



**Activate**  
Circular Accelerator

# COIL Activate Circular Accelerator Program Guide

Fall 2022 Cohort

**Funded by:**  
Federal Economic Development  
Agency for Southern Ontario

**Canada** 

## Background

The Circular Opportunity Innovation Launchpad (COIL) Activate program supports business activities that are informed by circular economy knowledge and practices. The program offers mentorship, education, national and international scaling connections, and funding to fuel innovative, circular projects across southern Ontario.

This program is made possible through funding from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, which was awarded to the City of Guelph in early 2021. COIL Activate builds upon the City of Guelph and County of Wellington's success in cultivating a dynamic regional circular food economy. The program is delivered through Innovation Guelph's Circular Economy Innovation Hub (CE iHub) and funding, contracting and reporting systems are administered by 10C Shared Space. 10C is leading the development of Harvest Impact, a social finance fund investing in circular economy initiatives. As a regional hub with national reach, Innovation Guelph supports business growth through access to funding, mentorship, and training. Since 2011, we have supported over 1200 businesses, including over 50 scale-up companies each year.

Building on the learnings and success from the previous cohorts of the COIL Activate accelerator, as well as the COIL Evolve pre-accelerator, Cohort 3 of COIL Activate has been revised and improved. COIL Evolve has been merged into COIL Activate to create a new, more accessible program for circular businesses.

## Program Overview

With the support of the CE iHub, industry-leading mentors, and the broader COIL circular economy ecosystem, you will take on a circular project over the course of 6 months to further your business' circularity. Businesses can apply with projects between \$5,000 and \$20,000 that have a focus on food and environment. COIL Activate businesses will benefit from access to world-class circular economy training that is specially crafted to unlock each business' potential to reduce waste and reach new markets. It is designed to help companies launch circular projects to change the way we do business through circular business practices. Although there is no revenue requirement, it is recommended that businesses apply for funding relative to their annual revenue as following:

- \$0-\$50,000 revenue = \$5,000 grant
- \$50,000-\$100,000 revenue = up to a \$10,000 grant
- \$100,00 - \$150,000 revenue = up to a \$15,000 grant
- \$150,000+ revenue = up to a \$20,000 grant

However, if your business has a significant track record of growth, financial stability, and/or a strong project proposal, you may apply for any amount of funding.

In its third cohort<sup>1</sup>, COIL Activate will support circular projects for businesses through:

- A non-repayable grant up to \$20,000 per company,
- An educational program focused on circular practices (approx. \$7,200 value)
  - Mandatory involvement:
    - completion of CE 101 (4 units) and quizzes (estimated 4 weeks);
    - attendance at CE 101, Business/Economics, Agri-Food, and Environment discussion groups (1-hour each); and
    - four (4) networking sessions (Coffee with COIL, B2B, etc.).
  - Up to 24 hours of targeted support and expertise from business leaders (\$3600 value)
    - Note: working with assigned mentors and industry specialists is a requirement of the program.
- Optional financing to support scaling your project. Harvest Impact<sup>2</sup> offers COIL Activate participants loans of \$2,500 to \$10,000 offered at 0% interest over 24 months, with payments deferrable for up to 12 months from signing of loan agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Additional cohorts to be announced. Please check the website for program updates.

<sup>2</sup> Harvest Impact's social finance fund by10C Shared Space offers character based lending and considers your values and social impact over past financial history. They are also able to offer additional financing at preferred rates based on project specifics. They will work with you at any stage of growth from idea to scaling, for more information on their offering, please contact the team at [investment@harvestimpact.ca](mailto:investment@harvestimpact.ca) or visit: <https://harvestimpact.ca/>

## Schedule of dates

Sept 6, 2022	Applications Open
TBD	Program Information Sessions
Oct 18, 2022	Applications Close
Oct 25, 2022	Successful Applicants Announced
Nov 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023	Project Period

## Application Process

### Step 1: Call for Applications

An open call for applications will be posted on the COIL website and shared through the social media accounts of COIL partners, including Innovation Guelph, 10C Shared Space, LaunchIt Minto, Business Centre Guelph-Wellington, Guelph Chamber of Commerce, the John F. Wood Centre, and more

### Step 2: Completing your application

Applicants are responsible for completing and submitting the online application through our application portal, SM Apply. If you have an existing SM Apply username and password you can use this to login and access the application. If not, you will need to create a new username and password.

