

Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund Ltd. OCIF Express – In-House Training Stream – Call for Applications (CFA)

Issued: October 17th, 2024

Responses Due: November 8th, 2024

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1. Introduction

The Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund Ltd. (OCIF), through its funding initiative the OCIF Express In-House Training Stream, is seeking Applications from innovation-driven companies in Calgary. This stream is aimed at upskilling and reskilling employees in specialized areas and is designed to enhance the workforce capabilities of local companies, foster innovation, and support economic growth in Calgary.

2. OCIF Right of Refusal, Reservation of Rights and Applicant's Agreement regarding Records of Information

OCIF Express is a highly competitive process and meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding approval.

OCIF reserves the right:

- To extend the CFA Deadline or time, or may amend, postpone or cancel this CFA in its sole discretion. OCIF will notify Applicants of any such changes;
- To not consider, or to reject, any or all Applications in whole or in part for any reason whatsoever in its sole and absolute discretion;
- To accept any Application in whole or in part, even if it does not comply with the terms of this CFA;
- To short list Applicants, and require a presentation by any Applicants short-listed and/or the provision of additional information by any such short-listed Applicants;
- At any time, to add, delete or modify this CFA and the timelines listed in Item 5 below, if applicable, and to have the Applicants advise OCIF of the effect of such changes on their Application and/or have any Applicants supplement or resubmit their Applications in light of same;
- To negotiate at any time with any one or more of the Applicants to the exclusion of the other Applicants; and
- To not proceed, for any reason, with this CFA or the initiative contemplated in this CFA.

By submitting its Application for consideration, the Applicant understands:

- That FOIP applies to and governs all records and may require the disclosure of such records to third parties making a request under FOIP;

3. Background

Created in 2018, OCIF is one of Calgary's most effective tools to ensure a resilient economic future for Calgary. Our city is home to a vibrant community of companies that are critical to the region's economic development. However, many companies struggle to keep their employees updated on skills and technologies, which can lead to inefficient use of talent and missed opportunities to enhance productivity. This initiative aims to bridge that gap by providing resources and support to help companies upskill their new and existing workforce.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the OCIF Express – In-House Training Stream are to:

- Bridge skill gaps in the workforce to ensure Calgary-based companies are equipped to tackle emerging technologies, challenges and opportunities to innovate.
- Contribute to the economic growth, diversification, and sustainability of Calgary-based companies.
- Increase access to professional development opportunities for High Skilled Employees, fostering career growth and retention.

5. Timelines

CFA release	October 17, 2024
Deadline for written questions	October 31, 2024
Application submission date	November 8, 2024
Meetings with short-listed applicants (if required)	November 2024
Selection	December 7, 2024 - January 31, 2025
Public announcement date	No later than January 31, 2025

6. Definitions

“Applicant” means a Calgary Company responding to this CFA.

“Application” means the intake form completed and submitted by the Applicant through the OCF Express portal by the Deadline and that forms the basis for OCIF to evaluate the merits of Applicant’s Project to be considered for OCIF funding.

“Calgary Company” means a revenue-generating, innovation-driven Calgary-based enterprise in a Key Sector (except for aerospace) with less than 500 employees globally, or an innovation-driven Calgary-based enterprise of any size in the aerospace sector, and registered to do business in Alberta at the time of submitting the Application.

“FOIP” means Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

“High Skilled Employee” means a Calgary-based full-time employee hired by the Calgary Company in a technical or professional STEM related role and that earns a minimum salary of \$60,000 in cash compensation per year.

“High Skilled Trainee” means a High Skilled Employee that has completed a minimum of 21 hours of Instructional Training Hours as evidenced by a proof of completion, with the purpose of upskilling and/or reskilling in Specialized or Technical Skills within the Calgary Company.

“Instructional Training Hours” are mandated technical and /or professional courses or assigned training hours in which trainees are engaged in directed programming and learning activities and

interact with the Trainer. The instructional format can be hybrid, provided individually or in a group setting, and delivered on-site or online. Both High Skilled Trainees and Trainer must reside in Calgary and be in Calgary at time of training. Training hours completed by a High Skilled Employee through an externally provided program, including those offered by post-secondary institutions, upskilling programs, and other similar programs do not qualify as Instructional Training Hours. Examples of eligible courses include but are not limited to: Software Development, AI/ML, Cloud Computing, Quantum Computing, Aircraft Instrument, Electrical and Avionics Mechanics, Project Management, Critical Thinking, Analytical Skills, Interpersonal Communication, Leadership. **“Key Sector”** means clean energy transition, ag/agtech, life sciences/health, aerospace and advanced manufacturing/logistics, and creative economy/digital industries.

