Rhyze®Up! Program Frequently Asked Questions

Program Basics and Application Information

How does the Rhyze®Up! National Accelerator program work?

- The program is designed to accelerate growth and profitability of women- and nonbinary-led/owned or co-led/owned businesses through mentorship, project implementation, and leadership coaching.
- The program begins with the Discovery Phase with up to 15 hours of support with an experienced mentor to help identify your company's challenges and opportunities for growth. At the end of the Discovery Phase, the mentor provides a list of high-impact, high-return project recommendations.
- Traction is the next phase of the program, where chosen projects are implemented with mentor and industry specialist support. On average, projects are 40 hours of work and are completed within three to four months.
- Throughout the program the woman or nonbinary leader/owner would also receive one-on-one Leadership Coaching with a leadership coach for up to 12 hours.

Who is eligible to apply?

- For-profit companies who are:
    - women-led or women-owned or nonbinary-led or nonbinary-owned;
        - Note: co-owned and co-led companies are also eligible. Women and nonbinary individuals do not need to own 50% or more of the company; however, they must have decision making authority. An individual in a C suite role may also qualify.
    - incorporated in Canada;
    - employing less than five hundred staff;
    - be a technology-driven innovation; and
    - generating a minimum of $200,000 in annual recurring revenue.
- Ideal companies would fall within our main industry sectors: agri-food, technology, manufacturing, clean technology, or digital media/ICT.
- Companies cannot be a consultant or solo entrepreneur with a service or retail outlet focused on selling locally, and/or unable or unwilling to scale.
    - For example, a real estate agent, physiotherapist/counselling clinic, gym, or online reseller would not be a good fit for this program.
- Other eligibility criteria may be used to determine companies who would be the best fit for the program, including a review by the program's funder, NRC-IRAP. Enrollment is limited each year. Not all applicants will be accepted into the program.

How and when do I apply?

- The program has a continuous intake starting in April and we will accept companies until all spots are filled. If our program is full when you apply, we can add you to a waiting list to be considered for the following fiscal year.
- You can apply through our online application form here: Rhyze®Up! Application Form.

Is the program delivered in person or online?

- The program is delivered online with companies taking part across Canada. Your mentor and leadership coach will set up virtual meetings and/or phone calls with you as applicable.

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How much does this program cost and how does the funding work?

- The Discovery Phase and Leadership Coaching is fully funded (free).
- If you choose to move forward with the Traction Phase, there is a generous $5,600 subsidy towards the cost of the approved projects, with a client contribution of $1,200 (plus applicable taxes).
    - Companies only need to pay the client contribution portion of the project (i.e. $1,200 plus applicable taxes). They do not have to pay for the entire cost of the project first and wait for the subsidy portion to be reimbursed.
- The funding allows us to provide mentorship, leadership coaching, and project work. It is not a grant or a loan. Companies receive support from our mentors through the Discovery Phase, Leadership Coaching sessions, and the Traction Phase, which is an estimated $5,000-$12,000 overall value.

Why do I have to pay a portion of the project (the client contribution) if I want to do a project?

- Being able to pay for a portion of the project helps us identify companies who have growth potential and investor appeal. It also helps ensure full commitment and active participation throughout the program.

What is the time commitment involved for Leader/Owner?

- On average, you can expect to spend about 1-5 hours per week with all the program phases combined, however, it will vary for each company. Meetings can be arranged to suit your schedule. During the Discovery Phase, it is important that all decision makers are present and engaged. This phase involves a collaborative approach and a deep dive into the business.
- During the Traction Phase, the success of this program is based on the implementation and execution of projects by our industry specialists, which means that a great deal of the actual work is being created and/or delivered by them, with you and/or your team providing information, direction and feedback as required.
    - For example, you might be asked to provide your current communications strategy, financials for revenue projections, or access to your plant for a LEAN project. Depending on the work and the number of staff you have, this could be delegated to the appropriate employee(s) (i.e., head of marketing, plant manager, bookkeeper).
- Leadership Coaching is for the woman or nonbinary leader/owner and is up to 12 hours of one-on-one sessions throughout the program.

How long is the program?