The application form will request information about:

- How your business meets the program's eligibility criteria
- General information about your business
- Business growth and scaling goals
- Knowledge and experience related to circular practices
- Planned use of funds and project proposal for program period (6 months)
- Applicants will be responsible for submitting the following information:
  - High level project budget
  - Pitch deck and/or short video

If you have questions about the application, please contact [ceihub@innovationguelph.ca](mailto:ceihub@innovationguelph.ca) or [investment@harvestimpact.ca](mailto:investment@harvestimpact.ca).

### Step 3: Evaluation by Selection Committee

Once the open call has closed, applications will be evaluated by the Innovation Guelph CE iHub team and a selection committee. The selection committee will be comprised of representatives from COIL partner organizations and experts from outside of the ecosystem.

The selection committee will evaluate all applications based on the following eligibility and selection criteria. Selected applicants will then be informed of their award and will be onboarded into the program.

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for this program, businesses must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- One or two members of the business' leadership team is available to participate in the program between November 1, 2022 and April 30, 2023.
- The business operates within one or more of the following sectors: food and beverage, retail, agriculture, environment, and clean-tech.
- The business is registered within a Canadian jurisdiction and operational within southern Ontario (Appendix A).
- The applicant has read and agreed to the Innovation Guelph Client Services Agreement (available through the online application).

## Selection Criteria

To be selected for this program, businesses must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant has completed the application in full.
- Eligibility criteria have been met.
- The application provides enough information to address applicable evaluation criteria.
- The intended use of funds is clear and consistent with a realistic strategy to achieve the business' project goals.
- The application falls under the eligible project types (Appendix B)
- Applicant has acknowledged that funds will not be used for ineligible costs, as identified below.
- Applicant has acknowledged their agreement with all other terms and conditions of the program.

## Ineligible Costs<sup>3</sup>

- Costs of land, building or vehicle purchase;
- Refinancing;
- Losses of 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;
- Food, accommodation and entertainment costs;
- Costs of membership in a professional body;
- Lobbyist fees;
- Cost of conference or tradeshow admission if not exhibiting or presenting;
- Costs associated with basic research and development activities;
- Sales Tax/HST;
- Costs of intangible assets such as goodwill, whether capitalized or expensed;
- Depreciation or amortization expenses; and
- Opportunity costs

<sup>3</sup> Recipient's records may be subject to review and audit to confirm that funds have not been used for ineligible costs.

## Step 4: Award Recipient Agreement Process

Applicants will be notified as funding decisions are reached. Successful applicants (“recipients”) must:

- Enter into a Contribution Agreement with Harvest Impact by 10C, they support the distribution of grant and loan funds.
- Register as an Innovation Guelph CE iHub client.
- Engage with the CE iHub team who will assign a mentor based on the recipient’s need for specific expertise.
  - Note: working with assigned mentors is a requirement of the program.

The grant will be distributed as outlined below:

- Once an initial diagnostic and work plan has been completed by the recipient and by their assigned Innovation Guelph mentor, the funds will be released.
- All receipts must be submitted by the end of the project period to ensure the money has been spent on eligible project costs.

### Additional Requirements

As a condition of receiving funds and support, recipients agree to:

- Complete surveys at the end of the program period and periodically thereafter to report on the impact of the funds and support received through the program.
- Participate in program-related communications including allowing the use of their name, photograph, facilities, and video content (as applicable).
- Acknowledge COIL, Innovation Guelph, Harvest Impact by 10C, and FedDev Ontario in any public announcements or other communications about the fund.

## APPENDIX A

### Eligible locations

Applicant Entrepreneur/Business must be located within the regions outlined below:

#### Territory – Southern Ontario

As Canada's most populous region, southern Ontario is a key contributor to the overall Canadian economy. With headquarters in Waterloo and offices in Toronto, Peterborough and Ottawa, the Agency has a presence across southern Ontario to provide regionally tailored knowledge and expertise.

Its mandate covers the region as defined by 37 Statistics Canada census divisions. A list of the communities that form each census division is available on the [Statistics Canada website](#).

