Edmonton Local IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE GUIDE Part 3 of 4

ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2025 - EMPLOYMENT ACTION TABLE



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada



Land ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We **respectfully** acknowledge that the City of Edmonton is located on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional lands of diverse Indigenous Peoples including the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux. **These Nations are the original caretakers of this land. Their histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence the vibrancy of our community today.**

As we work toward a more inclusive and equitable Edmonton, we recognize our shared responsibility to honour the land, its original peoples, and the ongoing contributions of Indigenous communities.

This guide is created in the spirit of reconciliation, understanding, and collaboration with all who call these lands home.

Message from the Chair

When we first began talking about this guide, we did not just envision a document, we imagined a **shared journey**. One where stories, ideas, and experiences would shape something truly meaningful. Today, as I reflect on everything that's brought us to this point, I am filled with **deep gratitude**.

To my fellow members of the **Employment Action Table**, thank you. Month after month, you've shown up with open hearts and thoughtful contributions. You've **listened**, **challenged**, **encouraged**, and **created**. Every section of this guide holds a little bit of you—your care, your insight, your belief in the **power of equity** and **inclusion**.

But perhaps most importantly, I want to thank the **volunteers** who shared their stories with us. Your voices made this guide real. The interviews were more than just information gathering—they were moments of **connection**, **vulnerability**, and **hope**. Your honesty and passion reminded us all why this work matters.

Some of you spoke of barriers you've overcome. Others painted a picture of the kind of workplace you dream of. Many of you simply wanted to help others feel less alone in their journey. Thank you. You didn't have to say yes, but you did and we are better for it.

This guide is for you. It's not just a resource, it's a **reflection of community.**

So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in this work. For showing up. For caring deeply, even when it was hard. This is what **community leadership** looks like. And it's an honour to walk alongside you.

With sincere appreciation,

Thabani Conrad Bhala
Chair, Employment Action Table


Thank you!
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Edmonton
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CANADA CAREER TRAINING
MFRS Multicultural Family Resource Society
FOCAS CANADA
Thank You
211
CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES
BREDIN CENTRE FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT
MCHB
IslamicFamily created to serve
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PolicyWise for Children & Families
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
ACTION FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES IN ACTION
Gateway Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is something powerful about having an idea—and the courage to bring it to life. For many people in Edmonton, especially newcomers, entrepreneurship is not just a career path—it is a **declaration of possibility, independence, and hope.**

Whether you dream of opening a café, launching a tech start-up, or offering your professional services as a consultant, this Part 4: Entrepreneurship Opportunities is designed to support you. This section of the Employment Resource Guide walks you through the **essential steps** of starting and sustaining a business in Alberta, from registering your company and understanding licensing requirements to exploring funding programs and immigration supports for entrepreneurs.

We understand that building a business in a new country or province can feel overwhelming. That is why this section breaks things down clearly and practically—with real tools, links, and local resources to help you move forward with **confidence**.

This part of the guide also celebrates the **entrepreneurial spirit** in Edmonton—a city filled with innovation hubs, collaborative networks, and programs designed to nurture bold ideas. Whether you are just getting started or ready to scale, you will find that you are not alone. There is a community here ready to support you.



HOW TO USE THIS PART OF THE GUIDE

This section is laid out to follow the natural stages of starting a business, with practical resources along the way:

Laying the Foundation

Begin by understanding what it takes to legally and successfully start a business in Alberta. We cover:

- Choosing your structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation)
- How to register your business name and apply for necessary licenses
- Where to go for business planning support, market research, and mentorship

Entrepreneurship and Immigration

This part outlines federal and provincial immigration programs that support entrepreneurs. You will learn about:

- The Start-Up Visa Program
- The Owner-Operator pathways
- The Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP) for entrepreneurs
- Key eligibility requirements and links to updated government resources

Funding, Grants, and Financial Supports

We provide a comprehensive list of funding opportunities for new businesses, including:

- Grants from Alberta Innovates, the federal government, and local partners
- Small business loan programs
- How to write a source letter and where to get support with financial planning

Local Networks and Resources





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For those with an **entrepreneurial mindset**, starting a business in Canada presents exciting opportunities, but the process can be complex without the right guidance.

This section outlines the essential steps for launching a business, including business registration, licensing requirements, and financial support available to entrepreneurs. It is designed to help newcomers understand how to turn their **business ideas** into reality while navigating legal and regulatory frameworks.

