



Critical Industrial Technologies Sector Adoption Program

Agri-Food Cybersecurity Solutions

Challenge Launch	October 15 th , 2024	Challenge Deadline	November 18 th , 2024
Available Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$500,000 2:1 match from applicant 	Timeline	Maximum project duration of up to 1 year
Eligible Sectors	Agri-food	Eligible Technologies	Cybersecurity
Challenge Info Webinar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday October 23rd 2024 at 11:00AM. Register 		
Challenge Statement	<p>In recent years, experts have warned that with the ever-increasing use of technology in the Agri-Food supply chain there is a mounting vulnerability to cybersecurity attacks. A successful attack could lead to a disruption in both food production and processing – impacting both supply and pricing. Despite these warnings, there is generally a lack of robust cybersecurity measures in place in the Agri-Food sector.</p> <p>Considering this increasing risk, the Critical Industrial Technologies (CIT) initiative is supporting Ontario-led company consortia in the development and implementation of innovative solutions to address the cybersecurity threat to Ontario’s Agri-Food Sector.</p> <p>The cybersecurity solutions developed and demonstrated through this challenge statement must be capable of widespread implementation and adoption throughout a multitude of businesses to have a significant impact on securing Ontario’s Agri-Food supply chain.</p> <p>The Critical Technology Initiative is looking for novel, innovative solutions specifically applicable to the Agri-food sector that are easily adopted and readily scalable. Solutions may include, but are not limited to, Software as a Service offerings for smaller producers with limited IT resources, enterprise applications for large processors or securing the ever-increasing number of IoT devices throughout the Agri-Food supply chain.</p> <p>This is a unique opportunity for companies to receive funding support to develop, demonstrate and drive the adoption of their innovative cybersecurity solutions across the Agri-Food sector to help ensure the future stability of Ontario’s food supply.</p>		
Project Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications MUST come from a consortium of partners who will work collaboratively to develop and demonstrate a solution that will have widespread adoption and impact on securing Ontario’s Agri-food supply (which includes primary agriculture producers, food and beverage processors, and food retailers and wholesalers) from cybersecurity related risks. The lead applicant MUST be an Ontario-based SME and must meet the requirements identified in the CIT Sector Adoption Program Guidelines. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one of the project partners MUST be an end user/customer of the resultant product/service. • Projects must involve the integration, development, adoption and/or acceleration of Cybersecurity solutions applicable to the Agri-food sector. • Proposed projects can be enhancements to existing products/services or new products/services. • The consortiums must serve as catalysts to drive widespread adoption of the proposed solution. The Primary Partner should not only demonstrate their need for the solution but be capable of influencing adoption by others to truly impact the Agri-food sector. Through this widespread adoption, Ontario will secure its food supply chain and encourage growth throughout the sector. • Project partners will be required to sign a letter of support and if approved the OCI project funding agreement. • Project activities need to be carried out in Ontario. • The Project partner consortia will be required to present to an external review panel as part of the full application process.
<p>Project Outcome and Participation Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects MUST demonstrate how the project partners are making a significant impact on cybersecurity across the Agri-food sector. • Consortia must create scalable solutions that can be easily replicated and deployed across multiple stakeholders -thus fostering widespread adoption and impact. • Demonstrate the solution(s) with an end user/customer to show industry acceptance and suitability for widespread adoption. • Foster collaborative partnerships between Ontario-based SMEs and industry partners, leveraging diverse expertise and resources to drive innovation and achieve shared goals. • As cybersecurity disruptions can have devastating effects on businesses, suitable cybersecurity solutions can prove key in supporting Ontario’s broader economic development objectives. In addition to generating significant job creation and economic growth for the applicant companies and related industries, applicants should indicate how their solution could impact the Ontario economy. • Create opportunities for market expansion and business growth by introducing innovative solutions that meet evolving market demands and customer needs, both within Ontario and beyond.