

# **SBEC PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

## **SBEC CORE INITIATIVE**

### **BACKGROUND**

In recognition of the vital role that entrepreneurial activity and businesses play in Ontario's economy and specifically in the growth and prosperity of local communities, Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECs or Recipients) were created in local communities across Ontario to deliver various services and programs.

The SBEC Core programming dates back to the mid 1980's with a few pilot Business Self-Help Offices (BSHOs). There are currently 47 SBEC locations across Ontario.

### **DESCRIPTION**

Under transfer payment agreements, the Province provides funding to SBECs (including municipalities and non-profit entities). The SBEC Core Initiative consists of Client services and supports to entrepreneurs and new businesses within a municipality and surrounding service region ("Service Region"). The Recipients assist in the formation and support of new businesses by promoting their early growth and success.

The SBECs are part of the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs ("ONE"). ONE was launched on May 15, 2013 and is made up of the SBEC Program, the Regional Innovation Centres ("RICS") program and the Business Advisory Services program all of which are funded by the Province.

### **MANDATE**

The mandate of the SBEC Core Initiative is to help build a prosperous and fair Ontario by:

1. Assisting small "Main Street" businesses, including entrepreneurs and new business start-ups.
2. Providing stability and early-growth support to existing small businesses which are typically:
  - a. Less than five (5) years in operation, and
  - b. Have under ten (10) employees

3. Improving the success rate and longevity of small businesses in Ontario.
4. Raising the profile and promoting small businesses in Ontario as an important part of the community and as a viable career choice.

SBECs provide:

1. Training and business skills development to help small businesses maintain or expand their own business;
2. Business supports to help start businesses, and to help businesses to prosper and expand;
3. A variety of services, events, and activities targeted at supporting small businesses; and
4. Data collection of a number of metrics to help understand and assess the local economic environment and performance.

## **FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Ministry and Municipality/Non-Profit Funding Arrangements**

1. The SBEC Core Initiative is funded by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, except for the SBECs in Northern Ontario locations which are funded by the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines. Under the SBEC, individual municipalities or other non-profit entities receive transfer payment funding for the delivery of the SBEC Core Initiative within the Service Region.
2. The municipality or non-profit entity may also provide their own funding for operation costs of the SBEC.
3. SBECs are not offices, agencies or otherwise a part of the Province; SBEC staff are primarily municipal employees or employees of non-profit entities. SBECs are managed locally, coordinated and networked across Ontario, and eligible for financial support under transfer payment agreements, and other private sector supports.
4. SBECs must enter into a transfer payment agreement acceptable to the Province in order to receive any funding under the Initiative.
5. Funding by the Province for this SBEC Core Initiative is a non-entitlement initiative. As such, notwithstanding that an SBEC applicant for funding has submitted a complete application, there is no guarantee that the SBEC applicant will be awarded funding by the Province.

### **Other public supports or private sector partnerships/sponsorships**

SBECs are encouraged to seek public supports in addition to funding that may be provided by the Province or private sector partnerships/sponsorships in order to supplement the resource base available for Client services. Additional funding supports may be in the form of cash and/or in-kind contributions.

## **REQUIREMENTS AND SERVICES**

### **General Description**

Under the transfer payment agreements with the Province, individual SBECs must be engaged in business activities in their communities, the surrounding Service Region and the ONE region and meet the following requirements:

1. SBECs are required to engage with the community by offering business services, financing options, events, and activities to Clients throughout the Service Region.
2. SBECs must also undertake data collection, maintain Client information in a confidential manner, and maintain appropriate organizational insurance coverage.
3. SBECs are required to attend and participate in all ministry sponsored or funded events, such as regional meetings. SBECs are required to follow these Guidelines.

### **Community Engagement**

As ONE members, SBECs should be:

1. Active in the community, developing, and promoting their centres as a visible resource, and
2. Providing services within the mandate to all individuals who visit or contact the SBEC, regardless of their place of residence.

### **Events, Activities and Services**

Business outreach and networking activities should also include: local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, post-secondary institutions etc. within the specific SBEC's Service Region, which may be both within and outside the region of the municipality.

Events to be organized by SBECs in connection with the SBEC Core Initiative are to focus on entrepreneurship, small and medium business, and business development. These business outreach and networking activities may include but are not limited to offering or undertaking:

1. Information kiosks,
2. Workshops/seminars,

3. Speaking engagements,
4. Small business and entrepreneurship events,
5. Mentoring,
  - Youth outreach activities, including but not limited to
  - High school activities,
  - Post-secondary activities, and
  - Activities targeted at Youth not- in-school
6. Business referrals.

A description of the types of small business and entrepreneurship events in connection with the Initiative is outlined in the table below.