“OCIF” means Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund Ltd.

“OCIF Express” means an expedited funding stream developed by OCIF and focused in one-metric Projects to make targeted investments aimed at filling identified gaps in the Calgary economy.

“Project” means an initiative that has a clear start and end date, distinct from ongoing business operations and that aims to achieve specific, measurable outcomes or deliverables.

“Selection Committee” means the committee so designated consisting of OCIF staff and OCIF consultants responsible for reviewing Applications and making funding recommendations to OCIF.

“Specialized, Technical, or Professional Skills” means skills required by a High Skilled Employee to operate a particular machine, use a particular technology, or support the continuous education and skills upgrading in their role.

“STEM” means Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

“Trainer” means a Calgary-based full-time employee or a contractor delivering training modules to High Skilled Employees, but cannot be a family member of the Applicant or a senior officer or controlling shareholder of an Applicant, and must have educational credentials and/or work experience relevant to the nature of the training. Where a course is in an area subject to third-party regulators, the Trainer must meet the qualifications prescribed by that regulator.

“Underrepresented Individuals” means a High Skilled Employee that belongs to disadvantaged groups such as: indigenous peoples, women, racialized people, disabled people/people with disabilities or members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

7. Applicant Questions

For OCIF to communicate effectively with Applicant, questions or concerns must be communicated in writing to the OCIF Express email inbox identified in Item 13 of this CFA in accordance with the Timeline indicated in Item 5 above. Questions or concerns received after this time will be answered if, in the opinion of OCIF, time permits. Questions or concerns and responses may be recorded and may be distributed to all Applicants to whom this CFA is provided.

The Applicant must immediately notify OCIF using the email identified in Item 13 of this CFA in writing of any ambiguity, divergence, error, omission, oversight, or contradiction in this CFA discovered by the Applicant and request whatever clarification is believed to be required for the Applicant or an Application.

8. Conflict of Interest

Applicants must fully disclose, in writing, to the contact outlined in Item 13 of this CFA on or before the Application Submission date, the circumstances of any possible conflict of interest or what could be perceived as a possible conflict of interest between the Applicant, and any one of OCIF, Calgary Economic Development, The City of Calgary, or the Government of Alberta. OCIF may reject any Application where, in the opinion of OCIF, the Applicant is or could be perceived to be in a conflict of interest.

9. Applicant Expenses

The Applicant is responsible for all costs of preparing and presenting its Application.

10. Purpose of the Project and Deliverables

OCIF is searching for Calgary Companies in targeted sectors that are looking to upskill and train High Skilled Employees in STEM Specialized, Technical, or Professional Skills over a period of one year. Selection of successful Applicants is in the sole discretion of OCIF.

Projects must start by January 1st, 2025 the latest, and end no later than December 31st 2025.

11. Funding

OCIF may provide up to \$500,000 in funding to eligible Calgary Companies for High Skilled Trainees completing Instructional Training Hours during the Project period:

- Up to \$10,000 (up to \$20,000 for Calgary Companies in the Aerospace sector) per High Skilled Trainee supported during the Project period as evidenced by certificate of completion, badge, or similar proof of training completion. Funding rates vary depending on a combination of factors such as program delivery cost, method of delivery, program development costs, etc. and are determined by the Selection Committee in its sole discretion at time of Application evaluation.
- OCIF only funds training and upskilling programs once per High Skilled Employee.
- Eligible costs for the In-House Training Stream include but are not limited to: in-house instructor hiring or training, programming development and materials, textbooks or software, other required materials directly relevant to the training course and distinct from materials required to run the Calgary Company's business.
- Instructional Training Hours can be met through a combination of multiple courses.
- OCIF is a milestone-based program, and funding is only disbursed upon validation by OCIF of targets achieved. Milestone periods may be no more frequent than quarterly and not less frequent than annually.