Beyond the technical steps of business setup, this portion of the guide explores available funding and grant opportunities, networking resources, and industry trends that can help entrepreneurs establish and grow their businesses. Whether readers are looking to launch a small local enterprise or scale a larger business, they will find **practical tools and information to support** their entrepreneurial journey.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship Opportunities

1

NOC Codes for Entrepreneurs

What is the NOC for you?

For entrepreneurs in Canada, the NOC Code system still plays a role in defining specific job roles related to entrepreneurship, though it's generally more applicable to certain business-related professions rather than the entrepreneurial role itself. Here's a breakdown:

1 NOC Codes for Self-Employed People:

While there isn't a specific NOC code for the general "entrepreneur" role (since entrepreneurs can span across various industries and job titles), there are related NOC codes for **self-employed individuals** who own or operate businesses. ***These may include jobs such as:***

a. **Small Business Owners**
b. **Business Managers**
c. **Consultants**
d. **Freelancers** in various industries (e.g., marketing, technology, consulting)

These positions fall under a range of categories and can be grouped as **management occupations** or **professional occupations** depending on the nature of the business and its activities.

2 Examples of Entrepreneur-Related NOC Codes:

NOC Code	Occupation
NOC 0124	Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations Managers
NOC 0711	Construction Managers (for entrepreneurs in construction)
NOC 1122	Professional Occupations in Business Services to Management (for business consultants or advisors)
NOC 1311	Accountants (for entrepreneurs in finance or accounting services)

3 NOC Code Use for Entrepreneurs:

Immigration: Entrepreneurs applying for immigration to Canada (e.g., through the Start-up Visa Program) may need to demonstrate they meet specific criteria linked to their business and occupation. Although there's no "entrepreneur" NOC code per se, their role and qualifications are categorized by the type of business they run or manage.

Job Search: If an entrepreneur wants to search for roles in a similar business or managerial field (e.g., looking for consulting opportunities, starting a business, or hiring), NOC codes help categorize the skills and tasks involved in running the business.

Government of Canada NOC Tool

The NOC tool is the official and primary resource for finding NOC codes.
Website: National Occupational Classification Tool
How to Use:

a. Enter your job title or keywords related to your occupation in the search bar.
b. Refine the search by matching your job responsibilities and duties with the descriptions provided.
c. Review the "TEER" (Training, Education, Experience, and Responsibilities) category associated with your code.

Note: *This tool is regularly updated, so ensure you use the latest version for accuracy.*

IRCC NOC Guidance Page

For immigration purposes, specific NOC codes are often required based on the type of visa or program you're applying for, such as Express Entry or Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs).
Website: IRCC NOC Page
IRCC Website: For immigration-specific information, use the IRCC NOC guidance page.
How to Use:

1. Visit the page to learn which NOC categories (e.g., TEER 0, 1, 2, or 3) are eligible for immigration programs.
2. Confirm if your occupation matches the eligibility criteria for your application type.

Provincial or Territorial Websites

Provinces often have programs under the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) that rely on NOC codes.

- Visit the immigration section of the province or territory's website if you're interested in finding NOC-specific guidance for their programs.

Employment Resources

Many employment resources, such as job search websites or career counseling platforms, reference NOC codes for guidance. If you're unclear about your NOC, these resources can help match your skills and job title.

2

Registrations for Business Licences

Steps to Register a Business Licence in Alberta

1 Choose a Business Structure

Decide if you'll operate as a sole proprietor, partnership, or corporation. Determine the type of business structure that best suits your needs:

- **Sole Proprietorship**: The simplest structure with minimal regulatory requirements. You are personally liable for the business.
- **Partnership**: Involves two or more individuals sharing profits, responsibilities, and liabilities.
- **Corporation**: A separate legal entity offering limited liability protection but requiring more compliance and formalities.

Each structure has distinct implications for taxation, liability, and regulatory requirements, so choose wisely based on your business goals.

2 Register the Business Name:

Use Alberta's Corporate Registry Services.

- If you're not operating under your own personal name, you need to register your business name.
- Visit Alberta's **Corporate Registry Services** to search for and register your business name.
- Ensure the name is unique and not already in use by another entity in Alberta.
- You can register at a local registry agent office or through authorized online services.

Obtain a **Business Number (BN)** from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for tax and payroll purposes.

3 Apply for a Licence with Your Municipality:

Depending on your location and the type of business, you may need a municipal business licence. Each municipality has its own application process and requirements.

A. Edmonton: Apply here for city business licenses.

1. Apply online through the City of Edmonton's Business Licence platform.
2. Certain businesses, such as those dealing with food, personal services, or trades, may need additional inspections or permits.
3. Check the City of Edmonton's guidelines for specific industries.