- It will vary for each participating company as this is not a cohort-based program where all companies start at the same time and go through the phases at the same time. On average, the Discovery Phase takes about one to two months to complete, the Leadership Coaching about four months to complete, and the Traction Phase about three to four months to complete.
- The Leadership Coaching takes place alongside the Discovery and Traction Phases (if applicable), so a company could complete the program in as little as four months pending everyone's availability and commitment. This timing depends on availability and capacity of the company/owner, the industry specialists, the type of work, and the urgency. All projects, hours, and meetings will need to be completed by the end of the fiscal year in March.

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Leadership Coaching

What is Leadership Coaching?

- Past participants in the program have described Leadership Coaching as specific help for them as an individual entrepreneur, whereas the Discovery and Traction phases of the program are there to help the company. It addresses personal and non-technical challenges such as work life balance, time management, and delegation.
- Your coach will help identify your leadership goals and set a meeting schedule that works for you.
- Leadership coaches help clarify your thinking, ask powerful questions, and will co-create strategies to help you grow. The coaching is not counseling or therapy.
- The application form includes a section to describe the leadership or other skills that you would like to work on. Your coach will bring in other tools and templates to support your work towards those goals.

Do I have to be "leading" a team? For example, what if the company is just me and a co-founder?

- No, you do not need to be overseeing a team to take advantage. It can be a helpful process regardless of how many people you work with.

Mentors

How do you match me with a mentor?

- Each company accepted into the program has an initial call with the program manager. This allows the program manager to learn more about the company and get an understanding of their needs.
- Boundless Accelerator (BA) has a robust roster of over thirty mentors and industry specialists. Each person is onboarded through a comprehensive selection process which provides program specific training and gathers details about their skills and sector experience. We use a mentor skills and sector experience matrix along with information from your completed intake form, and the initial call with the program manager, to determine the best mentor fit.

Can I use/hire my own mentor/consultant to work with me through the program?

- No. The program is designed for companies to work with our internal roster of vetted and trusted mentors and industry specialists. We are unable to utilize outside consultants.

Traction Phase and Projects

Are projects discussed with me before they move forward?

- Yes! The Discovery Phase is collaborative. It is a time for the mentor(s) to learn more about you and your company, and it is a time for you and your company to build a relationship with the mentor(s).
- During this time, you will be having many meaningful discussions, and our experienced, high-caliber mentors will also provide advice regarding potential solutions along the way. By the time recommendations for projects are delivered, you will be very much involved and the project recommendations that emerge have been discussed with you and have incorporated your input. You are the ultimate decision-maker when it comes to what you want to focus on.

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Can I get help with a few different areas during the project phase?

- Yes! Most projects during the Traction Phase aim to address one to three challenges that your company is facing. The mentor will work with you to help prioritize your focus and ensure projects can be completed within the amount of time given.
- If the project ends and you would like to explore those areas in further detail or would like help with other challenges, we would be happy to talk to you about our Boundless Business Consulting services for continued support.

What are some examples of the kinds of challenges the program can help my business with?

- Each project is customized towards your specific company and needs. In general, here are some areas that other companies have received support with:
  - NEW for 2026: Artificial Intelligence (AI) gap analysis and readiness assessment
  - Technical challenges for new or existing products or services
  - Management issues related to skills, capacity, communications, planning
  - Strategic marketing aiming to build market reach
  - Strategic sales and/or key account management aiming to access new key customers/clients
  - Recruitment of critical and exceptional talent
  - Process efficiency and optimization to achieve market advantage
  - Demos and pilots of new technologies/products to enter new markets
  - Improving product or service quality
  - Looking for new ways to capitalize on existing technology
  - Growing business to be better able to scale-up and/or expand operations
    - Note: Any projects that focus on services related to direct sales, sales prospecting, promotion, public relations, or direct marketing to customers or clients, will not receive support through the funding

Do I have to do the Discovery Phase? Or can I move directly into the project?

- Yes, companies need to go through the Discovery Phase first as this helps us understand your company, your needs, and your goals. This also allows you to build trust with Boundless and get to know your mentors and the potential industry specialists who will be working with you through the project phase. However, not all companies will need to use the full 15 hours of time. A reminder that the Discovery Phase is fully funded (free).

OTHER QUESTIONS

What if I still have questions about the Rhyze®Up! Program?

- Please fill out our contact form and we will get back to you as soon as we can! We would be happy to arrange a time to speak with you to answer any other questions you may have.

This program is supported in part by the National Research Council Canada
Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP)

National Research Council Canada | Conseil national de recherches Canada

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