ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program

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Program Information and Eligibility Requirements

Overview and Benefits

The ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program supports standalone small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME) projects and SME collaborations with industry partners and/or public sector organizations such as municipalities, healthcare facilities, public utilities for testing and validation activities using the ENCQOR 5G Innovation Platform as a Service (iPaaS) testbed in order to develop or advance new technologies, products, processes and services.

The ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program is delivered by OCI in partnership with Innovation ENCQOR on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.

Benefits to the SME Applicant
• Accelerate time to market by providing access to a pre-commercial 5G wireless platform • Develop, prototype, test and demonstrate on a standards-based Innovation Platform as a Service (iPaaS) testbed • Connect with ENCQOR 5G anchor firm partners, customers and ecosystem services

How Funding Works

Program Contribution	50% (maximum) of total eligible project costs, up to $50 000
SME Applicant Company Contribution	50% (minimum) of total eligible project costs (i.e. minimum 1:1 match to federal government contribution)
Example	Total eligible project costs $100,000 • Maximum federal government contribution: $50,000 • Minimum industry partner contribution: $50,000 cash
Funding Recipient	SME Applicant Company
Institutional Overhead	Not applicable

As part of the ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program application, SMEs can also apply for an ENCQOR 5G Talent*Edge* Internship as part of the application process, subject to meeting the eligibility requirements. Further details on the Internship Program are available.

Eligibility Requirements

SME Applicant Company

- An Innovation-Driven Enterprise (IDE), using or developing technology innovation or innovative processes for competitive advantage in provincial, national and/or global markets

- For-profit, incorporated in Ontario or Canada, and has a valid CRA business number
- A small-to-medium size enterprise (SME - less than 500 employees), with a validated innovative product/service.
- Has operations with R&D and/or manufacturing in Ontario related to the project
- Has 50 per cent or more of its full-time employees located as their ordinary place of work in Ontario.
- Has the intent and potential to apply, exploit and/or commercialize the results of the project for the economic benefit of Ontario.
- Has the necessary expertise and resources to put the project into effect within an appropriate time frame
- In good financial and reporting standing with OCI
- Companies with over $500,00 f OCI funding in their lifetime (inclusive of current application), will be required to obtain OCI approval before a new application for funding is initiated
- Awardees MUST agree to cooperate with OCI in the development of case studies [a requirement of the program]

Strategic Partner (if applicable)

- SME applicant companies may choose to apply in collaboration with a strategic partner company. **A Strategic Partnership is not mandatory.**
- A strategic partner could be a private industry partner and/or public sector organizations such as municipalities, healthcare facilities, public utilities.
- The strategic partner company should represent a significant potential commercial partner/strategic client for the proposed innovative product/service.
- The SME and strategic partner MUST have an arm's-length business relationship.

Project

- Technology Readiness Level 1-7
- Supports testing and validation activities using the ENCQOR 5G iPaaS testbed at one of three hub locations in Ontario:
    - MaRS (Toronto)
    - Communitech (Waterloo)
    - Invest Ottawa (Ottawa)
- Solution should be highly innovative or disruptive, by providing a novel, or radically different approach to solve a problem for their sector.
- Solution MUST be the basis for a globally competitive business and MUST offer good return on investment and benefits to Ontario (e.g. new revenues, job creation/retention, productivity improvement).

How to Apply

Application Process and Timelines

Program Status: ✓ Open for Applications (rolling intake)

1. If you are ready to start applying for the ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program click the button below to start the application process.

   *The SME Applicant Company should click this button when ready to apply for funding. Companies who wish to find out more about other OCI programs, should submit a generic Client Intake Form.

   Please note: completion of this form does not constitute an application for funding. A Business Development Manager (BDM) will contact you within two business days to discuss the opportunity. If you are already working with a BDM, please indicate this in the form.

2. Once the BDM confirms that the opportunity is suitable for the program, you will be sent a link to OCI's online application system, AccessOCI.
3. Complete the online application form and upload the required supporting documents.

   - Required supporting documents:

     - Resumes/CVs from relevant team members
     - Letter of support from strategic partner company (to be included only if a Strategic Partner is engaged with the project)
     - Company profile from strategic partner company (to be included only if a Strategic Partner is engaged with the project)

   For assistance, please see the following resources:

   - Sample application form (for reference purposes only)
   - OCI's Knowledge Base (Frequently Asked Questions)

4. Request your BDM to provide an endorsement of the application. **The endorsement must be requested at least one week prior to submission.** Once the endorsement is provided, the applicant or BDM will then be able to submit the application.
5. OCI will internally review the application within approximately one week for eligibility, completeness and eligible expenses. A list of any deficiencies will be sent to the applicant for revision.
6. When the application is endorsed as eligible and complete by OCI's internal team the application will be sent for review by external, subject matter experts as well as the ATP Review Committee which includes program partner organizations, Ciena, Ericsson Canada, Thales, CENGN and IBM Canada.
   The ENCQOR 5G members of the ATP Review Committee will assess the feasibility of the project given iPaaS capabilities and resources. They may reach out to the applicant to request further information or clarification at this stage if needed.
7. Applicants will be notified of OCI funding decision by email.

8. Once the application is approved, the Applicant SME Company will be forwarded a copy of the OCI/Innovation ENCQOR Demonstration Program funding agreement with an embedded copy of the submitted application, and the iPaaS Access Agreement for execution.
    - Please note: both agreements are non-negotiable.

