

Introduction

At the heart of every community are places where people can gather safely to celebrate our rich cultural heritage. All Nova Scotians need facilities in their communities that are safe, welcoming, foster community pride and build stronger communities. The Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage supports activities that contribute to the well-being and vitality of Nova Scotia's communities through the promotion, development, preservation, and celebration of the province's diversity, culture, heritage, identity, and languages.

Program Description

The Community Facilities Improvement Program supports community-led projects which enhance the public use of existing facilities. This includes repairs and improvements to building exteriors, and interior features that are integral to the long-term sustainability of the facility. In alignment with the Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage's Climate Change Adaption Strategy, applying organizations are encouraged to incorporate a long-term view of facility improvements that decrease their building's environmental impact.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Community Supports and Infrastructure Team to discuss their project before applying at CommunitiesNS@novascotia.ca or (902) 424-5793

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Commitment

- Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage supports our communities to thrive by promoting active living, tourism, and Nova Scotia's diverse culture, heritage, and languages. We pride ourselves in helping to grow communities and organizations by providing programs and services that support these areas.
- We are committed to ensuring that our programs and services are free of discrimination and barriers, and value equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA). By applying this lens, and ensuring it is a core value in our programs and decision-making processes, we are taking steps to address the long-standing systemic barriers that impact many communities in our province.
- Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage is committed to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility across Nova Scotia, and we support partners who share in this commitment.

Eligible Applicants

- Joint Stocks-registered Not-for-Profit Societies in good standing, OR
- Federally registered Charities or Not-for-Profit Corporations in good standing, OR
- Nova Scotian Mi'kmaw bands.

All applicants must:

- Operate primarily for the benefit of community, culture, and diversity, AND
- Provide programs that serve a broader community and not strictly the organization's membership, AND
- Own the property where the work will take place OR maintain a long-term lease of at least 5 years with the owner of the property where the work will take place.

Eligible Projects

- Exterior facility improvements, such as siding, gutters, roofing, or other projects.
- Interior facility improvements, including kitchen upgrades. Large appliances may be eligible if they are part of a larger kitchen renovation, subject to approval by the Department.
- Improvements related to the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations, including electrical upgrades.
- Improvements to building efficiency such as insulation, windows, doors, or heat pumps.
Energy Efficiency Upgrades: If you are applying to energy efficiency upgrades, such as heat pumps, you are strongly encouraged to contact [Efficiency NS](#) to determine if you can get a rebate. This rebate should be named on your application in 'funding sources'
- For projects that are primarily accessibility improvements, the applicant should apply to the [Community ACCESS-Ability Program | Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage](#)
- The applicant must comply with all necessary legislative requirements such as, but not limited to, the [Fire Safety Act](#), the [Building Code Act](#), the [Accessibility Act](#), and the [Heritage Property Act](#).

Ineligible Applicants

- Organizations who have received funding from this program in 2024-25
- Private sector organizations
- Federal, provincial, regional, municipal governments, counties, towns, villages, etc.
- Hospitals or health facilities
- Education institutions (public and private)
- Individuals
- Religious or faith sanctuaries (consideration may be given to improvements within a place of worship that is used primarily by eligible not-for-profit organizations, such as a church hall)
- Legions*
- Sport, recreation and fitness facilities*

Ineligible Projects and Costs

- New construction or improvements to the new construction of a facility or extension.
- Paving or general landscaping projects.
- Costs associated with preparation of the grant application (see in-kind note below).
- Improvements not directly related to the physical structure of the facility, such as generators, solar panels, seating, and storage.
- Public wharfs, playground equipment, parks, and trails.

**Please see page 6 for other grants if you are ineligible for this grant.*

Program Criteria

Eligible applications will be reviewed against the following program criteria:

- **Applying organization** – overall mandate and purpose; how welcoming the organization is to your local community, and Nova Scotians at large. Preference may be given to those who have not yet received funding under this program.
- **Facility** – how the facility supports a variety of activities and services needed by communities, organizations and individuals.
- **Project Rationale** – why the project is important or urgent for the long-term sustainability of the facility and development of the organization(s) who use it.
- **Project work and budget** – how the applicant demonstrates the capacity to complete the project work on time and within scope; quotes are provided, project costs are reasonable, and applicant demonstrates sources of revenue; the budget is detailed and balanced.
- **Community outcomes, engagement and benefits** – how the project will help sustain, improve or expand participation in activities and services by a broad section of the community; how the facility will help support a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive community.
- **Environmental Impact** – how the project may reduce the facility's environmental impact.

