School Food Infrastructure Fund

APPLICANT Guide

School Food Infrastructure Fund: Applicant Guide

Step 1. What this program offers

Intake period: September 6, 2024, to October 4, 2024,11:59 pm Pacific Time.

The program ends March 31, 2026.

1.1 About the program

The School Food Infrastructure Fund (SFIF) supports not-for-profit organizations to improve infrastructure and equipment for school food programming across Canada.

As announced by the Government of Canada in Budget 2024, SFIF is delivered as a complement to the National School Food Program and the guidance provided under the National School Food Policy.

1.2 Program objectives

Through the further distribution of funds by a limited number of not-for-profit organizations to approved community-based organizations, SFIF will:

- support the purchase and installation of infrastructure and equipment that increases the capacity of community organizations to produce, process, store, and distribute food for school food programs

Through this further distribution of funds, the program aims to, ultimately:

- strengthen wider community and local food systems through investments in infrastructure that expand the reach and impact of school food programming

- help ensure that children have the nutritious meals they need to learn, grow, and reach their full potential

1.3 Funding

Funding will be provided to a limited number of not-for-profit organizations ("initial recipients") with knowledge of, experience with, and access to an established network of community organizations involved in the delivery of school food programming.

The maximum Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) contribution toward a project will normally not exceed $8,000,000 over 2 years. Applications under $1,000,000 after ineligible costs have been removed, will not be considered for funding.

1.4 Further distribution of funds

The SFIF will provide contributions to eligible initial recipients who will further distribute funds to one or more ultimate recipients. Ultimate recipients and initiatives to be funded will be selected by initial recipients based on a clear, transparent, and open decision-making process.

An initial recipient:

- is a not-for-profit organization that receives contribution funding from AAFC and further distributes that funding to ultimate recipients
- will have a relationship with AAFC and with the ultimate recipients
- will have independence in how they further distribute contributions
- will carry out a transparent, and open decision-making process, which includes the selection of ultimate recipients and projects or activities to be funded

An ultimate recipient:

- is a not-for-profit organization that receives a payment from an initial recipient
- will have a relationship with the initial recipient
- will not have a relationship with AAFC

1.5 Cost-sharing

AAFC will provide up to 100% in funding toward eligible project costs.

Step 2. Eligibility

Check if you meet the criteria to apply.

2.1 Eligibility checklist

You must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible.

[ ]	You're one of the following organization types: **Not-for-profit:** Organizations that operate solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, or any other purpose except profit. They may include: - Sector councils - Corporations **Not-for-profit Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit, Métis) organizations**
[ ]	You have knowledge of, experience with, and access to an established network of not-for-profit local food service organizations/community organizations that can support school food programming in low-income, Indigenous and/or visible minority communities.
[ ]	You have a broad geographic reach within Canada (for example, provincial/territorial, or pan-Canadian/national).
[ ]	By the application submission date, you have been in operation for at least 2 years as a legal entity (federally, provincially, or territorially incorporated) capable of entering into legally binding agreements.

Note: Priority will be given to organizations with existing provincial/territorial, and national networks of local not-for-profit organizations involved in, or capable of, supporting school food programming.

Based on the above-referenced eligibility criteria, ineligible applicants include:

- Schools, school boards, as well as academic and educational institutions
- For-profit entities
- Organizations without legal status (for example, unincorporated)
- Consultants and other third parties that submit an application on behalf of another organization

2.2 Eligible activities

There are two eligible activities for initial recipients.

- Activity 1: further distributing funds to ultimate recipients.
- Activity 2: Administrative costs (up to 10% of requested funding for activity 1); see eligible costs, below, for more details) to manage the funding envelope. This is meant to cover costs specific but not limited to:
    - designing and implementing a selection and merit review process that will help achieve SFIF objectives
    - managing funding agreements with ultimate recipients to further distribute funds
    - undertaking oversight of ultimate recipients in terms of their obligations
    - producing financial and other reports for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

2.3 Eligible costs

Eligible costs are project expenses, claimed or contributed, that fall within the set program cost categories, and which respect all program limitations.

To be considered eligible, all costs must be:
- included in the project application form budget
- related to the activities included in the work plan
- incurred within the work plan activities timeframe

Note: Costs incurred and work undertaken prior to your application being deemed complete are ineligible under the program. Any costs incurred after the deemed complete date but prior to the signing of a contribution agreement will be incurred solely at your risk without any obligation of payment by the program.