Reference Documents

- Sample application template - this sample application template is for informational purposes only. Applications are only accepted through OCI's online system where full application requirements are listed.
- OCI/Innovation ENCQOR Demonstration Project funding agreement
- iPaaS access Agreement
- Eligible Expenses

Assessment Process and Criteria

The ENCQOR 5G Demonstration Program is a discretionary, non-entitlement program with limited funding. All eligible applications undergo a review process where the applications are assessed against program objectives and assessment criteria. Not all eligible applications will be approved for funding.

Applications are internally reviewed for eligibility, completeness and financial compliance, prior to evaluation by external reviewers with domain expertise from academia and industry, and the Advanced Technology Platform (ATP) Review Committee which includes program partner organizations, Ciena, Ericsson Canada, Thales, CENGN and IBM Canada.

As part of the ATP review process the application will be reviewed by the ENCQOR technical committee made up of representatives from ENCQOR 5G Anchor Firms whose technology is integrated into the iPaaS testbed. The technical committee will examine the technical feasibility of the project and compatibility with the testbed infrastructure to ensure that the project will be able to leverage the iPaaS testbed.

Projects that are unable to utilize the ENCQOR 5G iPaaS testbed are not eligible for funding under this program.

All reviewers are bound by confidentiality agreements. The final funding decision is made by OCI and Innovation ENCQOR.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated against assessment criteria including:

- Clarity of the SME challenge, significance of the opportunity, and expected economic benefit to the SME and Ontario (e.g. new revenues, job creation/retention, productivity improvements)
- Ability of the innovation to address the SME challenge and the role/benefit of the access to the iPaaS testbed
- Expertise and experience of the team members, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and evidence of collaboration
- Clarity, feasibility and appropriateness of the project plan and budget
- Evidence of next steps, and clear strategy and capacity to bring the results to market and/or implement at the company
- Overall quality and completeness of the application

Project Activation, Funds and Reporting

Project Activation

- Upon approval of a project for funding, OCI will activate the project in the AccessOCI system.

Flow of Funds

- Upon activation, the SME Applicant Company can begin to accrue project related costs for reimbursement. The program award will be disbursed by a claims and reimbursement model. Funds will flow to the applicant from Innovation ENCQOR. For example:

Program award amount	$50,000
SME Applicant Company contributions	Minimum $50,000
Funds released upon project activation	$0
Funds released by Innovation ENCQOR through the claims and reimbursement process to be administered by OCI	$50,000

  - Project funding will not be release until the project is activated and the first claims report has been approved. OCI and program partners will not be held responsible for any expenses incurred for the project prior to activation. If for any reason the requirements for activation are not met within thirty (30) days from the date of release of the approval notification, the funding offer may be retracted.

- The final reimbursement claim will be released by Innovation ENCQOR upon project completion and receipt of the following: applicant final progress and financial reports, outcomes.

Project Reporting

The following project reports will be required.

Please note that completion of all required reports is a contractual obligation to receive funding for this program.

Interim Progress and Claim Report(s)

Interim report(s), including progress, proof of expenditures, financial attestation, and a request for reimbursement may be submitted at the three, six and 12-month intervals of the project (dependent on the project duration) – by applicant company only.

Copies of detailed reporting instructions will be sent to successful applicants upon project activation. The report must be received and approved by OCI and Innovation ENCQOR prior to release of funds by Innovation ENCQOR for eligible claims.

Note: Applicants MUST retain all proof of purchases, receipts, and other relevant documentation relating to eligible expenses. These should be included in the Interim Progress and Claim Report.

Final Reports

Forty-five (45) days prior to the scheduled completion date, the Applicant will receive a notification of the project end date from OCI's AccessOCI system, with a link to the Final Project Report should the Applicant wish to begin entering data. If an extension to complete the project is required, the Applicant must request it prior to the scheduled project completion date, using the Project Administration tab in their AccessOCI project file. A maximum extension of [three] months will be allowable.

On the scheduled project completion date, the Applicant will receive notification and a link to complete a Final Project Report (including progress, financials and metrics) from OCI's AccessOCI system. Reports must be received and approved by OCI within 30 days of project completion.

All required final reports by all partners must be submitted within 30 days of project completion in order to release the final reimbursement payment and maintain good financial standing with OCI.

Project Metrics

If the project continues past a fiscal year end (March 31), the Applicant will be required to complete an annual Metrics survey each April, for the part of the project that has been completed since the previous March 31. This annual report is mandatory for OCI to fulfil its contract with its funding Ministries. Required metrics reports from all partners must be submitted in order to maintain good financial standing with OCI.

Retrospective Survey

At one, two, and three years after project completion, the applicant will be sent a link to complete a retrospective survey to collect data on commercial outcomes from the project. This information is required by OCI for assessment of program impact and continuous improvement.

Project Changes

- The applicant must contact the Program Manager for any material change in the project, including but not limited to changes related to the applicant company, the strategic partner, scope of work or eligible expenses, when they are identified.

- For any variances to the funded budget of $5,000 or greater, or extensions to the project end date, the applicant must complete a Project Change Request form prior to the project end date, using the Project Administration tab in their AccessOCI project file.

Contacts

Search OCI's Knowledge Base of Frequently Asked Questions.

For further questions regarding program guidelines, eligibility, and submitting the online application, please contact your OCI Business Development Manager or:

For other inquiries, please contact:

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