



# Major & Signature Grants Guidelines

Written proposal deadlines are noon November 1<sup>st</sup> each year

## Who to contact with questions about Major & Signature Grants:

Ingrid Wasylyshen, Grants Associate  
Email: [IWasylyshen@calgaryfoundation.org](mailto:IWasylyshen@calgaryfoundation.org)

### About Major & Signature Grants

Major & Signature Grants assist qualified donees<sup>i</sup> in all parts<sup>ii</sup> of the charitable sector by providing grants to support single or multi-year, large-scale initiatives with transformational impact that broadly enrich the community in Calgary and area<sup>ii</sup>. Please be aware that the Major & Signature Grants typically receives 12-15 strong applications and is able to support between 2-4 projects.

### Who can apply

Qualified donees with eligible initiatives are invited to complete a grant proposal (using Calgary Foundation's grant portal). Eligible initiatives:

- Align with the Calgary Foundation's mission, vision and priority areas;
- Positively impact our community by addressing major issues and serving a great number of people;
- Encourage innovative partnerships and collaboration;
- Are at an advanced stage of readiness;
- Demonstrate good planning, a firm case for financial support and sustainability, organization resilience, and secure leadership that demonstrates trusted relationships, significant or unique reach in community and a capacity to drive change.
- Significantly enhance the Calgary Foundation's ability to serve as a philanthropic leader.

The Calgary Foundation welcomes all eligible initiatives, particularly those that help further the following issues:

- Reducing poverty
- Encouraging mental health
- Living a creative life
- Strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities
- Pursuing an environmentally sustainable future

The program also prioritizes sustainable capital projects or collaborative initiatives that tackle the root causes of complex issues. Organizations funded at this level will be able to demonstrate how they incorporate principles of equity into their work. Each applicant is eligible to submit one proposal per deadline.

## **How to apply**

The Major & Signature Grants process has two primary phases: a written proposal, and a meeting with the advisory committee. Proposals will be shortlisted after the first phase. Not all applicants will be invited to meet with the advisory committee. The process is as follows:

- Contact the Calgary Foundation to discuss the initiative by September 15.
- Applicants submit proposals (through the online grants portal) by noon on November 1<sup>st</sup>;
- The committee shortlists proposals in December;
- Representatives for shortlisted proposals meet with the advisory committee in February;
- Shortlisted proposals receive the results of the process by April 1;
- Applicants not selected for grants can book appointments to receive feedback.

## **The written proposal**

Complete the proposal available on the Calgary Foundation's Online Grants Portal ([www.CalgaryFoundation.org/Grants-Awards/Major-Signature-Grants](http://www.CalgaryFoundation.org/Grants-Awards/Major-Signature-Grants)) and include all required attachments. The proposal is customizable by applicants and can include video. The Calgary Foundation will accept an applicant's existing case for support package if it addresses the criteria.

The proposal should provide:

- A brief description of the applicant organization(s) and the cause(s) for which it works;
- A robust description of the initiative including: the challenge it addresses, the strategy(s) for change, and anticipated community impact.
- Include a budget and timeline.
- Description of partnerships or collaborations and engagement strategy with the target audience;
- An outline of the plans to evaluate impact and/or how you will observe change and incorporate learning; and
- Details of how the grant will be used to help further the initiative.

Attach the following documents to the proposals

- The lead organizations' audited financial statements for the past three years;
- Brief résumés/bios for all members of the leadership team;
- A list of the organization's board of directors with name, role, length of service and experience; and
- A document to help us understand your organization's structure (for example, an organization chart that includes staff, volunteers and reporting relationships and identifies whether any key roles are vacant).

## **The advisory committee meeting**

Representatives for shortlisted proposals will each be sent a specific meeting date and detailed meeting instructions by email. Meetings will be up to 90 minutes in duration and have three agenda items:

1. Introductions and learning about your organization(s)
2. Opportunity to present the initiative and provide further insights
3. Discussion or questions arising from the committee or applicants.

Most applicants choose to share a powerpoint or similar presentation to augment the discussion. We recommend sending presentations and audio/visual requirements to [IWasylyshen@calgaryfoundation.org](mailto:IWasylyshen@calgaryfoundation.org) at least 4 business days before the meeting, as a back up.

### **Who assesses grant proposals**

The Calgary Foundation's Major & Signature Grants Committee evaluates proposals and recommends grants to the Board of Directors. The advisory committee is composed of at least three current board members and members from the community with a deep understanding of the Calgary Foundation's mandate. (see members under 'Core Committees' [here](#))

---

*i* Go to Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Listing to determine whether your organization is a qualified donee if you are not sure: <https://apps.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebci/hacc/srch/pub/dsplyBscSrch>

*ii* *Calgary and area means must be based in and serve one or more of the following regions: Banff, Calgary, Municipal District of Bighorn (including towns and hamlets), Foothills County (including towns and hamlets), Wheatland County (including towns and hamlets), Municipal District of Kananaskis, Rocky View County (including towns and hamlets), Kainai Nation, Piikani Nation, Siksika Nation, Îyârhe Nakoda Nation, Tsuut'ina Nation*