



# Digital Adoption 2023-24 Programming Guidelines

## Program Objective

The [Atlantic Canada Aerospace & Defence Association \(ACADA\)](#), with the support of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), is providing support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Aerospace, Defence, and Security industries for Digital Adoption projects.

ACADA's Digital Adoption Program ("the Program") aims to assist SMEs in furthering their digital transformation. Adopting and investing in digital best practices can help boost business capacity and improve operational efficiency and productivity.

The Program is intended to support SMEs that have already taken advantage of the [Canada Digital Adoption Program \(CDAP\)](#), or those that are not eligible for the program. ACADA's funding is meant to augment the resources available through CDAP, not replace nor duplicate.

## Eligible Companies:

To be eligible for the Program, a company must be an active, paid (i.e., in good standing with all membership and event fees paid in full) ACADA member. Eligibility is limited to Industry Membership, Category A only. The company must meet the definition of an SME, having fewer than 500 employees.

## Program Criteria

The Program may be used to identify digital gaps or to implement digital adoption. Applicants may use any service provider they choose for the project, as long as the service provider is arm's length from the applicant, and they have the required skills and experience for the project.

Only new projects or digital upgrades will be considered. Digital technologies already in use by the SME will not be eligible for the Program.

## Projects Assisted

Projects that are eligible for consulting support for the Program will aim to support the SME with implementing new digital tools, strategies, and resources into their business. Projects may include:

- Process automation and optimization
- Managed service provider analysis and consultation
- Skills development and training
- Implementation of cybersecurity best practices

- Cybersecurity and data protection consulting advice
- Digital marketing programs
- Improve user experience for online customers
- Other project deliverables discussed with individual SME (to be approved by ACADA).

Projects must be completed no later than March 31, 2024.

### **Application Process**

Interested SMEs may submit an application to ACADA for consideration. The application will be reviewed through a competitive assessment process. Applicants must include an outline of the project to be undertaken and the intended benefit to their business with their application.

Approved applicants will be advised of their acceptance to the program and, once accepted, may commence the project with the consultant.

### **Application Intake**

Applications will be accepted from September 7, 2023 until January 31, 2024, or until such time as the five (5) SMEs are chosen. Initial review and selection on September 25, 2023, so we encourage members to apply early to be considered. If funding remains available after this date, further applications will be accepted.

### **Terms of Incentive**

Approved projects will be cost-shared between ACADA and the SME. The maximum project cost supported is \$20,000, of which the SME will pay 35% of the total cost to ACADA.

ACADA will pay the Project Consultant for the eligible project outlined in the Program application upon project completion. ACADA will then invoice the participant for their portion (35%) of the cost. Invoices are due upon receipt.

If the project is not completed for any reason, the SME will be required to pay 50% of the total costs billed at the time of the project ceasing.

Only project costs outlined in the approved application will be considered eligible under funding for this program.

### **Other**

Participants in the Program agree to complete ACADA's program survey upon completion of the Program.