



Advancing Water Technologies (AWT) Program Guidelines

Program Objectives

The Advancing Water Technologies (AWT) program is a catalyst for industry-led collaborations in the water sector. It was created to help Ontario small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) leverage world-class research facilities and academic expertise to develop and demonstrate water technologies and introduce them to the market. AWT provides financial support to industry-led research and development projects in the water sector that will result in the successful commercialization of globally-competitive and market-ready products and services. The AWT Program supports new and existing industry-academic partnerships.

About the Program

The Advancing Water Technologies (AWT) program is administered by the *Southern Ontario Water Consortium*, on behalf of its 10 member institutions.

The *Southern Ontario Water Consortium* is a platform that creates unique capacity for research, development, testing and demonstration of water and wastewater technologies and services for local, national, and global markets. Members include: Fleming College, McMaster University, Queen's University, Ryerson University, University of Guelph, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, Western University and Wilfrid Laurier University. For more information, visit: sowc.ca.

Project Eligibility

Industry-led research and development projects that seek to develop globally competitive technologies, products or services in the water sector will be considered. Applicants seeking to develop a technology and to remove commercialization barriers associated with any aspect of the product's innovation chain are encouraged to apply. Projects must be industry-led and involve collaboration with an academic researcher at a SOWC member institution. New partnerships are encouraged, although not required. The AWT Program is intended to support no more than one project per company. SOWC staff is available to assist companies with identifying relevant academic researchers.

The technology to be developed during the AWT project should, at a minimum, be at a stage where the prototype is ready for demonstration in an appropriate operational environment; this includes field testing, validation, and demonstration of the technology. The goal of AWT is to assist companies with overcoming the final challenges that pose a barrier to product commercialization and advancing the technology readiness of a product or service. From this stage it's expected that the technology will be launched to market in no more than 18 months. Technology that is at an earlier stage, where a model or prototype is in a near-desired final state, and is ready for testing or demonstration in a simulated operational environment or laboratory will be considered on a case-by-case basis if it can be justified that the technology will still be brought to market from this earlier stage within the same anticipated 18-month timeline.

The following R&D activities will be considered:

- Prototyping
- Demonstration projects*
- Advanced product development



- Applied research leading to a practical commercial application
- Certification/verification that is part of a larger project to support product and/or technology development may be eligible

**Projects that involve a product that is already fully developed are not eligible. For example, demonstration projects solely for the purposes of disseminating information, marketing, attracting new customers or any other business development-related activity are not eligible.*

Eligible Company Partner

The company partner applying for an AWT project must be a registered Canadian for-profit company operating under the laws of Ontario or Canada, and must have a minimum of two full-time employees or be in operation for a minimum of two years. The company partner must be located in Southern Ontario and must demonstrate the economic benefits (e.g. jobs) that will accrue to Southern Ontario as a result of the AWT contribution to the project. Please note that the AWT Program is intended to support no more than one project per company. The company must demonstrate good financial standing in its application by submitting either audited financial statements for the previous two years or a letter from its financial institution that attests good financial standing. Applicants are required to review and follow the AWT Conflict of Interest Policy below.

Eligible Academic Researcher

To be eligible, academic researchers must hold an academic appointment and be eligible to hold research funds at their respective SOWC member institution. Applicants are required to review and follow the AWT Conflict of Interest Policy below.

Eligible Academic Institutions

SOWC member institutions in good standing with the Consortium are eligible to receive AWT project funding. Members currently include: Fleming College, McMaster University, Queen's University, Ryerson University, University of Guelph, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, Western University and Wilfrid Laurier University.

Term

Projects are expected to be up to 12 months in duration. Projects of a longer duration (up to a maximum of 2 years) may be approved, with adequate justification. All eligible project expenses must be incurred by 31 December, 2018.

Deadlines

AWT is a three-year program ending on 31 December, 2018. All AWT Applications must be approved by 31 December, 2017; project spending must be completed by 31 December, 2018. Applicants who are interested in applying for project funding are encouraged to contact the SOWC as early as possible.

Funding

The AWT Program may provide projects with a contribution of up to \$100,000 CAD towards eligible project costs. Project funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis only, to the academic partner institution where the project's eligible academic researcher is employed. Under no circumstances will funding be directed to a company partner.

Requests for larger contributions of more than \$100,000 CAD may be considered and other conditions will apply; please contact SOWC for further discussion and information.

