## Reaching Home Application Guide

*Reaching Home*

The Government of Canada allocated an additional $2 million in Reaching Home dollars to the Rural Development Network to be invested across the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 fiscal years. The Rural Development Network is the Reaching Home Community Entity for Rural and Remote Alberta, and is responsible for distributing this funding to rural and remote organizations and communities in Alberta, including Indigenous communities, to support community efforts in addressing and responding to homelessness.

The Rural Development Network is launching a call for applications for this additional $2 million. **Communities and organizations in need of financial assistance for activities specific to meeting the urgent and immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness and those at imminent risk of becoming homeless are eligible to apply.** **Project activities must be completed and funding must be utilized and spent by March 31, 2024. Projects may be funded up to a maximum of 19 months (1.5 years) and may commence as early as Fall 2022. Funding decisions will take place in August/September 2022.**

Project activities must take place outside of the “Seven Cities” in Alberta (Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, and Fort McMurray). **This funding is specific to those living in rural and remote areas, including First Nations and Métis Settlements in Alberta. On-reserve projects are also eligible.**

**Proposed projects must serve or target individuals and/or families who are experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness.**

*Eligible Organizations:*

| * Not-for-profit organizations; | * Public health and educational institutions; |
| --- | --- |
| * For-profit organizations; | * Provincial and territorial governments and their entities[[1]](#footnote-0); and |
| * Municipalities; | * Indigenous organizations[[2]](#footnote-1) |

*Eligible Activities and Priorities:*

**Priority will be given to projects that:**

* address a demonstrated need;
* clearly outline capacity to deliver identified project activities;
* demonstrate innovative approaches to ending homelessness and strong partnerships;
* develop responses to Indigenous Homelessness (e.g., culturally appropriate supports);
* development of a coordinated community response to address the spectrum of homelessness such as a task force;
* identify opportunities for integration of services and supports;
* provide basic need services (e.g. food, transportation, hygiene, clothing);
* operational supports for shelters/mat programs;
* connect clients to housing placements and supports;
* focus on prevention and shelter diversion services, such as the provision of short-term financial assistance; (e.g. rental arrears, utility payments);
* support clients with housing start-up costs (e.g., damage deposits, furnishings);
* connect clients to mental health and addiction supports;
* connect clients to clinical and treatment services, economic integration services (e.g. income assistance, employment, job training, education) and social and community integration services;
* enhance coordination and navigation of services that will shift towards a regional “Coordinated Access” system;
* *Capital projects are also eligible.*The purchasing of land, buildings, vehicles and renovations, including the construction or renovation of emergency shelters, transitional or permanent supportive housing and non-residential facilities (e.g. resource centres) are examples of capital projects that will be considered. Please refer to the sustainability checklist (pg.6-10) and capital project requirements (pg. 11-13) in Appendix A for detailed requirements.

Please note that all projects that meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness or people at imminent risk of homelessness will be considered for funding. If you are unsure whether your project falls under the priorities identified, we encourage you to contact the Reaching Home team to discuss your idea. Please connect with the Reaching Home team at [programs@ruraldevelopment.ca](mailto:programs@ruraldevelopment.ca) or 780-964-2736 ext. 2.

*Reporting:*

This is a reimbursement grant, which means that the funding is not provided upfront, but rather provided once appropriate documentation and back-up (receipts) is submitted. Advances may be considered on a case by case need.

Organizations will be required to:

* Submit monthly or quarterly financial expense claims and activity reports.
* Collect project specific data.

We are committed to working with Indigenous projects to discuss flexibilities with regards to reporting requirements.

*Funding available per project:*

While there is no maximum amount of funding communities can request for this intake, funding is limited and all funding must be spent by March 31, 2024. We will be unable to fund all applications and some applications may not be approved for the full request. We will consider requests for higher levels of funding if the proposed activities and expenditures correspond with a heightened need in the community. Capital projects may also correspond with higher funding requests.

You must determine an appropriate funding request based on the scope of your proposed project, rationale of overall costs needed to achieve outcomes, costs associated with capital expenditures, the feasibility of sustaining the project once the Reaching Home funding has ended, and other sources of funding.

