

HALIFAX



Community Grants Program

A guide to different types of Community Grants, eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Applications deadline: March 31, 2025.

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Other municipal grants programs

The Community Grants Program is one of many grant programs offered by the Halifax Regional Municipality. If your project does not fit the Community Grants Program mandate, or if you have other projects on the horizon, be sure to explore our other opportunities at: halifax.ca/grants.

Support and recognition for volunteers

Volunteer conference

The municipality's Neighbourhood and Volunteer Services team offers an annual conference each November. Held once a year, this conference provides residents with an opportunity to network, celebrate and participate in workshops on relevant topics, like grant writing, fundraising, board governance, engaging youth, community event planning, marketing your organization, and volunteer recruitment and engagement.

Volunteer awards

Each year during National Volunteer Week, the Halifax Regional Municipality holds an award ceremony to acknowledge and honour the contributions of volunteers and volunteer organizations in our communities.

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What is the Community Grants Program?

The Community Grants Program provides funding opportunities to support non-profit organizations and volunteers in providing a range of leisure, learning and recreational opportunities for residents and the provision of programs, services and amenities to enhance public safety and the well-being of individuals and families with special needs. Eligible organizations can apply for funding under one of the following funding categories:

- community arts
- community histories
- diversity and accessibility
- emergency assistance and public safety
- environment and climate change
- leisure
- recreation

Applicants unsure which category applies to their project can email nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca or call 902.497.0479 for assistance.

About this guidebook

This guidebook is to help applicants understand the Community Grants Program. This program is provided under the direction of Regional Council as outlined in the [Community Grants Program Administrative Order](#). In the event of a conflict between this guidebook and the administrative order, the administrative order prevails.

First-time applicants

First time applicants are highly encouraged to contact Grants and Contributions staff to discuss their application prior to submission. Staff can be reached via email at nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca or telephone 902.497.0479.

Priority outcomes

Priority outcomes for each category can be found in the funding categories section of this guidebook. Requests may range between \$500 – \$5,000. An exception to this limit is made for capital grants, which may be funded up to \$25,000.

Previously funded projects

Non-profit organizations are encouraged to view previously funded projects. This information is available on the [Community Grants Program web page](#).

Eligibility of community groups

Organizations eligible to apply to the program must be registered under one of the following legislative acts:

- a non-profit society incorporated pursuant to the *Nova Scotia Societies Act*
- a non-profit association incorporated pursuant to the *Nova Scotia Co-operatives Associations Act*
- a not-for-profit corporation incorporated pursuant to the *Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*
- a non-profit organization otherwise incorporated under an act of the Nova Scotia Legislature or an act of the Parliament of Canada
- a charitable organization registered pursuant to the *Income Tax Act (Canada)* and registered with the Canada Revenue Agency

Registration requirements

The organization must be registered for at least one year prior to the Community Grants Program application deadline. Registration must be in good standing meaning the registration status of the applicant has not been revoked or suspended.

Joint applications from two or more eligible non-profit organizations are acceptable but the maximum value of grant remains the same.

Grants will not be issued to unregistered groups, except in the case of a joint application in partnership with a registered non-profit or charitable organization. Any award will be issued to the registered co-applicant. Each applicant party to a joint application must sign the application form and provide a financial statement showing revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities. If the unregistered group does not have a financial statement, this should be disclosed in the application. A simple statement of the unregistered group's cash position may be substituted, as applicable.

If a joint application is successful, payment will be made to only one, registered organization that is party to the joint application. In the event of default in submitting a final report with proof of payment for the expenditure of the grant awarded to a joint application, the eligibility of both parties will be suspended until either the final report has been received or for up to three years.

Late applications will be deemed ineligible for consideration.

Only projects located within the Halifax region are eligible for a grant.

Ineligible grant expenditures

No portion of a grant awarded under this program shall be used for:

- an organization's operating costs including but not limited to salaries, wages, insurance, utilities, rent, debt or registration fees
- a stipend, bursary, scholarship, honoraria, prize, financial gift or item(s) for personal ownership
- leasehold improvements, repairs and/or fixed upgrades to a building, land or equipment that is not owned by the applicant(s)

An exception may be made for improvements to **land** leased from the provincial or federal government (public property) if the tenant has a lease agreement of five years or more, the owner has provided their written consent for the work and application has been made for provincial or federal funding in support of the same project in an amount equal to or greater than the municipal funding requested. If a grant is awarded funds will be held pending confirmation of successful provincial or federal funds.

