

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key dates for Round 4?

- **June 25, 2026 at 2:00 PM ADT:** Pre-screening deadline
- **July 23, 2026 at 2:00 PM ADT:** Full application deadline
- **July - October 2026:** Evaluation of submissions
- **Fall 2026:** Funding decisions are expected to be finalized and applicants notified

How do I know if I am eligible?

To be an eligible applicant, you must represent a Nova Scotia municipality, a First Nations band or tribal council, a post-secondary institution, or a non-profit organization. Non-profits must be formally registered and active in Nova Scotia. For a detailed description of eligible applicants, refer to section 2.1 of the Applicant Guide. Your project must directly benefit a community and/or group in Nova Scotia and clearly align with one of the two core program objectives outlined in section 1.3 of the Applicant Guide; for full details on project eligibility, see section 2.2.

What types of projects are eligible for funding?

The Fund supports projects in two main categories: adaptation and mitigation. Adaptation projects may include restoring wetlands for flood management, developing forest and wildlife strategies, or mapping vulnerable or at-risk community infrastructure. Mitigation projects may include implementing energy-efficiency technologies, electrifying community transportation, or installing renewable energy systems. Additional examples of both adaptation and mitigation projects can be found in sections 3 and 4 of the Applicant Guide.

What information will I need to apply?

To complete a full application, you will need a detailed project description, budget figures, and project timelines. You must also demonstrate how your project aligns with the Fund's climate-action objectives and provide a clear plan for completing the work. Full application requirements are provided in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the Applicant Guide.

For mitigation initiatives with total eligible costs over \$500,000, you must include an estimate of potential greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions. If costs fall below this threshold, the estimate is optional but encouraged. More information on GHG reporting is available in section 9 of the Applicant Guide.

What are the steps in the application process?

The first step is to submit a pre-screening application through *Submittable*, the Fund's online application portal. This form collects basic information about your project, organization, community, and overall budget. Fund staff will review pre-screening applications within five business days. If your project meets basic eligibility requirements, you will receive access to the full application form in *Submittable*, which requires more detailed information.

How long does it take to prepare an application?

The time needed to complete the application varies depending on the project type, its complexity, and how much information you already have available. Projects involving GHG reductions often require more documentation, so it is best to begin gathering estimates and permits early.

The application includes roughly 20 questions with a total word limit of 2,000 words. Once all required information is prepared, the application and project workbook typically take two to three hours to complete.

What are eligible expenses?

Eligible expenses are project costs that are direct and necessary for successful project implementation. Examples of eligible expenses can be found in section 6.1 of the Applicant Guide.

Are costs incurred before a funding agreement is signed eligible for support?

The Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund can only support expenditures incurred after a funding agreement has been fully executed between NSFM and the successful applicant. Any activities or costs incurred before the agreement is signed are ineligible, regardless of when funding decisions are announced.

How are successful projects selected?

Initial pre-screening forms will be reviewed by Fund staff to ensure that basic eligibility requirements are met. Full applications will then be reviewed by an external Technical Advisory Committee with expertise in community-level climate change mitigation and adaptation. Final funding decisions will be made by Nova Scotia's Minister of Environment and Climate Change. For an overview of how the Technical Advisory Committee will evaluate your project, please refer to section 8 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 by any other means, such as mail or email, will not be accepted.

When are grant funding decisions made?

Funding decisions are expected to be made by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change in Fall 2026, after which Fund staff will notify all applicants of the results. For more information on the funding cycle, refer to section 5.4 of the Applicant Guide.

If my project is successful, how long will I have to complete the work?

All Round 4 projects must be fully completed by November 30, 2027. Given the anticipated timing of funding decisions in Fall 2026 and the time required to execute funding agreements, successful applicants may have less than one year to complete their projects. As a result, readiness to proceed is essential.

Where can I get help with my application?

You can get help with your application by consulting the *Applicant Guide* and the supporting resources available on the Fund's website. You are also encouraged to sign up for one of the information webinars listed on the Resource Hub under *Webinars and Events* on the program website, as these sessions provide guidance on the application process and an opportunity to ask questions. If you require additional assistance, you may contact Fund staff by emailing info@sccfns.ca.