For more detailed information, refer to Step 5 (Eligible cost items).

2.4 Expected results

SFIF supports the vision of the National School Food Policy.

As an initial recipient, you'll:
- collect disaggregated data to measure and report on your distribution of funds
- submit reports tracking project outcomes as they relate to the ultimate recipients involved

Contribution agreements between AAFC and the initial recipients will further confirm expected results which align with the SFIF parameters and terms and conditions. The results expected are within the reasonable control of the recipient and are stated at a level of detail that will support accountability and performance measurement. There are no performance requirements between AAFC and the ultimate recipients.

Expected outcomes and indicators for which data will be collected include, but are not limited to, the following.

Results timeline	Outcome	Performance indicators	Data source
Immediate	Organizations have increased capacity to deliver school food programs.	Degree to which funded organizations' capacity to deliver school food programs has been increased.	Data collected directly from ultimate recipients following project completion.
Intermediate	Food environments are improved within schools.	Percentage change in the quantity and value of foods produced, processed, distributed and/or donated through funded projects. The degree to which ultimate recipients report improved availability and access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food.	Data collected directly from ultimate recipients following project completion.

Ultimate	Strengthened community food security.	Relative change in the degree to which recipients perceive access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food.	Final recipient performance reports. Where possible, a survey of ultimate recipients may be administered by project proponents after project completion.

Step 3. Before you apply

Review and consider the following information before you apply.

3.1 Your responsibilities as an initial recipient

As an initial recipient, you'll be responsible for:
- managing a transparent and open decision-making process to select the ultimate recipients of funding — organizations that will purchase and install infrastructure and/or equipment to expand the reach and impact of school food programming in Canada
- running the selection process of the ultimate recipients independently from direct government intervention (and in no event acting as an Agent of the Crown in distributing funds)
- monitoring ultimate recipients and their obligations as outlined in the funding agreement between the initial recipient and the ultimate recipient
- sending reports to AAFC on financials and the aggregate project results achieved.

Note: Projects from ultimate recipients involving new building construction and/or structural changes to an existing building are not eligible to be funded under the SFIF.

Priority must be given to ultimate recipients who are serving schools attended by children and youth from lower-income families as well as visible minority and Indigenous communities. The lack of access to food disproportionately impacts children and youth from those groups.

> Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is committed to engaging and fostering meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis). Recognizing that Indigenous Peoples have unique and diverse realities, perspectives and needs associated to agriculture and agri-food, the program was designed to be inclusive of Indigenous groups.
>
> If you're unsure whether the program is the right fit for your Indigenous group, the Indigenous Pathfinder Service can help you navigate information, tools, and programming available to start or expand activities in the agriculture and agri-food sector. For more information, you can contact the Indigenous Pathfinder Service directly by email at aafc.indigenouspathfinder explorateurautochtone.aac@agr.gc.ca or telephone: 1-866-367-8506.

3.2 How we assess your application

All applications will be selected in a fair, accessible, and transparent manner. They'll undergo a competitive review process and will be evaluated based on their merit and the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Ability to further distribute funds

Your capacity, governance structure, partners, established networks, and facilities that will be leveraged in order to further distribute funding within a limited time frame.

Ability to manage a selection process

Your capacity to manage a transparent, and open decision-making process to select the ultimate recipients and corresponding projects or activities to be funded.

Capacity to manage contribution funding

Your ability to develop and implement an accountability and management framework; manage written funding agreements with ultimate recipients; and manage and leverage internal controls to ensure funding is provided to ultimate recipients for the intended purposes.

Expertise in school food programming

Your experience working with a variety of local not-for-profit organizations supporting school food programming in many different low-income communities within a province/territory or across the country.

Well-established networks

Your knowledge of, experience with, and access to partners and networks (provincial, territorial, or pan-Canadian/national) with community-based, not-for-profit organizations supporting school food programming; networks should allow for broad geographic reach within a province or territory or across the country.

Impact on school food access

Your understanding of how infrastructure/equipment will increase the capacity of community organizations in diverse locations to produce, process, store, and/or distribute food in order to increase the reach of school food programming.

Experience supporting at-risk groups

Your ability to ensure funded projects or activities support school food programming that reaches low-income communities, Indigenous groups (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) and/or individuals from other under-represented or marginalized groups, including visible minorities, youth, women, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+, and official language minority communities.

Reporting capacity

Your ability to collect data to measure and report on distribution of funds and to track project outcomes as they relate to the ultimate recipients involved.