- leasehold improvements to municipal or private property will not be considered
- housing or residential accommodations used for an institutional purpose, private ownership or any part of a dwelling provided as an employment related benefit
- costs associated with the purchase of surplus municipal property in accordance with *Section 17, Schedules 1 and 2 of [Administrative Order 50](#)*
- events including but not limited to a dinner, trade show, reunion, meeting, conference, festival, fundraising event or tournament
- consumables including but not limited to office supplies, travel, admission or membership fees, food, utilities or fuel
- academic or school-based projects or educational programs including preschool and childcare programs and facilities
- projects directly or indirectly serving the interests of a trade, profession, industry, commerce or business, including a sole proprietorship
- economic development or employment except for an inclusive employment project, program, service or amenity exclusively serving persons with a disability
- a medical program, service, amenity, facility or equipment

- international development
- pre-paid expenses
- a project, program, service or facility that advances a political or religious doctrine

Contact staff for information on your project cost eligibility if required.

Types of grants

Project grants: the dollar value of a project grant ranges from \$500 to \$5,000.

Capital grants: the dollar value of a capital grant ranges from over \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000. Capital projects which request a grant of more than \$5,000 must provide two competing quotes or, where it is not possible to obtain competing quotes, a statement explaining why only one quote is provided in the application. **Applications without quotes may be declined.** Applicants are not required to select the lowest priced quote.

For clarity, capital grants shall only be awarded towards the following:

- the purchase of real property
- construction, repairs, renovation, upgrade or improvements to real property owned by the applicant
- the purchase of a large or specialized item of equipment costing over \$5,000 per item
- a public artwork, monument or installation

An application for a capital grant will only be considered if the applicant is the owner of the asset. An exception can be made to include an application with respect to a capital improvement to **land** leased from the Government of Nova Scotia or the Government of Canada. **Excludes** a facility or building owned by the Government of Nova Scotia or the Government of Canada. The following conditions apply:

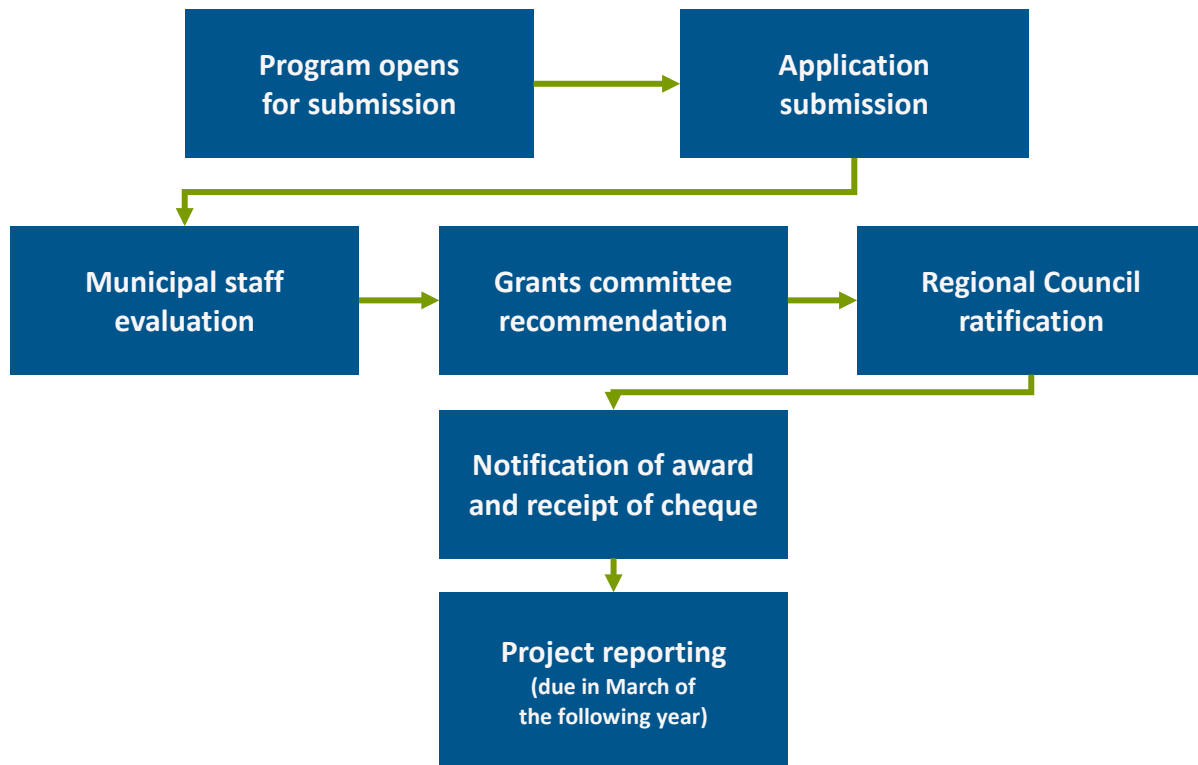
- (i) the applicant has a signed lease agreement with a minimum of five years remaining or a renewal option
- (ii) the property owner has provided written consent
- (iii) an application has been made for provincial or federal funding in support of the project in an amount equal to or exceeding the value of municipal grant requested

