

## Lots of grant money available

By Erin Britnell,  
Senior Analyst

Town of Caledon Strategic Initiatives

What type of organizations do you typically think as eligible for grants?

Not-for-profits? Of course. Governments? Absolutely. Businesses? Umm . . .

Every grant program has its own restrictions, but yes, there are opportunities available for businesses if you know where to look. It's said that there is no such thing as free money, which is true, but put some effort into a good grant application, and you may be rewarded.

So where should you look to see if there is grant program that is right for you? Some great places to find grant opportunities for businesses include:

? The Canada Business Network ([canadabusiness.ca/programs/](https://canadabusiness.ca/programs/)). Operated by the government of Canada, this site lists more than 800 grant, financing and loan programs for businesses across Canada. You can search by industry and by province to narrow down your options.

? The Ontario Grants Portal ([www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantsHome/](https://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantsHome/)). The Ontario government has a tool for searching all grant programs offered by the Province, which you can also narrow down by grants which are most applicable to you.

? Community Improvement Plans ([www.caledon.ca/cip](https://www.caledon.ca/cip)). The Town of Caledon has Community Improvement Plans in place in Bolton, Caledon East and the Six Villages to help businesses to improve their properties' facades, landscaping, or redevelop the site.

? There are also private companies and foundations that offer grants or contests for innovative ideas or business start-ups. The best way to find these is to identify organizations that match your company's purpose. For example, if you have a company with environmental goals, look for foundations or companies whose focus is also environmental.

So how does one access these grants? Grants often have a reputation for being tedious and bureaucratic. To make your grant writing experience a bit easier, here are five tips for writing a great application:

? Alignment. Grant programs will have specific goals or problems they are trying to solve. Make sure you are applying to programs where your business goals align with the grant program's goals, and that your application clearly shows how.

? Follow Directions. Be sure to follow directions on the application. If it says a maximum of 200 words, do not write 201. Especially if they are submitted online, your submission might be cut off at the word maximum and all the great things you said afterwards will not be considered.

? Clear language. Assume the reader knows nothing about your business or your industry, so the more readable the application is the better chance of success. Think of it as a pitch to an investor versus a grant.

? Don't give up. You might have to apply to multiple applications, in hopes that one will be successful, but stick with it and continue to refine your application.

? Proofread.

If you still have questions, or are struggling to identify opportunities, our Economic Development team is happy to help. Contact us at [edc@caledon.ca](mailto:edc@caledon.ca) or 905-584-2272, ext.4286 to set up a consultation.