

**STRATFORD INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY**

Know the Money (And Where to Find It).

A GUIDE FOR WHERE TO FIND AND APPLY FOR FUNDING FOR YOUR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual Property (IP) is important, but it can quickly get expensive, which is why it is critical to be able to identify smart ways to allocate your funds to maximize your ROI.

Know the Money is your go-to resource for identifying funding opportunities that can help you invest in and grow your IP strategically.

At a Glance.

Executive Summary

Building a strong intellectual property (IP) strategy shouldn't be out of reach for small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs). Budget limitations are a reality, but they don't have to stand in the way of securing the valuable protection that IP provides. By tapping into cost-effective funding sources, savvy organizations can safeguard their innovations while setting the stage for growth.

Know the Money is designed to help you navigate the current funding landscape and identify opportunities to extend your IP budget. With up-to-date information and practical insights, this guide supports your efforts to implement an IP strategy that protects your interests, fuels your business objectives, and evolves alongside your growth.

About Stratford Intellectual Property

Stratford Intellectual Property, a division of Stratford Group, is a full-service patent and trademark agency that offers end-to-end IP services covering all types of IP. Our virtual IP department service is offered on a monthly subscription basis where our cross-functional team of IP experts collaborate to proactively and pragmatically develop and implement your IP strategy. We work with you to ensure it stays in sync with your business objectives to maximize value and reduce risks. Equipping your team with hands-on support, Stratford Intellectual Property delivers you peace of mind as it relates to your intellectual property.

At Stratford, we're here to help you maximize the resources you have — and leverage additional funding opportunities to build a stronger, more sustainable path forward.

How to Use This Resource

Leverage our Expertise

The process of identifying and applying for funding can be an overwhelming process. This guide is organized to help you quickly scan for opportunities, identify next steps, and move forward with clarity.

To get the most out of this guide:

- **Explore:** Review available funding programs and supports that may align with your IP initiatives.
- **Evaluate:** Consider eligibility criteria, timelines, and fit with your business objectives.
- **Engage:** Reach out to Stratford if you'd like expert support in mapping your project to the right funding opportunities and strengthening your applications.

Our team can help you scope your projects, align with program requirements, and develop strong proposals that increase your chances of success — making the most of your time, resources, and IP investment.

***Please note that not all programs listed are available/seeking applicants on an ongoing basis. We invite you to reach out to a member of our team to help determine your options.**

Find the Sources. Fund Your Ideas. Fuel Your Growth.

Identifying the right funding sources can make the difference between setting aside great ideas — and bringing them to life. From tax credits and grants to advisory support programs, there are resources available to help you grow, protect, and scale your intellectual property investments.

Use this guide as a starting point to discover options that fit your goals — and remember, Stratford is here to help you every step of the way.

Book Your Free Consultation

Not sure where to start?

Schedule a free, no-obligation consultation with Stratford's IP funding experts. We'll help you assess your options, prioritize opportunities, and map out a strategy to extend your IP budget — and your impact.

LET'S TALK



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<https://www.stratford.group/full-service-ip-agency>



IP plays a critical role in exploiting the growth and innovation potential of businesses. An IP strategy for your business can help extract value from existing products and services, create new revenue streams and raise capital.

— GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Sources

Additional information and source materials can be found at the links provided in the contact information box

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/innovation-canada/en>

**KNOW THE MONEY is an ongoing publication that is researched by our Intellectual Property team, collecting the most relevant funding options available to Canadian businesses and organizations. We do our best to maintain the accuracy of the information collected within, however, some programs may close or change unexpectedly.

DATE OF LATEST RELEASE: 06/25

NRC IRAP IP Assist

NRC IRAP IP Assist helps Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) leverage intellectual property to protect and commercialize their innovations. Delivered through the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP), IP Assist offers both advisory services and funding support. The program helps companies increase IP awareness, develop actionable IP strategies, and implement prioritized IP activities to strengthen their competitive position and fuel business growth.

