

Active Communities Fund Program Guidelines for Community Applicants



These guidelines are for municipalities, villages and First Nations communities.

What is the Active Communities Fund?

We created the Active Communities Fund to help your community get active and stay active. In particular, this fund supports [community-wide approaches](#) and plans for low barrier, less-structured movement. It is part of [Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia: An action plan for increasing physical activity in Nova Scotia](#). You can use this fund to help you

- plan, develop or evaluate [policy](#)
- plan, create, improve, or evaluate [physical environments](#)
(The fund is limited to supporting low-cost physical environment initiatives.)
- plan, create, improve, or evaluate [social environments](#)

Who can apply for funding?

- municipalities
- villages
- Nova Scotian Mi'kmaw bands
- Regional Centres for Education
- registered not-for-profit societies and not-for-profit cooperatives*

*Not-for-profit societies and cooperatives must be in good standing with the Provincial Registry of Joint Stock Companies or federally registered under the Corporations Act as a not-for-profit society or cooperative based and operating in Nova Scotia.

We strongly encourage partnerships among municipalities, the health sector, schools, and workplaces.

There are separate applications for communities (municipalities, villages or First Nations communities) and community organizations (not-for-profit agencies and Regional Centres for Education).

We will NOT issue funds, even if your application is successful, if your organization has outstanding final reports for any other funding issued by CCH or Arts Nova Scotia.

What initiatives qualify for funding?

Initiatives that encourage low barrier, less-structured movement that people can fit easily into their day.

For example, your proposal may encourage

- reducing sitting time by, for example, encouraging walking meetings
- unstructured active play
- cycling
- walking, including using a cane, walker, or wheelchair

We may consider programs with more structure for up to \$5,000 per application period. Such programs should be flexible for participants and encourage daily physical activity over the long term.

Initiatives that aim to enhance physical activity among at least one of the following groups:

- youth ages 12-18
- the aging population, anyone 45 years old or older
- females in the above age groups
- community members who may have minimal access to physical activity opportunities
- less active adult population (in general)

How much funding can I apply for?

Total funding for initiatives*

Municipal or First Nations community applications are eligible for up to \$25,000. Applications above \$5000 must be accompanied by and reflect part of a one year multi-faceted community wide physical activity plan.

We will award up to 75% of eligible costs. You may apply for funding from other provincial or federal government departments for part of the remaining 25%. However, your organization and other partners must cover at least 10% of eligible costs. Your organization's contribution need not be financial. It can be an in-kind contribution. This contribution, however, cannot include time spent by Municipal and Mi'kmaq Physical Activity Leaders.

Once your initiatives receive funding from the Active Communities Fund, they will NOT qualify for Regional Community Development Grants.

Community Requests for more than \$5,000*

Community applications over \$5,000 should reflect part of a one year [community-wide](#) plan that encourages physical activity. One year plans must be included with your application. Community applications supported by strong one-year plans are eligible for up to \$25,000.

Communities with more than 90,000 people

If your municipality has more than 90,000 people, you may be eligible for more funds. Contact your regional [Communities, Culture and Heritage \(CCH\)](#) office for more information.

Members of the Municipal and Mi'kmaq Physical Activity Leadership Program (MPAL) with shared agreements

If your organization is a member of MPAL and has an agreement that is shared with other communities, contact the [regional office](#) for information on how to apply for funding.

*Ongoing operational costs are NOT eligible for funding.

How are applications assessed?

All applications must meet these 2 criteria to be considered for funding:

- The budget must meet the government assistance limits listed under [How much funding is available?](#)
- The application must clearly show how you will design your initiative to meet the needs of at least one of the populations listed under [What initiatives qualify for funding?](#)

In addition, we will assess applications using the degree to which the initiatives meet the following 8 factors:

1. socio-ecological model
2. planning
3. partnership
4. need
5. less-structured movement
6. key settings
7. sustainability
8. evaluation plan

These are described in detail below along with the maximum number of points that we will allot for each.

We will award funds based on assessments and available, approved funds.

Socio-ecological model: 20 points

The initiatives are likely to increase **less-structured movement** through **policy**, or through creating or improving **social** or **physical environments**.

Social environment programs with more structure will be considered if you apply for \$5,000 or less. Such programs should be flexible for participants and encourage daily movement over the long term.

Applications that address more than one category of the socio-ecological model will be eligible for more funding.

Planning, partnerships, and need: 15 points

- **Planning**

There is a clear and reasonable action plan for items that need funding.

If you apply for more than \$5,000, your initiative should be part of a one-year **community-wide** physical activity plan.

More points will be given to initiatives that are also part of multi-year plans.

- **Partnerships**

Your organization works with other organizations to do such things as

- carry out the proposed initiatives
- support the annual plan
- lead the multi-year plan

- **Need**

Your organization may not be able to carry out the proposed initiatives without grant support. Your initiative fills an identified gap in your community.

