

UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC PROGRAM

The UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC program is the result of a Québec-France industrial cooperation agreement jointly administered by Québec's ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation and France's Ubifrance. Its aim is to promote the negotiation and signing of partnership agreements between small and medium-sized businesses in France and Québec.

Under the conditions described below, the program covers the costs of **mission** preparation, transatlantic transportation, living expenses and inter-city transportation in France.

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1. Eligibility

Small and medium-sized businesses that have an industrial project with a French partner are eligible under the program. Examples of such projects are the acquisition or transfer of know-how or patents for manufacturing a product or operating a process under licence, the joint development of a product or process, the creation of a mixed enterprise or industrial subsidiary, etc. Applicants must have the status of legal persons. No minimum sales figures are asked for, but the technical and financial capacity to go through with the project is one of the primary acceptance criteria. The program is not for businesses looking for

partners. Businesses must already have found a partner and established contact with it. In addition, discussions must have led to reciprocal interest in reaching an industrial agreement.

- **Ineligible businesses**

Product distribution firms, mercantile establishments, service businesses (unless they are already involved in an industrial project described above) cultural businesses (they must apply to the SODEC), professional or sectoral associations, universities, colleges, research centres, government departments and government or paragonovernmental agencies are not eligible.

- **Ineligible projects**

Trade prospecting projects, import-export projects and industrial machinery purchasing projects are not eligible, even if they require the acquisition of know-how and on-the-job technical training. One exception is technology transfer related to an industrial agreement described above.

2. Program access

Businesses must complete a mission application form and send it to the MDEIE, indicating briefly, but clearly, the objective sought. The form must include a description of the business, copies of the correspondence exchanged with the partner, data on the project technology, available financial statements or annual reports for the last three years, and any additional information likely to add to quick comprehension of the project (market research surveys, feasibility studies, previous mission reports, press releases, etc.). Special attention should be paid to the instructions on the form, since an incomplete application may delay authorization of the application and the mission itself.

- **Time required for authorization**

Four weeks are required from the moment the form is registered with the MDEIE (authorization) until the anticipated departure date. This time period enables the file to be examined by the parties in both France and Québec, the logistics to be worked out and the plane tickets to be bought.

- **Number of persons**

One of the business's decision-makers is eligible. Another person (usually a technical expert) may be authorized if it is shown that the person's presence is necessary.

- **Duration of the mission**

The duration of a mission is determined by the program authorities. The living expenses allowance applies to the part of the stay devoted to the mission, not necessarily to the total length of the stay.

The actual length of the mission depends on the availability of both partners. In this respect, funding applies only to the project presented. For this reason, the mission cannot include any visits to fairs or exhibitions, prospecting initiatives, travel to another country, etc.

3. Travel

- **Transatlantic transportation**

Participants are reimbursed for their Montréal-Paris-Montréal transatlantic ticket at the most economical rate available at the time of the reservation, excluding the cost of cancellation insurance. Participants who leave from Québec City with a stopover in Montréal are reimbursed only for a combination ticket, Québec-Montréal-Paris and return. The program cannot pay for the high price of a Québec-Montréal-Québec ticket. Travelling expenses from the participant's home to the airport of embarkation for the transatlantic flight are to be assumed by the business or the participant.

The MDEIE supplies participants with information concerning available rates and, if need be, contact information for a government-accredited travel agency. After receiving a notice from the MDEIE that the mission is authorized, the participant is responsible for purchasing an economy class ticket.

- **Reimbursement procedure**

In the month following the end of the mission, the business must send the MDEIE the original plane ticket stub and the original invoice from the travel agency or carrier, indicating the name of each passenger and the cost of the person's ticket, together with any original voucher certifying that a participant paid for the inter-city transportation in France required for the mission. Cheques are made out to the order of the businesses, not the participants. **Care must be taken to send only original documents.**

- **Passport**

A passport is necessary to stay in France. However, Canadian citizens no longer need visas.

- **Living expenses**

UBIFRANCE sends each participant a cheque for living expenses (meals, accommodation and urban transportation) for the duration of the mission. At present, the allowance is 110 euros per 24 hours.

- **Inter-city transportation**

The program pays for travel throughout France for the purpose of the mission. UBIFRANCE makes the necessary reservations, buys tickets and gives them to the participants. Participants who have to pay for inter-city transportation

(train, plane) are reimbursed by the MDEIE, subject to prior approval from UBIFRANCE. By way of exception, vehicle rental costs (unlimited mileage and no deductible amount) may be reimbursed if the program managers authorize them beforehand because of a stay's specific constraints. However, vehicle-related costs (fuel, parking, tickets and additional insurance), as well as additional costs for extending a rental or for returning a vehicle to a counter other than the point of origin, etc., are paid for by participants.

4. Mission sequence

UBIFRANCE is responsible for missions in France. The contact person for UBIFRANCE is Catherine Corlobé, 14, avenue d'Eylau, 75116-Paris, tel: (1) 44.34.50.27, fax: (1) 44.34.50.01. Missions start with a meeting with Ms. Corlobé at the UBIFRANCE office on the day of arrival in Paris or on the first working day thereafter. At the meeting, participants are given their living expenses allowance and, where required, their inter-city transportation tickets. Participants undertake to comply with the program and schedule prepared for them by UBIFRANCE on the basis of the information submitted in the mission application and that provided by the partner. The program and schedule can be modified only after prior agreement with the MDEIE.

At the end of the mission, the Service économique of the Délégation générale du Québec in Paris (66, rue Pergolèse, 75116 - Paris, tel. (1) 40.67.85.80, fax: (1) 40.67.85.89) meets with participants to review how things went. The particulars of that meeting are given on the day before the departure.

The program provides services to official participants in missions, not to the persons accompanying them (spouses, consultants, etc.). Consequently, non-participants cannot partake of any hotel reservation or transportation services.

- **Mission report**

Within the month following their return, participants must send the MDEIE a report (form supplied) on the results obtained compared with the objectives sought, the meetings held, and the anticipated follow-up with the French businesses and organizations they met with. If the report is not filed within the time allotted, the MDEIE reserves the right to withhold reimbursement of the transportation tickets.

5. The MDEIE's responsibility

The MDEIE is not responsible for any risks, damage or accidents that may occur during the mission. Québec participants must therefore make sure that they hold appropriate personal coverage.

6. Testimonials

[TRANSLATION]

“We contacted a French firm, Quescom, in Paris while taking part in the INTEROP 2001 trade mission organized under the UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC program.

A few months later, we again met with Quescom, thanks to the UBIFRANCE program. That time, the meeting was held in the Sophia-Antipolis cultural complex in the Alpes-Maritimes.

That meeting was conclusive, enabling us to assess the complementarity of our products and lay the groundwork for a technological development partnership that was signed in November 2002.

UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC therefore provided us with valuable assistance for our exports to Europe.”

Jean-Claude Périgny

Chairman and chief executive officer
RDC Technologies inc.

“In 2000, we started negotiating with a French firm, GROUPE CEMA, for the purpose of creating in Québec a mixed enterprise for the joint manufacture of aeronautical subassemblies. Our specific goal was to become an integrated supplier able to respond to the new needs of the industry’s contract givers. Thanks to the UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC program, we took advantage of two separate missions to meet with our partner in order to speed up our talks. Our agreement was finalized in July 2000. The program’s financial assistance and logistical support represented major assets and helped us enter into an agreement.”

Robert Carrière, president, PEGA PRECISION

7. For more information

For more information on the UBIFRANCE/QUÉBEC program, please contact:

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