Funding Parameters

- The department's contribution will not normally exceed 75% of total estimated project costs, and not exceed a maximum of \$50,000.
- The applicant must contribute at least 25% of the total estimated project costs, **10% of which must be cash**. Applicants can use municipal/federal funding, rebates, and cash donations as their 10% cash contribution.
- The other **15% of the applicant's contribution can be in-kind**. The value of donated/in-kind contributions of labour and materials must be included in the project revenues and contributions only if they are essential to the project. Please ensure a breakdown of the donated/in-kind contributions is included in the estimated project costs. Costs for application preparation are not eligible.
- Funding is based on estimated project costs. Should the actual costs of the project decrease, the department will only provide 75% of the actual costs. Payments are issued on an 80% / 20% basis. The final 20% is issued after a review of the actual costs of the project and the final report.

Project Considerations

- Once funding has been provided, no substantial changes can be made to the project without the written consent of the Program Officer. Funds are to be returned if not completely used for the project.
- Organizations which receive funding must submit a final report within 30 days of the project end date. Organizations will be required to submit copies of final invoices and proof of payment (i.e. paid receipts/cancelled cheques) for purchases/services rendered in completion of the project. Organizations will be required to submit images of the completed work.
- All overdue final reports, where applicable, for projects previously funded by CCTH must be submitted and approved before funding for new projects is released.
- The Province's support must be recognized as outlined in the [Requirements for Acknowledging Funding](#).
- All successful grantees will maintain adequate financial records related to funding and upgrades during the project and for seven (7) years after the completion date. Upon request, Grantees will make the records available for review by the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage or its agents for inspection, review and audit.
- All grantees will comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and municipal by-laws, that apply to the project

Application Procedure

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to speak with department staff far in advance of the deadline and before applying. See department contact information below.
- Applicants must complete the Application Form in full. A checklist is included to help ensure that all required information is considered/provided. **Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.**
- Applicants must include at least one quote from external contractors/suppliers
- Application Forms must be signed and dated by the Chairperson / Chief.
- Applications can be delivered by email, in-person, fax, courier or sent by regular mail.

Application Deadlines and Activity Start/End Dates

- **The deadline to submit complete, signed application is 11:59 p.m. February 14, 2025. Projects can start no earlier than April 1, 2025, and must be completed prior to January 15, 2026. Projects must have defined start and end dates.**
- Applications will be reviewed by Communities, Culture and Heritage staff and recommendations for approval made to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. **The entire review and approval process may take 12 - 16 weeks.**

Other Funding Programs

- Legions should apply to the [Legion Capital Assistance Program](#).
- Facilities that are predominantly used for sport, recreation and fitness should apply to the [Recreation Facility Development Grant](#).
- For accessibility projects (i.e. accessible ramps, washrooms, egresses, etc.), eligible applicants should apply to the [Community Access-Ability Program](#).
- For trail expansion and development projects, eligible applicants should apply to one of the [Trail Funding Programs](#).
- For small scale indoor and outdoor capital recreation projects, eligible applicants should apply to the [Community Recreation Capital Grant](#).
- For advice on the conservation of properties registered under the Heritage Property Act or grants offered to eligible owners of registered heritage properties, please consider applying to the [Heritage Property Program](#).
- For equipment purchase(s) related to a fire or emergency situations, eligible applicants should apply to the [Emergency Services Provider](#)

For more information, please contact Community Supports and Infrastructure:

Phone: (902) 424-5793

Email: CommunitiesNS@novascotia.ca

Fax: (902) 424-0710

Courier: Homburg Building 1741 Brunswick Street, 3rd Floor Halifax, NS B3

Mail: Communities Nova Scotia Unit, Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage

PO Box 456, Halifax, NS B3J 2R5