

Community Grants Program: 2026 Vital Grant Stream Application Guide



Community Grants Program purpose and priorities

- To strengthen the charitable sector and long-term resilience of our community by supporting eligible local organizations with flexible, general operating funding, through a process that is guided by trust-based philanthropic principles.
- To offer support across the charitable sector while also prioritizing organizations that:
 - are led by or serving equity-deserving groups;
 - are locally based and already operating within the Capital Regional District;
 - demonstrate strong financial need.

How to apply:

Application portal link: <https://vfgrants.ca>

Application question list: [HERE](#)

Application submission opening date: **February 3, 2026**

Application submission closing date: **March 10, 2026**

Contact the grants team:

grants@victoriafoundation.bc.ca



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Eligibility

Eligibility highlights

Your organization is eligible to apply for a Community Grant if you meet **all** the following criteria:

- Your organization is a registered charity or other qualified donee.
- Your organization is working for the benefit of the people and/or environment of the Capital Regional District (CRD).
- Your organization's address, as listed with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), is located within British Columbia. (See: [List of charities and other qualified donees - Canada.ca](#))
- Your organization's revenue is under \$15 Million*, as reported in your 2024 CRA T3010 Form.

In addition to the above eligibility requirements, we also prioritize organizations that:

- are already established in the CRD
- have a home office in the CRD

*Organizations with revenue over \$15 Million may be granted an exception to apply if they are either:

- a First Nation or Indigenous-led organization located within the CRD, or
- a registered charity working within an intermediary partnership with a non-qualified donee (see "[Appendix: Intermediary Partnerships](#)" below for more information).

Who do we fund?

We fund federally registered charities and other qualified donees** working within the CRD (see CRD Administrative Boundaries map [HERE](#) and map of First Nations with Traditional Territories in the CRD [HERE](#)). See our webpage [HERE](#) for clarity on how different types of qualified donees can apply to the Victoria Foundation.

***A qualified donee is defined under the Federal Income Tax Act as those organizations that can issue official donation receipts for gifts they receive from*



individuals and corporations. For a full list of types of organizations that qualify as qualified donees, see the CRA website [HERE](#). If you have questions about your eligibility, see [HERE](#).

For information about intermediary relationship applications, see:
["Appendix: Intermediary Partnerships"](#)

Faith-based organizations

Faith-based organizations are welcome to apply if their request can ensure:

- 1) benefit goes beyond their congregation(s) or faith-based community;
- 2) that faith is not a requirement of participation; and,
- 3) proselytizing or related activities will not occur with any grant funds.

Religious activities or services including faith-based programming are ineligible. See also ["What is not eligible for funding?"](#)

Fundraising organizations *NEW in 2026*

Organizations with a primary purpose of fundraising, a primary purpose of fundraising for a specific charity, and/or are categorized as a private or public foundation on the CRA are not eligible. See also ["What is not eligible for funding?"](#)

Application process

How can I apply?

The first step is to create a new account on the online grants portal after it opens on **February 3, 2026**. Even if you have applied in the past, you will have to create a new 2026 account with updated contact information.

The portal can be accessed through this webpage: <https://vfgrants.ca>

From the main page, select the "2026 Applications" link. This will take you to the current application portal where you can register a new account.



For organizations that do not have a federal charity registration number (i.e., other qualified donees including First Nations), please contact the grants team and we will provide you with separate instructions that will allow you to register and apply (grants@victoriafoundation.bc.ca or 250-381-5532).

What is eligible for funding?

- General operating
- Modest capital costs critical to the organization fulfilling its mission (including purchasing or upgrading physical assets including technology, safety equipment, vehicles, office equipment, etc.)
- Organizational capacity building (including staff wellness, training and professional development, costs associated with organizational mergers, fundraising for general operating, etc.)
- Program costs
- Projects, programs, or initiatives
- Staffing
- Technology adaptation and upgrading

What is a general operating request?

General operating requests include expenses incurred through normal operations such as rent, heating, insurance, honorariums, staffing and equipment costs. If you are unsure if your general operating costs are eligible, please contact the grants team.

What is not eligible for funding?