Official language capacity

Your ability to provide services and communication materials of equal quality in both official languages as necessary to communicate with potential ultimate recipients in the official language of their choice.

Additional assessment criteria

We'll also consider the overall quality of your application, and the extent to which your application will meet, at a minimum, the following:
- Your proposed activities including expected results and outcomes support program objective and priorities
- Your proposed activities and expenditures are eligible, reasonable, and required to meet the project objectives
- You have or have access to the qualifications (such as capability/capacity including the necessary technical, financial and managerial capacities) and track record required to complete the project
- All your sources of funding for the project to be funded under the program are identified
- You've established robust organizational governance practices, including internal policies related to:

- o conflict of interest
- o values and ethics
- o anti-discrimination
- o anti-harassment

Please note that even if your project meets all eligibility criteria, the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the Minister or of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada officials to provide funding for the proposed project. The Minister retains discretion to determine, based on other public policy and public interest considerations, whether an application that meets the criteria identified in the guide will ultimately receive funding.

3.3 Considerations

M-30 Act (Quebec organizations only)

The Province of Quebec's M-30 legislation may apply to Quebec-based applicants only. It is the *Act Respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q., c. M-30).

More information on the Act is available online or by contacting the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (MAPAQ) at dpci@mapaq.gouv.gc.ca.

All Quebec-based organizations will have to address this matter and demonstrate their compliance with the Act during the application assessment process and before they enter into a contribution agreement.

Intellectual property

If your project is approved for funding, the contribution agreement will contain an intellectual property clause confirming that the title to all intellectual property in any materials created or developed by or for the recipient under the agreement will be owned by the recipient or a third party. However, the recipient must grant to AAFC the right to utilize any material or information produced, for AAFC and other Government of Canada purposes.

Step 4. How to apply

4.1 Complete and submit your application.

1. [Access your program information](#)
2. Choose a secure sign-in method
3. Sign in (or Sign up)
4. Start a new application process
5. Complete the School Food Infrastructure Fund Application Form
6. Download the following forms to your computer
   - Required: detailed project budget
7. Complete and save the forms on your computer
8. Upload the completed forms as well as the following documents
   - Required: Copy of the organization's Certificates and Articles of Incorporation or Letters Patent
   - Required: copy of the last 2 years' financial statements
   - Required: detailed project budget
   - Required: project team description
   - Optional: accountability and management framework
   - Optional: endorsement or support letters for the project
9. Complete the application details
10. Submit your complete application

For details about the application form, refer to [Step 5: Complete the application and apply](#).

If you need help to complete and submit the application form, please contact the [AAFC Contact Centre.](#)

Step 5. Complete the application and apply

Please complete and review your full application form before you submit your application.

Full application form

Note: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) uses the information you give in the application form to determine whether your project is eligible.

The application form has the following 10 sections to be completed.

1. Project information
2. Organization or business
3. Project team
4. Activities
5. Funding sources
6. Budget summary
7. Documents
8. Contacts
9. Declarations
10. Review and submit

How to complete the application form

5.1 Project information

AAFC will use the information provided in this section, along with the details of your project's activities and budget, to determine the eligibility of your project. Refer to Step 2: Eligibility for more details on eligible activities and costs.

Project title

Provide a short, descriptive project title that accurately reflects the activities and results of the project.

Project objective

What is the overall goal of your project? What does your project aim to achieve?

If the project is approved for funding, this summary may be used publicly on Government of Canada websites.

Project description

Briefly outline the issues and/or gaps that the project will respond to and how the project will address them.

Application by consultant

Are you a consultant submitting this application on behalf of an eligible applicant?

Accountability and management framework

Does your organization have the capacity to develop and implement an accountability and management framework to support funding decisions with regard to ultimate recipients? This framework helps demonstrate that your organization has management oversight mechanisms in place in core areas (finances, distribution of funding,

information and technology, results and reporting, and human resources).

Previous experience

If your organization has experience leading initiatives that further distribute funds to not-for-profit local organizations that support school food programming, please provide the initiative's objectives, results and dates; if funding agreements were signed with ultimate recipients; and experience with undertaking or overseeing reviews or audits related to the initiative(s).

Targeted programming

Does your organization have experience in working with low-income communities, Indigenous groups (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) and/or individuals from other under-represented or marginalized groups, including visible minorities, youth, women, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+, and official language minority communities? For more information regarding low-income thresholds, please visit Low income measure (LIM) thresholds by income source and household size (Statistics Canada).

