



Digital Transformation Grant 2020 Program FAQs

What is a Digital Transformation Grant?

Digital Main Street (DMS) is a program focused on assisting main street small businesses (MSB) with their adoption of technologies. Through a partnership with FedDev Ontario and the Province of Ontario, grant opportunities are available to enable this digital transformation process. The Digital Transformation Grant (DTG) program will provide funding for training, advisory support, and grants to main street small businesses looking increase their capacity through digital transformation.

What is the objective of the DTG?

Digital Assessment ▶ To provide MSB owners with an online assessment to direct them through the process of determining the digital needs of their business.

Online Training ▶ To provide MSB owners with the digital literacy skills they need to execute their digital transformation by completing an online training course that provides the basics of how digital technology will transform their business for success.

Advisory Support ▶ To provide eligible and approved MSB owners with a grant of \$2,500 to assist with the execution of their digital transformation plan (DTP).



What is a Main Street?

Official Plans define a **Main Street** as the following:

A commercial street with strong pedestrian orientation, accessible to the adjacent community and containing a mix of uses (stores, community facilities, apartments, etc.).

Rural communities who have a commercial crossroads, may not follow the typical 'main street' definition, but they must have a commercially zoned main street area. (Highway Commercial)

Further, they are defined as "streets that offer some of the most significant opportunities in the city for intensification through more compact forms of development, a lively mix of uses and a pedestrian-friendly environment."





DTG 2020 Program FAQs *Continued*

Who is eligible?

The DTG is open to participants who meet the following requirements:

- **Must be a main street business that:**
 - **Is** located in, or close to, a designated zoned commercial core or in an eligible Business Improvement Area (BIA).
 - **Is** employing 1-10 employees (or fewer than 25 employees if they are a café, restaurant, or bar)
 - **Is** paying commercial property tax (commercially assessed), either directly or through commercial rent
 - **Is** a registered business in Ontario and/or is incorporated
 - **Is** open for business/operating at the time of application (not a start up)
 - **Is NOT** a business supplying digital services to other businesses (e.g. website design/development, SEO, programming)
 - **Is NOT** a franchise, including those individually owned and operated
 - **Is NOT** a not-for-profit/ charitable organization
- **Is NOT** renting office space on a temporary basis (month-to-month)
- **Is NOT** in a shared workspace such as a hot desk or dedicated desk
- **Is NOT** a purely online business
- **Is NOT** a home-based business
- **Owned by:**
 - An **Ontario resident** operating a business in Ontario
 - An individual of **18 years of age or older** at the time of application
 - A **Canadian citizen** or **permanent resident**
- **Has completed the Digital Transformation for Main Street program, which includes:**
 - the **Digital Main Street Assessment**
 - the **online training**
 - developing a **Digital Transformation Plan**
- OBIAA reserves the right to determine who is eligible/ ineligible on a case-by-case basis

Additional Notes

- Previous Digital Main Street grant recipients may apply, provided all reporting and project receipts have been submitted
- Large corporations **are not** eligible to apply for a DTG
- Businesses with multiple locations are only eligible to apply for **one** DTG
- Owners with multiple businesses may only apply for one grant
- BIA offices are not eligible to apply for this grant, but are eligible to participate in all trainings
- Businesses located within a shopping mall are not eligible (even if the mall is located within a BIA)
- French translation assistance will be available for applicants upon request
- Businesses in Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) that do not have a traditionally zoned commercial core i.e., Industrial or Employment zoning, and those that do not have consistent zoning throughout, are not eligible. Examples of this are, but are not limited to:
 - Carp Road BIA
 - Duke Heights BIA
 - Kanata North BIA
 - Malton BIA





DTG 2020 Program FAQs *Continued*

What costs are eligible?

- **Digital Marketing:**
 - Hiring a consultant/agency/person to execute digital marketing initiatives
- **Website:**
 - Redesign, improvement of existing website
 - Development of new website
 - Accessibility compliance
- **Software**
 - Graphic design software
 - Productivity software (LastPass, Hootsuite, Dropbox, etc.)
- **Digital Training**
 - Ongoing digital training courses (in-person & online)
- **Hardware**
 - Must be hardware deemed necessary (as determined by OBIAA in its sole discretion)
- **Social media software** (Hootsuite, Buffer, etc.)
- **Security software**
- **Other software** as evidenced in the DTP

What costs are not eligible?

- Microsoft Office
- Website hosting
- Domain name renewal
- Software subscription renewal
- Signage and printing
- Logo redesign and rebranding
- Unnecessary or excessive equipment (or equipment you already have and want to upgrade) (as determined by OBIAA in its sole discretion)
- Business owner's salary or current employee salary for executing the project
- Costs of land, building or vehicle purchase
- Costs of intangible assets such a goodwill, whether capitalized or expensed
- Depreciation or amortization expenses
- Interest on invested capital, bonds, or debentures
- Bond discount
- Monthly mortgage, loan and/or rent payments
- Refinancing of an existing debt
- Losses on investments, bad debts, and any other debts
- Fines or penalties
- Costs related to litigation
- Fees for administrators including payments to any member or officer of the Recipient's Board of Directors
- Opportunity costs
- Hospitality and entertainment costs
- Franchise fees and/or franchise license costs
- Lobbyist fees
- New capital expenditures





DTG 2020 Program FAQs *Continued*

How do I apply?

Applications for Digital Transformation Grants will open **July 1st, 2020** and will continue to be accepted until **December 31st, 2020** (or until all grant funds have been awarded – whichever comes first). The process for businesses applying for a Digital Transformation Grant has two main stages.

****NOTE:** businesses **MUST** have completed their assessment, passed the eligibility quiz, taken the online training, and developed their Digital Transformation Plan **BEFORE** applying.

Stage 1 – Application:

- Create an account on digitalmainstreet.ca/ontariogrants
- Complete their digital assessment
- Pass the eligibility and requirements quiz
- Complete an online training program focused on developing their digital literacy skills
- Develop a Digital Transformation Plan (DTP)
- Submit an application to include detailed information on the DTP along with a detailed budget (costs net of HST)
- Submit a copy of their Articles of Incorporation (AOI) or business registration
- Submit a picture of their store front / business operations

Stage 2 – Review and Award:

- OBIAA will review the application and once approved, the business will receive an agreement to be executed by both the business owner and OBIAA
- Upon receipt of the signed agreement, OBIAA will release the \$2,500 grant to the business to begin implementing the DTP

What are my obligations once I sign the grant agreement?

- The funds must be used for the project as outlined in the DTP and spending must align with the budget
- A 15% variance is allowable between budget line items, except for hardware
- All receipts for expenditures must be submitted along with a final report within 15 days of project completion
- All applicants must comply with all applicable laws
- All applicants must acknowledge their business name and location will be disclosed to the Federal Government for the purposes of preparing events/success stories

How can I learn more?

Visit digitalmainstreet.ca/ontariogrants for more information on timing and instructions for applying for Digital Transformation Grant.