Company Contribution



Company partners are required to provide a 1:1 matching contribution to the AWT Program funding to the project. Cash or cash-equivalent, or a combination of both, will be accepted. Matching contributions must be allocated towards eligible project activities and should adequately reflect the project's needs. Cash and cash-equivalent contributions from the company partner are eligible if they are directly associated with the project and meet the following requirements:

Cash: Cash contributions must be expended on eligible project costs and must be provided to the academic partner institution.

Cash-equivalent: Contributions in-kind such as labour (company personnel time for individuals working on the project), company's expenditure of professional services, non-capital costs (see explanation below), and capital (in accordance with the AWT Company Matching Contribution Guidelines).

Please refer to the [AWT Company Matching Contribution Guidelines](#) for detailed information on eligible and ineligible contributions including valuation of capital contributions.

Project Costs Eligible for Reimbursement

Only eligible expenses that are reasonable and directly associated with eligible project activities during the term of the project will be reimbursed. All purchasing must comply with the procurement and other relevant policies of the academic partner institution. Applicants are strongly advised to contact SOWC with questions and for clarification regarding eligible expenses.

Cost categories eligible for reimbursement as part of the AWT contribution include:

- **Labour:** Personnel costs (salary and up to 20% non-discretionary benefits) incurred by the academic institution. For example, student personnel, technicians, project management support, technology transfer personnel and other customized personnel. Recipients are required to track and claim working hours and actual costs.
- **Expertise:** Professional services that are not readily available at the academic institution are eligible. Such services may include analytical lab contract services, project design, performance measurement, report writing, and specialized technical support.
- **Non-Capital:** Minor capital, such as for prototype development, safety equipment, measuring tools, software, sensors, testing materials, monitors, utility costs (water, electricity) that are directly attributed to eligible project activities and that are substantiated with documentation; transportation expenses (only parking, car rental, public transportation and mileage) that are necessary for the execution of the project; air fare for essential project activities is eligible but must be preapproved by SOWC in advance of each trip; food (related to necessary project travel) and accommodation. Travel expenses are pursuant to the rates of either the Treasury Board of Canada Travel Directive or the project's academic partner institution (whichever is lower). Funds requested for non-capital should not exceed 10% of the total AWT contribution of project costs. Projects that require non-capital funds in excess of 10% are required to provide a strong justification for the request.
- **Capital:** Equipment that is necessary for the project and well justified is eligible. Equipment such as terminal parts, pumping station maintenance, valves, control systems, actuators, sensors, PLCs, programming, and interfaces, electrical equipment (e.g. wiring, terminals), miscellaneous pipe fittings (e.g. reducers, flanges), and material handling equipment (e.g. rigging tackle) necessary for the execution of a project. For a definition of capital, please refer to the policies of the academic institution or contact SOWC for more information. Funds requested for capital should not exceed 10% of the total AWT contribution of project costs. Projects that require capital funds in excess of 10% are required to provide a strong justification for the request.

**Note: Specific costs related to the use of a SOWC facility or other facility may be eligible as long as they can be directly attributed to the project and fit one of the above categories of eligibility (e.g. utility costs in non-capital). General facility*



rental fees that are not attributable to specific project activities at the facility are ineligible for reimbursement under this program.

Ineligible Project Costs

The following expenses are not eligible. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact SOWC for clarification regarding the eligibility of a project expense not identified in this document. Ineligible incurred costs will not be reimbursed and will be the responsibility of the academic partner institution.

- Other facility rental fees (see above Note on Eligible Project Costs)
- Hospitality costs (e.g. for hosting project meetings)
- Registration fees for conferences, workshops, etc.
- Marketing
- Business development expenses
- Overhead
- Opportunity costs
- Travel to conferences and workshops or for other non-project related activity
- Any other expense that is not directly associated with eligible project activities

Project Budgets

Only expenses that are reasonable, eligible and necessary for the completion of the specific project will qualify for reimbursement. A detailed budget and adequate justification are required for each project expense for which applicants seek reimbursement, as well as a justification for a company's matching contribution. Project spending must be in accordance with the approved budget, which will serve as a component of the project agreement. Restrictions in the management of the global program budget require that spending limits apply to some cost categories. Deviation in budget allocation, and between cost categories, will not be permitted. Any expense that is deemed ineligible or that exceeds the budgeted amount in a cost category or the total awarded amount will not be reimbursed.

How to Apply

Step 1: Intake Process

Interested applicants must first complete the AWT Program Intake Form. Intake forms will be reviewed internally against guidelines to determine fit and eligibility within the AWT Program. An intake form may be submitted by a company with or without an academic researcher identified; following preliminary discussions, SOWC will work with the company applicant to identify a relevant academic researcher if one has not yet been identified. Academic researchers must have a company partner identified in order to submit an intake form. Applicants are encouraged to contact Harriet Bigas, Manager for Research Partnerships (harriet@sowc.ca) early in the intake process.

