

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 where they are safe, comfortable and welcoming, foster community pride and build stronger connections. 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 Adaptation Strategy (Dec 2022), applying organizations are encouraged to incorporate a long-term view of facility improvements that decrease their building's environmental impact.

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.
- 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; project costs are reasonable, and applicant demonstrates sources of revenue; the budget is appropriately 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.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must:

- Be a registered not-for-profit Society in good standing, OR
- Be a federally registered Charity or not-for-profit Corporation in good standing, OR
- Be a Nova Scotian Mi'kmaw band
AND
- 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.

Ineligible Applicants

- Organizations who have received funding from this program in 2023-2024
- 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 (see the note below)
- Facilities that are predominantly used for sport, recreation, and fitness (see the note below)

Eligible Projects

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. Eligible projects may include:

- improvements to the exterior of the facility such as siding, gutters, roofing, or other projects
- improvements to the interior of the building, such as 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 improve building efficiency such as insulation, windows, doors, or heat pumps.
- For projects that are primarily accessibility improvements, the applicant should apply to the Community Accessibility Program (see below). For projects where accessibility is not the central focus, applicants should separate the accessibility related costs as noted on the separate budget table provided in the application. Applicants are encouraged to keep accessibility projects separate from CFIP applications wherever possible.

Ineligible Costs

Costs associated with:

- New construction/development 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.
- Accessibility improvements to the facility, such as accessible ramps, washrooms, egresses, etc. (see the note below)

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.

NOTE:

- 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 Fund](#).

Funding

- 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.
- The value of donated/in-kind contributions of labour and materials can be included in the project revenues and contributions 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. Funding terms include, but are not limited to:

- 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.
- The Province's support must be recognized as outlined in the [Requirements for Acknowledging Funding](#).
- 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.
- All successful grantees will maintain adequate financial records related to the Club Upgrades and the funding 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 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.**
- 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.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to speak with department staff to discuss their proposed project in advance of the deadline and before applying. See department contact information below.

Application Deadlines and Activity Start/End Dates

- The deadline to receive complete applications is **February 14, 2024**
- Projects can start no earlier than April 1, 2024, and must be completed prior to January 15, 2025. 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.**

Please send your completed application to us by email, mail, or fax on or before the deadline.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT

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