Digital Transformation Grant 4.0 – How to Complete and Submit Your Application

Thank you for your interest in the Digital Main Street Digital Transformation Grant (DTG) program. This handout will walk you through how to apply for the DTG 4.0.

The application portal for Digital Transformation Grants opened **June 21, 2022** and applications will continue to be accepted until **October 31, 2022** (or until grant funds are exhausted)**.** Should grant funds still be available after the portal has closed and all eligible applications have been processed, the application portal will re-open in **January 2023** and remain open until **September 30, 2023** (or until grant funds are fully exhausted).

Before you begin applying:

- Confirm your eligibility by verifying participant requirements on the introduction page.
- If you don't have Microsoft Word installed, we recommend using Google Docs or installing Apache OpenOffice for free on your PC or Mac.
  Go to the following website to download and install Apache OpenOffice.
  https://www.openoffice.org/
- Google Chrome is the recommended browser. If you are having any issues with the application, please try using incognito mode in Google Chrome.
  Incognito mode:

  1. On your computer, open Chrome.
  2. At the top right, click More ⋮ › **New Incognito Window**.
  3. A new window appears. In the top corner, check for the Incognito icon 👓 .

  You can also use a keyboard shortcut to open an Incognito window: **Windows, Linux, or Chrome OS: Press Ctrl + Shift + n**. Mac: Press ⌘ + Shift + n.

Start the application process:

1. Create an account on digitalmainstreet.ca/ontariogrants

2. Complete the Digital Assessment
   This is a benchmarking tool that provides you with insight into your business's current digital footprint, plus you'll get a checklist of action items that you can start implementing today to begin your digital transformation. Once your assessment is complete, you will have access to the Digital Transformation Grant 4.0 dashboard where you will see your application progress.

   Click on the Digital Transformation Grant 4.0 link to access the dashboard.

   Grants Available:
   Digital Transformation Grant 4.0
   CDAP

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3. Review the participant requirements

Click on the Introduction link located on the Journey to Receive a Digital Transformation Grant timeline on your dashboard.

JOURNEY TO RECEIVE A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION GRANT

Introduction | Digital Assessment | Pre-Qualification | Training Videos | Application | Reporting

Make sure you have reviewed the complete list of participant requirements available here and have the required documents before proceeding to the next step: the Pre-Qualification quiz.

4. Complete the pre-qualification quiz

Click on the Pre-Qualification link located on the Journey to Receive a Digital Transformation Grant timeline on your dashboard.

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Be sure to read each question carefully and answer the questions correctly or you will be disqualified from applying for the grant. If you've answered the pre-qualification quiz correctly, you will receive an email within two hours notifying you that you can continue with the grant application process and the required online training program. If you are not qualified to apply for the grant, you will receive an email explaining why you are ineligible. If you answered a question incorrectly at the Pre-Qualification stage, you will need to respond to this email or email grants@obiaa.com explaining the error in order to have the Grants Team reset your application status and allow you to continue with the application process. Remember to check your junk mail/SPAM folder if you do not receive an email within 24 hours. The online training is not restricted to qualified applicants, and you can still proceed with the course content even if you are ineligible to apply for the grant.

Please note that the pre-qualification quiz is NOT the grant application and correctly completing the form does not guarantee you will be awarded a Digital Transformation Grant. You still need to complete the rest of the application process and submit all of your documentation for final review and approval.

5. Complete the training modules

    Click on the Training Videos link located on the Journey to Receive a Digital Transformation Grant timeline on your dashboard.
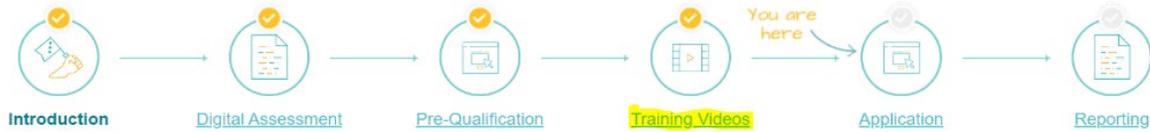
    The online training program has been updated to streamline the content and focus on what really matters in today's climate.

    It will help you create a Digital Transformation Plan by using your digital assessment results to determine what areas of interest you may want to invest in. For example, are you developing a website, improving website traffic, increasing sales, or increasing back-office efficiencies?