- Activities that promote harmful rhetoric, discrimination, hate and divisiveness
- Capital campaigns (e.g., for new buildings, land, monuments)
- Deficit reduction (e.g., debts or loans)
- Fundraising campaign costs and contributions
- Grants primarily benefiting individuals (outside of the activities of eligible organizations)
- Political activities that are prohibited by the Canada Revenue Agency
- Religious activities or services including faith-based programming or proselytizing



- Requests without specific and primary benefit to the residents or environment of the CRD
- Retroactive requests (any expenses incurred before February 1, 2026)
- Sponsorships

What funding is available?

Vital Grant Stream: Up to \$30,000

This funding stream is for any individual organization seeking a grant for their charitable purposes and activities.

We encourage you to apply for the amount appropriate to your organization's or project's needs.

Collaboration Grant Stream

The 2026 Collaboration grant stream has a separate application intake period in 2026. Please subscribe to our [granting e-news](#) to stay up to date with information about this grant stream.

Can I apply for more than one grant?

In general, organizations may submit one application per charity number through the Community Grants Program's Vital Grant stream per calendar year.

Organizations with multiple chapters or locations that use the same charitable number can apply once (typically for one chapter or location). Coordination and communication within these organizations is recommended before applying, to ensure you submit only one application.

For exceptions involving charities working in an intermediary partnership with a non-qualified donee, see "[Appendix: Intermediary Partnerships](#)".



What do I do if I have a current grant with the Victoria Foundation?

Submission of final reports from previous years is not required for your organization to be eligible to apply for funding in 2026.

If you have received a grant in the past and have spent 100% of the funds, submitting the related final report is required to complete the obligations of that grant agreement. As part of the due diligence process for new requests, staff review all active and closed grants an organization has with the Victoria Foundation, and this may influence the application review. During the staff review of applications, a staff member may reach out with a request for a brief summary of activities completed to date for an active grant.

If you have any questions about previous grants and final reports, please contact the grants team.

Special notes for applicants:

Re-using past Community Grants Program application text

You are welcome to directly reuse text from your previous year's Community Grants Program application by selecting the "Reuse your 2025 application" feature in the application portal. Staff review each application per the current year's application guidelines and criteria. We recognize that many organizations have ongoing funding needs and that this can save you time in applying.

Letters of support

Only organizations working with(in) schools or involved in specific kinds of environmental restoration are required to submit letters of support. No other letters of support or other types of documentation will be accepted.

1. Funding requests for work with(in) schools must show evidence of support from the schools within the grant period (e.g., a letter signed by the principal of each



school identified for the 2025-2026 school year, ongoing partnership agreements, etc.).

2. Funding requests for activities involving waterway and/or land use changes must submit approval documentation.

Financial statements

Only first-time applicants to the 2026 Community Grants Program are required to submit their most recent organizational financial statements. Financial statements can be audited or unaudited statements from the most recent fiscal year showing income/expense, assets/liabilities. They might also include balance sheets in certain circumstances. Contact staff with any questions or concerns.

Staff can access most organizations' financial information on the CRA website but may still request a recent financial statement or balance sheet.

How can I contact the grants team with questions?

Level of support	Contact option
General support: If you have general questions about the application guidelines and application submission, or require support navigating the portal, please email us.	grants@victoriafoundation.bc.ca
Online information session for intermediary partnership applications *NEW in 2026*: If you are thinking about applying within an intermediary partnership (a partnership between a qualified donee and a non-qualified donee), you are encouraged to join this online session with granting staff to determine your eligibility, understand the roles and responsibilities within this type of partnership, and learn how to register and apply on the granting portal.	Date and time: Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CLICK HERE TO REGISTER



<p>Please join the meeting promptly to attend a short staff presentation. A question-and-answer period will be held after the presentation.</p>	
<p>Drop-in online participatory open house session:</p> <p>Join the optional online drop-in open house session.</p> <p>This drop-in session is intended for support with questions that are more specific to the application process itself and can be answered in a few minutes. (E.g., “when should I upload a budget file?” “How much information should I include in the results section?” “How do I create a new account?”)</p> <p>Please join us anytime during the hour. Attendees will be part of a small group with a grants team member and can ask questions in an open forum.</p> <p>The conversation will be led by participants – bring your questions! Staff will not be providing a presentation about the program.</p>	<p>Date and time:</p> <p>Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>CLICK HERE TO REGISTER</p>
<p>Intermediary partnership preliminary meeting:</p> <p>Both new and returning intermediary partnerships must reach out to granting staff before applying. In most cases we will require a meeting. Meetings must be held <i>before March 3.</i></p> <p>Representatives from both partner organizations should attend.</p>	<p>grants@victoriafoundation.bc.ca</p>
<p>In-depth, 1-on-1 support:</p> <p>If you have questions specific to your organization and what you want to apply for, please schedule a time to talk to a member of the grants team.</p> <p>Organizations serving equity-deserving groups, new grant writers, new applicants to the</p>	<p>grants@victoriafoundation.bc.ca</p> <p>250-381-5532</p> <p>Please indicate that you are hoping to book a time to speak to someone on the grants team for in-depth questions.</p>