AT A GLANCE:



Canada



Rolling / Ongoing intake



[Visit the website for more details](#)



Combination Advisory Services & Reimbursement Grant

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply

- Incorporated, profit-oriented SMEs in Canada
- Companies with 500 or fewer full-time equivalent employees
- Companies pursuing growth and profit through the development and commercialization of innovative, technology-driven products, services, or processes

What activities are supported

- Activities that build IP awareness
- Development of formal IP strategies
- Execution of prioritized IP activities aligned with commercialization and business objectives

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Level 1 – Awareness:

- Access to NRC IRAP's network of advisors, resources, and partner organizations to improve understanding of IP best practices and how to safeguard innovations.

Level 2 – Strategy:

- Access to IP experts to help develop an IP strategy aligned with business goals, provide insight on the IP landscape, and prioritize IP actions.

Level 3 – Action:

- Funding to help execute priority IP actions identified in the IP strategy (drafting and prosecution fees are not eligible).

REQUIREMENTS

- Must be an existing NRC IRAP client or apply to become one.
- Submit a request aligned with a clearly developed and approved IP strategy.
- All proposed IP activities must be documented and justified in the submission.

FUNDING

- Levels 1 and 2: Advisory-based, no direct funding.
- Level 3 (Action): Funding available to support execution of prioritized IP activities (amount varies based on scope and approved project).

Innovation Asset Collective (IAC)

IAC is a not-for-profit membership-based organization that helps SMEs in cleantech strengthen their IP strategy and build competitive, defensible IP portfolios. A key pillar of Canada's national IP strategy, IAC provides both education and financial support. Through this program, IAC offers funding to support IP activities that advance members' business strategies and commercial objectives; it also seeks to improve gender and diversity representation in the Canadian IP landscape.

AT A GLANCE:



Canada



Multiple submission rounds per year; deadlines posted on the IAC website.



[Visit the website for more details](#)



Combination Advisory Services & Reimbursement Grant

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply

- IAC members only (two membership tiers):
 - Full Members: SMEs in the data-driven cleantech sector with <500 employees
 - Associate Members: Early-stage companies in the data-driven cleantech sector with <25 employees and <\$500K annual revenue
- Must be a Canadian SME working in data-driven cleantech (as defined by IAC).
- Must demonstrate alignment between IP strategy and business/commercialization objectives.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

- IP Grant Program: Financial support to fund IP activities that align with and advance the business strategy of the member organization.
- IP Credit (Membership Benefit): Annual IAC membership fees can be used as credit/reimbursement towards IP spend for services such as trademark and patent filings, legal fees, IP software tools, and IP consulting.
- 3 Dedicated Programs: Full Member Grant Program, Associate Member Grant Program, Women in IP Grant stream — a portion of funding is reserved for women-led companies.
- Additional Resources: IP education and training, access to IP landscape tools and software, community of practice events.

REQUIREMENTS

- Must be an active IAC member in good standing.
- Submit an IAC Grant Application demonstrating:
 - Alignment of requested funding with IP strategy.
 - Expected business impact.
 - Fit with IAC's mandate to advance IP portfolios in the data-driven cleantech space.

FUNDING

- Full Member Grant: Up to \$20,000 per grant.
- Associate Member Grant: Up to \$10,000 per grant.
- Dedicated percentage of funding reserved for women-led companies.
- Funding must be used for eligible IP-related activities.

Intellectual Property Ontario (IPON)

IPON offers trusted IP support and services tailored to the needs of Ontario-based innovators. The program is designed to help businesses strategically protect and leverage their IP to fuel commercialization and growth. Through a two-tiered support structure, IPON provides education, funding, and hands-on assistance to help companies integrate IP into their business strategies and scale competitively.