    It only takes about two and a half hours to watch all of the training modules. Don't forget to click the "Mark Complete" button after each module to save your progress and finish the course. Please note that all videos must be watched in their entirety in order for them to be marked as completed.
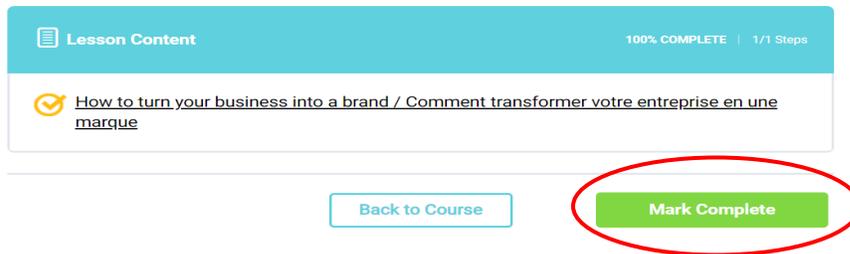
6. Develop a Digital Transformation Plan (DTP)

    Now it's time to develop your Digital Transformation Plan! Download the plan by clicking the button on your DMS dashboard.

    Click on the Application link located on the Journey to Receive a Digital Transformation Grant timeline on your dashboard.
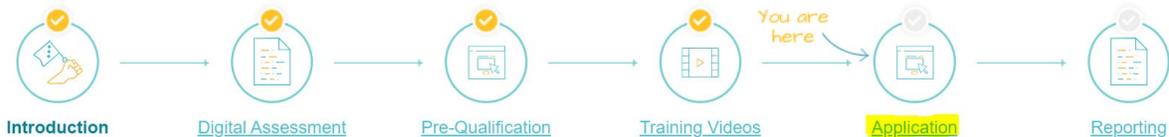
Digital Transformation Template*

Please submit a completed Digital Transformation Plan - which can be found here:

[Choose Files] No file chosen

NOTE: The training videos and pre-qualification steps must be completed before you can access the application page. If all training modules are marked complete and you cannot access the application page, contact your local Digital Service Squad member or Virtual Digital Service Squad member (ronnie@obiaa.com).

You will be asked to save the document to your computer's Downloads folder. This is where you will find your DTP anytime you want to access it unless you manually move it to another folder on your computer. We recommend saving a copy of your DTP in an easy-to-find location on your computer, such as your Documents folder.

The browser may automatically save your file to your downloads folder. Open file explorer and navigate to your downloads folder.
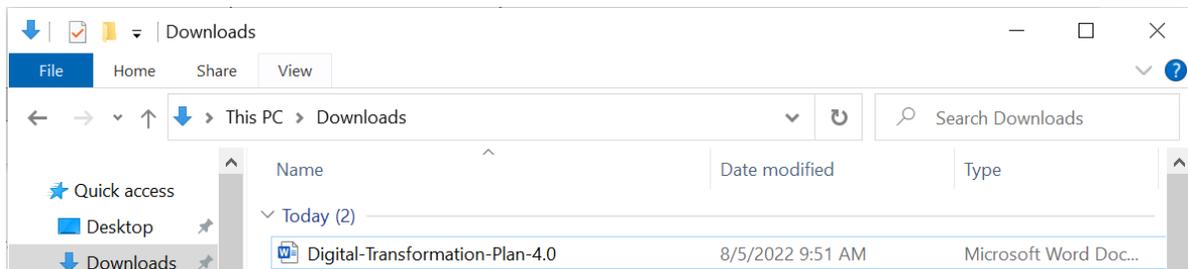
You will need to have Microsoft Word installed or a tool that can edit (.docx) files as previously described at the beginning of this document.

The Digital Transformation Plan 4.0 is divided into six sections:

1. About Your Business:
 • A brief description of your business and the products and/or services it offers

2. Digital Audit:
 • Summary of your business's strengths and weaknesses
 • Use the results from your Digital Assessment to outline your business's strengths and weaknesses in terms of digital technology and your online presence.

