

Encouraging Development, Growth and Expansion (EDGE)

Should I apply for the STEM or Entrepreneur Category?

It is important to place your EDGE application in the correct category to improve your chances of winning. The STEM application category is reserved for companies that utilize science, technology, engineering, or math as part of their core business operations. All other companies should apply to the entrepreneur category.

STEM-Category Companies Typically

Often hold patents, proprietary technologies, or unique technical processes that protect innovation and provide a competitive advantage.

Offer products or services that are primarily based on scientific or technical knowledge, such as software, hardware, biotech solutions, or engineering services.

Focus on creating, improving, or utilizing technology to solve problems or create new products.

Engage in research or development related to physical sciences, life sciences, or social sciences.

Example: An advanced materials manufacturing firm that is developing a patented filtration system for removing carbon from the atmosphere.

Entrepreneur-Category Companies Typically

Provide high-quality or more efficiently delivered products or services that meet existing market standards and customer expectations.

Utilize a well-established business model to enter the market, and focus on competitive pricing, service excellence, or efficient operations rather than radical innovation.

Seek to establish a foothold within existing market segments by offering reliable solutions that align with current industry practices.

Aim for steady, incremental growth by building a solid customer base and expanding market share through established, proven methods.

Example: A restaurant that is building a new website to improve the online ordering process for their customers.

****Note that exceptions do exist. DSB recommends consulting with your Regional Business Manager to determine which category best fits your business and will provide the best chance of success.***