FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Sector Transformation and Community-based Tenant initiative funds
2020

What projects or initiatives can receive funding from the funds?

All projects funded by the Centre must demonstrate a transformative aspect or impact that increases the organizational capacity of the applicant (or the sector) and/ or their sustainability and capacity to grow.

• Sector Transformation Fund – Local Projects:

The Local Projects stream is meant to support local community housing providers, individually or as a small group. This grant prioritizes transformative projects that bring more or better services to their communities and increase the organizational capacity of the grantee(s). They should contribute to sustainable solutions and strengthen organizational missions.

• Sector Transformation Fund – Sector Impact Projects:

The Sectoral Impact stream supports either sectoral service providers, community housing providers or those who are responding to a large identified gap within the community housing sector. This funding stream is aimed at transformative projects that bring more or better services to multiple communities across multiple areas. They should contribute to a sustainable solution and strengthen the community housing sector in its region, by housing type or for a specific demographic.

• Community-Based Tenant Initiative Fund:

Projects presented for this fund should help raise public awareness of tenant issues, increase tenant participation and influence in housing decisions/ projects that affect them, support tenant access to information about improved housing options, and provide information and increase awareness on tenant rights and responsibilities and financial literacy related to housing costs.

Are all sizes of organizations/ providers eligible to apply for the Centres's funds?

Yes, the Centre will accept proposals from all sizes of organizations/ providers. However, since there is a limited amount of funding available, priority will be given to organisations that have limited operational margins to implement their projects without Centre support.

Are we allowed to apply for the fund more than one time?

While an organization can apply for any fund more than one time and different chapters from one organization can also apply, the Centre's goal is to support all geographic regions, types of community housing providers and demographics in an equitable way. As a result, the prioritization of regions, types of providers and demographics for funding may happen as more and more dollars are distributed across the country.

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How does the Centre define transformation? What is a transformative project?

The Centre defines transformational impact as change that is sustainable, long-term, concrete and far-reaching. As such, proposed projects need to include new approaches, tools and/ or ways of doing things within the organization/sector.

This doesn't mean that the method or approaches are new altogether but, simply, that they are new for the specific provider proposing the project.

Implementing a new method in your organization that has been proven by other providers is "new" and "innovative" for you.

For example, your organization starting to collect rent via electronic transfer rather than asking tenants to pay with cheques could be tr ansformative if it reduces your administrative costs, eases the rent collection process and simplifies the life of the tenant. The Centre could fund a new computer and the software needed for such a "transformation".

On a much larger scale, completing a feasibility study for two, three or four providers to merge to increase their financial viability, professionalize their management and strengthen their board would also be labeled "new and transformative".

On a sectoral level, setting up a centralized technical resource center for a province, region or even a large city would help dozens of housing providers to elaborate plans for growth and scale up the organizational capacities of the sector.

How will the Centre avoid duplication of services?

The Centre identifies knowledge sharing and partnerships within the community as a key principle and consequently manages an inventory of services.

The first step for applicants applying for the Centre's funds is to review this inventory to ensure that the exact service being proposed doesn't already exist. However, we will consider a proposal for a project that is adapted to a specific community or demographic and is proposing something new for the organization itself.

Other community organizations are already transforming the community housing sector, what makes the Centre different?

The Center is sector-led and answers back directly to sector organizations. Our vision and actions are defined by the sector itself. Through this dialogue, the core purpose of the Centre was defined as encouraging the community housing sector to scale up their activities and incre ase their level of impact while focusing on initiatives that answer to current service gaps.

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What are the Centre's priority areas? What are their definitions?

Centre Priorities	Priority Description	Examples
Reducing the sector's environmental footprint	• Reducing the environmental footprint of the community housing sector through initiatives that promote best practices and the development of educational tools. • Giving opportunities to tenants and members to participate in and lead footprint reduction programs.	• Implementing a community car sharing program in an existing housing project • Educating partners on choosing long life material when renovating infrastructure • Consultations with tenants in identifying and implementing energy sustainability services and innovations in their buildings
Answering to gaps in service for Indigenous communities	• Working towards reconciliation with Indigenous communities by promoting and adopting best practices and Calls to Action at all levels of our sector. • Supporting Indigenous-led and/or managed housing providers with their own transformation agendas. • Intentionally answering to gaps in service for Indigenous communities in both urban and rural environments.	• Rallying local stakeholders together around an Indigenous community housing project • Workshops offered to board members on how to increase Indigenous representation • Encouraging initiatives responding to gaps in service for Indigenous communities • Campaigns celebrating Indigenous achievements in community housing and tenant engagement
Supporting innovative and sustainable business practices	• Growing the quality of management and governance in the sector through training and workshops while enhancing sector awareness through financial and organizational assessment. • Empowering community housing providers and bringing forward tools to better represent their interests. • Exploring new management and business models, supporting consolidation efforts between existing partners and assisting asset leveraging initiatives.	• Conducting an external analysis of spending and revenues • Creating financial tools to help housing providers have more control over their budget • Operationalizing sharing resource agreements • Offering training programs for managers • Data collection in order to create promotional materials and tools to help community housing advocacy • Performing organizational assessments

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More priorities and definitions...