B. Calgary: Use Calgary's MyBusiness portal.

1. Use Calgary's **MyBusiness portal** to apply for a business licence.
2. The portal provides step-by-step guidance tailored to the type of business you're starting.
3. Depending on your industry, you may need supplementary permits or inspections, such as building or fire safety approvals.

4 Understand Additional Licensing Requirements

- Some industries require provincial or federal licences in addition to municipal licences. For example:
  - Businesses dealing with alcohol, cannabis, or gaming require approvals from the Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis (AGLC).
  - Transportation businesses might need permits from Alberta Transportation.
- Consult with Alberta's OneStop Business Registration Service to identify any additional licences or permits applicable to your business.



5 Maintain Compliance

- Keep your business licence up to date by renewing it annually or as required by your municipality.
- Update your information if your business address, structure, or operations change.
- Stay informed about regulations affecting your industry to avoid penalties or disruptions.

3

Registrations for Business Permits

Some businesses require additional permits depending on the industry and municipality. Starting a business in Alberta often requires obtaining specific permits and licenses, depending on the nature of the business and its location. These permits ensure that your business complies with local, provincial, and federal regulations. Below are the key categories of permits you might need:

Common Permits in Alberta

1 Zoning & Development Permits

Check local bylaws for land-use permissions.

a. **Purpose:** Zoning and development permits ensure that your business activity aligns with the designated land use in your municipality.
b. **Key Steps:**
   i. Check local zoning bylaws to confirm that your intended business activity is permitted in your chosen location.
   ii. Contact your municipal office or planning department to apply for the necessary permits.
c. **Examples of considerations:**
   i. Residential vs. commercial zoning.
   ii. Parking requirements.
   iii. Noise restrictions.
   iv. Signage regulations.

2 Health Permits

For food-related businesses, consult Alberta Health Services (AHS Business Permits).

a. **Purpose:** Health permits are mandatory for businesses involved in handling food, beverages, or personal care services to ensure public health and safety.
b. **Key Steps:**
   i. Reach out to Alberta Health Services (AHS) to determine the specific health permits required for your business.
   ii. Undergo inspections and training as required by AHS regulations.
c. **Examples of businesses requiring health permits:**
   i. Restaurants, cafes, and food trucks.
   ii. Daycare centers and senior care facilities.
   iii. Hair salons and tattoo parlors.

3 Specialized Industry Permits

Refer to the BizPal tool for a comprehensive list of permits tailored to your business.

a. **Purpose:** Certain industries require specific permits tailored to their unique operational needs or regulatory requirements.

b. **Key Steps:**

   i. Use the BizPal tool (an online resource) to identify the permits and licenses needed for your specific business type and location.

   ii. Follow the instructions provided to apply for each permit.

c. **Examples of industries requiring specialized permits:**

   i. Construction and trades (e.g., building permits, contractor licenses).

   ii. Transportation (e.g., taxi licenses, logistics operations).

   iii. Cannabis retail or production.

   iv. Alcohol sales (e.g., liquor licenses).

4 Why Are Permits Important?

Legal Compliance: Operating without the required permits can result in fines, penalties, or even business closure.

Consumer Trust: Proper licensing shows customers that your business meets safety and ethical standards.

Operational Smoothness: Being fully licensed reduces the risk of unexpected legal or regulatory hurdles.

5 Resources for Assistance

1. Local Municipal Offices: For zoning and development-related queries. Each municipality has its website where you can find zoning and development permit information. Example:

a. City of Calgary (Zoning & Development): https://www.calgary.ca

b. City of Edmonton (Zoning Bylaws): https://www.edmonton.ca

c. If you are in a different municipality, search for your local government's website by typing "zoning permits [your city/town name]" in a search engine.

2. Alberta Health Services: For health permit information and inspections.

- Health permits and requirements for food-related businesses, personal care services, and more.
- Website: https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph/Page8302.aspx

3. BizPal: A government-backed tool to streamline the process of identifying and applying for necessary permits.

- A tool to identify and apply for business permits and licenses based on your industry and location.
- Website: https://bizpal.alberta.ca

4

Resource Links for Business Insurance

Business insurance is a critical component of running a successful operation. It safeguards your organization, employees, and assets from unforeseen risks, such as property damage, liability claims, and interruptions in business activities. To help you navigate your options, here are some essential resources and tips for finding the right coverage:

Key Insurance Providers and Resources:

1 Insurance Bureau of Canada: www.ibc.ca

The IBC is a national industry association representing Canada's private property and casualty insurers. Their website offers comprehensive resources on business insurance, including information about types of coverage, FAQs, and guidance for small businesses.

