

## **B.C. Fast Pilot Program Guidelines**

### ***A program delivered jointly by NRC IRAP & Innovate BC***

The need to test and demonstrate new technology operating under real world conditions is a common challenge for small to medium sized companies (SMEs) aiming to commercialize new technologies. A pilot implementation is an essential but often capital-intensive step for companies to progress from prototype stage to commercialization. The B.C. Fast Pilot Program is designed to support SMEs through this important step by helping them measure the value of their solution within a pilot installation.

#### **Program Description**

The implementation of a pilot installation is a key mechanism SMEs can use to prove the value of an innovative technology to potential customers. The B.C. Fast Pilot Program is for B.C.-based SMEs developing technologies that have passed the prototype stage and now require real-world pilot project validation to demonstrate the value of their innovation to potential customers.

Support is available to SMEs to design, build and operate a pilot plant or small demonstration of their technology in real-world conditions to prove the impact of their product, measure the value of their solution and encourage customer adoption. The goal of the B.C. Fast Pilot program is to facilitate the product sale of an SMEs product or service.

#### **Priority Focus Areas**

Priority areas include, but will not be limited to:

- Regional B.C. SMEs and pilot implementations/sites in B.C., especially outside the Lower Mainland.
- Pilot initiatives in the cleantech sector defined as processes, products, or services that reduce negative environmental impacts through significant energy efficiency improvements, the sustainable use of resources, or environmental protection activities.
- Pilot initiatives related to emergency management, and involving Indigenous communities or organizations

#### **Company Eligibility**

The program helps B.C. SMEs who have developed a prototype and are ready to take their technology and demonstrate it at a prospective customer site. An SME should have an early adopter or a potential customer identified.

An SME needs to contact an IRAP Industrial Technology Advisor (ITA) and meet eligibility criteria for NRC IRAP financial support including:

- Having separate legal status as an incorporated, for-profit SME in Canada with the objective to grow and generate profits
- Having less than 500 employees
- Operating legally in Canada, and specifically in B.C. for this program.

#### **Project Scope & Funding**

This program is funded by NRC IRAP and leveraged Innovate BC funding. The exact amount and ratio of funding per project will be determined on a case by case basis. Pilots may receive up to \$200,000 in joint funding for project, depending on available funds. SME's must be prepared to implement the solution and execute on the majority of the deliverables of their project by March 31, 2021.

Program Timeline:

- May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 - Expression of Interest submission deadline
- Mid-June, 2020 – Successful applicants invited to Full Proposal

## Project Description

A typical project will include design, construction, and operation of a pilot plant at a customer site, at the scale and duration sufficient to prove long term performance of technology. Examples of supportable project activities include, but are not limited to:

- Design and construction of pilot rig
- Site preparation
- Pilot plant commissioning, testing mechanical systems
- Operation of pilot plant
- Testing for stability, reliability, durability, components degradation
- Validation of product features and product performance
- Generating data to design a large scale/commercial installation
- Preparing reports and documentation
- Training of end user on the technology
- Data collection and recording

## Customer/Early Adopter

An SME should identify a potential customer or early adopter and ensure their agreement to operate a pilot installation at their site in real-world conditions. Preference will be given to projects where the SME has a MOU/Letter of intent to implement a full-scale system deployment if the pilot meets their acceptance criteria.

## Supportable Costs

This is a cost-shared pilot program delivered in partnership with NRC IRAP and Innovate BC. Depending on the needs of the project, B.C. Fast Pilot funding can support SME technical salaries, contractor fees, capital costs, travel and other necessary costs incurred during the Project implementation.

## How will the Project success will be measured?

Baseline data will be collected as part of the application process and projects will be expected to report on critical metrics & KPIs after the pilot to assess success. Examples include, but are not limited to: whether the pilot implementation resulted in a purchase agreement, key benefits to customer/adopter, jobs created, new investments and revenues created for B.C. SMEs.

## General Inquiries or Support

All general inquiries and/or requests for B.C. Fast Pilot support should be directed to Innovate BC ([programs@innovatebc.ca](mailto:programs@innovatebc.ca)) or an IRAP ITA. Eligible companies without an ITA should [contact IRAP](#) to find an appropriate advisor in their region.

## How to Apply

The application process is two-step:

1. SMEs must request an “*Expression of interest for B.C. Fast Pilot*” form from their IRAP ITA. It is highly recommended that SMEs work with their ITA to fill out the form to ensure all requirements are met. Completed forms will be reviewed and submitted by the ITA to the B.C. Fast Pilot Joint Review Committee (JRC), which consists of representatives from both IRAP and Innovate BC. Submitted projects will be screened, evaluated, and selected by the JRC.
2. Successful applicants are invited to submit a full IRAP project proposal. The SME works with their ITA to develop a full proposal according to standard IRAP practices.

For more information on finding a local ITA visit:

<https://nrc.canada.ca/en/support-technology-innovation/nrc-irap-advisory-services>