

Community Grants Guidelines

We revise the Program Guidelines every grant cycle. Please refer to the [Community Grants website](#) for the most up-to-date information on the Program Guidelines. New guidelines are posted at the start of each cycle, in January and August.

CONTACTS

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Click to schedule a conversation
with a member of the team

ABOUT COMMUNITY GRANTS

Community Grants cover a broad scope of projects aimed at strengthening the charitable sector and engaging communities. This is Calgary Foundation's largest granting program and is open for application twice a year. We receive about 300 applications per year and fund around one-third of the projects. Grant amounts vary; the average request is \$75,000 and requests can range from \$5,000 - \$200,000.

We support single year or multi-year projects for:

- **Existing Programming:** *(For organizations with an operating budget less than \$4M)* Costs associated with the delivery of current/ongoing programming or incremental growth. Examples include salaries, program materials and equipment, space, promotion, administration, accessibility considerations, etc.
- **New Initiative:** Cost associated with activities that represent a change in service delivery model or approach to working with people. Examples include salaries, program materials and equipment, space, promotion, accessibility considerations, capital projects, as well as public policy dialogue and development activities.
- **Organizational Development:** Costs associated with internally focused work that invests in the effectiveness of an organization to advance its charitable mission (capacity building). Includes: staff wellness strategies, consultancy fees, professional/leader development, organizational assessments, technology, specialized equipment, renovations, costs associated with organizational mergers. Capacity Building may also be to strengthen a sector or collective group and may include costs to collaborate, community engagement and organizing, identifying issues and framing shared actions. (Note: adding more staff to deliver programs is captured in the programming categories above).

WHO CAN APPLY?

Registered charities and other qualified doneesⁱ can apply for projects that take place in Calgary and areaⁱⁱ. If your group is not a registered charity, contact us to discuss grant options.

CAN WE HAVE MORE THAN ONE CALGARY FOUNDATION GRANT?

Charities and qualified donees can have one active application or grant at a time ('active' means from the time of application submission to the completed report submission). While groups can only have one grant at a time, it is not a one-time-only grant. We are happy to hear from past grantees about new projects or about next steps in a project we supported.

We make an exception for charities to apply for a second grant when they are supporting a nonprofit or collaborative group that is not otherwise eligible to access funding. Check out the [Better Together Guide](#) for more information about working in partnership.

CAN WE TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT OUR IDEA?

Yes. The Community Grants team can help you think through your project ideas, connect with peers who have done similar projects and support you to outline your grant application. We also provide feedback on draft applications. We offer alternative application formats (oral or video) to make our application process more accessible. Declined applicants can discuss the reasons for the decision with one of us.

WHAT IS INELIGIBLE?

- Activities that do not align with [Calgary Foundation's stated values](#)
- Any activities that happen or expenses that are incurred before our grant decisions (decision notifications are sent to applicants around early July and January for the Spring and Fall application cycles respectively)
- Annual events or event series, e.g., symposiums, gatherings and conferences
- Research other than Participatory Action Research
- Fundraising activities or fundraiser's salaries
- Debt retirement and endowment building
- Direct financial support to individuals
- Requests from private schools except Designated Special Education Schools (DSERPS) that serve students who are identified with a mild, moderate or severe disability
- Local neighbourhood or school playgrounds and parks
- Travel outside of Calgary and area or the surrounding First Nations of Treaty 7 Territory
- Exclusively religious activities (defined as religious worship or instruction), those that include proselytizing (defined as converting or recruiting people to a specific set of religious beliefs), or programs/services that require participation in religious activities

HOW DO WE APPLY?

- Read the Program Guidelines carefully.
- Contact us to discuss your initiative, eligibility, and our upcoming deadlines before working on an application.
- Check the next Community Grants deadline on our website. There are two application deadlines per year, typically in mid-February and mid-September. It takes about 4 months between the application deadline and grant decisions. It is important to plan your applications in advance of the work you want to do.
- Complete the application form online on Calgary Foundation's Grant Portal. The application consists of long and short answer questions. The text area is about 2 pages.

WHO EVALUATES COMMUNITY GRANTS APPLICATIONS AND HOW DO THEY DECIDE?

Staff and volunteer committees made up of local community members, often with charity or non-profit experience, who believe in inclusive welcoming communities review eligible applications. Reviewers look for such things as: groundwork and details that support the project purpose, a well-thought-out and resourced plan, a clear understanding of what you hope to achieve and appropriate relationships with other organizations who are working towards similar goals.

Applicants whose applications most closely meet these criteria are invited to meet with a committee to share more about their initiative. Have a look at Calgary Foundation's [Vital Priorities](#) and [our commitment to equity & inclusion](#). We support a variety of projects. Historically, three-quarters of grants awarded aligned with a Vital Priority or equity goal.

IF AWARDED A COMMUNITY GRANT, THEN WHAT?

- Acknowledge the support of Calgary Foundation in project materials or use our logo on your website where appropriate. See [Media Kit | Calgary Foundation](#). *Note: If your project is awarded a Community Grant, we will list that information on our website and in our other public records.*
- Consult us first if you are considering changing the project or how you spend the grant. We will do our best to support you as you respond to changing circumstances.
- Tell us your project story and lessons learned through a final (and sometimes, interim) report.

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- I. Go to [Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Listings](#) to see if your organization is a qualified donee
 - II. Calgary and area means the work must be based in and serve one or more of the following regions: Banff, Calgary, Canmore, Municipal District of Bighorn, Foothills County, Municipal District of Kananaskis, Rocky View County, Wheatland County (including towns and hamlets), Siksika Nation, Kainai Nation, Piikani Nation, Tsuut'ina Nation, and Iyiarhe Nakoda Nations.