Community Grants Guidelines
Applications due at noon (12:00 pm MDT) on February 27, 2026

CONTENTS

The Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF) Community Grants program provides funding to help with a variety of organizational needs. We look to organizations to determine their priority areas; this can include renovations, equipment purchases, program support, operational costs, and more.

We expect that the need for funding will remain significantly higher than our available resources. On average, the program receives around 100 applications per cycle, with about 30% advancing to the next stage. Given the high volume of grant applications, the review process may take into account your organization's previous and current applications and grants received, through various ECF grant streams.

ECF will not fund the same initiative across different grant streams. Organizations should consider how their request aligns to the specific criteria of the grant stream. We do not recommend applying to multiple grant streams in the same calendar year. **As grant streams may change from year to year, applicants should review the most up-to-date guidelines for each grant program.**

ELIGIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY GRANTS

Who can apply

Applicants must meet **ALL THREE** of the following criteria to apply to the Community Grants Program:

1. Are a Registered Canadian Charity or other qualified donee[1].

2. Are based in and/or serve the Greater Edmonton Area, including the four surrounding counties[2] and Indigenous qualified donees located within Treaty 6 Territory.
   - National Organizations may only apply if they demonstrate strong local connection, such as sustained operations in the Greater Edmonton Area, locally based staff, and/or local representation on their Board of Directors.

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[1] Visit Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Listings website to determine whether your organization is a registered charity/qualified donee: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/charitylists/. If your organization is a non-profit society in Alberta without registered charity status, you may be able to apply in partnership with a registered charity/qualified done.

[2] Leduc County, Parkland County, Strathcona County and Sturgeon County

3. Are in good standing with ECF, with no outstanding or overdue final reports, including those from partnership initiatives.

Application limit

Organizations may submit **ONE Community Grant application per calendar year** if they have completed their previously funded initiative and have submitted a final report.

Organizations may also submit **ONE Partnership Grant application per calendar year.** See the section below for details.

Priority for equity groups

ECF is committed to equity. As part of our commitment, we will prioritize applications from organizations serving First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI), racialized communities, and other equity groups. We recognize these communities often face systemic barriers to accessing funding. By integrating resources from our former BIPOC grant stream, we aim to strengthen support for initiatives that advance equity and inclusion in the Greater Edmonton Area.

To advance this commitment, we actively welcome partnership applications from organizations serving First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI), racialized communities, and other equity groups. Other equity groups include those marginalized by systemic barriers, such as First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI), racial or linguistic minorities, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and people with disabilities. This list is not exhaustive.

Please contact a grants team member at grants@ecf.ca before completing an application if you plan to apply in partnership with a non-profit organization.

What are the Community Grant maximum funding amounts and time frame

-   If the organization **has not** received a Community Grant in the last five years, the organization is eligible to apply for up to $50,000.

-   If the organization **has** received a Community Grant in the last five years, and reported on it, the organization is eligible to apply for up to $80,000.

-   Community Grants are not limited to a specific calendar or fiscal year. Your grant request should cover the amount of time needed to achieve your intended impact and should be completed within 18 months of the grant start date. Timelines are assessed on an individual basis.

What activities are eligible

Existing Programming Costs *(only for organizations with an operating budget less than $8M)*: Costs associated with the delivery of current or ongoing programming including operational expenses. Includes: salaries, program materials and equipment, promotion, administration, accessibility considerations, etc.

New and Expanded Programming Costs: Costs associated with the development, delivery, piloting, or evaluation of new or expanded programs. Includes: salaries, program materials and equipment, promotion, spaces associated with programming, accessibility considerations, etc.

Capacity Building: Costs associated with strengthening the organization's ability to deliver on its charitable mission. Includes: consultant fees, professional development, organizational assessments, technology, specialized equipment, costs associated with organizational mergers, etc. Capacity Building may also be to strengthen a sector or collective group. Includes: costs to collaborate, community engagement and organizing, identifying issues, and framing shared actions.

Equipment Purchases or Renovations: Costs associated with buying specific items or renovating a space or location.

When must these activities occur

Expenses covered by the grant must be incurred after July 1, 2026, following grant decisions.