Does your organization have experience supporting culturally appropriate school food programming?

School food infrastructure and equipment needs

Describe how your project will improve and address the current needs and gaps regarding infrastructure and equipment supporting school food programming and how your project will increase the reach of such programming.

Describe how your project will support investments in infrastructure and equipment that will enable school food programming to improve access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food for children and youth in Canada, in support of the vision of the National School Food Policy.

Project design and delivery

Describe how your project could reach schools that primarily serve low-income communities.

Describe how your organization will design, launch and manage a clear, transparent, and open decision-making process for the selection of the ultimate recipient(s) and projects/activities to be funded.

Please provide a timeline to further distribute funding to local not-for-profit organizations that support school food programming for the following time periods:

      1) from Fall 2024 to March 31, 2025 (maximum 5 months)
      2) fiscal year 2025-26 (full 12 months from April 1 to March 31)

Community and environmental benefits

Describe how you will ensure availability and a fair geographical distribution of funds for local not-for-profit organizations, groups, and associations involved in school food programming in low-income communities.

Will your project have broader benefits on community food security?

Will your project help strengthen connections to local food systems and promote environmental sustainability?

Project risk

Identify any financial and non-financial risks as well as associated mitigation measures.

Results reporting

Describe how you will collect data to measure and report on the distribution of funds and to track project outcomes.

Organizational description / Governance structure

What is your geographical coverage for your services (for example, provincial, territorial or national)?

Indicate the number of schools that you work with, based on your current network of partners, as well as approximate student enrolment in these schools.

Is your organization led by (more than 50%) one or more of the following groups?

Does your organization self-identify as being Black-led or Black-focused?

> **Black-led**: an organization where the leadership positions are minimum 2/3 occupied by people who self-identify as Black, and/or where the governance structure is minimum 2/3 composed of people who self-identify as Black.

> **Black-focused**: an organization where your mandate supports members of the Black community.

Describe your organization's capacity, governance structure, partners, the extent of your network, and facilities that will be leveraged in order to further distribute funding within limited time frames.

Describe your organization's governance practices including, among others, internal policies related to conflict of interest, values and ethics, anti-discrimination, and anti-harassment.

Will your organization provide services and communication materials of equal quality in both official languages in order to reach potential ultimate recipients in the official language of their choice?

Organizational capacity

Describe how your organization has the capacity to deliver this project. Refer to past AAFC funded projects. If no projects have been funded by AAFC, refer to other projects of similar scale that your organization has delivered in the past. For example: describe whether your organization has adequate staffing resources, access to suitable resources, and management capacity; describe the results of the previous projects, level of complexity or expertise used for past projects including experience managing a budget or submitting claims, etc.

5.1.2 Primary project location

Enter the address where the project will take place.

If there are multiple project locations, for the primary location, enter the address for the project location where activities associated with the largest portion of the budget will take place.

5.1.3 Environmental considerations

In accordance with the *Impact Assessment Act* (Justice Canada) (IAA), we must determine if projects that take place on federal land are likely to cause significant environmental damage.

To determine if IAA applies to your project, answer the following questions:

A. Is the proposal a "project" as defined by the IAA?

Examples of projects include:

- construction of a greenhouse
- installation of a permanent irrigation system
- building construction or demolition
- any other activity related to a permanent human-made work

Activities that are **not** considered projects include:

- administrative or marketing activities
- workshops
- training or hiring staff
- installation of temporary or portable systems
- any other activity not related to a physical work

B. Where does the project take place?

AAFC has certain obligations under the IAA, if providing financial assistance to projects on federal land. Under the IAA, "federal lands" means:

    a.   lands that belong to His Majesty in right of Canada, or that His Majesty in right of Canada has the power to dispose of, and all waters on and airspace above those lands, other than lands under the administration and control of the Commissioner of Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut;

    b.   the following lands and area:
        i. the internal waters of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province,
        ii. the territorial sea of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province,
        iii. the exclusive economic zone of Canada, and
        iv. the continental shelf of Canada; and

    c.   reserves, surrendered lands and any other lands that are set apart for the use and benefit of a band and that are subject to the *Indian Act*, and all waters on and airspace above those reserves or lands.

If you answer "Yes" or "Unsure" to Question A and "Federal lands or lands outside Canada" or "Reserves, surrendered land or other land set apart for the use and benefit of a band and that are subject to the *Indian Act*" to Question B, further assessment may be required. AAFC will contact you as necessary.