- Calgary Companies must commit to deliver a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of fifty (50) High Skilled Trainees over one year. Targets specific to each Calgary Company are agreed to prior to the start of the Project
- OCIF can only fund up to 50 per cent of eligible Calgary Project costs. For more details about Project costs and sources of funding, please refer to Budget and Funding Section of Appendix C.

12. Project Budget and Funding Requirements

The Project Budget structure will be considered and negotiated as part of the evaluation process in selecting Calgary Companies for funding under this CFA. Please indicate the required funding and Project expenses as part of the electronic Application per Appendix C.

13. Submission and Process

Interested Applicants will provide a written submission via the OCIF Express web portal as outlined in Appendix C below:

OCIF Express – In-House Training Stream Application portal:

https://webportalapp.com/sp/ocif_xp_training

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the OCIF Express email inbox, Subject line: “OCIF Express – In-House Training Stream” for more information.

Email: ocifexpress@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

Subject line: “OCIF Express – In-House Training Stream”

OCIF will follow the below process:

1. OCIF will issue the CFA and open Applications for suitable applicants.
2. Review Applicants and prepare a final list of qualified Calgary Companies.
3. Set up interviews with short-listed Applicants and Selection Committee.
4. Liaise between Applicants and Selection Committee.
5. Perform reference and background checks.
6. Ongoing review by the Selection Committee.
7. Finalize arrangements with the Applicant including negotiation and execution of the required Contribution Agreement.

14. Application Evaluation Criteria

Applicants should be aware that certain mandatory requirements have been set out in the ‘Evaluation criteria’ in Appendix A. Applications that fail to provide these requirements, in OCIF’s

sole discretion, may not be evaluated or if evaluated may not be approved for funding. All funding decisions are at the sole discretion of OCIF and additional criteria may be considered.

15. Submission and Process

Applications, including responses to the questions outlined in Appendix C must be received via the OCIF Express Application portal by Friday, November 8th, 2024, at 16:00 hrs. (“**Deadline**”):

OCIF Express Application portal: https://webportalapp.com/sp/ocif_xp_training

- OCIF may determine not to consider any Applications that:
 - Are received after the Deadline;
 - Do not comply with CFA criteria; and
 - Are delivered in a form other than the OCIF Express application portal.
- After the Deadline, OCIF may post the names of the successful Applicants.
- At any time, to add, delete or modify this CFA and the timelines listed in Item 45 above, if applicable, and to have the Applicants advise OCIF of the effect of such changes on their Application and/or have any Applicants supplement or resubmit their Applications in light of same;

16. No Further Contract or Liability Arising from CFA Process

By submitting an Application, the Applicant acknowledges and agrees that:

- Nothing in this CFA nor the submission of the Application nor the review and consideration of the Application by OCIF, nor any communication between the parties in relation to the CFA or the Application, operate to obligate any party to enter into any further business relationship with the other party and, in particular, if OCIF decides to engage the Applicant in connection with the subject matter of its Application then such engagement will only result in a legal obligation pursuant to a written agreement that has been signed by both parties and, absent such written agreement, OCIF will have no liability or obligation to the Applicant in connection with the subject matter of this CFA;
- The Applicant is participating in this CFA process at its sole risk and expense, and OCIF will not be liable to the Applicant for any costs, expenses or liabilities incurred by the Applicant in any way arising in connection with the Applicant's participation, including submission of an Application or discussions thereafter;
- OCIF has made no representations other than those expressly stated in this CFA;
- OCIF has the right to cancel this CFA at any time and to reissue it for any reason whatsoever or decide not to reissue it for any reason, without incurring any liability and an Applicant will not have any claim against OCIF as a consequence; and
- The Application and any accompanying documentation submitted by the Applicant will become the property of OCIF and will not be returned.