Note: preference may be given to amenities open to the public at no or low cost. Capital improvements to **municipal or private property** will not be considered.

Application and decision-making process

The process usually takes five months from program launch to approval by Regional Council. Typically, the Community Grants Program begins accepting applications in January of each year. The intake period and application deadline will be established by staff and advertised in all print and digital media and stated in the application form and program guidelines.

If the application deadline falls on a weekend or a holiday the application deadline shall be the next business day. The application deadline might also be extended in the event of a major disruption to service. For example, a severe weather event.



The grant approval process

Staff will evaluate projects according to the scoring criteria for the applicable funding category. You can find the evaluation criteria in this guidebook accompanying each funding category. A staff report is presented to the Grants Committee, which will make a formal recommendation to Halifax Regional Council. Halifax Regional Council makes the final decision. **Note:** preference may be given to:

- organizations not in receipt of recurring municipal, provincial or federal government funding
- by the type and scope of public benefit in terms of one or more of the following: accessibility, diversity, affordability or inclusivity
- applicants ineligible for consideration under another municipal grant program
- geographic or interest-based communities with limited access to public amenities
- amenities open to the public at no or low cost

Notification of awards

Staff will contact you with Regional Council's decision. If approved a grant may be issued in full, in installments, or held-back pending confirmation that specific requirements have been met.

Responsibilities of grant recipients

Organizations receiving an award must submit a final report on or before March 31 of the following year. Instructions on reporting will be provided with your letter of notification.

Acknowledgement

For guidance on acknowledgements or use of the Halifax Regional Municipality logo, please contact Grants & Contributions.

Changes to projects

If the funded project cannot be completed as planned, or cannot be undertaken, please contact the Grants and Contributions office for guidance at 902.497.0479. In some cases, an extension may be permitted, and funds may be carried forward to the next fiscal year. If an extension is approved, the term of an extension will be for up to 12 months and confirmed in writing.

Refund of ineligible expenses

Your letter of notification will specify the value of the grant and the expenditures supported by the grant. Use of funds towards expenses not approved by the grant may result in a request to repay the municipality and/or suspension of eligibility for up to three years.

Refund of grant balance

If it is necessary to refund all or a portion of a grant, a cheque payable to Halifax Regional Municipality may be sent to the Grants and Contributions office. If the unspent balance remaining in the municipality's grant is \$50 or more the funds shall be returned to the municipality.

Funding Categories

Evaluation criteria and weighted scoring for all funding categories

Criteria	Description	Weight
Sector priority	Does the project directly address a funding priority for this funding category?	/ 5
Financial need	Demonstrated inability to self-fund. Limited access to government or other funding.	/ 5
Public benefit	Accessible, affordable and inclusive	/ 5
Volunteer support	Support volunteers in the development and/or delivery of a program or service serving residents	/ 5
Total		/ 20

Community arts

Purpose

Encourage residents' engagement in the arts as a learning or leisure activity.

Priorities

- projects that engage residents in the arts as a community engagement activity, or to preserve and express cultural identity
- broaden the inclusion and active participation of diverse identities, whether those identities are based in ability, culture or geographic location
- the production and presentation of works by non-professional arts organizations and organizations whose mandate is not arts based

Project grant examples

Reusable equipment, professional fees, marketing, facility rentals or website.

Capital grant examples

Lighting/sound equipment, repairs to facilities or public art (i.e., a sculpture).

Note

professional arts organizations should apply to the municipality's Grants to Professional Arts Organizations Program.

Examples of eligible organizations include non-professional arts organizations (i.e. theatre, music, dance, literary arts, media arts or crafts).

Community histories

Purpose

Protect, interpret and present the region's culturally diverse histories.