Less-structured movement, key settings, and sustainability: 10 points

- **Less-structured movement**

Your initiatives encourage low barrier, **less-structured movement** its target population can easily fit into their day in small bouts. Initiatives should strive to reduce barriers to regular participation in the proposed physical activity. Consider time needed to participate, skill level needed and dependence on equipment, instructors and special infrastructure.

- **Key settings**

The initiatives are designed to reach the target group where they spend their time such as schools, workplaces, and community and healthcare settings. We will evaluate the application based on how well the target group is likely to be engaged in movement in the chosen setting.

More points will be given to applications connected to one-year **community-wide** physical activity plans using at least 2 of the above settings. If more settings are targeted, more points will be given.

- **Sustainability**

The initiatives should encourage movement over the long term. This may happen through:

- building knowledge and skills within the community
- developing policy
- enlisting and retaining volunteers and leaders
- partnerships
- other

- **Evaluation plan: 5 points**

The application includes clear outcomes and ways to measure the initiative's success. At the end of the funding period, you will be asked to report on funded activities. The evaluation plan will help you to capture information for your final report.

When can I submit my application?

Community applications associated with one-year plans can be submitted between April 1 and July 15. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt. Additional applications from communities who did not exceed the \$25,000 limit will be accepted until December 1. Funds will be distributed based on eligibility until we have distributed all the money or by December 1.

What is the application and funding process?

BEFORE you submit an application, you should contact the CCH office nearest you (see [Who do I contact for more information?](#)) to discuss the proposed initiatives and the application requirements.

Once we have assessed your funding application, we will contact you.

If your application is successful, we will send you a Terms and Conditions Grant Agreement. You must sign the Terms and Conditions Grant Agreement and return it to us **BEFORE** we can send you funding.

You must complete your initiatives within the time stated in the Terms and Conditions Grant Agreement.

We may ask for supporting documents at any time throughout the initiatives. You should keep the following documents for auditing purposes for at least 10 years after your initiative is completed:

- Terms and Conditions Grant Agreement
- final report
- supporting documents

What if the initiatives change, cannot proceed, or are cancelled?

If you need to change the initiatives so that it is significantly different than those outlined in your application, you must make a written request to CCH. You may only change the scope of the initiatives once you have CCH's approval.

If your initiatives are cancelled or you do not need the entire grant to complete them you must return all remaining funds to CCH. This must be done using a cheque addressed to the Minister of Finance.

What disqualifies an organization from funding?

We will **NOT** issue funds, even if your application is successful, if your organization has outstanding final reports for any other funding issued by CCH or Arts Nova Scotia.

Once your initiatives receive funding from the Active Communities Fund, they will **NOT** qualify for Regional Community Development Grants.

Does my organization have to acknowledge that we received funding?

Yes. You must acknowledge the financial assistance of the province of Nova Scotia as described in the [Acknowledgement Guidelines](#).

Who do I contact for more information?

Look below for the regional office closest to you.

Cape Breton Region

Serving Cape Breton Island

850 Grand Lake Road, Suite 15

Sydney, NS B1P 5T9

Office 902-578-4813

Larry.Maxwell@novascotia.ca

Natalie.MacPherson@novascotia.ca

Central Region

Serving Halifax Regional Municipality

Homburg Bld, 3rd Floor

1741 Brunswick Street

PO Box 456 Halifax, NS B3J 2R5

Office 902-456-5908

Fax 902-424-0710

CentralRegion@novascotia.ca

Deborah.Fram@novascotia.ca

South Shore Region

Serving Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens, Lunenburg Counties and District of Argyle

312 Green Street,

PO Box 9000

Lunenburg, NS B0J 2C0

Office 902-930-2872

Fax 902-634-7542

Anna.Haanstra@novascotia.ca

Denise.Scott@novascotia.ca

Provincial Initiatives

Elaine Shelton, Manager of Physical Activity

Email: elaine.shelton@novascotia.ca

Phone: 902-424-7629

PO Box 456 STN Central Halifax, NS B3J 2R5

Fundy Region

Serving Cumberland, Colchester Counties and Municipality of East Hants

80 Walker Street, Suite 1

Truro, NS B2N 4A7

Office 902-324-8392

Fax 902-896-2425

FundyRegion@novascotia.ca

Teresa.McNutt@novascotia.ca

Highland Region

Serving Guysborough, Antigonish and Pictou Counties

149 Church Street, Suite 4

Antigonish, NS B2G 2E2

Office 902-870-7278

Fax 902-863-7477

Rae.Gunn@novascotia.ca

Chantel.Mahar@novascotia.ca

Valley Region

Serving Municipalities of West Hants, Clare, Annapolis, Kings and Digby Counties

10 Webster Street, Suite 200

Kentville, NS B4N 1H7

Office 902-698-9407

Fax 902-679-6748

Anna.Sherwood@novascotia.ca

Tracy.Roberts@novascotia.ca

Appendix A

Definitions

Community members who may have minimal access to physical activity opportunities: people who experience barriers to accessing physical activity opportunities. Such barriers may include cost, transportation, safety concerns, lack of comfort in the environment, and so on.