APPENDIX A – EVALUATION

To be considered as an eligible Calgary Company, the Applicant will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Criteria
1) Calgary Company that delivers a minimum of five and a maximum of 50 High Skilled Trainees over the course of one year
2) Conducts innovative Projects in OCIF’s Key Sectors that advance Calgary’s position as a global innovation hub: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Energy Transition • Ag/AgTech • Life Sciences/Health • Aerospace • Advanced Manufacturing/Logistics • Creative Economy/Digital Industries
3) Additional sources of funding secured by the Calgary Company.
4) A portion of the High Skilled Trainees are covered by Underrepresented Individuals.
5) Project will demonstrate economic benefit to Calgary in the form of incremental revenues for the Calgary SME
6) Total Instructional Training Hours proposed by the Project
7) Recognition and/or demonstration of equity, diversity, inclusion and social impact initiatives
8) Has long term plan for the sustainability of the Project post OCIF funding.

APPENDIX B – OCIF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Applicants

- Registered to do business in Alberta with, in the case of Calgary Companies in Key Sectors (except for aerospace), less than 500 employees globally, and any number of employees in the case of Calgary Companies in the aerospace sector.
- Cannot be an individual or a sole proprietorship
- Can be a for profit or a non-profit enterprise
- Can be locally, nationally or internationally based; and
- Can be a partnership, although a lead applicant must be identified.

Projects

- Aligned with the Calgary economic action plan, *Uplook* (Council approved);
- Catalytic, innovative, and stimulate the local economy;
- Located within the city of Calgary boundaries;
- Create economic benefits that must be realized in Calgary;
- Create jobs in Calgary; and
- Evaluated against OCIF Express - Assessment Evaluation Criteria as found in Appendix A.

Funding Sources

- Applicants must have significant interest in the Project;
- Leveraging other public and private funds. For Applicants in the aerospace sector, OCIF cannot fund Calgary Companies that are currently receiving or have received funding through Government of Alberta programs for the Project; and,
- Maximum funding: 50 per cent of Project cost with a cap in Project funding up to \$500,000.

APPENDIX C – WRITTEN RESPONSES

PLEASE REVIEW THE OCIF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA LISTED IN APPENDIX B PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM ON THE OCIF WEBSITE

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED AS A GUIDE TO THE ELECTRONIC APPLICATION FORM.

A. Profile

1. Provide the full legal name and address of the Calgary Company applying for consideration.
2. Provide the full names, emails, and direct telephone numbers for the Calgary Company's main contact.
3. Provide total number of employees in Calgary, Canada, and globally.

B. Application**a. Eligibility Criteria.**

- Applicant must acknowledge that:
 - Applicant meets all requirements for this OCIF Express intake as communicated in this CFA and on the OCIF Website.
 - Applicant is registered to do business in Alberta.
 - Has premises for Project within the city of Calgary boundaries.
 - Project benefits are realized in Calgary
 - Funds will not be used for general working capital, communications, marketing or public relations, or transferred to subsidiaries, controlling entities, or other entities of the Applicant;
 - Calgary Company is not looking for start-up costs (i.e., market research, product development, prototype production).
 - Calgary Company currently operates in Calgary.
 - OCIF is currently only funding Calgary Companies that are either headquartered or have significant operational presence in Calgary.
 - Your organization must fall under one of the following OCIF's Key Sectors:
 - a. Clean Energy Transition
 - b. Ag/Agtech
 - c. Life Sciences/Health
 - d. Aerospace
 - e. Advanced Manufacturing/Logistics
 - f. Creative Economy/Digital Industries

C. Brief Project Summary

- Provide a brief description of the Project, why OCIF funding is needed, what is the gap in training in Applicant's High Skilled Employees, and how the funding would be used to address this gap.
- Address how the funding will have an economic impact (internal and external to your company) and accelerate innovation in Calgary.
- Start and end date of the Project. The Project cannot be longer than one year.

D. Location Summary

- Provide address of the Calgary Company.
- Indicate whether the above facility location will be the location of the Project activities. If not, please indicate the proposed location.