Grants are NOT available for the following

- Deficit funding
- Retroactive funding (any expenses incurred prior to the decision date)
- Endowments
- Medical equipment
- Research
- Post-secondary institutions
- Funding to replace government cuts
- Travel outside the Greater Edmonton Area
- Capital campaigns and purchase of land and/or buildings
- Conferences, annual events, or organization celebrations
- Private schools, charter schools, or post-secondary institutions, including their foundations
- Other funders and organizations whose primary purpose is to raise money for a third party
- Grants primarily benefitting individuals (i.e. scholarships, bursaries, gift cards, vouchers, etc.)
- Fundraising events (such as tickets, raffles, auctions, or tournaments) or annual fundraising appeals
- Faith-based organizations and activities that require religious participation by those receiving services or that are providing religious education
- **National or provincial** initiatives without specific benefit to Edmonton; initiatives with a clear and measurable benefit to Edmonton will be considered for a proportional request
  - National Organizations may only apply if they demonstrate strong local connection, such as sustained operations in the Greater Edmonton Area, locally based staff, and/or local representation on their Board of Directors

APPLYING FOR THE COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

How to apply

1. Make sure your organization is eligible to apply.
   a) Review these guidelines carefully. If you need clarification about your organization's eligibility email grants@ecf.ca to schedule a meeting. Please note, as the deadline approaches, availability is limited.

2. If eligible, complete the first stage of the application through the Online Grant Portal, available on ECF's website (**See Appendix A of these Guidelines for Stage 1 Questions**).

The application consists of:
- basic questions about your organization to answer in writing
- questions about your initiative
- a budget template to fill out within the application

- attachment section for Financial Statement(s)

Online application tips

Applicants can save a draft application as they work, log out, and log back in to continue working on the application up until the deadline. Be sure to click **"Save Draft"** as you go through the application.

Spring 2026 timeline for funding after July 1, 2026

- Stage 1 application opens Monday February 2, 2026
- Stage 1 application closes Friday February 27, 2026, **at noon (12pm)**
- Early April: Applicants shortlisted for Stage 2 will be notified
  - Unsuccessful applications will receive notifications mid-April
- If requested, Stage 2 submissions due Friday April 17, 2026, **at noon (12pm)**
  - Stage 2 applications are assessed by volunteer committees consisting of community leaders and sector experts during the months of April and May
- Final decision and announcements made in late May / early June
  - Applicants awarded a grant will receive guidance on next steps, including reporting requirements
- Grants will be issued towards the end of June, 2026

How applications are assessed

The Community Grants program receives a variety of requests. Applications are assessed individually and in relation to the pool of applicants. Assessment criteria include the following, which vary slightly depending on the type of initiative:

- *Rationale for the grant (Why?):* Did the applicant sufficiently explain the need for this work and why it's important to receive this grant to do so? Does the review committee have a clear picture of the challenge this work will address or the strength the applicant aims to build? If applying for existing programming, did they sufficiently explain why this grant is important at this time from a financial perspective?

- *Timeframe and Activities (When? How?):* Is the plan (including activities and timeframe) clearly described, ready to execute and important to accomplish within the timeframe of the grant?

- *Impact (Desired Outcomes):* Are the outcomes in direct relation to the proposed activities? Is the review committee able to understand the desired impact over the course of the proposed timeline?

- *Fit within community (Who?):* Are there partnerships in place to ensure success of the work? Does the work complement existing efforts well or bring to light a new perspective to enhance the community?

- *Inclusive design:* Are there connections to the intended population? How will relationships contribute to the proposed work? Did the intended population contribute to the program design? Will the intended population continue to be part of its ongoing success?

- *Budget:* Is the budget appropriately resourced and does it have a strong alignment with the activities? Does it provide a clear rationale for how each line item was determined?

- *Viability and Feasibility:* Requests are viable when there is a clear plan with timelines, activities, readiness to implement, and a balanced budget.

Reporting

Organizations that receive a Community Grant are required to submit a final report through the online Grant Portal. ECF staff review your grant report to learn how your initiative went, to make improvements to our granting process, and to identify gaps in the community we might be able to help fill. Completion of the report is a condition of receiving future grants.

If your application is declined

You can set up a conversation with ECF staff to receive feedback on your application. To help manage staff capacity, feedback conversations will be available by appointment only after the Community Grants process has concluded.

APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY GRANTS APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Community Grants Program – Question List

Stage 1 application

*My organization is applying in partnership with a non-profit society to support a partnership serving First Nations, Métis, or Inuit (FNMI), racialized communities, or an equity group. (Yes/No)

If yes, additional question:
*Who are you applying in partnership with? List the name of the non-profit and identify the equity population they serve. (200 words)

*Title (10 words)

 *Concise Description. Use plain language to describe your request in two sentences.
This concise description may be shared with interested donors, funders and on our website. In this section, please refer to your organization in the 3rd person, rather than using "I, we, our" statements. For instance: "XYZ Organization is designing a new program" is better than "We are designing a new program". (50 words)

*Amount Requested from ECF (Number field)
- The organization **has** received a community grant in the last five years, and submitted reporting, the organization is eligible to apply for up to $80,000.
- The organization **has not** received a community grant in the last five years, the organization is eligible to apply for up to $50,000.