Communities and organizations are not prohibited from submitting more than one funding application. However, we ask everyone to please consider the limited funding that is available for all of rural and remote Alberta and prioritize funding requests accordingly.

*Examples of Previous Projects:*

* Site preparation for Indigenous led transitional housing project
* Renovations of existing units and purchase of modular units for transitional supportive housing
* Land purchased for a new second-stage transitional shelter for women fleeing domestic violence
* Transition beds for people with addictions waiting to get into inpatient treatment
* Funding for housing support workers to assist people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
* Outreach supports for youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness
* Shelter pods for clients to access emergency shelter
* Operations of temporary emergency mat programs
* Culturally appropriate supports

This list is by no means exhaustive.

*Q&A Sessions:*

Four live virtual Q&A Sessions will be taking place on the following dates/times with RDN’s Reaching Home team. Please register through eventbrite in order to receive a zoom link.

**Reaching Home Indigenous Application Q&A led by RDN Indigenous Liaison:** Tuesday July 5, 2022 @ 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/374452576737>

**Reaching Home Indigenous Application Q&A led by RDN Indigenous Liaison:** Tuesday July 12, 2022 @ 11:00am - 12:30pm

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/374520048547>

**Reaching Home Application Q&A:** Wednesday July 13, 2022 @ 11:00am - 12:30pm

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/374523137787>

**Reaching Home Application Q&A:** Tuesday July 26, 2022 @ 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/374525625227>

Indigenous communities and organizations are welcome to attend all sessions. We have two sessions that will be led by RDN’s Indigenous Liaison specifically for Indigenous communities and organizations.

We strongly encourage interested applicants to attend one of the sessions to ask questions and learn more about the application processes, funding priorities, eligible projects/activities and reporting requirements.

If your organization or community previously submitted a Reaching Home application and was not successful in receiving funding, we welcome you to reach out to us to discuss your previous application.

*Application Deadline*

**The Reaching Home application and all relevant documents must be submitted not later than August 5th, 2022 at 11:59pm MDT**. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered. Earlier submissions from applicants however are strongly encouraged in order to ensure applications are reviewed and decisions are made in a timely manner. Please submit completed applications to [rhapplications@ruraldevelopment.ca](mailto:rhapplications@ruraldevelopment.ca). Please submit 2 copies of your application – one as a word doc and the other a PDF.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to our organization if you have any questions. The Reaching Home team can be contacted at [programs@ruraldevelopment.ca](mailto:programs@ruraldevelopment.ca) or 780-964-2736 ext. 2. We strongly encourage applicants to register for and attend one of our Q&A sessions and review our working FAQ document.

**APPENDIX A: REACHING HOME SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS**

*These guidelines will assist applicants seeking funding for capital projects to ensure that all elements of the sustainability checklist are complete.*

**1. Funding to Implement the Project**

| To fund the project: | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Are all relevant and related project costs identified in the application package and/or sustainability plan? | ☐ | ☐ |

The following are minimum cost items to consider according to the scope of your project:

**Project Financing**

* + Cash, equity, grants, loans, other sources of financing

**Project Costs**

* + Land or property acquisition costs: Purchase price, taxes, legal fees, environmental remediation, survey, inspection, appraisal costs, other disbursement, city/municipal development charges, city/municipal permit fees, city parkland levy, insurance, mortgage, utility fees, consultants and professional fees, architect and engineer fees, other costs
  + Construction or renovation costs: Renovation/ conversion/ construction costs, finished basement and/or additional living spaced, surface parking, landscaping, furniture and equipment, stove and refrigerators, laundry equipment, other equipment
  + Organizational costs: Administrative costs, organizational infrastructure costs, staff wages, other related labour costs
  + Additional costs: Rent loss during construction, GST, PST, contingency funds

|  | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Do the application package and/or sustainability plan clearly show funding sources equal to the total costs of the project? | ☐ | ☐ |

The total amount (in dollar, $) coming from your funding sources should at least be equal to the total cost of your project. This can either be reported through your Reaching Home funding application or sustainability plan.