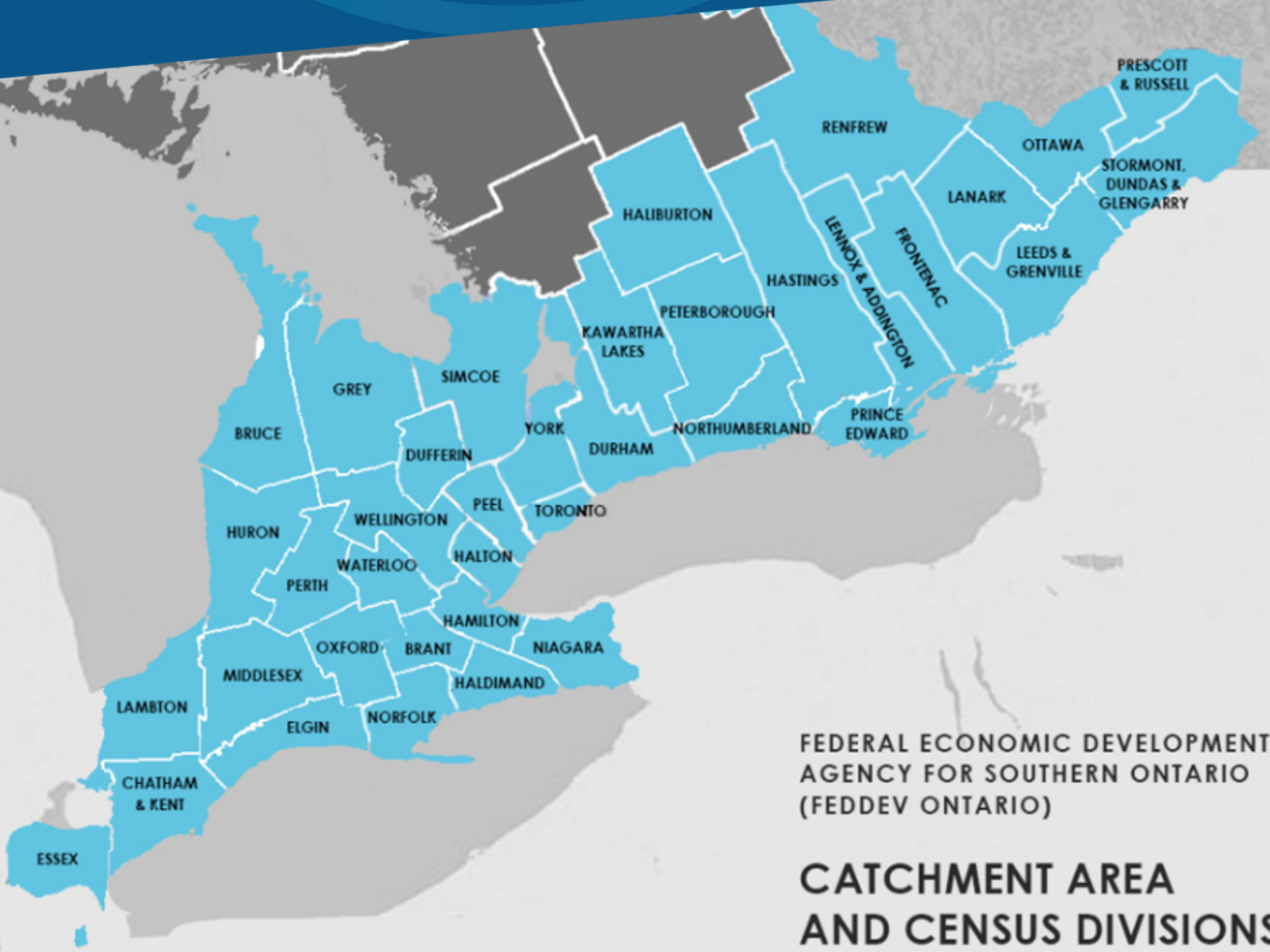
The following 37 Statistics Canada census divisions are identified in the map:

Brant;	Huron;	Peel;
Bruce;	Kawartha Lakes;	Perth;
Chatham–Kent;	Lambton;	Peterborough;
Dufferin;	Lanark;	Prescott and Russell;
Durham;	Leeds and	Prince Edward and
Elgin; Essex;	Grenville;	Lambton;
Frontenac;	Lennox and	Renfrew;
Grey;	Addington;	Simcoe;
Haldimand–Norfolk;	Middlesex;	Stormont,
Haliburton;	Niagara;	Dundas and Glengarry;
Halton;	Northumberland;	Toronto;
Hamilton;	Ottawa;	Waterloo;
Hastings;	Oxford;	Wellington; and
		York.

See the following map below for visual representation:







FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
 AGENCY FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
 (FEDDEV ONTARIO)

## CATCHMENT AREA AND CENSUS DIVISIONS

## APPENDIX B

### Eligible Project Types

COIL Activate projects for cohort 3 will focus on one or more of the following project areas within the food and environment sectors:

- Waste-reduction that will improve the current food and environment systems
- Ecosystem regeneration from nature-based solutions and bio-based products
- Material loss prevention innovations that will provide long-term benefit
- Approaches to turn waste/bi-products into new products
- New use for the excess, lost or wasted material along your supply chain
- Developing or deploying technology to reduce waste

To be sure that the proposed project is eligible please confirm with the CE iHub team.



core delivery partners



supporting partners



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