Small Grant Guidelines

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The Small Grants program provides flexible funding for one-time, stand-alone needs up to $10,000. The program will provide support in two key areas:

1. **Capacity Development** – Helping charities strengthen internal operations, invest in staff training, improve client services, and explore new ways to deliver programs.

2. **Unforeseen Needs** – Offering one-time support for unexpected situations that are independent of ongoing operations and programming.

All funded activities should be planned to conclude within six months of receiving the grant.

ELIGIBILTY FOR SMALL GRANTS

Who can apply?

Applicants must meet **ALL THREE** of the following criteria to apply to the Small 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[2] counties and Indigenous qualified donees located within Treaty 6 Territory.
   - National Organizations may apply only 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.

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 Small 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 Small Grant application per calendar year.** See the section below for details.

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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 donee

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

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.

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.

We ask that you connect with a grants team member at grants@ecf.ca if you are looking to apply in partnership with a non-profit organization, before completing an application.

Applying for a Small Grant

Small Grants are available for up to $10,000. We encourage applicants to request only what they need rather than automatically applying for the maximum amount.

The application period runs from March 1, 2026, to October 1, 2026, or until the allocated budget is fully distributed. Applications are reviewed every two months. Please see the table below for the intakes, funding decision dates and the earliest eligible expenses for each intake period.

Application Intake	Funding Decision	Earliest Date Eligible Expenses Can Be Incurred:
March 1- March 31, 2026	April 2026	May 1, 2026
April 1 – May 31, 2026	June 2026	July 1, 2026
June 1 – July 31, 2026	August 2026	September 1, 2026
August 1 – October 1, 2026	October 2026	November 1, 2026

If your request is over $10,000 or does not meet the Small Grant guidelines, please consider applying to our Community Grant Program instead.

Examples of eligible Small Grant activities

Sample Capacity Development initiatives could include, but are not limited to:
- Volunteer Program Development – *Example: Create onboarding tools and scheduling systems to improve volunteer engagement*.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives – *Example: Develop a DEI action plan and update policies to reduce barriers*.
- Learning and Professional Development – *Example: Provide staff training in leadership, grant writing, or specialized skills*.
- Community Engagement & Outreach Strategies – *Example: Launch targeted campaigns and partnerships to reach underserved groups*.
- Digital Transformation – *Example: Upgrade CRM systems, strengthen cybersecurity, and train staff on digital tools*.
- Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Programs – *Example: Offering Employee Assistance Plan services, wellness workshops, and flexible work options*.
- Fund Development Plans – *Example: Create a fundraising strategy with donor stewardship and digital campaigns*.
- Strengthening a Sector or Collective Group. – *Example: costs for collaboration and organizing, identifying shared issues, and developing collective actions*.

Sample <u>Unforeseen Needs</u> could include, but are not limited to:
- Emergency Facility Repairs – *Example: Fixing a burst pipe or roof leak to prevent program disruption and protect assets.*
- Temporary Relocation Costs – *Example: Renting a short-term space after sudden loss of a primary venue due to fire or flooding.*
- Crucial Technology or Equipment Upgrade – *Example: Replacing a failed server or computer system essential for client data security and program delivery.*
- Emergency Staffing Support – *Example: Hiring short-term staff to maintain essential services during a sudden surge in demand (e.g., disaster response).*
- Health & Safety Compliance – *Example: Upgrades and repairs needed to meet health and safety requirements*
- Accessibility Repairs & Upgrades – *Example: Repairing an elevator or installing temporary ramps.*
- Urgent Legal or Compliance Support – *Example: Hiring a lawyer or consultant to resolve an unexpected regulatory issue that threatens service continuity.*
- Immediate Security Upgrades – *Example: Installing locks or alarm systems after a break-in or incident.*

Small Grants are NOT available for the following:

- Initiatives extending more than 6 months
- Ongoing core operational or programming expenses
- Funding to replace government cuts
- Annual events, conferences or organization celebrations
- Retroactive funding (any expenses incurred prior to the decision date)
- Deficit funding
- Endowments
- Medical equipment
- Research
- Travel outside the Greater Edmonton Area
- Capital campaigns and purchase of land and/or buildings
- 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 apply only 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

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 application through our online portal, available on ECF's website (See Appendix A of these Guidelines for the application Questions).

How are applications assessed?

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

Sample <u>Capacity Development</u> review considerations include:
- Does the request clearly strengthen the organization's long-term capacity?
- Is there a clear plan for implementation and measurable outcomes?
- Has the organization identified how this initiative addresses a current gap or challenge?
- Is the proposed budget reasonable and directly tied to capacity-building activities?
- Does the request have quotes to support work with consultants, training expenses, or professional services, if applicable?
- Will the initiative have lasting impact beyond the grant period?
- Number of Small Grants received over the last number of years.

Sample <u>Unforeseen Needs</u> review considerations include:

- Does the request support a one-time need that is reasonably unanticipated?
- Does the application clearly demonstrate the need for this grant and its benefit to the organization and/or community?
- Is the proposed budget reasonable and directly tied to the unforeseen need?
- Does the request include quotes to support consultants, equipment purchases, or renovations, if applicable?
- Number of Small Grants received over the last number of years.

What grant reporting is required?

Small Grant reports are an online form found on <u>our online portal</u>. The report form will be added to the same user account that submitted the grant application approximately three months after the application has been approved.

The form is comprised of a number of short answer, drop-down menu, and multiple select questions. These questions address general information about your grant, staff resources allocated to your grant, grant impact, financial information, and any follow-up activities which your organization may be undertaking. You will also need to upload financials for the grant which clearly indicate where the grant money was spent. Receipts for expenses are not required.

APPENDIX A – SMALL GRANTS APPLICATION QUESTION

Small Grants Program – Question List

Request

*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)

*Total Project Cost
(Number field)

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

*Grant End Date
Please indicate when the grant money will be spent and the work it covers finished up.

*This grant would be used primarily to support:
(Drop down, select one of the options below)

Capacity Development: Helping charities strengthen internal operations, invest in staff training, improve client services, and explore new ways to deliver programs. Capacity building can also support strengthening a sector or collective group. This may include costs for collaboration, community engagement and organizing, identifying shared issues, and developing collective actions.

Unforeseen Needs: Offering one-time support for unexpected situations that are independent of ongoing operations and programming.

>If selected Capacity Development above:
>*** What capacity challenge is your organization currently facing? How will addressing it through this grant improve your programs or services?**
>(200 words)

If selected <u>Unforeseen Needs</u>, question above:
* Describe the unexpected need your organization is facing and why this support is critical.
Address how this funding will help you respond effectively and what impact it will have on your community.
(200 words)

*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?
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.
(Number field)

*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)

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

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 link to complete the budget table (a new page will open).

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

Attachments

*Attach quotes for requests to support consultants, equipment purchases, or renovations.
Quotes must be attached to the application for the requests specifically to support consultants, equipment purchases or renovations.

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