If not, you may consider the following:

* + Review your project funding and costs for any mistake
  + Identify additional funding sources and confirm them through official letters of support
  + Revise the scope of your project, in order to have costs below the total amount coming from your funding sources

|  | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Are all funding sources confirmed through letters of support in the application package? | ☐ | ☐ |

You must have an official letter of support from each organization providing the funds for your project (usually one letter for each funding source). These letters should be attached with your Reaching Home funding application. Each letter should clearly identify the funding source, the applicant and project to be funded, the amount in dollar that will be provided, and the time when funding will be provided (preferably with detailed day-month-year to day-month-year).

If not, you may consider the following:

* + Review your official letters of supports and follow-up with the organizations if applicable
  + Identify the funding sources for which you should have an official letter
  + Identify additional funding sources and confirm them through official letters of support

**2. Project Impacts**

| Impacts of the project on staff and service requirements: | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Do the application documents and/or sustainability plan clearly indicate the impacts of the project (i.e., will be a need for additional staff or services after completion)? | ☐ | ☐ |

The Reaching Home funding application and/or sustainability plan should clearly indicate the scope of your project. For example, is the project expected to include one of these activities:

* + Construction of a new facility
  + Conversion/renovation of an existing building
  + Addition of new beds/units, new or expanded services (more staff or more clients served)
  + Purchase of land or property
  + Purchase of equipment, appliance or furniture

In addition your sustainability plan must indicate how the activities will be sustainable five years after the end of your project.

**3. Partnerships**

| Demonstrate support: | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Does the sustainability plan clearly identify all partners and indicate support that will be provided by each towards new requirements and impacts of the project? | ☐ | ☐ |

The sustainability plan for your project should identify:

* + All partners relevant to your project
  + All partners relevant to the delivery of services or housing for five years after the end of the project, if applicable

Depending on the scope of your project, the relevant partners who could be considered, among others, may include:

* + Land owners and developers
  + Agency, church, or other organization to develop land they own
  + Lawyers and development consultants with strong non-profit and development experience
  + Architects able to design shelters or quality housing within a tight budget
  + Cost consultants (Professional quantity surveyors) to monitor construction costs from concept through construction to ensure budgets are maintained
  + Community agencies who serve homeless clients and those at imminent risk of homelessness
  + Partners who will share space or provide services after completion of your project

**4. Operational Costs at the End of the Project**

| After project ends: | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Do the application documents and/or sustainability plan clearly indicate funding sources for additional staff or service requirements? | ☐ | ☐ |

The Reaching Home funding application and/or sustainability plan should identify all the relevant funding sources for the operation of facility/new services. The funding sources must be indicated for the five (5) years after project completion.

Fundraising is not considered sustainable. Therefore, most of the funding for operational costs should come from stable funding sources such as:

* + Province or Territory
  + Housing corporations
  + National organizations such as the Salvation Army or the John Howard Society

|  | **YES** | **NO** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Does the sustainability plan clearly show that the annual operational budget will be balanced for five years after project ends? (i.e. annual operational costs must be lower than the annual income) | ☐ | ☐ |

The total annual amount (in dollar, $) coming from your funding sources should at least be equal to the total operational cost of your project for five (5) years after completion. This should be reported in the sustainability plan for your project.

Annual Income could include: Government supplement/per diem, government funding, income from rent, income from parking, donation, other grants, other income

Annual Expenditures could include:

* + Building operating costs: Maintenance, repairs, materials, utilities, insurance, municipal taxes, vacancy allowance
  + Organizational expenditures: Administrative costs, organizational infrastructure costs, staff wages and other related labour costs, support services
  + Mortgage and other expenditures

If the annual operating budget is not balanced, you may consider the following:

* + Review your project operational funding and costs for any mistake
  + Identify additional funding sources and confirm them through official letters of support
  + Revise the scope of your project, in order to have the appropriate operational funding for five (5) years after the project is completed

## Capital Project Requirements

Capital investments are intended to increase the capacity or improve the quality of facilities that address the needs of individuals and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, including those that support culturally appropriate programming for Indigenous individuals and families.

To reduce overcrowding in shelters and limit the spread of COVID-19 transmission, communities may wish to use Reaching Home funds to, for example:

* Purchase or repurpose existing properties to create new temporary housing (e.g., motel and hotel spaces, community spaces); and,
* Renovate existing facilities (e.g., shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or non-residential facilities) to, for example, improve ventilation or increase the distance between residents.

