

Subject: SLED Program is open

Hello Everyone,

I'm pleased to announce the opening of the SLED program today. The SLED program will replace the HEDP fund moving forward. I've outlined the program and process below. If you have any questions please call or email me anytime.

2018 Supporting Local Economic Development (SLED) Program

In previous years there was a program called the Huron Economic Development Partnership (HEDP) fund which was a grant program designed for Huron County municipalities to obtain up to \$10,000 each year for projects identified in their economic development strategic plans. We have created a new program which will replace HEDP called SLED (Supporting Local Economic Development). It has some of the same elements but is not the same program.

SLED is a more focused program designed to help fund projects targeting key regional economic development priorities: workforce attraction, agriculture, tourism, and investment attraction. These priorities are subject to change through an annual review process by the Huron County Economic Development Board.

Normally the program will open January 1 to Municipalities and other non-profits are eligible to apply after June 30. The program is delivered on a first come, first served basis and monies will not be reserved for Municipalities after June 30 each year although they are still eligible to apply anytime. Non-profits can apply early on behalf of a Municipality with written permission from the Municipality.

Because the program is starting mid-way through 2018 Municipalities will be given an opportunity to apply to the fund before non-profit applications are considered, unless applying on behalf of the Municipality as outlined above.

No organization will be provided more than \$10,000 per project through this fund. Projects must be completed in 12 months from the date of application. Money will be provided at the completion of the project following the submission of a completed project report from the applicant to the program administrator.

Application Process

Potential applicants should meet with the program administrator to discuss potential projects prior to applying. The program administrator's role is to support the applicant by discussing how to meet the various criteria (i.e. discussing how to measure economic impact), work through any questions, and approve applications.

Criteria

Applications to the SLED program must meet the following criteria:

1. The money has to be used in a way that has a clear and obvious economic impact;

2. The direct economic impact of the project is measured;
3. The project leverages other investment, ideally private investment;
4. The applicant clearly supports the project through meaningful resource commitments; and
5. The project focus on at least one of the following objectives:
 - a. Attracting and settling new residents (i.e. workforce age) to the area;
 - b. Clearly encourages the diversification of existing agriculture in the area;
 - c. Creates or clearly expands/improves visitor experiences in the area; or
 - d. Likely to attract investment or resolve investment attraction issues in the area.

In speaking with Vicki Lass from OMAFRA we agreed it was important to mention the RED program is currently open and closes September 28. Utilizing both programs together for a project could be highly beneficial to some of you. I'd highly encourage those considering applying to RED to speak with Vicki first but for more general information here is a good link: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rural-economic-development-program>.

I will take on the role of program administrator. Please feel free to call or email me anytime. I look forward to discussing economic development projects with you.

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