

Nova Scotia Co-operative *Innovation Council*

Call for Proposals

Dear Fellow Co-operator:

In September 2003, the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council launched the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council.

This council is being led by a group of senior decision-makers throughout our co-operative and credit union businesses, and these individuals have agreed to promote, stimulate, and manage an innovation agenda within the co-operative sector over the next decade.

The concept of innovation within the co-operative sector is not new. We have been growing and expanding our product lines and services since our beginnings. We know that our co-operative leaders and members have ideas for innovation that they would like to pursue if they had the time, expertise, and resources. And, we also know that our ability to innovate, to add value, and to continue to grow in new and exciting ways is very important to our future.

It is for these reasons that the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council has been launched. Our goal is to work with local co-operatives in spawning and stimulating innovation within their businesses. It may be an idea that you have for a new product or service that can be commercialized, or developing or enhancing a system or process to do business more efficiently and profitably.

Innovation, as you may know, is a long-term process. It takes time, energy, resources, patience, and commitment. Rarely does one see results in the short term. It is for these reasons that the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council is narrowing its support to no more than two new projects per year.

The Innovation Council is **now seeking expressions of interest** from our co-operative members for innovation ideas that they wish to explore, if they had the technical and financial support to do so.



Nova Scotia Co-operative Council

M a k i n g a D i f f e r e n c e i n N o v a S c o t i a C o m m u n i t i e s



The Selection Process

It is the intent of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council to engage other partners for technical, management, and financial support in the implementation of our innovation strategy. These partners may include Nova Scotia Business Inc, InNovaCorp, ACOA, Nova Scotia Economic Development, the National Research Council, and others.

Once the expressions of interest have been received, a committee of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council and our partners will review the submissions and select two innovation proposals for potential support over the next year. The proponents of the top proposals may be asked to meet with the review committee before a final decision is made.

Those not selected for support this year will be eligible for review again in subsequent years. It is the intention of the Innovation Council to continue to grow our capacity to support several innovation ideas in the co-operative sector over the next five years.

Following a review of all submissions, you will be notified of the committee's decisions and next steps.

We do hope that your co-operative will give serious consideration to submitting an idea for 'innovation'. This is an exciting opportunity for the co-operative sector to take part in the innovation agenda for Nova Scotia, and to ensure the future growth and success of the co-operative economy.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please feel free to contact Dianne Kelderman, CEO of the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, at (902) 896-7291 or via email at diannefk@eastlink.ca.

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

Determine Your Goals & Develop a Plan

Please describe and submit a brief outline of the following to the Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council **no later than August 31**:

1. Your idea
2. Why do you think this idea is 'innovative'?
3. Why have you not pursued this idea before now?
4. Who will lead and manage an innovation initiative within your co-operative?
5. What strengths do you feel your co-operative has in moving forward with an innovation idea (technical expertise, strong management, resources, etc)?
6. What is the size of the market potential for this idea, from your perspective?
7. How much do you think it would cost, financially, to take this idea from the idea stage, through the development process, and into the marketplace?

Please mail submissions to
Nova Scotia Co-operative Innovation Council
PO Box 1872, 339 Willow Street
Truro, NS B2N 6C7

Or email submissions to
diannefk@eastlink.ca