5.1.4 Project data collection

The responses to the following questions will be used for program reporting purposes only and will not impact the success of the application.

North American Industry Classification System

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is an industry classification system developed by the statistical agencies of Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

For more information, visit [North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada 2022 Version 1.0 (statcan.gc.ca)](https://statcan.gc.ca) AAFC has identified the following NAICS category options for this program. Select the NAICS identifier that best applies to the project or to the industry the project represents.

- Individual and family services

- Community food services
- Child day-care services

Groups who will directly benefit from the project's activities

Select all that apply.

Indigenous peoples

The collective name for the original peoples of Canada and their descendants and consists of distinct, rights-bearing communities comprising First Nations peoples, Inuit, and Métis.

First Nations — are a people composed of many different nations having their own origin, history and culture, and whose members have called North America home for thousands of years. First Nations include status and non-status Indians.[1]

Inuit — are a people that inhabit or that traditionally inhabited the northern regions and Arctic coasts of Canada known as Inuit Nunangat, and whose members are united by a common origin, history and culture.[1]

Métis — are a people whose members are of mixed First Nations and European ancestry, are united by a common origin, history and culture, and are generally accepted by the Métis Nation.[1]

Indigenous organizations may include:

- Aggregated Indigenous entities (as self-defined by Indigenous groups, could be linked by cultural or linguistic background, geographical area or historical treaty lines);
- Associations;
- National and regional Indigenous organizations;
- Indigenous non-governmental and voluntary associations and organizations, including non-profit organizations and corporations; and
- Self-governing Indigenous governments.

Persons with disabilities

The *Employment Equity Act* defines "persons with disabilities" as persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who:
- consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or
- believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment,
and includes persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace.

Women

One of many gender identities. Includes all people who identify as women.

Youth

Individuals aged 35 and under.

Members of visible minorities

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[1] Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology

The *Employment Equity Act* defines "members of visible minorities" as persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

2SLGBTQI+

Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and other people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities who use additional terminologies.[2]

Not applicable

Use this selection if the question is not relevant to your organization.

Decline to identify

Use this selection if you do not want to disclose this information at the time of your application.

5.1.5 Previously received funding

Has your organization received any funding from AAFC within the last 6 years?

If yes, and if known, show:

- the AAFC program(s) your organization received funding from
- the name of the projects
- the amount received

5.1.6 Official languages

AAFC is committed to enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities (OLMCs), supporting and assisting their development, and promoting the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

OLMCs consist of Francophones outside Quebec and Anglophones in Quebec. These communities are often represented by provincial and regional organizations.

Audience

Do the project activities have the potential to reach an audience of both English and French speakers?

Community who will benefit

If approved, would the project activities specifically target an official language minority community (French speakers outside Quebec or English speakers in Quebec)?

Service provision

If the approved project involves activities that may have an impact on OLMCs or promote the use of English and French, AAFC will include appropriate commitments in agreements with your organization and additional expenses incurred as a result of these commitments will be considered eligible for contribution funding.

Activities can include, but are not limited to:

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[2] Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan…Building our future, with pride

Communications

- Project web pages and/or project social media account(s) produced and maintained in both official languages
- Project materials offered in both official languages (brochures, kits, handouts, newsletters, reports, etc.)
- Directional and educational signs produced in both official languages
- Project-related advertisement in OLMC media (newspapers, radio, social media)
- Bilingual coordinator or other contractor hired to help deliver project-related activities in both official languages (for example, master of ceremony for a project event, workshop facilitator or simultaneous translator)
- Distribution of invitations in both official languages
- Knowledge transfer activities

Outreach

- One or more OLMCs are included in the project target groups (for example, as in-kind or cash partners in project budget or to be invited to project events)
- Other groups representing OLMCs are consulted to see if there is any potential for involvement on their end
- Travel to or from OLMCs (costs associated with these project activities included in project budget)

If your project is funded, your organization may be required to publicly acknowledge AAFC's support for the project, in both official languages, and in a form determined by Canada.

You're encouraged to complete the OLMC self-identification section in the application form.

5.2 Organization or business

AAFC uses the information you provide in this section to confirm your organization's identity and to verify your organization's eligibility for funding.

Refer to Step 2: Eligibility checklist to determine if your organization is eligible under this program.

