

Frequently Asked Questions

When is funding available?

The Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund's second intake period is starting in fall 2023. Please join our mailing list for updates on the website's "Contact" page.

How do I know if I am eligible?

To be an eligible applicant, you must represent a Nova Scotia municipality, First Nations band or tribal council, post-secondary institution, or a non-profit organization. Non-profits must have a form of registration and be active in Nova Scotia. For a detailed description of eligible applicants, please review the Applicant Guide section 2.1.

For your project to be considered eligible under the Fund, it must directly benefit a community and/or group in Nova Scotia. The project must clearly align with one of the two core program objectives, which can be found in the Applicant Guide section 1.3. For full information on project eligibility refer to the Applicant Guide section 2.2.

What type of projects are eligible for funding?

The Fund will support projects that fall into two main categories, adaptation, and mitigation. Some examples of adaptation projects include restoring wetlands for flood management, forest and wildlife strategies, and mapping of vulnerable and at-risk community infrastructure. Some examples of mitigation projects include implementing energy efficiency technologies, electrification of community transport, and renewable energy installations. For more examples on mitigation and adaptation project examples, review sections 3 and 4 of the Applicant Guide.

What information will I need to apply?

You will need a variety of information to complete a full application, some of these items include organization information, a detailed project description, budget figures, and project timeframes. You will need to have a strong understanding of how their project will meet climate change action objectives, and a plan for how they will undertake the work. For more information on requirements to apply, refer to the Applicant Guide sections 5.2, 5.3, and Appendix B.

For projects that have a total eligible project cost greater than \$500,000 you will be required to provide an estimate of potential greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction for your project. If your project's eligible costs are less than \$500,000 this information is optional but encouraged if it is available. For more information on GHG reporting refer to section 9 of the Applicant Guide.

What are the steps in the application?

The first step is to submit a pre-screening application (through *Submittable*, the Fund's online application portal), with basic information about your project, organization, community and overall budget. Staff will review each pre-screening within 5 business days, and if the project meets basic eligibility, you will be provided access to the full application form in *Submittable*. The full application requires more detailed information about your project.

How long does it take to prepare an application?

The length of time it will take you to prepare an application depends on the amount of information you have readily available on your project. Gathering the necessary documentation for a project related to GHG reduction can be a lengthy process, and you should start acquiring necessary estimates and permits as soon as possible.

Filling out the application was designed to be as simple as possible. There are approximately 15 questions and a total word limit of 2000. With all the necessary information in hand, the application and project workbook will take approximately 2 – 3 hours to complete.

What are eligible expenses?

The Fund will aim to support project costs that are deemed direct and necessary for the successful implementation of the project. For a list of examples of what may be considered eligible, refer to section 6.1 of the Applicant Guide.

How are successful projects selected?

Initial pre-screening forms will be reviewed by Fund staff to ensure that basic eligibility requirements are met and to determine where more information may be required. All applicants are notified whether a project does or does not meet basic eligibility requirements.

Full applications will be reviewed by an external Review Committee who have expertise and/or connections to community-level climate change mitigation and/or adaptation. For an overview of how the Review Committee will evaluate your project, please refer to Section 8 of the Applicant Guide.

When are grant application deadlines?

The second round of funding will open to applicants on October 17, 2023. The deadline to submit the pre-screening form is November 14, 2023 and the full application deadline is November 28, 2023. For more information on application deadlines, refer to section 5.4 of the Applicant Guide.

How do I submit my application?

All applications must be submitted online through *Submittable*, the Fund's grants management system. You must create an account and log in to begin the process. Hard copies or electronic copies submitted any other way, such as by mail or email, will not be considered.

When are grant funding decisions made?

Fund staff expect to begin notifying all applicants of funding decisions in April 2024. For more information on the funding cycle, refer to section 5.4 of the Applicant Guide.

Where can I get help with my application?

Fund staff are available to assist by answering any questions related to the application process. The main point of contact is the Grant Coordinator who can be reached by emailing info@sccfns.ca.