3. Business Goals and Objectives
 • A list of objectives, based on your Digital Assessment, that you hope to accomplish by successfully completing your DTP

4. Budget:
 • Detailed breakdown of how you plan to invest the grant money

- Create a budget describing the tools and services you plan to invest in, to support your business goals.
- Research the products and services you plan to purchase.
- Use the budget table to identify which expenditures you would like the grant to cover and be sure to review the full list of eligible and ineligible expenses (refer to the FAQ handout).
- Do not include HST in any of your budget amounts.
- Hardware purchases may not exceed $1,000
- Add up your costs and note the total.

5. Action Plan:

For each of your objectives, identify the tactics, or action steps, you intend to use to achieve your goals. Include any details involved in completing each step, who will be responsible to look after that detail, and when each task should be completed.

Please ensure you fill out this section with at least one tactic.
- **Objectives:** Specific, measurable actions you plan to achieve that support your overall business goals
- **Action/Tactics:** Specific steps you will take to accomplish your objectives
- **Who/By When:** Specific details regarding each action/task (i.e., who will be responsible for completing the task and when should it be completed).

6. Measurement and Milestones:

Each of your objectives will have one or more metrics known as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will allow you to measure your performance over time. Your KPIs will differ based on the tactics you are using to achieve your objectives, but some common ones are follower growth, conversion rate, website visitors, referral traffic, and return on ad spend. Based on the tactics you are using to achieve your objectives, determine:

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Metrics you will watch to track your progress
- **Milestone:** A specific milestone you will be watching for
- **Review Date:** The date when you will check your progress
- **Milestone Target Date:** The date when you plan to achieve your milestone

Now that you've completed all six steps of your Digital Transformation Plan, remember to save the document as a PDF. To do this, you will click the Save As button on your completed form and select Save as PDF. Remember that you will find your plan in your Downloads folder unless you manually moved it to another folder on your computer. You're ready to upload your supporting documents and submit your application!
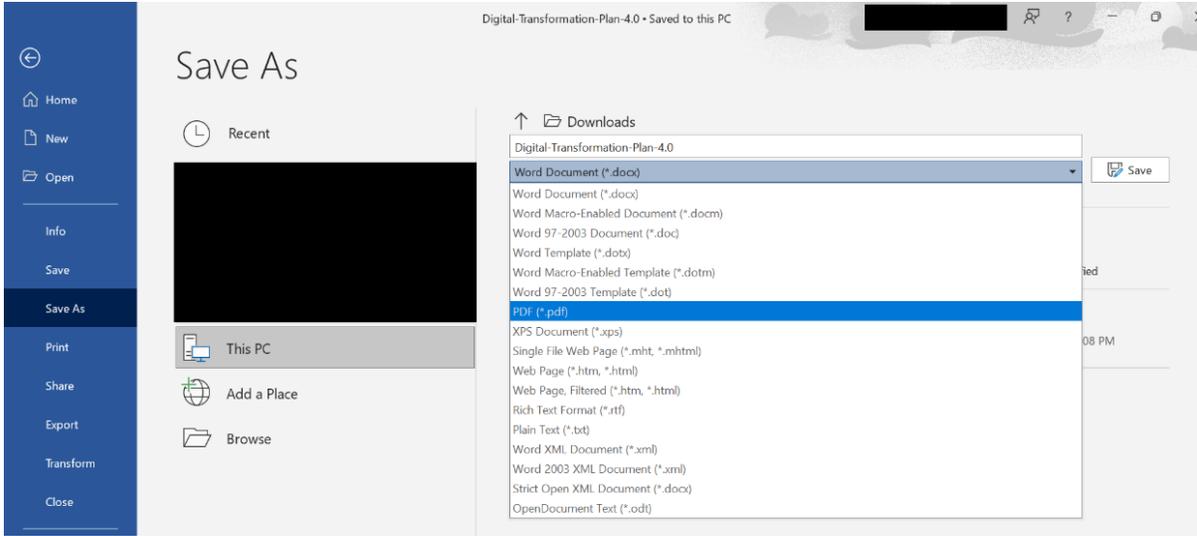
7. Submit your application

Click on the Application link located on the Journey to Receive a Digital Transformation Grant timeline on your dashboard.