Priorities

- broaden the inclusion and active participation of diverse communities
- engage residents in community-based research, interpretation and presentation
- encourage self representation

Project grant examples

Community research projects, digitization of documents and images, design and installation of interpretive panels and plaques, website, artifact restoration, small equipment or heritage conservation report.

Capital grant examples

Commemorative monuments, display cases, cabinets or permanent installation, large equipment or purchase of an historical artifact.

Note

Restoration of heritage properties owned by registered not-for-profit organizations may apply in this funding sector. **Applicants are required to have heritage planner approval for their projects before submitting their application. Contact information can be found [on our website](#).**

Examples of eligible organizations

Historical societies, an organization developing a project to commemorate an historical person, place or event.

Diversity and accessibility

Purpose

Address barriers to participation based on physical or cognitive disability, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity or income.

Priorities

- actions to identify and reduce barriers to access a program or service due to a physical or cognitive disability

- actions to address the representation and participation of persons, families, and communities based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic location or income
- projects that present the municipality as a welcoming community to immigrants, refugees and newcomers

Project grant examples

Adaptive aids, professional fees for translation or conversion (e.g., braille, speech to text, etc.), accessibility audits, marketing, public education or website.

Capital grant examples

Elevators/lifts, ramps, washrooms, cultural facilities or equipment. Preference may be given to applicants who have completed and submitted an **accessibility audit** by a qualified service provider.

Examples of eligible organizations

Those investing in accessibility upgrades.

Note

Accessibility grants are limited to organizations whose programs and services are eligible for consideration under one of the program's other funding categories.

Emergency assistance and public safety

Purpose

Community based support for individuals and families unable to meet their basic needs for daily living and projects that enhance public safety.

Priorities

- accommodation and support services located outside the capital region for persons who are temporarily homeless or at risk of homelessness
- programs and services for individuals and families unable to meet their need for safety, food, shelter or basic household items
- safety education and risk prevention or reduction

Project grant examples

Small equipment, community or facility safety audit, public education, emergency preparedness, crime prevention, harm reduction, diversion programs, website or food storage equipment.

Capital grant examples

Commercial grade appliances for a food bank/community feeding program (refrigerator, freezer, fire suppression system), laundry appliances for shelters, upgrades to a shelter for the unhoused community, security system or the purchase of a vehicle for food collection and/or distribution.

Examples of eligible organizations

A food/clothing/furniture bank, mobile feeding/food program, help line, shelters for the homeless, victims of violence, youth or post incarceration or addictions recovery.

Environment and climate change

Purpose

Prevent or remedy harm to the environment.

Priorities

- protect or conserve the natural environment
- recognize and support the participation and representation of culturally diverse communities in environmental stewardship
- public education and engagement

Project grant examples

Public education, energy audits, community clean ups, marketing, websites, water conservation (project or capital)

Capital grant examples

Purchase of land for conservation, equipment or energy conservation.

Note

Preference may be given to energy efficient projects that have conducted an energy audit prior to applying to the program.

Examples of eligible organizations

Land or wildlife conservation organizations, nature clubs, animal control, organizations developing a naturalization project (e.g. tree-planting, erosion prevention, etc.).

Leisure

Purpose

Strengthen social connections through access to group activities.

Priorities

- projects that provide or enhance public access to a program, service, or facility to encourage social interaction, unstructured or passive play activities and community gatherings
- amenities in communities with limited access to public facilities
- encourage affordable and inclusive programming for a range of ages and abilities

Project grant examples

Small equipment, web site, marketing, furniture, storage equipment, marketing or computer equipment.

Capital grant examples

Community hall upgrades, large appliances, playgrounds or parks.

Note

Energy efficiency upgrades are considered under the environment funding sector.

Examples of eligible organizations

Community halls, seniors' clubs, community-owned parks and playgrounds, youth groups or hobby clubs.

Recreation

Purpose

Encourage physical activity and fitness.

Priorities

- entry level learning opportunities and exposure to an activity (i.e. non-high-performance training or competitions)
- children, youth, lower income individuals and families
- affordability and inclusivity

Project grant examples

Sports equipment (not for personal ownership), equipment loan program, website or marketing.

Capital grant examples

Indoor or outdoor recreational facility upgrades (e.g. field, court, clubhouse, docks, etc.) or large equipment.

Note

Energy efficiency upgrades are considered under the environment funding category.

Examples of eligible organizations

Sports clubs, campgrounds and recreation organizations.