5.2.1 Applicant information

Legal name

Your organization's legal name, as it appears in legal documents such as Certificate of Incorporation, and Articles of Incorporation or letters patent.

Operating as

Enter the name under which your organization operates, if that name is different from its legal name. If you do not use an 'operating as' name, provide your organization's legal name.

Acronym (if used)

Enter the acronym your organization uses, if different from legal and 'operating as' names.

CRA business number

Enter the first 9 digits of your 15-digit Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Business number.

Example: **123456789** RR 0001

If you don't have a CRA Business Number, select the checkbox "The organization or business does not have a Business Number" and provide an explanation. Note: you'll be required to obtain a CRA Business Number if your project is approved for funding.

Organization type

Select one of the following:

- Not-for-profit
  - Sector council
  - Corporation (not-for-profit)

- Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis)
  - Indigenous organization (not-for-profit)

5.2.2 Headquarters address

Enter the complete address, main email address and main phone number of your organization's headquarters or regional headquarters.

5.2.3 Mailing address

Enter the mailing address if different from the headquarters' address or click on "Copy Headquarters address."

5.2.4 Organizational capacity

AAFC will use the information you provide in this section to understand more about your organization and to assess your ability to carry out this project.

How many employees work for your organization?

Describe your organization (for example, when it was established, the mandate/mission, and who it serves).

Responses to the following questions will be used for reporting and program planning purposes and will not impact the success of the application.

Does the mandate/mission of your organization target any of the following groups? (Select all that apply)

- Indigenous peoples
  - First Nations
  - Inuit
  - Métis
  - Unknown
- Persons with disabilities
- Members of visible minorities
- Women
- Youth
- 2SLGBTQI+
- Not applicable
- Decline to identify

Is your organization majority owned (more than 50%) by one or more of the following groups? (Select all that apply).

Gender parity

A minimum of 50% women and/or non-binary individuals.

Non-binary

A person whose gender identity does not align with a binary understanding of gender such as man or woman. It is a gender identity which may include man and woman, androgynous, fluid, multiple, no gender, or a different gender outside of the "woman—man" spectrum.

Does your organization's Board of Directors have a diverse composition with significant representation (30% or more) from one or more of the following groups? (Select all that apply)

See information above for groups included in the previous 2 questions.

Does your organization have a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan or a Human Resources Plan that supports diversity, equity and inclusion?

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

An employment equity plan addresses under-representation of marginalized groups such as Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, women, youth, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and official language minority people and employment barriers they may face. A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan goes beyond an employment equity plan to address under-representation and employment barriers for equity and equity seeking groups to advance diversity, equity and inclusion commitments in the workplace.

Human resources plan that supports DEI

A plan that links human resources management to the organizations' overall strategic and operational plans and includes objectives to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace.

Does your organization commit to the 50 – 30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage?

The 50 – 30 Challenge is an initiative co-created by the Government of Canada, civil society and the private sector that aims to attain gender parity and significant representation (at least 30%) of other under-represented groups on boards and senior management positions in order to build a more diverse, inclusive, and vibrant economic future for Canadians.

The Challenge will allow a variety of organizations to participate across 3 program streams including small and medium-sized enterprises and non-profit organizations, and those without Boards of Directors or senior management teams. The Challenge includes organizations that meet the Challenge and organizations that are working toward the Challenge.

For more information, please visit: The 50 – 30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada)

5.3 Project team

Review the contact information for project team members and edit if necessary. There is a maximum of five (5) project team members per project. Any project team member can create and edit project application forms, submit direct deposit information, and submit payment requests and performance reports to AAFC.

5.4 Activities

5.4.1 Detailed project budget

To help determine the budget numbers to enter into the Activities section, you must first complete the **detailed project budget**, which can be downloaded from the portal. Once the budget is completed, enter the data in the relevant areas of the application and attach the spreadsheet in the Documents section of the application.

Refer to the **instructions** within the **detailed project budget** to help you complete the budget.

5.4.2 Activity details

The Activities section is where you will provide a detailed description of the 2 planned activities noted in the application form, which are as follows.

- Activity 1: Initial recipients will further distribute funds to ultimate recipients.
- Activity 2: Administrative costs (up to 10% of requested funding for activity 1); see Administrative costs, below, for more details).

You should include key milestones and descriptions of your planned performance measures as well as how you will report on results.

The activities will be assessed to determine if they have been clearly planned and described, and if they are aligned with the project's goals, objectives, and purpose.