Step 2: Application

All applicants will be required to submit a completed AWT Program Application Form. Full applications will be invited only once an intake form has been completed and approved.

It is strongly recommended that the company partner and academic researcher jointly complete the application. The application includes:

- Application Form
- Budget
- Evidence of good financial standing (from the company partner)
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Form
- Aboriginal Duty to Consult Form



Application Authorization

The application requires authorization signatures from the company partner (authorized company official, such as a CEO or President), the academic researcher and the academic institution (authorized official, such as V.P. Research or equivalent).

Application Submission

Completed applications, with the required authorizations, should be submitted via email to Harriet Bigas, Manager for Research Partnerships at harriet@sowc.ca. An acknowledgment message will be sent to the company, academic researcher and academic institution.

Application Review and Approval Process

Applications will be reviewed for completeness by SOWC staff. Following submission of completed applications, the company, academic researcher and academic institution will be notified that the application has been received and is considered complete.

Complete applications will be externally reviewed against AWT Program guidelines by the Project Oversight Committee. The Committee comprises a combination of industry and sector experts whose role is to review project applications to ensure that projects are well-designed and risks are mitigated. The Committee may include business leaders or experts with market awareness, knowledge of technology development, commercialization, and applied research. The Committee is bound by confidentiality and conflict of interest requirements.

All applicants will receive a summary of feedback from the external review completed by the Project Oversight Committee. Feedback from the Committee may include: comments concerning improving the project design (e.g. work plan, project's likelihood to meet market needs); methods to reduce technical risks associated with development or commercialization of specific technologies; confirmation of eligibility of project activities; budget and industry contribution.

Decisions on the approval of applications are made by SOWC. A notification of the decision will be made within 4-6 weeks of the notice of complete submission. Decisions on the application include: approved, declined, or pending – further information or revisions are required. SOWC's decision on the application is final.

Exclusion of Reviewers

Applicants may request in their application form that specific companies, organizations, or individuals be excluded from reviewing their proposal. This information will be taken into account and remain confidential.

Intellectual Property

Title to any foreground intellectual property (FIP) developed as the result of an industry-led project must be owned by the academic institution, owned by the company partner, or co-owned by both; to be negotiated between the academic institution and the company partner, and subject to AWT Program requirements and the policy of the academic institution. For further details, please refer to the AWT Program IP Policy.

Environmental Assessment Form

In accordance with the requirements of the Federal Government, SOWC is required to report on whether the proposed project may trigger the *Canadian Environmental Assessment*. Applicants are required to complete the Canadian Environmental Assessment Form as part of their application.

Aboriginal Duty to Consult Assessment Form

In accordance with the requirements of the Federal Government, SOWC is required to report on whether the proposed project may trigger a legal *Duty to Consult*. Applicants are required to complete the Aboriginal Duty to Consult Assessment Form as part of their application.



Agreements

Companies with successful AWT applications will be required to enter into a formal Collaborator Agreement with the academic partner institution where the academic researcher is appointed, and will be required to enter into a formal Sub-Project Agreement with SOWC.

Reporting

Project partners (company, academic researcher, and academic institution) will be required to report on project outcomes, economic impacts and other performance metrics using a template provided by the AWT Program. This includes a baseline, annual (where applicable), and project completion progress reports.

Conflict of Interest

Employees, faculty, or anyone associated with employees or faculty (e.g. family members) of an academic partner institution who is involved in a project on behalf of an academic partner institution may not receive project support through the AWT program if they own any share of the product being developed or of the company involved. Academic researchers on a project (faculty of the academic institution) cannot own any of the foreground intellectual property (FIP) that is generated during a project, nor personally benefit as a result of that FIP. Any potential royalty, revenues, or other financial benefit deriving from the FIP owned by the academic institution may be held in an account by that faculty member's institution to be directed towards other research.

Companies and academic researchers applying to receive project support from the AWT Program are required to disclose any real or potential conflict of interest according to the AWT Program policy. Applicants will be required to complete and submit a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form as soon as any real or potential conflict of interest has been identified, including outlining proposed mitigation measures as discussed with SOWC.

Contact

Please direct all questions and inquiries about the AWT Program to:

Harriet Bigas
Manager, Research Partnerships
Southern Ontario Water Consortium
harriet@sowc.ca
519-888-4567 x31799

AWT Program Guidelines are subject to change without notice.

This project is funded by the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Ce projet est financé par le gouvernement du Canada à travers l'Agence fédérale de développement économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario.

Canada 