Community Grants Program, or applicants who have technology or language barriers are encouraged to reach out via email or phone to book a consultation with the grants team.	
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Application review process

What are the granting focus areas this year?

The Community Grants Program provides support across the non-profit sector. In addition to this broad-based approach, we will prioritize support to address pressing needs as identified by the community, informed by sector reports and as identified through the most [recent Vital Signs Report](#). The 2025 Vital Signs Key Issue Areas that received the lowest grades and will be prioritized in 2026 are:

- Housing
- Economy
- Getting Started
- Health & Wellness
- Safety
- Standard of Living
- Transportation

In addition for 2026, in honour of our 90th anniversary year and in response to community action momentum, we are also prioritizing applications in the areas of:

- **youth housing** (regional efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness),
- **food economy** (supporting efforts of farmers, food makers and food organizations to build a resilient and inclusive regional food economy and strengthen regional food security),
- **cultural arts spaces** (preserving and enhancing community-owned and shared-access physical spaces for music, performance and visual artists in our region) .

The Victoria Foundation recognizes long-standing structural and systemic inequities within our community, and is committed to upholding the values of equity, diversity and inclusion in our programs. In pursuit of these values within the sector-wide scope of Community Grant funding, and to prioritize and centre their work at the forefront of their communities, **we encourage applications from equity-deserving groups.**



Equity-deserving groups are those that:

- actively seek social justice and reparation in order to disrupt those power dynamics or imbalances;
- identify and work to reduce or eliminate barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination.

Equity-deserving groups include, among others:

- Indigenous Peoples
- Black and racialized people
- Women
- People with visible and hidden disabilities
- LGBTQIA2S+ communities
- Newcomers (immigrants and refugees who have landed in the past five years)
- Children and youth (ages 0-29)
- Seniors (ages 65+)

We recognize the intersectionality of issues and identity and are continuously looking for ways to better understand and prioritize different needs. See “[How are applications assessed?](#)” for more information.

As a **place-based funder**, the Victoria Foundation also prioritizes organizations that are already established in the CRD and have their home office in the CRD.

How are applications assessed?

The Community Grants Program uses a [trust-based philanthropy framework](#) to assess all applications. Some key values of this approach include equity, humility and transparency.

The grants team conducts an initial due diligence review on each application, then assesses applications based on four main criteria. Criteria are listed below in summary form.

As a broad-based funder, the Victoria Foundation also considers funding based on geography, specific subsectors, issue areas and equity-deserving groups in final recommendations. In addition, we know that certain populations and causes are in greater need at certain times and we adjust our focus annually to direct funds to areas



of greatest need. This is weighted with our overall support of the sector to create a vibrant and caring community for all.

1. Organization strength and resilience (20%)

Mission is aligned with request; organization is connected to and contributes to community; organization has strong governance and decision making.

2. Community need and impact (35%)

Organization holds a clear understanding of community needs; request is aligned with issue(s) identified by community (e.g., Vital Signs, sector reports, advisory groups); organization works strategically with partners; well-considered impacts; geographic reach (depth and/or breadth) of request.

3. Demographic impact (25%)

Request will benefit one or more equity-deserving groups; organization and request's depth of focus on serving equity-deserving groups (e.g., led-by or included in design and decision-making/targeted programming); organization offers targeted programming to serve the needs of certain demographic(s).

4. Financial need (20%)

Budget is supportive of planned activities and within proven fiscal management of the organization; organization has a strong financial need and will be significantly impacted by funding; potential for transformational impact on organization; timeline is appropriate.

How much was distributed in past years?

