

2025-26 ONTARIO CREATES DISCOVERABILITY AND COMMERCIALIZATION PROGRAM

For the Interactive Industry

Deadline: Continuous, closes December 17, 2025 – 5:00PM ET

The Discoverability and Commercialization Program (DCP) documentation includes:

- DCP Guidelines (this document)
- [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#)

Applicants must review the documents listed above prior to submitting an application.

This program is only open to projects that have received Production funding from the **IDM Fund – Interactive or Video Content Programs** or **IP Fund – Interactive Content Stream**.

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1. Introduction

The Discovery and Commercialization Program (DCP) is designed to increase the visibility and commercial success of **interactive projects that have received Production funding from Ontario Creates**. The program supports activities that take place during and/or after Public Launch¹.

¹ Public Launch occurs when a product is made publicly available to an audience and may include releases commonly known as early access, soft-launch, beta release and full launch. The project should be in a position to generate revenue once Public Launch has occurred. Release of a demo is not considered a Public Launch.

Ontario Creates is committed to:

- supporting diversity and gender parity;
- providing enhanced accessibility support to people with disabilities, people who are Deaf and people who have barriers to accessing technology to complete an application; and
- fostering respectful workplaces in all the sectors and companies we support.

Please see [Program Policies](#) for important details.

2. Eligible Applicants

Applicants **must be the recipient of Production funding through the IDM Fund – Interactive or Video Content Programs or IP Fund – Interactive Content Stream** ² for the project for which they are requesting DCP support.

3. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities must:

- have a measurable impact on product reach, audience engagement, and revenue generation;
- take place during and/or after Public Launch³
- be distinct from activities covered in the production budget (no overlap);
- commence no later than 18 months after Public Launch and conclude within one year of notification of a successful application;
- not be underway at the time of application submission or, for an activity already in progress, demonstrate how funding would enhance the scope and impact of the activity; and
- use Ontario suppliers where possible.

DCP activities can include, but are not limited to:

- activities broadly defined as live operations (management of and updates to projects after Public Launch) and ongoing operational costs;
- development of downloadable content/DLC;
- porting to new platforms for releases that occur after Public Launch;
- creating marketing materials and tools (website, trailer, giveaways, posters, social media assets, etc.);
- advertising and co-op (paid placement with retailers);

² IP Fund – Linear Content Production recipients should refer to the Marketing and Distribution Initiative Fund

³ Activities that take place prior to Public Launch are eligible for IDM Fund Concept Definition and Production program and IP Fund Pre-Production and Production stream support. See relevant Budget and Financing Guidelines and Template for details.

- offers and promotions, consumer contests and other audience/user engagement and retention campaigns;
- PR, influencer, social media campaigns;
- community development and management; and
- project-related/launch events.

Production activities (post-production, polish, testing, bug fixes, certification, general admin/overhead), wishlist-building activities, ports to additional platforms, demos, and DLC that are released at the time of Public Launch are considered Production activities and are not eligible for support through this program.

Applicants may submit one DCP application per eligible project.

4. Budget, Financing and Timeline Requirements

DCP will provide a non-repayable contribution of up to 50% of eligible expenses

- \$15,000 – minimum request
- \$50,000 – maximum request

Budgets and financing plans must be submitted on the template provided and include all costs through to completion and delivery of the activities.

Budgets:

- Costs that are covered in IDM Fund Concept Definition/Production, IP Fund Pre-Production/Production and the Global Market Development Fund⁴ are not eligible.
- Expenses incurred prior to submission of the application are not eligible.
- A company's ongoing operational expenses will not be considered.
- Administration costs are capped at 15% of the budget.
- Applicants are encouraged to include quotes for third party services.

Financing:

- The remaining 50% must come from a source other than Ontario Creates (e.g. applicant company, third party).
- At least 10% of the total budget must be in the form of a cash contribution.
- Non-cash contributions (deferral, donation, in-kind services) may be included in the financing plan.

⁴ The Global Market Development Fund provides funding for interactive digital media companies to attend key international events. If attendance at international events is an element of your marketing activities, you may apply to DCP for assistance with enhanced marketing, registration and booth costs above the limitations outlined in the Global Market Development Fund guidelines.

- Ontario Creates may request written verification of financing.

Timelines:

- Applications can be submitted six months before and up to 16 months after Public Launch⁵.
- The applicant must begin incurring expenses no later than 60 days after notification of a successful application;
- Activities must be completed with all expenses incurred and all deliverables provided to Ontario Creates within one year of notification of a successful application.

5. Application Process and Evaluation

Applications must be submitted to Ontario Creates via the Online Application Portal (OAP) at <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca/>. This program has continuous intake, with a closing date of December 17, 2025 at 5:00 pm ET.

The applicant must request approval to apply by sending an Application Inquiry from their Production project page in the Online Application Portal (OAP). Approval will be based on the current status of the Production project and timing for the planned Discoverability and Commercialization activities. Please consult Ontario Creates if you have any questions.

Applications are evaluated by Ontario Creates Staff on an ongoing basis as they are submitted. Decisions will be communicated to applications within eight weeks of the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application at least eight weeks prior to requiring funds to provide sufficient time to process the application

6. Decision Criteria

Ontario Creates will select the funding recipients based on the appropriateness of the strategy and the potential impact on the applicant company. Applicants should ensure that their application material clearly conveys the strengths of their application in relation to the program guidelines. The number of applicants who will receive funding and the amount awarded will depend on the availability of funding and the individual needs of each applicant. Applications will be evaluated on a first come, first served basis.

Ontario Creates applies a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the evaluation criteria for this program, and directs jury members to do the same. Applicants proposing projects/activities that support, reflect and strengthen diversity and gender parity in Ontario are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-deserving communities. Ontario Creates may identify particular

⁵ Significant discoverability and commercialization opportunities that arise after this period may be eligible in some cases. Please contact Ontario Creates for more information.

underrepresented communities within a particular sector.

The provincial definition of diversity includes but is not limited to: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Considerations may include
Track Record	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• company experience with similar activities/projects• capacity, skills, knowledge and expertise of the team (including service providers)• company performance on previous Ontario Creates funded projects and activities• diversity among senior leadership, staff and/or contract employees and evidence of company policies and/or initiatives that support diversity, equity and inclusion
Feasibility and Risks	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clarity of activities and deliverables• accuracy of budget and cost allocations• suitability of project planning and timelines• mitigation of challenges and risks
Economic Benefit	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• impact of the contribution on applicant company• likelihood of critical and commercial success• size and scope of the opportunity• demonstration of other benefits to the company and/or the Ontario economy
Activity Impact	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• likelihood of the activities driving project success• suitability of activities to reach and engage the target audience• presentation of research and rationale to support the strategy• clarity and accuracy of projected results

7. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants who are Deaf or disabled may be eligible for supplementary funds for accessibility expenses required to complete their project deliverables.

Successful applicants will receive funding as follows:

- 60% on execution of the Ontario Creates agreement;
- 25% on delivery of an interim report;
- 15% on completion of all activities and delivery of a final report.

8. More Information

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These guidelines are for the 2025-26 deadline only. This document is subject to change for future deadlines . Applicants are advised to consult the Ontario Creates website for any relevant Frequently Asked Questions documents and Ontario Creates Bulletins for clarifications and alterations to these guidelines.

Ontario Creates is an agency of the Government of Ontario that facilitates economic development, investment and collaboration in Ontario's creative industries including the music, book, magazine, film, television and interactive digital media sectors.
ontariocreates.ca