AT A GLANCE:



Ontario



Continuous intake



[Visit the website for more details](#)



Combination Advisory Services & Reimbursement Grant

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants Must:

- Be Ontario-based SMEs with >500 employees and intend to grow the business in Ontario long-term
- Operate in one of the following sectors: Health technology, Life sciences, Artificial intelligence, Vehicle technology, Mining technology, Agriculture and food technology, Clean economy technology, Advanced manufacturing (if technology relates to the above sectors)
- Own IP or be an exclusive licensee intending to commercialize/monetize it in Ontario
- Demonstrate the potential for social or economic benefit to Ontario
- Have financial capacity to protect and commercialize IP with IPON support

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Tier 1 Services: Eligible companies can access foundational services designed to improve their IP awareness and readiness.

- IP education (online resources, learning modules)
- IP benchmarking (assessment of IP maturity and positioning)
- IP events and workshops
- Client Q&A sessions (interactive sessions with IPON staff and experts)
- IP coaching (deeper one-on-one guidance for select clients)

Tier 2 Services: Tier 2 clients have access to all Tier 1 services (excluding IP coaching) and may also receive direct financial support to advance their IP strategy.

- IP survey (assessment of the company's IP portfolio and opportunities)
- Development of an IP strategy (customized roadmap aligned to business goals)
- IP registration (patent, trademark, industrial design filings)
- Contractual support (support for licensing, IP-related agreements, and contracts)
- Initial IP-related disbursements (support for costs such as search fees, filing fees, etc.)

Important Note: Funding is for forward-looking work only — costs related to litigation, taxes, subscriptions, or prior work are not eligible

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants must meet IPON's Eligibility By-Law
- Applications are assessed based on IP readiness and business stage
- An approved scope of work is required before any funding is disbursed
- Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis: clients pay their contribution first and submit proof of payment for reimbursement
- Services must be provided by licensed Ontario IP lawyers or registered patent agents

FUNDING

- Tier 1 Services are provided at no cost to eligible clients (does not require a funding application, but clients must be approved for Tier 1 services)
- Tier 2: Up to \$100,000 per year, lifetime cap of \$300,000
- Additional \$25,000 per year for equity-deserving groups
- 80% of eligible costs covered by IPON; clients pay at least 20% + HST

CanExport SMEs

CanExport is a competitive funding program designed to help Canadian SMEs diversify and expand into new global markets. The program shares the costs of international business development activities, reducing risk and encouraging growth. The program can be used to fund IP protection activities in target markets, including filing and professional services – a valuable tool for companies aiming to build a defensible position in new markets. It also supports a broader range of export-readiness activities such as market research, legal advice, and trade missions.

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply:

- Canadian SMEs that are for-profit, incorporated, and established in Canada
- Must have 1–500 full-time equivalent employees
- Must have \$100,000–\$100 million in annual revenue in their last complete fiscal year
- Must have meaningful economic ties to Canada and demonstrate ownership of the goods/services being exported

AT A GLANCE:

-  Canada
-  Specific intake windows as identified on program website
-  [Visit the website for more details](#)
-  Reimbursement Grant or Upfront Grant (discretionary)

Eligible activities include:

- IP protection activities in target markets (patent, trademark, copyright, industrial design applications; IP strategy development; database search; drafting & filing of IP documentation)
- Market entry and export diversification activities (International travel for market development, Participation in trade missions and events, Market research and intelligence, Legal, tax, and regulatory advice, Marketing material adaptation, Contractual adaptations (e.g. licensing agreements))

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

- Funding is available to cover up to 50% of approved project costs, with applicants funding the remaining 50%.
- IP-related activities are a fully supported category – including new IP protection in international markets and IP professional services (note that Canadian-based IP protection is ineligible).
 - Broader support covers:
 - Market entry preparation
 - Export risk reduction
 - Development of commercialization capacity abroad
- Companies may apply for one project per year, with a maximum of 5 new target markets per project (subject to restrictions).