The project start and end dates are automatically determined by the date that work on the first activity will take place and the last day that work on the last activity will take place. The fiscal year begins April 1 and concludes March 31.

Activity title

Activity 1: Please enter "Further distribution of funds to ultimate recipients."

Activity 2: Please enter "Administrative costs."

Activity start date

Enter the date that the individual activity will start.

Activity end date

Enter the date that the individual activity will finish.

Activity location

Enter the location(s) where the individual activity will take place.

Activity description

Activity 1: Enter a detailed description, including expected results (refer to Step 2: Eligibility - Expected results).

Activity 2: Enter the following:

Administrative costs to deliver activity 1. These include but are not limited to:
- project management costs
- administrative office supplies and expenses
- audit fees
- bank fees
- insurance
- legal fees
- administrative information technology products and services
- other overhead type expenditures relating to the organization's office

Activity cost by fiscal year

Provide the AAFC funding amounts for the activity by fiscal year. The amounts you input here will be summarized in the Funding Sources section of the application. The available fiscal years for each activity are determined by the activity's individual start and end date.

AAFC funding

The amounts that you're requesting from AAFC.

Non-AAFC funding

This program does not require NON-AAFC funding as a source funding.
Please leave the value as 0.

Non-AAFC breakdown by funding source

This program does not require NON-AAFC funding as a source funding.
Please leave the value as 0.

Confirm all activities have been added for this project

After you list all of the project activities, you must click on "I confirm" before you can move to the next section of the application.

5.4.3 Administrative costs

Administrative costs — Eligible cost items

Administrative costs under a Further Distribution of Funds model are defined as the initial recipient organization's expenses to manage the funding envelope. This is meant to cover costs specific, but not limited to, the project selection process, financial reporting, management and oversight, and negotiation of funding agreements with the ultimate recipients.

Administrative costs means costs related to:

- project management costs: management and administrative staff wages, including those who oversee the project, negotiate funding agreements with ultimate recipients, pay the invoices, manage the project budget, undertake or oversee reviews and audits, and monitor and/or prepare the claims and any financial or progress/performance reports for the project
  - salaries, Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs), and benefits and/or contract services
- administrative office supplies and expenses
  - basic telephone fees (including fax lines) and cell phones
  - hydro
  - materials and office supplies (for example, pens, pencils, paper, envelopes, cleaning supplies, subscriptions)
  - monthly internet fees
  - postage and courier fees
  - office equipment (for example, computers, printers, photocopiers)
  - office space (rent) and related utilities, maintenance and property taxes
- audit fees (if eligible)
- bank fees (if eligible)
- insurance (fire, theft, liability) (if eligible)
- legal fees (if eligible)
- administrative information technology (IT) products and services, including maintenance
- other overhead type expenditures relating to the organization's office

Administrative costs — Limitations/Explanations

- These costs will be funded at the approved program cost-share ratio.

5.5 Funding sources

This program does not require NON-AAFC funding as a source funding.
Please leave the value as 0.

5.6 Budget summary

Review all information in this section. The budget summary is calculated from the addition of all activities, and you must return to the Activities section to make any changes.

Reminder: The amounts in the detailed project budget document need to match the information presented in this section.

5.7 Documents

In addition to the application form, you must submit the following documents to AAFC:

Required: A copy of the organization's Certificate of Incorporation and Articles of Incorporation or Letters Patent

A copy of the Certificate of Incorporation and Articles of Incorporation or letters patent, documenting your not-for-profit corporation's status as a legal entity and purpose for at least 2 years prior to the application submission date. If your corporation has amended its legal name or amalgamated since the initial registration, also provide the amendment document(s) to confirm the chain of re-naming.

Required: A copy of the last 2 years' financial statements

- Statements for the last 2 years
- Most recent interim financial statement

Required: Detailed project budget

The budget breakdown for each activity is required on the AAFC-provided Excel spreadsheet.

Required: Project team description

The project team is the group of people responsible for executing the tasks and producing deliverables for the project. Project team members may or may not be involved during the entire life cycle of the project and may or may not be full time to the project.

Other optional documents

If available: Accountability and Management Framework

An accountability and management framework helps demonstrate that your organization has management oversight mechanisms in place in core areas, such as finances, distribution of funding, information and technology, results and reporting, and human resources. The framework also helps demonstrate that you have accountability mechanisms and methods in place to ensure the ultimate recipients are held accountable to you.