**UNDER THE SBEC CORE INITIATIVE EACH SBEC IS EXPECTED TO OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information to new entrepreneurs and new and existing small business owners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide referrals for third party “professional consultations” on an as-needed basis.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and distribute publications and materials related to the SBEC Core Initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct and/or facilitate seminars and workshops for new and existing entrepreneurs on topics related to business start-up, operations and management. Initial one-on-one consultation to be provided on a no fee basis to each Client. Any additional consultations (advanced/in-depth level) may be offered to the Client. Fees, if any, and the amount (cost-recovery or otherwise) are to be determined by the SBEC.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process – on a non-fee basis – general inquiries (face-to-face and electronically) related to business start-up and growth, operations and management and SBEC Core Initiatives and other services available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide mentoring and/or coaching service to Clients. Services may be delivered on a non-fee or fee basis.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively promote Initiatives related to small business opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide outreach services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Service Region served by the SBEC on a market need basis;</li> <li>○ Local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, post-secondary institutions etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide all services to the public under the transfer payment agreement in accordance with the <i>French Language Services Act</i> (Ontario).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, promote and provide networking opportunities for small business owners.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each SBEC is expected to offer targeted events to service specific demographics each fiscal year, including, but not limited to: Women, Francophone, Aboriginal, Youth, and/or Accessibility events.</li> </ul>

## Location

TO BE DETERMINED BY THE RECIPIENT	LOCATION STANDARDS
<p>Conform to SBEC requirements, if any (e.g. Board/Municipality visibility standards).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A highly visible location in the central business district for each SBEC (i.e. located in a mall, on a main street or in a visible area in city hall or other suitable public building);</li> <li>• Access to parking and public transit;</li> <li>• Free access to building (does not require security key, sign in, doorbell, etc.);</li> <li>• Appropriate space to fulfill core services including reception area;</li> <li>• Private office for consultations;</li> <li>• Separate space for resource centre;</li> <li>• Access to boardroom/meeting space; and,</li> <li>• Appropriate accessibility access.</li> </ul>

## Signage/Visibility

TO BE DETERMINED BY THE RECIPIENT	SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS
<p>Name/logo of SBEC.</p>	<p>Visible signage outside and inside featuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBEC name;</li> <li>• Outside sign visible from 50 metres;</li> <li>• Inside signage to make a distinction between founding or core partners; and other partners/sponsors.</li> <li>• Bilingual signage when the SBEC is located in a Designated Bilingual Area (DBA) as per the <i>French Language Services Act</i> (Ontario).</li> <li>• Appropriate use of Provincial logos as supplied and directed by the Province, including the Trillium logo, the ONE Brand logo, and Youth entrepreneurship logos, such as Summer Company</li> </ul>

	Initiative, Starter Company Initiative etc.
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## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SBECs will be required to collect, compile, analyze, and report to Province on the nature and number of:

- Businesses Started
- Businesses Purchased
- Businesses Expanded
- Jobs Created
- Inquires
- New Client Consultations (Starting a Business)
- New Client Consultations (Existing Business)
- Repeat Client Consultations
- French Language Consultations
- Referrals to Public Sector
- Referrals to Private Sector Professionals
- Workshops/Seminars
- Outreach Connections
- Events Hosted
- Events Attendance
- Mentorship matches

## CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY POLICY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

### Client Confidentiality

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Ontario) ("FIPPA"), the Province is responsible for protecting the personal information that it holds to carry out its responsibilities.

The privacy protection rules of FIPPA govern all aspects of personal information, including its collection, use, disclosure, retention, and secure destruction.

SBECs shall collect and maintain Client records and information to the appropriate standards so that:

- When collecting personal information from Clients, precautions are taken to ensure this information is safeguarded from unauthorized collection, use, disclosure, retention, and secure destruction.

- All records containing personal information and personal information banks shall be kept in compliance with FIPPA requirements and standards.

### **Privacy Policy**

SBECs will be required to provide the Province with a copy of their respective privacy policies. The SBECs are subject to FIPPA, which governs the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information.

Please note that the Province is subject to FIPPA. FIPPA provides every person with a right of access to information in the custody or under the control of the Province, subject to a limited set of exemptions.

### **Conflict of Interest**

SBECs will be required to provide the Province with a copy of their respective conflict of interest guidelines.

## **TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY**

Any disbursement of Funds to the Recipient shall be subject to the Recipient's guidelines on travel, meal and hospitality expenses provided that such guidelines are no less stringent than the guidelines set out in the Province's Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive, dated January 1, 2017 as may be amended from time to time ("Travel Directive") please see: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/travel-meal-and-hospitality-expenses-directive>

## **ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Any Funds provided under transfer payment agreements are subject to the eligible and ineligible expenditures as described in such agreements.

SBEC Program Guidelines as may be amended from time to time can be accessed at any time at <https://www.ontariocanada.com/ecr/controller/ReportHelp> ("Guidelines")

**IN THE EVENT OF ANY INCONSISTENCIES IN THE ABOVE AS COMPARED TO THE GUIDELINES (ACCESSIBLE AT THE ABOVE LOCATION), THE GUIDELINES SHALL PREVAIL.**