Introduction → Digital Assessment → Pre-Qualification → Training Videos → You are here Application → Reporting
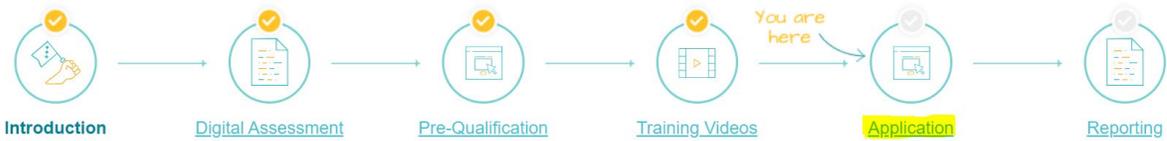
Remember, you won't be able to save your progress, so here's what you need to have ready to complete the form:

- Proof of incorporation i.e., Article of Incorporation **or** current Master Business License **or** forms indicating your HST number **or** forms with your Business Number (BN), showing your business in operation (no expired licenses, no vendor permits)
- Completed Digital Transformation Plan template
- Digital photo of your storefront **clearly** showing the business location and operating name
- Digital photo of the interior of your business clearly indicating where business's commercial transactions take place
- Copy of commercial tax bill for the property the business is located at (or a lease stating 'commercial tax' is included in the rent)

Please ensure the business name on your Digital Transformation Plan matches the name on your supporting documents.

Click on "Choose Files" to locate and upload your documents and pictures.
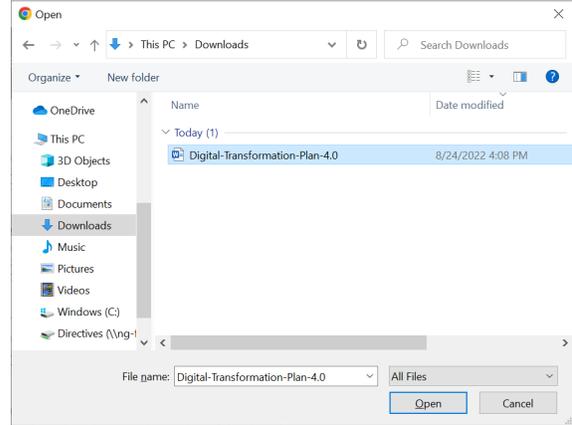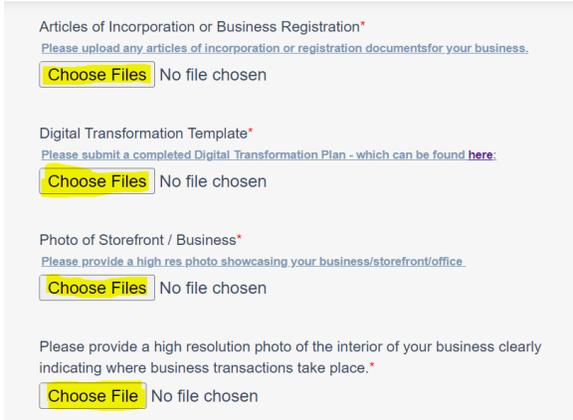
To upload your documents, you will need to either scan them, or take photos of them and email them to yourself. From there, you will download the scans or photos from your email to your computer's Downloads folder. To upload your supporting documents, you will click the prompt buttons on your DMS dashboard, then select the files you need from your Downloads folder. To upload multiple files at once, hold the Ctrl key (if using a PC), or the Command key (if using a Mac). Once the appropriate files have been selected, click Upload. The same principle applies to uploading your finished Digital Transformation Plan.

Fill out all of the fields in the application, including your contact and company information. And finally, what are you hoping to accomplish with this grant? Do you want to increase online sales, social media activity and engagement, or grow your mailing list? Please answer all questions and check each box that applies.

That's it; you're done. Just hit the "Submit" button. Your grant application will be reviewed within five (5) business days; however, your approval time will vary depending on the volume of applications received. The Grant Review Team will contact you if they require additional information.

If you have any issues submitting your application, please try using incognito mode in Google Chrome as described at the beginning of this document. If you are still having issues, then contact your local Digital Service Squad member or Virtual Digital Service Squad member (ronnie@obiaa.com).

The sooner you submit your application, the sooner you'll be able to start digitally transforming your business with the help of Digital Main Street. The deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on October 31, 2022, or until grant funds are exhausted.

If you need help with your application, there may be a local Digital Service Squad available to assist you in one of the many towns and cities across the province. To find out if there is an active Squad in your area, please contact your local BIA, Small Business Enterprise Centre, Economic Development Office, Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trade, or email dms@obiaa.com.

Congratulations!