REQUIREMENTS

- Must submit application via CanExport online portal (competitive, capped intake – program opens periodically)
- Required documentation:
 - Articles of incorporation
 - GST34 return or FPZ-500-V for Quebec applicants
- Must clearly demonstrate the project's contribution to export diversification and detail market readiness and commercialization plans.
- IP protection requests must align with an international market strategy and be new, forward-looking work (maintenance and renewal fees not eligible).
- Companies may apply for one project per year, with a maximum of 5 new target markets per project (subject to restrictions)

FUNDING

- Up to \$50,000 CAD per project (minimum \$10,000 request)
- Each project must have a total budget of \$20,000 to \$100,000 (50% applicant-funded, 50% CanExport-funded)
- Support is provided either via grant or contribution, at the program's discretion:
 - Contribution: Reimbursed after expenses are incurred
 - Grant: Full payment provided upfront after agreement signature
- Multiple projects across CanExport streams may not exceed \$99,999 in total per fiscal year per company.

CanExport Innovation

CanExport Innovation helps Canadian innovators pursue new collaborative international R&D partnerships for their IP-driven technologies. The program funds activities that support negotiating and formalizing new R&D partnerships—not conducting R&D itself. Through this support, Canadian companies and research organizations can advance global commercialization pathways, enhance their IP positioning, and accelerate market readiness. The program offers significant support for international IP protection and strategy work, along with other activities critical to securing high-value R&D alliances.

AT A GLANCE:

-  Canada
-  3 annual intakes (March 1, June 1, September 1).
-  [Visit the website for more details](#)
-  Upfront Grant

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply:

- Canadian SMEs (fewer than 500 employees)
- Canadian academic institutions
- Canadian non-government research centres

Eligible organizations must:

- Be registered in Canada with a valid CRA business number
- Own, co-own, or control IP rights for the proposed technology
- Have a prototype at TRL 4 or higher
- Intend to commercialize the technology within 5 years

Eligible activities include:

- Applying for IP protection in international markets
- IP strategy development (legal advice, drafting, IP search, filing)
- Negotiating collaborative R&D agreements
- Securing certifications required for the partnership
- Shipping technology for demonstrations
- Developing promotional materials for prospective partners
- Holding in-person or virtual meetings with pre-identified partners
- Conducting due diligence or drafting partnership agreements

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

- Key Focus: Support activities to pursue, negotiate, and formalize international R&D partnerships that advance IP commercialization and market entry.
- IP Support Includes:
 - Filing and registration of patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyright
 - IP legal advice (strategy, agreements, searches, filings)
 - Drafting non-disclosure agreements and white space analyses
 - IP-related translation and local market compliance work
- Broader Support Includes:
 - Travel for in-person meetings and R&D partnership discussions
 - Participation in virtual events targeting international R&D partners
 - Development of R&D partnership-oriented promotional materials
 - Consultant or legal services to support partnership negotiations
 - Certification costs directly linked to facilitating R&D partnerships

REQUIREMENTS

- Required documentation includes: Articles of incorporation (or equivalent proof of organization type), Proof of IP ownership/authority, Evidence of TRL 4+ prototype
- Written confirmation of interest from pre-identified foreign R&D partner(s)
- Applications must be well scoped and fully documented—competitive merit-based review applies.

FUNDING

- Up to \$75,000 per project, covering up to 75% of eligible costs.
- Applicants must contribute 25% of total project costs (in-kind contributions are not permitted).
- Grants (not contributions): funding is provided upfront once a funding agreement is signed.
- Projects are single-year and must align with the Government of Canada's fiscal year.

Important Notes:

- R&D work itself is not eligible for funding
- Funding for IP is limited to international markets where the R&D partnership is being pursued—Canadian-based IP protection is ineligible.