Eligible activities include:

* Renovation of emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or non-residential facilities, including:
  + Renovating an existing facility for upgrades and to meet building standards
  + Removing asbestos, mold, rodents; and
  + Repurposing an existing property to create transitional housing or permanent supportive housing, and expanding an existing facility.
* Repairs of damages resulting from housing placements (includes private market housing).
* New construction of transitional or permanent supportive housing, or non-residential facilities (for example, community hubs to include furniture banks, drop-in centres, resource centres, outreach worker spaces, counselling spaces, laundry facilities, food banks), including if applicable tearing down an existing facility to build a new one.
* Purchase of transitional housing, or permanent supportive housing, and non-residential facilities to create new space or units.
* Eligible costs related to professional fees, such as consultants, audit, technical expertise, facilitation, legal, and construction contractors, and capital costs of the purchase of a land or building.
* Purchase or construction of new emergency shelters using funding from Indigenous, Territorial and **Rural and Remote streams.**
* Purchase of furniture, appliances, machinery (for example, lawnmower, woodworking tools), electronic equipment and vehicles (for example, to be used for outreach, transportation for furniture banks).

Ineligible activities include:

* Construction and renovation of housing units funded through the bilateral Housing Partnership Framework agreement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and most provinces/territories.
  + Investments in social housing, including
  + Repairs to social housing units
  + Renovation of social housing units; and
  + Creation of social housing units

Requirement: If a community is going to invest in a capital project, the community and project sponsor must demonstrate they have done the following:

* Linking with the province or territory: efforts should be made to link with provincial, territorial or municipal funding. It is important to provide evidence of the need to purchase, construct, or renovate facilities and to ensure that the community is best placed to undertake the capital project. This should be demonstrated through the Reaching Home Sustainability Checklist for Applicants of Capital Investment Projects (see attached document for Checklist). Reaching Home funds can be used to complement other capital investments made by a province, territory or municipality. However, Reaching Home funding must not duplicate or displace funding from other programs (should be used to fill a gap in these instances).
* Encouraging leveraging: where possible, communities are encouraged to ensure that Reaching Home is not the sole funder in capital projects. For capital projects consisting of new construction or purchase of facilities, the community is required to record the in-kind and financial contributions of each capital investment sub-project funded under Reaching Home.
* Ensuring sustainability: capital projects require a sustainability plan in which organizations must demonstrate their capacity to operate the facility for its intended purpose for a minimum period of up to 5 years after project completion. Applicants must identify all relevant funding sources for the operation of the facility and/or new services through their application documents. As capital projects funded under Reaching Home should lead to new or improved services after their completion, an exit strategy is unacceptable for capital projects.
* In their sustainability plan, organizations must:
  + describe their partnerships;
  + confirm their funding sources for ongoing operations;
  + report if the project will increase the level of services or if they will remain stable; and
  + include a timeline for the completion of their activities.

Requirement: as part of the application process for a sub-project, capital project applicants must follow the Sustainability Checklist in order to demonstrate that the minimum project sustainability standards have been addressed.

* Applicants seeking capital funding under the regionally delivered funding streams (Designated Communities; Rural and Remote Homelessness; Territorial Stream and Indigenous Homelessness Stream) are required to complete the checklist as part of any proposal to create or expand a facility which could result in increased annual operational costs. The sustainability checklist can also be used to assess sustainability in capital projects that do not incur increased annual operational costs (for example, equipment purchase or renovations in a facility where no space, beds or units are added or no service is created or expanded).
* Community Entities are responsible to review the checklist completed by applicants through the solicitation or proposals, as part of the assessment process.

**Requirement: applicable to organizations which own a property or have a long-term lease, capital renovation projects may be subject to monitoring for up to 5 years after the project end-date to ensure recipients are compliant with the terms of their funding agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada.**

* Service Canada monitors capital investments for emerging issues and may ask for course correction as needed.

1. including institutions, agencies and Crown Corporations [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. (Indigenous organizations may include, but are not limited to, incorporated for-profit and not-for-profit Indigenous controlled organizations, Indigenous controlled unincorporated associations, Indian Act Bands, Tribal Councils and Indigenous self-government entities) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)