E. In-House Training Plan Creation

Applicants can meet the Instructional Training Hours through multiple courses. Please provide high level information regarding the training types to be delivered as part of the Project described in the Application including:

- Training Course name or description
- Target profile of High Skilled Employees receiving the training
- Number of High Skilled Trainees supported
- Area of Expertise
- Training type: Upskilling, Reskilling
- Number of hours required to complete the training
- Timeline to complete the training
- Location of High Skilled Trainees (must be Calgary based)
- Percentage of training offered to existing employees
- Percentage of training offered to net new employees
- Percentage of training offered to Underrepresented Individuals
- Delivery Method (Virtual, In person, Hybrid)
- Proof of training completion
- Please upload a Word file describing the training course and course objectives, including details about the Trainer

Applicant can add up to 10 training types. Should more training types be required, please upload this additional information in a Word file in the application form under the link "Upload In-House Training Plan Here"

Examples of skills eligible for training include but are not limited to:

- Cyber Security
- CRM and GIS software
- 3D Modeling
- Data Analysis and Storytelling
- AI/Machine Learning
- UX/UI
- Agile Software Development
- Autonomous Systems
- Project Management
- Critical Thinking
- Analytical Skills
- Interpersonal Communication,
- Leadership.

F. Benefits to Calgary

1) Economic Benefits

Indicate an estimate of the incremental Applicant revenue from Project start date for the next three years as a result of the training offered during the Project. For example, will training offered to Geomatics Engineers in Cloud ultimately allow the Calgary Company to engage a client in a new contract valued at \$2M?

2) Environmental, Social, Governance & Indigenous (ESGI) considerations

Indicate whether your organization normally reports on ESGI metrics, and if so, which components are the primary focus of the reporting.

3) Social impact

Indicate whether your organization partakes in activities that create social impact for Calgary. Explain how OCIF funding would affect your organization's ability to partake in social impact activities.

G. Additional Organization Information

- List C-Suite, other key Executive Officers, Board of Directors and key staff along with their titles.
- List performance service providers (legal counsel, auditors, financial institutions).

Budget and Funding

Provide details on the Project costs and sources of funding, both confirmed and unconfirmed. Please note that sources of funding and Project costs must balance each other out.

A. Sources of Funding. Indicate all the sources of funding for the Project. These can include but are not limited to: Applicant's contributions, grants from the provincial and federal governments, and funding from third party sources.

- a. Loans and in-kind contributions are not calculated as sources of funding.
- b. Applicant must indicate whether the sources of funding included in the budget are confirmed or pending.
- c. Applicant must provide details on the funding sources listed above (e.g. issuing organization, main terms and conditions of funding, purpose of funding, portion of funding not yet received, etc.)
- d. Applicant must provide details on whether they have received or are currently receiving funding from any Government of Alberta programs.

- i. For Projects in the aerospace sector only. OCIF cannot fund Applicants that have received or are currently receiving Government of Alberta funding related to the Project.

Project Costs

- **Applicant shall indicate Project costs for the duration of the Project related to but not limited to:**
 - Project direct labour, contractors, direct materials, programming/training delivery, equipment, general administrative, and other direct costs. Applicant can add other cost categories as needed.
 - Ineligible costs include but are not limited to:
 - Communications, marketing or public relations.
 - Working capital
 - Market research
 - Prototype development.
 - OCIF will not fund more than 50 per cent of the total Calgary Project costs.
- **Documentation to be provided in this section**
 - Financial Statements, including balance sheet, income statement, and statement of cash flows for the past 2 fiscal years.
 - Interim Financial Statements for the most recent fiscal quarter.
 - Pro-Forma Income Statement for the duration of the Project (template to be provided by OCIF in the application portal).

APPENDIX D – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

OCIF has non-negotiable terms and conditions in place that will apply to all successful Applicants. OCIF requires for all Applicants to familiarize themselves with these terms and conditions to ensure alignment prior to submitting an Application.

The Contribution Agreement Key Terms containing a summary of the above can be found in <https://www.opportunitycalgary.com/OCIFexpress> OCIF may require modifications to its template to adhere to Applicant's Project.

APPENDIX E – REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

OCIF is a milestone-based program that requires beneficiaries to provide progress reports at time of milestone completion evidencing achievement of outcomes. Depending on pool of funding for each Project, upon receipt of a complete report, review and outcomes validation, OCIF either processes payment internally or submits a request for funds to the City of Calgary, who then disburses the funds related to the relevant milestones to successful Applicants. Additionally, OCIF also requires successful Applicants to provide quarterly reports indicating progress of metrics achieved and forecasted.

OCIF requires for all applicants to review the Contribution Agreement Key Terms to ensure Applicant will be able to deliver on the reports should your application be successful.