor access, R&D partner/program identification (i.e. Horizon Europe, Eureka, Eurostars), and integration into relevant local cleantech ecosystem(s).

Investment Access & Capital Support

- Connections to EU-based angel investors, VCs, corporate investors, and green finance programs/organizations.
- Investor readiness workshops, pitch preparation, and deal facilitation.

3 Program Eligibility

All applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Be an Atlantic Canada registered business in good standing.
2. Have a permanent establishment in Atlantic Canada.
3. Have most of its workforce currently residing in Atlantic Canada.
4. Have a commercialized technology/service that has generated revenue or have a new innovative technology/service that is ready for export.
5. Have no outstanding or pending claims/litigation, injunctions, judgments, orders, legal or administrative actions, or similar proceedings against the business, its principals and/or any related business(es)
6. The business, principals and/or any related business(es) shall not be in default of any obligations under any other form of financial assistance and/or incentive program from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Province of New Brunswick, the Province of Newfoundland & Labrador and/or the Province of Prince Edward Island.

It is expected that applicants provide a technology or service relating to one or more of the following themes:

- Renewable energy – solar, onshore and offshore wind, hydro, etc.
- Energy efficiency – equipment, infrastructure, storage/batteries, software, etc.
- Carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS)
- Circular economy – advanced waste management, biofuels, bioproducts, etc.
- Digital, remote, and autonomous operations including sensors, SaaS, digital twins, etc.
- Net zero enablers – clean logistics, electrification, port technology, environmental monitoring, etc.

Participating companies will be required to have the proven capacity to engage in long-term international business development, including the capacity to travel multiple times to Europe for the program and dedicate time on a continuous basis throughout the program timeframe.

For purposes of this criteria, a business' eligibility is at the program partners' sole discretion, based on the above-outlined criteria and information provided by the applicant.

4 Application Intake

Applications for the Scale-up Hub Benelux program must be received by **3:00 p.m. (NDT) on December 19, 2025**.

Applications received past the submission deadline will not be considered.

All applications are to be in English, or both English and French. If there is a conflict or inconsistency between the English version and the French version of the application, the English version of the application shall prevail.

Companies must complete and submit the online application form. The application form can be found at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScnX7FMk-_Mc9GBh7OCkHEu3UYE4fqrLotGZq9eqzmLjXJ6_g/viewform.

Once the application form has been submitted, an e-mail notification will be sent to confirm receipt of the application.

5 Application Requirements

In addition to basic information about the business, applicants will be required to answer the following questions in their application:

- Provide a brief description of your business and the products, services, and/or technologies it offers related to energy, clean technology, and/or the environment.
- Provide a brief description of any established intellectual property related to the products, services, and/or technologies your company offers.
- Please explain why you believe your product/service is a fit for the Benelux market and any research to support this.
- Please identify all internal and external sales supports and who will lead your sales and marketing expansion into the Benelux Region. If you do not have dedicated sales personnel, explain how you plan to engage in the market.
- What challenges do you expect to face (competition, cultural differences, import controls, intellectual property status, certifications, regulatory, legal, financial, etc.) and how will these be overcome?
- Do you have the internal resources/capacity to travel to Benelux to meet with clients?
- How do you believe that your company's participation in Scale-up Hub: Benelux will help you accelerate your export sales in this market?

6 Applicant Selection Process

Successful applicants will be selected based on:

- Meeting the minimum eligibility requirements as described above.
- The strength of the company's product/market fit for the Benelux region.
- A clear understanding of how participation in the program will help accelerate the company's growth.
- The company's ability to dedicate sufficient time and resources in the target market. This includes consistent engagement, responsiveness to market opportunities, and follow-through on strategic actions.

Following evaluation, short-listed applicants will be required to participate in a virtual interview with the program partners for final selection.

Successful applicants will be extended a Scale-up Hub Benelux Program Agreement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement must be accepted, signed, and returned within ten (10) days to be valid. The Program team reserves the authority to remove a participating business from the Program if they are deemed noncompliant with the contractual agreement.

7 Applicant Commitments

1. Participating businesses are required to pay a **non-refundable fee of \$1,750 CAD + HST** for the fifteen (15) month period (January 2026 to March 2027) once accepted into the program.
2. Participating businesses will be expected to commit the appropriate personnel and financial resources necessary to develop and execute on business development opportunities.
3. Participating businesses will be required to provide monthly progress updates to business development professional(s) for consistent tracking of activities.
4. Participating businesses must complete both an initial and final survey to summarize results and provide an overall evaluation of the Program.

8 More information

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Acts: Information collected in connection with this program is subject to, and will be treated in accordance with, the Newfoundland and Labrador *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Acts*.

For more information on this project, please visit <https://econext.ca/scale-up-hub-benelux/>.



econext is leading the program in collaboration with the Government of Canada, the governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland & Labrador, and tech NL.



This project is supported by the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic Provinces through the Atlantic Trade Investment and Growth Agreement.