



Making BC a great  
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# BC Tech Co-op Grants Program Guidelines

9th Floor, 1188 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC V6E 4A2

[bcic.ca](http://bcic.ca)

## BC Tech Co-op Grants Program

The **BC Innovation Council (BCIC)** is pleased to offer the **BC Tech Co-op Grants Program**, a two-year collaborative initiative to support talent in BC's technology sector. Tech firms hiring for any roles and non-tech companies hiring for tech-specific roles are encouraged to apply.

## Key Objectives & Benefits

The **BC Tech Co-op Grants Program** will provide:

- **Grant incentives** to small firms to recruit and train co-op students.
- **Work experience** for students, during which they acquire skills and knowledge, that they can apply towards their academic credits and future integration into the work force. In addition, students will gain hands-on experience within the technology industry.

The key objectives of the **BC Tech Co-op Grants Program** include:

- **Develop training opportunities for students in their first co-op placement.** Experience acquired during the first co-op placement helps students secure subsequent co-op placements required for academic credit and graduation, while fostering their long-term employability for full time jobs.
- **Encourage small technology firms to employ their first co-op student.** Such initiatives contribute to the increase of co-op employers in the BC technology sector and support small firms in gaining access to an energetic and innovative workforce.
- **Address the skills gap** between the business needs of technology employers and traditional classroom training.
- **Support knowledge transfer and innovation in the technology sector**, which will impact all other industries from healthcare, to natural resources, and more.

## Co-op Placement

Co-op students function as employees and are paid at fair market rates by the company they have been matched to work with for their co-op term, as part of an accredited post-secondary co-op program. In return, employers will have the opportunity to fill temporary human resource needs.

The co-op student's progress on the job will be monitored by the post-secondary co-op program and evaluated by the employer, according to the terms and conditions of each post-secondary co-op program.

## Co-op Terms and Program Funding

Participating companies are required to hire a student for a minimum of one co-op term, which is typically 16 weeks. Companies are advised to apply early, as post-secondary co-op program departments start the recruitment process at least four months prior to the beginning of each co-op term, as outlined below:

Co-op Work Terms
Summer (May – Aug)
Fall (Sep – Dec)
Spring (Jan – April)

Each employer is eligible to a maximum of four grants each per fiscal year valued at \$2,700 (a total value of \$10,800), to recruit and train between one to four distinct co-op students. Grant values represent the average one-month salary for a co-op student. The employer must pay the remainder of the student’s salary during the co-op term.

## Company Eligibility

To participate in the **BC Tech Co-op Grants Program**, a company must:

- Be established in BC
- Be a small business that employs 99 or less full time-equivalent employees on their payroll at the time of the co-op hiring
- Be established as one of the following:
  - 1) For-profit technology firm
  - 2) Not-for-profit organization in the technology sector (note: research labs are not eligible)
  - 3) Be a non-tech company hiring for a tech role

## Eligible Work Placement

To qualify for the **BC Tech Co-op Grants Program**, work placements must:

- Be approved by a co-op coordinator working at a BC public post-secondary institution.
- Involve a student in a co-op program that is provincially approved by the Accountability Council for Co-operative Education in BC (ACCE-BC) or nationally accredited by the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE).
- Be a minimum of one co-op term as determined by the institution (typically 16 weeks).
- Provide the student with productive work during the placement.
- Provide a fair market wage to the student for the work performed during the placement.
- Include student supervision and performance evaluation by the employer.

Further, the work placement is subject to one of the following limitations, which will be ensured by the post-secondary co-op department:

**Option A**            **The student must be a first term co-op placement** for a post-secondary program conducted in BC. The post-secondary co-op department will ensure that the employer is matched with a first term co-op student; or

**Option B**            **The company must be employing their first co-op student in at least the last five years** (new co-op employer). In this case, employers may be matched with students of any level of co-op experience.

## Grant Application & Co-op Placement Process

1. Interested companies apply to a local post-secondary co-op program. If they wish, employers have the option to advise the co-op program that the posting is conditional upon approval of a BC Tech Co-op Grant.
2. The post-secondary co-op program will review the employer's job posting, and advise the employer if the position meets the standards of an accredited co-op program.
3. If the job posting is accepted by the post-secondary co-op program, the position is posted to co-op student candidates. If applicable, a proviso can be added to the posting mentioning that the job is conditional upon the employer receiving a BC Tech Co-op Grant.
4. The post-secondary co-op program will match students with employers, and finalize the hiring process with the employer. If the work placement is conditional upon receipt of a BC Tech Co-op Grant, this step will be postponed until **step 6** is complete.
5. If the company appears eligible for a BC Tech Co-op Grant, the post-secondary co-op program will direct the approved co-op company to apply through BCIC before the **Grant Application Deadlines** (refer to page 3).
6. BCIC will review the employer's BC Tech Co-op Grant application for eligibility, subject to limitations verified after approval. Due to limited funding a first-come first-served principle may apply for each co-op term.
7. BCIC will issue surveys to the company, one to be completed by the company, and one that the company must see is completed by the student, so that BCIC can evaluate the results and impact of the BC Tech Co-op Grant.
8. Approved companies will receive a BC Tech Co-op Grant valued at \$2,700 toward the student's salary, before the last month of the co-op term.

## Changes and Termination

Any substantial changes or termination of the work placement must be processed through the post-secondary co-op program.

## Roles

**Post-secondary co-op departments** deliver the co-op program. They make the co-op placements (e.g. matching students with employers, overseeing the hiring process, evaluation for education credits). The employer and student will be participants of a formal co-op program.

**BCIC** administers the BC Tech Co-op Grant. The employer can apply to BCIC for a grant as soon as the job posting has been approved by the co-op department.

BCIC will verify the co-op work placement with the co-op department and disburse the funding.

**Employers** participate in a formal co-op program.

Employers apply to the post-secondary department for a co-op match with a student.

Employers apply to BCIC for the **BC Tech Co-op Grant**.

## FAQ

### **How long is processing time for an application?**

A typical application is processed within 20 business days.

**What is the definition of a first-time co-op student?** As a first-time co-op student, the student has never completed a co-op work term with any employer within any post-secondary co-op program.

**Are subsidiary companies eligible?** Yes, subsidiaries incorporated within BC are encouraged to apply. A subsidiary is defined as a corporation that is controlled, directly or indirectly, by another corporation but is able to exert influence over its affairs.

**If a student is on an 8-month co-op contract, are they eligible for a grant?** Yes, students are eligible to receive grants towards subsequent 4-month placements within the same contract.

### **What are the program requirements once a company has received grant approval?**

Employers will be issued a satisfaction survey by email to complete during the fourth month of the respective term pending their award.

## How to Apply | Contact Information

To apply, visit <http://bcic.fluidreview.com>.

For more information about the application process, visit <http://bcic.ca/techgrants> or contact us at [programs@bcic.ca](mailto:programs@bcic.ca).