2 Small Business BC Insurance Guide: smallbusinessbc.ca

Small Business BC provides a detailed guide tailored to small business owners. It explains various types of insurance policies, such as liability, property, and business interruption insurance, helping you make informed decisions.

3 Local Providers and Brokers: Contact local brokers such as AMA Insurance (www.ama.ab.ca)

Many local insurance providers and brokers specialize in business insurance. Working with a local broker can be advantageous as they understand regional regulations and market conditions. Some trusted options include:

a. **AMA Insurance (Alberta Motor Association)**: Offers a range of insurance products, including commercial coverage tailored to small businesses.

Website: www.ama.ab.ca

Other brokers: Contact local insurance firms in your area to compare quotes and find coverage that suits your business needs.

Tips for Choosing Business Insurance:

Assess Your Risks	Identify the specific risks associated with your industry and operations. For instance, a restaurant might prioritize liability and property insurance, while a consulting firm might focus on professional liability coverage.
Compare Policies	Obtain quotes from multiple providers to ensure competitive pricing and comprehensive coverage.
Understand the Fine Print	Review policy exclusions, coverage limits, and deductibles to avoid surprises in the event of a claim.
Consider Bundling	Some insurers offer discounts for bundling different types of coverage, such as property and liability insurance.
Seek Expert Advice	A licensed broker can provide personalized recommendations based on your business profile and budget.

5

Creating a Source Letter

A source letter is an essential document that confirms the financial backing for your business. It serves as evidence of your funding sources and is often required when applying for grants, loans, or other financial assistance.

How to Create a Source Letter:

1 Understand the Purpose of a Source Letter

The primary goal of a source letter is to demonstrate to lenders, investors, or grant providers that your business has secure financial backing. This assures stakeholders that you have the necessary resources to execute your business plans or meet the financial requirements of the funding opportunity.

2 Key Elements to Include in a Source Letter

a. Specify the Source of Funds: Clearly identify where the funds are coming from. This could include:

a. Personal savings.
b. An investor or partner.
c. A loan or line of credit from a financial institution.

b.Detail the Amount of Funding:

1. State the exact amount of financial support being provided by each source. Break this down if multiple sources are contributing to the total funding.

c. Outline the Nature of the Funds:

Indicate whether the funds are a gift, loan, or investment. If the funds are a loan, include terms such as the interest rate, repayment schedule, and any collateral requirement

3 Attach Supporting Documents

To validate your claims, include relevant documentation, such as:

a. Recent bank statements showing the availability of personal funds.
b. Proof of assets, such as property deeds, stock certificates, or other investments.
c. A signed agreement with an investor or lender detailing their commitment.



4 Use Professional Language and Formatting

Your source letter should be clear, concise, and professional. It should follow a formal business letter format and include:

a. Your name and contact information.
b. The date of the letter.
c. The name and contact information of the recipient (e.g., grant organization, lender).
d. A clear subject line, such as "Confirmation of Financial Resources."

5 Seek Professional Guidance

To ensure accuracy and compliance with any legal or financial requirements, consider enlisting the help of a professional:

a. **Accountants** can verify financial details and ensure all figures are accurate.
b. **Lawyers** can draft or review the letter to ensure it meets legal standards and protects your interests.

Example Template for a Source Letter

Here's a sample structure:

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, Province, Postal Code]
[Email Address] | [Phone Number]

[Date]

[Recipient Name/Organization Name]
[Address]
[City, Province, Postal Code]

Subject: Confirmation of Financial Resources

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to confirm the financial resources available to support **[Business Name]** as part of the application for **[Grant/Loan/Other Funding Opportunity]**.

The total funds secured for this initiative amount to **[total amount]**, sourced from the following:
[**Source #1: Description and amount].**
[Source #2: Description and amount].

Supporting documents, including **[list documents],** are enclosed for verification purposes.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me at **[phone number]** or **[email address]**.

Sincerely,

Signature

[Your Full Name]
[Title, if applicable]

6

Guides to Grants and Funding for Entrepreneurs

Navigating the world of grants and funding can seem overwhelming, but it's a crucial step for entrepreneurs and business owners looking to grow their ventures. Understanding the resources available and how to access them can make a significant difference in securing financial support. Below are some key grants and funding programs, along with tips on how to maximize your chances of success.