Indigenous Intellectual Property Program (IIPP)

The IIPP Grant supports Indigenous organizations with funding to strengthen education, awareness, and capacity related to IP, Indigenous Knowledge (IK), and Indigenous Cultural Expressions (ICEs). The program aims to make Canada's IP system more accessible to Indigenous Peoples and to empower them to strategically use IP to protect their innovations, creations, and traditional knowledge. Grants can also support participation in international IP discussions through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

AT A GLANCE:

-  Canada
-  Set intake periods as identified on the program website
-  [Visit the website for more details](#)
-  Grant
-  Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include:

- Indigenous organizations in Canada

Eligible activities include:

- Participation in WIPO sessions and events.
- Small-scale IP initiatives as well as more comprehensive IP-related projects.
- Education, awareness building, and capacity development activities related to IP, IK, and ICEs.
- Development of IP strategies, educational materials, protocols, training, research, or policy proposals.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

The IIPP Grant offers three distinct support streams designed to help Indigenous organizations understand, access, and leverage Canada's IP system, with a particular focus on IK and ICEs:

- **WIPO Travel:** Support for participation in WIPO sessions and events related to IP, IK, and ICEs.
- **Small-Scale Initiatives:** Funding for short-term, narrowly focused IP-related initiatives, including community-based education or awareness-building.
- **Projects:** Support for more complex or comprehensive IP-related projects requiring greater resources and longer timelines.

Primary focus areas across all streams:

- **Education:** Building understanding of IP and IP strategies for IK and ICEs.
- **Awareness:** Community-based initiatives and outreach to build broader awareness of IP in Indigenous contexts.
- **Capacity Building:** Strengthening skills and resources to empower Indigenous organizations to engage in IP-related work, both domestically and internationally.

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants must submit the appropriate application form depending on the stream:
 - WIPO Travel Stream Application
 - Small-Scale Initiative and Project Stream Application
- Applications must address eligibility requirements and merit criteria as outlined in the program guide.

FUNDING

- Total program funding: \$150,000 annually.
- Funding per stream:
- WIPO Travel: Up to \$6,000 per grant.
- Small-Scale Initiatives: Up to \$15,000 per grant.
- Projects: Up to \$50,000 per grant.
- Funding type: Non-repayable grant.
- Applicants may only apply for funding under one stream per application.
- Funding is administered on a competitive basis; applications are evaluated against merit criteria outlined in the program guide.

ElevateIP

ElevateIP is a federal funding initiative designed to help Canadian startups build, manage, and protect their IP assets. With \$90 million committed over four years, the program enables Business Accelerators and Incubators (BAIs) across Canada to offer customized IP services to startups. These services are aimed at helping companies understand their IP, craft strategic IP plans, and implement protections that align with their business goals. Managed through a network of selected BAIs, the program is part of Canada's broader National IP Strategy.

AT A GLANCE:

-  Canada - delivered regionally through designated BAIs
-  Ongoing until program funds are allocated. Annual intake aligned with federal fiscal year (April-March)
-  [Visit the website for more details](#)
-  Non-repayable funding, administered via BAIs (not direct -to-startup)
-  Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants Must:

- Canadian startups working with one of the ElevateIP program's designated Business Accelerators or Incubators (BAIs).
- Startups must demonstrate growth potential and an interest in developing an IP strategy.

Eligible Activities:

- Activities that build IP awareness and understanding
- Development of an IP strategy tailored to the business
- Implementation of IP protections such as filings, searches, and assessment

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Eligible activities fall under three main categories related to increasing IP capacity in Canada and assisting startups in developing and/or implementing their IP strategies:

- IP Education & Awareness: Workshops, webinars, conferences, and peer-to-peer sessions that build foundational IP knowledge
- IP Strategy Development: Tools, advisory support, and expert guidance to help startups identify and plan for the IP needs most critical to their commercialization path
- IP Strategy Implementation: Help executing the strategy, including conducting IP landscape analysis, filing patents or trademarks, and engaging professional IP services

REQUIREMENTS

- Startups cannot apply directly to ElevateIP but must work through one of the selected regional BAIs. These organizations assess startup readiness and coordinate support delivery.