Centre Priorities	Priority Description	Examples
Increasing social inclusion and community engagement	• Encouraging tenant empowerment initiatives focusing on meaningful participation and impactful decision making. • Merging best practices with governance structures. • Supporting the social inclusion of vulnerable tenants.	• Conducting a pilot project to bring information around tenant rights from a local non-profit organization to vulnerable tenants • Redefining selection policies for unit allocation to ensure equity amongst tenants • Training for board members as to initiate tenant engagement and representation on the board
Facilitating growth of the community housing sector	• Promoting and leveraging existing funding models that emphasize the growth of the sector. • Encouraging the exploration of new growth models through acquisition, land trust and other alternatives. • Creating new tools and resources to promote community housing as a solution for housing needs throughout Canada. • Answering to identified sector gaps in service and bringing structured solutions as a response.	• Studying a new business model that could benefit community housing providers • Merging multiple organizations • Upgrading organizational structures through external expertise • Leading new innovative models for development of community housing units
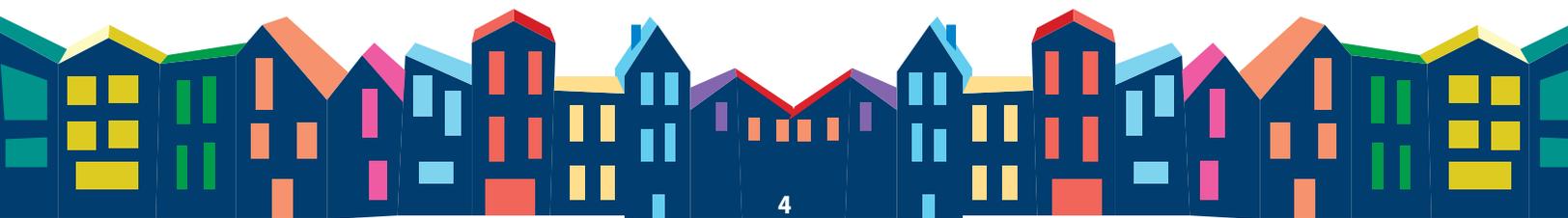
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What populations/ demographics has the Centre prioritized for funding?

Over time, the Centre will ensure an equitable funding distribution across vulnerable populations and prioritize projects tha t answer to service gaps on a regional, provincial and national scale.

Currently, as the Centre has identified ongoing reconciliation with Indigenous people as a priority, projects for and by Indigenous populations will be prioritized.

What are the submission deadlines for funding proposals?

There are no submission deadlines for the funds. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis.

What is the process to apply for the funds?

To apply for the funds, go to www.centre.support and click on Login in the upper-right corner and select Grant Portal. From this point, you will have to open an account, pick the fund you want to apply for and fill out the application. You can save the application and come back to it, as needed.

What questions are asked on the application form?

You can find a template of application forms for both funds on our website.

What are some reasons that our project may not get funding?

Not every eligible application will receive funding. Funding provided in one year does not guarantee funding will be awarded in subsequent years in the same way.

While all funding proposals will be judged on how closely the project meets the grant criteria, the Centre will make final decisions based on available dollars, number of requests received and equitable distribution across different sectors and across the country.

Will we have to report on how we used the funds?

Yes—For projects under 50,000$ AND under a year in length, there will be a report to submit at the end of the project.

For projects over 50,000$ OR for projects that are over 1 year in length, there will be more than one report to submit throughout the project. We would also like to do check-ins with all grantees at least twice a year by phone.

The Centre is open to a collaborative process in evaluating your project and to determine what success will mean to you and your community.

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If our application is successful, do we have to acknowledge the funding source on our project and project-related materials?

Yes, you will need to do so. However, how you acknowledge the Centre in your project is up to you. This can be through any combination of the following opportunities:

- electronically through websites, e-newsletters, bulletins, blogs, and/or social media;

- in printed products, advertisements, brochures, posters, newsletters, annual reports, media releases, signage, and/or correspondence; and,

- publicly during a community gathering or celebration, and/or at exhibits and displays. The logos and optional messaging will be provided to you if your proposal is approved.

How long will the review process take?

The Centre will do its best to have an answer on your application within 3 months.

Who will read my application?

While your application will be reviewed by a Program Manager, it may also proceed through the rest of the Centre's review process which includes external experts and an allocation committee. All external members rely on their knowledge of the community and sector to make informed decisions about project proposals and help determine which projects should be prioritized for funding. The Centre will make the final funding decision based on the assessment of proposals and the distribution of funds to date.

How will we find out if our application was successful?

You will receive an email from the Centre informing you that your application was successful. If there are changes to be made to your application or if your application was declined, you will also receive an email. If you don't hear from us, it means your application is still being processed or under review.

Who does the intellectual property belong to after the project's completion?

All knowledge and materials that come out of the project are the property of the grantee. The Centre does retain the right to utilize the materials in a perpetual manner without any fees. If the Centre needs the use of these materials for promotion or knowledge sharing activities, we will work together to determine how to go about this in a capacity-building way that works for both parties.

Can we talk to someone about our idea and grant application?

Yes! The Centre's Program Managers are here to help and provide support around the elaboration of your project or idea. **Call us at: 1-833-360-3967.**

www.centre.support