In 2025, \$5.35 million was distributed to 209 applicants, with a 60 per cent applicant success rate. Read the 2025 Distribution List [HERE](#) and the 2025 Press Release [HERE](#).

In 2024, \$6.19 million was distributed to 252 applicants, with a 75 per cent applicant success rate. This distribution was above average due to one-time contributions from the Government of British Columbia through the Community Prosperity Fund. Read the 2024 Distribution List [HERE](#).



Granting decision timeline:

March 10, 2026 @ 11:59 p.m.: Applications due.

March – May: Victoria Foundation staff conduct application reviews. As a normal part of our review process, you may hear from us with questions about your application.

Early July: Applicants notified and funding distributed. Every applicant will receive notification regardless of funding decision.

August onwards: The Victoria Foundation grants team will be available for follow-up calls with applicants.

See an example of the grant-making timeline on our website [HERE](#).

Reporting and stewardship:

- All successful applicants will be required to submit a simple final report. Instructions for the reporting process are provided on the granting portal.
- If your grant deadlines or project deliverables change at any time during the lifetime of your grant, please connect with the grants team to update your file as well as explore other ways that we can provide support.
- We want to hear from you during the lifecycle of your grant! Please reach out anytime with an impact story, picture or video, or just to say hi.

Appendix: Intermediary partnerships

NEW in 2026

Charities working in partnership with non-qualified donees

Federally registered charities and other qualified donees may apply a single time to the Community Grants Program. However, exceptions may be made when the charity is



working in partnership with a non-qualified donee (intermediary partnership), particularly when a non-qualified donee is representing an equity-deserving group(s). This is to recognize that there are systemic barriers to funding for some communities.

If your organization is a registered charity or qualified donee that would like to work in partnership with a non-qualified donee to carry out the activities of a grant through an intermediary partnership, **please reach out by email** for a preliminary meeting before applying to review specific guidance and additional information on these types of grants. Meetings must be held **before March 3**.

Except in the case of an Incubator Organization (see definition below), qualified donees may submit no more than two applications with intermediary partnerships.

See [“How can I contact the grants team with questions?”](#) for details about an information session to support intermediary partnerships applications.

When filling out the application, the registered charity or qualified donee contact information should be added to the “Applicant Organization” and “Applicant Contact” sections. The non-qualified donee’s information should be added to the “Intermediary Contact” section.

Eligibility criteria

Non-qualified donees that are eligible to apply within intermediary partnerships:

- BC Registered Societies
- BC Registered Extraprovincial Societies that have a home office in British Columbia and whose work is already deeply rooted in the CRD community

Exception: non-qualified donees that are not BC Registered Societies or BC Registered Extraprovincial Societies may apply with a qualified donee that intentionally integrates a suite of formal incubation services as described in their strategic plan and/or organizational mission and mandate (e.g., mentorship, shared infrastructure, compliance support). Qualified donees with incubation services are limited to three intermediary partnership applications. Qualified donees should connect with granting staff to determine if their organization aligns with this exception.



Eligible BC Registered Societies and BC Registered Extraprovincial Societies must have been operational for a minimum of 1 year (12 months) and be registered no later than April 30, 2026. Non-qualified donees may be asked to provide:

- financial records showing their fiscal management for a minimum of 1 year (12 months); this can include bank statements in the organization's name
- documentation of governance practices, (i.e., documents that show how decisions are made and who the decision-makers are)

Eligible intermediary partnerships must also meet the following criteria:

- Qualified donee's home office is located in British Columbia
- Partner's work is mission aligned
- Partners have been in relationship together for a minimum of 1 year (12 months)

Priority will be given to intermediary partnerships where non-qualified donees are:

- Led by equity-deserving groups

The following non-qualified donees are NOT eligible:

- Schools, PACs
- Social enterprises, businesses

Administration fees

Administration fees for the qualified donee may be included as part of the grant application request. The range for administration fees applied to intermediary partnerships is commonly around 10 to 20 per cent. The fee agreed between partners typically reflects the supports that the qualified donee provides within the relationship, such as:

- grant application stewardship and reporting,
- providing banking and bookkeeping services, and
- depth of contribution to grant activities.

Recognizing that public institutions (e.g., post-secondary institutions, municipalities/regional districts, health authorities) have robust administrative infrastructure, the suggested range of an administration fee is 0 to 5 per cent.