If available: Endorsement letters for the project/letters of support

Letters of support from organizations indicating they believe there is a need for the proposed project and expressing hope that the proposed project will be accepted.

5.8 Contacts

5.8.1 Primary contact

Enter the contact information of the person in your organization who is responsible for responding to inquiries about this application.

First name and Last name

Provide the name of the person in your organization who will be AAFC's primary contact about this application.

Email address

Provide the email of the primary contact. Please note AAFC will use this information to communicate with your organization about the application.

Language of correspondence

Provide the preferred language of the primary contact for written and verbal communication.

Position title

Provide the position title of the primary contact. For example, Business Owner, President, Executive Director.

Phone numbers and Fax number

Provide the telephone number(s) of the primary contact. If applicable, provide a fax number. AAFC will use this information to communicate with your organization about the application.

5.8.2 Project contact

If your project is approved for funding, this is the person who will discuss the project with AAFC. This person can be the same as the Primary Contact. Indicate if you're the project contact or if you need to enter a new contact. If entering a new contact enter the following:

First name and Last name

Provide the name of the person in your organization who will be AAFC's project contact for this application.

Email address

Provide the email of the project contact. Please note AAFC will use this information to communicate with your organization about the application.

Language of correspondence

Provide the preferred language, English or French, of the project contact for written and verbal communication.

Position title

Provide the position title of the project contact. For example, Business Owner, President, Executive Director.

Phone numbers and Fax number

Provide the telephone number(s) of the project contact. If applicable, provide a fax number. AAFC will use this information to communicate with your organization about the project.

5.9 Declarations

Read and complete the declarations.

5.10 Review and submit

Provide any additional information you would like to include in your application.

After you complete your application form and include the additional documents, please submit your application.

If you have any trouble when you complete or submit the application, please <u>contact the program</u>.

Step 6. After you apply

6.1 We'll send you an acknowledgement notice

Your application is considered submitted once you receive the acknowledgement notice.

Please note that even if all eligibility criteria are met, the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to provide funding for the project.

6.2 We'll verify your application

We'll verify that your application is complete and there's sufficient detail in the application to begin a full assessment. If your application is incomplete, we'll contact you for the required information.

Missing or incorrect information could result in a processing delay or your application being ineligible. Service standards for assessments only begin once the application is deemed to be complete.

6.3 We'll assess your application

We'll verify that all required forms and declarations have been completed accurately and there is sufficient detail in the application for a full assessment.

- **If deemed complete**, we'll review and assess your application against the principles and criteria of the program. Our assessors include program administrators and other technical reviewers within AAFC
- **If deemed incomplete**, we'll place your application on hold. A notice will be sent to ask you for more detailed information

At any point after you apply, we may contact you for more information. If you don't provide the information requested, we may not be able to consider your application further.

6.4 We'll send you a contribution agreement

If you're approved for funding, you'll receive a written decision letter outlining the level of assistance awarded and any other conditions, if applicable. You'll work with a program officer to go over the details of the approval, including activities and funding levels, as well as start and end dates. You'll also work with the program officer to negotiate the details of the contribution agreement you must sign to receive funding.

Note: even if an approval is granted, AAFC does not have the authority to reimburse recipients for costs incurred until a contribution agreement is signed.

6.5 You can track the status of your application

Access your program information to track the status of your application.

6.6 Reports you must provide

If you're approved for funding, you must report on finances, performance and results. These reports include:

- Progress reports — reports describing the activities completed and progress made toward the completion of activities described in the project work plan

- Performance reports — annual and end-of-year reports that track progress against mutually agreed to performance measures outlined in the contribution agreement
- Financial reports — reports required with each request for reimbursement of expenditures, in addition to year-end accounting and other financial reports
- Other reports that we may ask for

6.7 Service standards

Our goal is to:
- respond to general inquiries made to our phone number or email address before the end of the next business day
- acknowledge receipt of your application within 1 business day
- assess your application and send you an approval or a rejection notification letter within 100 business days of receiving a complete application package

Contact information

If you experience difficulty with your online account or need help with your application, please contact Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Contact Centre.

Hours of operation
8 am to 5 pm Central Time, Monday to Friday

For your protection: the Contact Centre may require information to confirm your identity.

Toll-free number: 1-877-246-4682
TDD/TTY: 613-773-2600

For more information on the School Food Infrastructure Fund, please contact us at aafc.SFIF-FIAS.aac@agr.gc.ca.