*Total Project Cost (Number field)

Expenses covered by the grant must be incurred after July 1, 2026, following grant decisions.

*Grant Start Date
Note: ECF does not provide retroactive funding. (Date field)

*Grant End Date
Please indicate when the grant money will be spent and the work it covers is expected to be completed. (Date field)

*What will you be doing?
Briefly describe the request as a whole but also make sure it's clear which portion(s) of the request ECF is supporting. (200 words)

*Tell us about the primary population served through this initiative.
Information can include equity groups, age groups, socioeconomic status, geography, etc. (100 words)

*How many direct beneficiaries do you expect to reach through this grant? (number only)
Direct beneficiaries are individuals who will directly participate in or receive the primary benefits of your project or program e.g. workshop participants, clients served, attendees at an event.

*What is the rationale for this number? Please explain how you determined this estimate.
Direct beneficiaries are individuals who will directly participate in or receive the primary benefits of your project or program e.g. workshop participants, clients served, attendees at an event. (200 words)

*Why is this specific request important? Tell us about how things are currently, and the proposed changes.
This could be in relation to clients, your organization, or the broader community. (200 words)

*When will the initiative start? Include a list of key activities and milestones. (200 words)

*Will you be working with partners?
For ECF's internal purposes, partnerships are defined as a mutually beneficial interaction built on trust, shared expertise, and meaningful contributions to achieve shared goals. In this definition, partners do not include a vendor relationship where you are paying for services. (Yes/No)

If yes, additional question:
*Provide one or two sentences describing each partner, group, or individual and their role. (200 words)

*Tell us about your fit within the community. If there are other organizations that do similar work or serve a similar community, does your work complement these efforts or bring a different perspective?
For national organizations, please describe your organization's local connection, such as sustained operations in the Greater Edmonton Area, locally based staff, and/or local representation on your Board of Directors.
(200 words)

*How will you know if you've been successful? How will you measure success? (200 words)

*What is your plan for sharing your learnings with partners, stakeholders, and/or other organizations?
(200 words)

*Reporting Timeline
If successful, when does your organization anticipate being able to submit a final report. (Date field)

Additional Information
This question is an opportunity to add context to your application. If there is information that should not be shared to protect clients, staff, or others, please feel free to enter it here. Any information entered here is private and will not be shared as open data. (200 words)

Budget

Please "Save Draft" on the application to update the "ECF Grant Request" before completing the budget table.

The budget should:
- identify which line items ECF funds would support
- be broken down by line item
- identify other funding sources (pending or confirmed), if applicable
- be balanced

[Watch this online video tutorial to learn about how to build a budget.](#)

Note: In 2025, the Living Wage in Edmonton was calculated at $22.30. You can find more information about living wage here [Living Wage Alberta](#).

*Budget (opens in separate pop-up window)
Please click below to complete the budget table (a new page will open).

Additional Budget Notes
Use this space to provide any additional information to your budget. (200 words)

Attachments

Stage 1 attachments

*Most recent financial statements (audited preferred)
If your organization is applying in partnership with a non-profit society to support a partnership focused on equity groups, attach the financial statements from your organization AND the non-profit society. (PDF)

*Certification of Accuracy
 Check 'Yes' to certify that: (Select one: Yes or No)
1. Your organization is operating in compliance with its bylaws and with Canada Revenue Agency regulations.
2. The executive leader of your organization is aware of the information contained in this application and can attest to its accuracy.

If requested, Stage 2 attachments

 *Provide the names of current board members. Provide the name, position, City/Town, and a brief sentence describing their relevant background and/or skills. (Table)
If your organization is applying in partnership with a non-profit society, include the board list from BOTH your organization AND the non-profit society.

*Optional, if requested, letters of support (maximum 2)
From external stakeholders (e.g. partners, clients) outlining the benefits of and/or their involvement in the proposed project. For ECF's internal purposes, partnerships are defined as a mutually beneficial interaction built on trust, shared expertise, and meaningful contributions to achieve shared goals. In this definition, partners do not include a vendor relationship where you are paying for services. (PDF)

*Optional, if requested, additional supporting documents (maximum of 2)
Some examples may include job description, quotes, community assessment. (PDF)