Key Grants & Funding Resources:

1 Alberta Innovates

Supports tech-focused businesses. Visit albertainnovates.ca.

a. Focus	Supports businesses with a strong emphasis on technology, innovation, and research.
b. Offerings	Funding, networking opportunities, and advisory services for startups and scale-ups.
c. Programs Include	1. **Entrepreneurial Investment Program:** Provides funding to startups for early-stage development. 2. **Smart Agriculture and Food Innovation:** Supports advancements in agri-tech and food production.
d. How to Apply	Visit Alberta Innovates to explore their programs and application requirements.
e. Pro Tip	Strong proposals align with Alberta Innovates' focus on tech-driven innovation. Clearly outline your project's impact and scalability.

2 Canada Small Business Financing Program

Visit Innovation Canada.

a. Focus	Helps small businesses access loans for purchasing equipment, renovating property, or other operational needs.
b. Offerings	Canadian-based businesses generating less than $10 million in annual revenue.
c. Programs Include	1. Secures up to $1 million in financing. 2. Loan guarantees reduce lender risk, making it easier for businesses to qualify.
d. How to Apply	Applications are processed through financial institutions. Learn more at Innovation Canada.
e. Pro Tip	Maintain strong financial records and a well-structured business plan to improve your chances of approval.

3 Government of Alberta Grant

Explore funding options at alberta.ca/business-grants.aspx.

a. Focus	Provides various funding options for businesses in Alberta, covering sectors like agriculture, energy, and technology.
b. Offerings	Canadian-based businesses generating less than $10 million in annual revenue.
c. Programs Include	1. **Alberta Export Expansion Program (AEEP):** Assists businesses in expanding to international markets. 2. **Job Creation Student Hiring Incentive:** Supports employers hiring students for work-integrated learning.
d. How to Apply	Visit Alberta Business Grants for a comprehensive list of available opportunities.
e. Pro Tip	Stay updated on grant deadlines and tailor applications to highlight job creation, economic growth, or other community benefits.

4 BDC (Business Development Bank of Canada)

Financing and advisory services for entrepreneurs (www.bdc.ca).

a. Focus	Offers financial and advisory services to Canadian entrepreneurs at all stages of business development.
b. Services Include	1. Loans for purchasing equipment, real estate, or working capital. 2. Growth equity and venture capital investments for innovative businesses. 3. Expert consulting on strategy, marketing, and operational efficiency.
c. How to Access	Explore their offerings at BDC.
d. Pro Tip	BDC prioritizes businesses with strong growth potential. Demonstrate how their support will enable significant advancements.

Tips for Success

Know Your Needs	Understand your business's financial requirements and which funding sources align with your goals.
Tailor Applications	Customize each grant application to highlight how your project aligns with the funder's priorities.
Keep Records	Ensure your financial statements, business plans, and other documentation are up-to-date and professional.
Leverage Resources	Many organizations, such as local chambers of commerce or business incubators, offer free guidance on navigating grant applications.

7

Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership (ELIP) Resources for Small Businesses/Startups

Key Partnerships for Small Business and Startup Support:

1. Edmonton Unlimited:
- Offers resources for innovation and startups, including accelerator and incubator programs.
- **Contact**: www.edmontonunlimited.com

2. ERIN (Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Network):
- Provides immigrant-focused employment and business resources.
- **Contact**: erin.ca

3. EED (Explore Edmonton Development):
- Supports entrepreneurs through marketing and event opportunities.
- **Contact**: exploreedmonton.com

4. Business Link Alberta:
- A hub for business advice, market research, and startup guidance.
- **Contact**: businesslink.ca

5. MNP:
- Accounting and advisory services for startups and small businesses.
- **Contact**: www.mnp.ca

6. BDC (Business Development Bank of Canada):
- Financing and guidance for entrepreneurs.
- **Contact**: www.bdc.ca

7. Futurepreneur Canada:
- Focuses on funding and mentoring for young entrepreneurs.
- **Contact**: www.futurepreneur.ca

8

Accelerator and Incubator Programs

1. Edmonton Unlimited:

- **Programs**:
  - **Accelerator Program**: Offers mentorship, networking, and funding opportunities.
  - **Incubator Program**: Provides resources and space for startups to grow.
- **Contact**: www.edmontonunlimited.com

2. Edmonton Regional Innovation Network (ERIN)

3. Edmonton Business Diversity Network (EBDN)

4. Business Link

5. Platform Calgary:

- **Programs**:
  - **Launchpad Accelerator**: Ideal for scaling startups.
  - **Startup Launch Program**: For early-stage businesses.
- **Contact**: www.platformcalgary.com

Edmonton Local
IMMIGRATION
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Your voice and presence matter in every workplace—never dim your light.