FUNDING

- IP Strategy Development & Awareness Activities: Fully covered by ElevateIP (no cost to the startup)
- IP Strategy Implementation Activities: Requires a startup contribution of 10–35% of eligible costs
- Maximum support per startup: \$100,000
- Funding cannot be stacked with other government programs to exceed 100% of eligible costs.

Important Notes:

- Eligibility and implementation may vary from one BAI to another
- Support services are delivered in both English and French and are customized to the needs of individual startups.

Fast Track to Financing Program

The Fast-Track to Financing Program provides Canadian innovators with non-repayable funding of up to \$25,000 to enhance business or commercialization plans and attract future investment. While the program broadly supports development across Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4–9 for natural products and technologies, it recognizes the strategic importance of intellectual property planning in building a compelling commercialization strategy.

AT A GLANCE:

-  Canada
-  Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis
-  Natural Products Canada
-  [Visit the website for more details](#)
-  Reimbursement Grant

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply:

- Canadian-incorporated SMEs, start-ups, or academic research institutes
- Must be members of Natural Products Canada (NPC)

What's supported:

- Projects that enhance commercialization readiness of biologically-based innovations
- Activities must demonstrate technical feasibility, economic or societal impact, and potential for commercialization in Canada
- Eligible innovations must include a biological component (e.g. plant-based, microbial, insect-derived)—not IT or mechanical-only solutions

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

Eligible projects include activities relating to:

- Engagement of external experts or consultants to strengthen or revise business or commercialization plans
- Supported plan components may include:
 - Market, customer, and competitive analysis
 - Value proposition
 - Regulatory plan
 - Intellectual property strategy
 - Financial plan
 - Production plan
 - Sustainability assessment
- Projects must demonstrate potential for commercialization in Canada and broader ecosystem impact

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants must first undergo an eligibility assessment with NPC
- Full proposals are reviewed on an ongoing basis
- Applications must outline the rationale for external expertise and the role of the selected service providers
- A 5% administrative fee applies (not covered by funding)
- Reports and claims must be submitted quarterly

FUNDING

- Up to 40% of eligible expert/consultant costs, to a maximum of \$25,000
- Minimum NPC contribution of \$5,000
- Applicant must contribute at least 60% of total project costs
- NPC funding is non-dilutive and non-repayable
- Stacking limit: combined government funding must not exceed 75% of eligible costs for SMEs/start-ups, 100% for academic institutes
- Funding provided via reimbursement upon approval of quarterly reporting

Let's Stay in Touch.

EXPERT INSIGHTS TO STAY AHEAD

Innovation moves fast – and having the right insights can give you the edge you need. Our team tracks emerging IP trends, funding opportunities, and strategic shifts to help you stay ahead of the curve.

We're here to help you turn smart ideas into strong assets – and strong assets into real growth.

ABOUT STRATFORD

At Stratford, we believe better is possible, and it's our mission to help clients get there with better strategies, better processes, better technology, better intellectual property protection and better leadership. Our teams have years of practical business experience, and deliver customized solutions that help clients realize value, achieve results and build enduring capabilities. Capabilities that leave our clients in better positions to thrive and contribute to the prosperity and vibrancy of their organizations, their teams and their communities.

Join the Stratford Community

Get actionable insights—no fluff, just value. [Sign up](#) for updates that break down complex topics into practical takeaways.

Follow Us for Updates & Events

Stay informed about the latest resources, events, and expert perspectives. Follow us on LinkedIn to keep up with what's new.

Explore Key Resources

Our latest reports, frameworks, and best practices can help you think ahead. Check out our [resource library](#) on our website.

Take the Next Step

Ready to dive deeper into funding strategies and how Stratford can support your goals?

Explore our detailed guide: [Securing Funding For Your IP](#)