Community-wide approaches: physical activity initiatives that take place across different settings and sectors. Such initiatives will be more successful in reaching many people and increasing physical activity than a single organizational plan, program or project. Municipalities, First Nations communities, schools, workplaces, and healthcare settings are good places to include in a community-wide approach. Targeted approaches, those that focus on a type of physical activity or a specific group, may be more effective.

Cross-sectoral leadership committee: a committee of decision-makers from a range of organizations within the community. These are some organizations that may provide members for such a committee:

- the local chamber of commerce
- the local centre for education
- the local municipal recreation department
- the local municipal planning department
- the municipality as a whole
- the local zone of the Nova Scotia Health Authority

Cross-sectoral partnership: a partnership with representatives from a range of organizations within the community (see examples listed above).

In-kind contributions: Goods or services required for the initiatives and contributed by the applicant or partner organizations. An example could be the contribution of recreation coordinator staff time to take registrations for a walking group. Information to explain how a dollar figure was determined should be included (e.g. 20 hours at \$20/hour = \$400). For this fund, MPAL time is not considered an eligible in-kind contribution.

Indicators: Markers of progress. Indicators should be specific, measurable and allow you to show progress with your goals and objectives. For example, for the goal of increasing engagement in play for adolescents, indicators could include number of adolescents who participated in X initiative, types of active play adolescents engaged in during X initiative, number of adolescents who reported engaging in play outside of X initiative etc.)

Initiative: In this context, initiative refers to the intervention for which you require funds. It could be a straightforward project (e.g. introducing play boxes) but it may have more elements (e.g. a play campaign that includes play boxes, a social media campaign, a junior high play partnership etc.)

Less active adult population (in general): Nova Scotian adults who have reported in citizen surveys that they are physically active 2 days a week or less. Data from the surveys show that less active adults are male and female and come from a variety of income brackets. They mainly get their physical activity through active household tasks and walking. They greatly prefer walking for recreation and active transportation, over any other form of physical activity, when they think of becoming active in the future. While most Nova Scotians prefer walking, less active adults prefer it more than the general population. The most common challenges to being active, according to this group, are lack of time, lack of social support, lack of interest in programming, the built environment, and health issues.

Less-structured movement: in this context, types of activities that are low barrier and can fit into daily life in a minimum of small amounts. Examples include reducing sitting time, gardening, unstructured active play, cycling, and walking.

Municipal and Mi'kmaq Physical Activity Leadership Program (MPAL): a program that pays for a staff person to develop and oversee the implementation of a community-wide physical activity strategy. The Province of Nova Scotia and participating communities share the cost of that person's salary.

Physical environment: includes the natural environment and the built environment. These environments influence how much people move by making it easier or harder to move more. In the context of this fund, equipment that encourages less structured daily movement (as described above) is eligible for funding in this category. These are some low-cost ways to make physical environments more activity-friendly:

- improve stairwells
- install or improve play boxes
- create community gardens
- stock a pedometer loan program
- paint games like hopscotch on pavement

Policy: in this context, the written policy or priorities of municipalities, First Nations communities, schools, or workplaces that encourage movement. Examples include policies that encourage access to recreation, walking meetings, active transportation, etc. Action to advance policy like education and awareness-building may be eligible for funding through this grant.

Programs: In the context of this grant, programs eligible for funding will be flexible for participants and encourage daily less structured movement (like walking, cycling, play, reducing sitting time) over the long term. Up to \$5000 per applicant will be available for this purpose.

Reducing sitting time: In addition to encouraging Nova Scotians to be more active, it is important to encourage the reduction of time spent sitting. It is possible to meet the guidelines for physical activity, but to spend too much time sitting. For the purposes of this grant, initiatives that fall into the "reducing sitting" category are those that specifically focus on breaking up sitting behavior (e.g. a workplace campaign to prompt standing at frequent intervals, a junior high school initiative to integrate movement during class time)

Social environment: There are many ways to promote a social environment that encourages movement. To qualify for this fund, social environment initiatives should aim for larger reach. One example is an initiative that encourages communities of volunteers to create social networks that support walking, play, or cycling. Another is to make use of existing campaigns aimed at changing social norms.

Social marketing: in this context, marketing to encourage health behaviours such as decreasing sitting and increasing physical activity. Tools to achieve this may include social media, paid advertising on television, radio, and in print, and community-based activities. Effective social marketing uses coordinated messaging and uses multiple tools to encourage behaviour-change.

Socio-ecological model: a way to understand and address what contributes to physical activity or sedentary behaviour. It recognizes the importance of the individual, the social and physical environments, and policy in encouraging more movement.