Submitting your application

Please make sure you have completed all information required including the attachments. Applications may be submitted in full by any of the methods listed below.

Mail:

Community Grants Program
HRM Finance – Grants and Contributions
PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5

Courier:

Community Grants Program
HRM Finance – Grants and Contributions
1st Floor Customer Service Centre
40 Alderney Drive
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 2N5

In person:

Applications may also be dropped off at any municipal customer service centre. Locations can be found here at halifax.ca/311

By email:

Applications can be emailed to nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca. A fillable application is available on the [Community Grants Program web page](#) or by request. Please ensure you receive confirmation of receipt.

Note:

- ensure you have completed all information required in sections 1 through 12
- ensure you receive a confirmation of receipt within two weeks of your submission – if not please contact staff
- if applicable, your non-profit has submitted the required final report from a previously awarded grant

Community Grants Program Application Form

If you have any questions, please contact the Grants and Contributions team at nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca or 902.497.0479.

Application deadline: March 31, 2025 – please review the Guidebook

1. Registered name of applicant organization:
2. Mailing address:
3. Project location:
4. Contact information: Name: Phone number: Email address:
5. Please provide applicable non-profit or charitable status registration number: Non-profit society registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies # _____ Non-Profit association incorporated under the <i>Co-operatives Associations Act (1989)</i> and registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks Companies # _____ Non-profit incorporated registered with Industry Canada # _____ Canadian charity registered with the Canada Revenue Agency # _____ Non-Profit organization incorporated under an act of the Nova Scotia Legislature or an act of the Parliament of Canada. # _____

6. Select one funding category:

- Community arts
- Community histories
- Diversity and accessibility
- Emergency assistance and neighbourhood safety
- Environment and climate change
- Leisure
- Recreation

7. Describe the project your organization wants to do and the people the project aims to serve. Attach additional information if required (max. three pages):

8. Amount requested from the Community Grants Program:

\$:

9. Will receive other funding from the municipality:

- Yes
- No
- Yes, not confirmed

10. Project budget (part one): Please include all possible sources of funding for your project			
Source of funding	Amount (\$)	Confirmed?	
		Yes	No
		Yes	No
		Yes	No
		Yes	No
		Yes	No
		Yes	No
Total project costs (\$)	\$		
11. Project budget (part two): Please list items and costs of the project.			
Item description		Amount (\$)	
Total cost of project (should equal total funding sources)		\$	
12. Please include the following with your application			
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial statements Your organization's annual financial statements for last year. Statements must include all revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities. Please do not submit statement and income and expenditure forms used to renew organization's renewal of registration with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks for your annual non-profit registration.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Quotes for capital projects Capital projects must include quotes from at least two providers. If only one quote is provided, please explain why an additional quote was not included.			

Collection & Use Statement

In accordance with Section 485 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA), any personal information collected on this application form will only be used by municipal staff and, if necessary, individuals and/or organizations under service contract with the Halifax Regional Municipality for purposes relating to the administration of the Community Grants Program. If you have any questions about the collection and use of your personal information, please call 311 or email contactus@311.halifax.ca.

Applicants are advised that extracts from an application may be cited in a public report.

Conditions of approval

If a Community Grant is approved by Council, the grant is subject to conditions that will be set out in the written notification to the recipient at the time of approval, including the following:

1. a grant awarded under this program shall only be used for the project as set out in the application and approved
2. the expenditures shall be made in the same fiscal year (April 1 – March 31) in which the grant was approved unless an extension has been approved in accordance with the *Community Grants Program Administrative Order*
3. no portion of a grant awarded under this program may be used for ineligible expenditures as set out in the *Community Grants Program Administrative Order*
4. the grant recipient shall submit a final report by the reporting deadline set out by the municipality, which shall include proof acceptable to the municipality of expenditures funded using the grant
5. any surplus funds of \$50 or more remaining at the time of the final report shall be returned to the municipality when the final report is submitted

Failure to comply with the conditions of the grant may result in ineligibility for such a grant in future years in accordance with the *Community Grants Program Administrative Order*.

Waiver

We submit this application for approval of a community grant with the full knowledge and authorization of the applicant organization and hereby certify that we are the authorized signing officer(s) of the applying organization (at least one of which is a member of the Board of Directors) and that this application is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge. We have read and understood this form and agree to the conditions of approval.

Signature:

Print:

Date:

Signature:

Print:

Date: