

Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Entrepreneurs (RAISE) Grant 2022 Program Guidelines and FAQs

What is the RAISE Grant Program?

The Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Entrepreneurs (RAISE) program is a comprehensive grant initiative to support Indigenous, Black, and other racialized entrepreneurs in Ontario to start and scale their business. RAISE will provide access to business development training, culturally responsive support services and access to grant funding.

What are the objectives of the RAISE program?

- **Increase economic inclusion** by supporting the Indigenous, Black, and other racialized small business community with one-to-one culturally responsive services
- **Knowledge transfer** through relevant online training and business plan mentorship
- **Provide funding** to facilitate innovation and growth within the Indigenous, Black, and other racialized small business community (\$10,000 Grant)

Eligible Businesses

Who is eligible?

RAISE is open to applicants that meet the following requirements:

- Is a registered business in Ontario and/or is incorporated
- Employs 1-10 full time equivalent employees equivalent including sole proprietorship, and up to 25 employees for businesses in the hospitality sector
- Is NOT a franchise, including those individually owned and operated
- Is NOT a wholesaler or manufacturer
- Is NOT a not-for-profit or charitable organization

Owner is:

- Indigenous, Black, or other racialized individual (mandatory self-identification is required in the application)
- 18 years of age or older
- Canadian citizens or permanent residents currently living and operating their business in Ontario

Has completed the application process, which includes:

1. Initial application
2. Online training
3. 2 to 10 hours of Business Coaching
4. Completed Business Transformation Plan and Budget

Additional Notes

- May be a home-based business
- Owners with multiple businesses and/or locations may only apply for one grant
- French translation assistance will be available for applicants upon request

Eligible Expenses

Applicant Eligible Costs

- Fees for expertise/professional services (excluding owner/staff wages and salaries)
- Marketing and communications costs (e.g. print media, signage, promotional ads etc.)
- Costs related to digital transformation (e.g. website, digital marketing, software etc.)
- Travel costs necessary to attain business transformation plan objectives
- Capital costs including POS systems, small equipment, and tools
- Business related materials and supplies
- Knowledge development activities (e.g. training, certifications etc.)
- Costs related to attaining disability supports

Applicant Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs include but not limited to the following:

- Ongoing operational costs such as, but not limited to regular maintenance and insurance.
- Computers, cell phones, printers, or any generic electronics (some exceptions could be allowed)
- Acquisition of land, buildings, or vehicle purchase.
- Cost incurred prior to the Recipient's approval date.
- Refinancing, depreciation, or amortization expenses (payments to existing loans).
- Costs of intangible assets such as goodwill, whether capitalized or expensed. Hospitality or entertainment costs.
- Membership fees in a professional body.
- Any part of a lease agreements (monthly rent or first and last to secure a location)
- Inventory
- Items not fully paid for or not yet shipped.
- Non-incremental wages, owner(s) wages
- HST remittance.

How do I apply?

The application portal for RAISE program will open on **March 17, 2022**, and applications will continue to be accepted until **October 31st, 2022** (or until grant funds are exhausted).

If my business is awarded a grant what are my obligations?

- The grant funds must be used for the project as outlined in the BTP and spending must align with the budget
- A final report must be completed by the applicant and submitted on time along with all supporting expense receipts/documentation
- All applicants must comply with all applicable laws
- All applicants must acknowledge their business name and location will be disclosed to the Government for the purposes of preparing events/success stories

Where do I start?

Visit digitalmainstreet.ca/raise to begin the application process or email raise@obiaa.com.