

Program Guidelines

Strengthening Community Capacity to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant Program



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Canadian
Red Cross



Public Health
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WELCOME

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of individuals across Canada, with concerns about the virus compounded by disruption of education, work and routines; financial stress, job and housing insecurity; social isolation; loss, bereavement and grief; and reduced access to services and supports. Although society continues to show signs of recovery, the mental health and wellbeing impacts are expected to persist.

These impacts have been particularly acute for certain populations.¹ Prior to the pandemic, many of these populations reported lower rates of mental health and wellbeing and higher rates of mental illness than the general population. These inequitable mental health outcomes often stem from social and economic inequities, discrimination, and lack of / limited access to safe and dignified mental health care. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these pre-existing issues, increased the volume of need for mental health and wellbeing services, and changed the way services needed to be delivered.

This funding opportunity will assist **community-based organizations** to support populations whose mental health and wellbeing has been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects funded through this program will promote mental health, prevent mental illness, and/or support organizational capacity to address mental health and wellbeing needs emerging from the pandemic.

Available Funding

With funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) is making grants available to community-based organizations across Canada to support the mental health and wellbeing of populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding for time-limited project grants is available to community-based organizations across Canada, especially those serving populations whose mental health and wellbeing has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, and in accordance with these Guidelines.

Community-based organizations can apply for funding for activities with a budget of a minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$75,000. Organizations may submit more than one application provided that each application is for a distinct project, however efforts will be made to fund as many distinct organizations as is feasible.

Deadline To Apply

The deadline to apply is July 29, 2022. Applications submitted after the deadline cannot be considered unless a general extension is provided for all applicants.

¹ Including but not limited to seniors and Elders, school-aged children, young adults (ages 18-30), Indigenous people, People of Colour, LGBTQIA2S+ people, people with disabilities, people experiencing domestic violence, disaster and crisis-impacted communities, people experiencing homelessness and precarious housing, people with serious mental illness and addictions, low-income individuals and people living in poverty, seasonal or migrant workers

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program outcome: increased capacity of community-based organizations to address the mental health and wellbeing needs of populations whose mental health and wellbeing has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Program goals

1. Promote mental health and wellbeing in the context of COVID-19 by building protective factors and/or reducing risk factors and enhancing resilience.
2. Prevent longer-term mental health illnesses including those associated with COVID-19-related traumatic experience.
3. Respond by equipping organizations and service providers to offer safe, responsive, and effective programming and support for those whose mental health and wellbeing has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Activity areas

1. Enhancing organizational capacity to address the current surge in demand for mental health and wellbeing promotion/mental illness prevention programs (e.g., training, technology, time-limited staffing)
2. Adapting to new models of promotion and prevention program delivery

Principles

- Health equity: efforts to address the needs of populations that are at higher risk for mental health impacts to help reduce health inequities between different population groups in Canada.
- Trauma-informed: a client-centered model that is built on knowledge about the impact of trauma on people's lives and health.
- Cultural safety: an approach to working across differences to make systems and organizations responsible for ensuring that service environments are safe for everyone—regardless of their expressed or assumed culture.
- Diversity and inclusion: a recognition that everyone has a unique set of lived experiences, perspectives and differences and an active, intentional, and continuous process of involving and valuing human differences while welcoming and facilitating the participation of everyone and reducing inequalities based on identities, roles, backgrounds, and power relations.

ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

In recognition of the diverse organizations that work together to provide safe, culturally relevant, accessible, and quality mental health and wellbeing supports to communities across Canada, this program will accept applications from a wide range of community-based organizations that meet the Eligibility Criteria below.

Community-based organizations are defined in these Guidelines as not-for-profit organizations, including registered charities, other qualified donees, and incorporated and unincorporated non-profits that are registered provincially, territorially or federally and are in good standing, that are organized and operated exclusively to provide social services, recreation, arts, education services, community service and engagement. This includes Indigenous governing bodies that are not registered as qualified donees, such as First Nations bands, Métis settlements, and Inuit governments or associations. Community-based organizations cannot operate for profit and exclude any for-profit business.

Eligibility Criteria

Organizations that meet **ALL** of the following criteria are eligible to apply for funding from this program:

- ✓ Have a mandate, guiding statement, and/or established history of delivering mental health and wellbeing services, including strengthening social connectedness, in communities in Canada
- ✓ Have been in operation since on or before December 31, 2019, and have operated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic without prolonged cessation of services
- ✓ Are incorporated or established in Canada or have a principal registered office address in Canada
- ✓ Are registered federally as a charity or qualified donee, registered provincially, territorially, or federally as a non-profit, and are in good standing, or are an established Indigenous governing body
- ✓ Have a governance structure with at least three people on the board, management committee, etc.
- ✓ Have internal accountability measures such as practices and procedures for internal controls and accountability
- ✓ Have a bank account in the name of the organization and a financial management system to effectively track the income and expense transactions of the organization

Ineligible Applicants

The following are ineligible to apply for funding from the Canadian Red Cross for this program:

- ✗ Individuals
- ✗ For-profit organizations or businesses
- ✗ Political organizations
- ✗ Organizations (including non-profits) that are serving private business or economic development needs
- ✗ Organizations that are not headquartered or incorporated in Canada
- ✗ Organizations that are not assisting Canadian communities

Required Eligibility Documents

The following information and documentation will be required as part of the application process, to validate your organization's eligibility for consideration for funding.

Registered Charities and Other Qualified Donees

- ✓ Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Charity Registration number or record of Qualified Donee status
- ✓ Last annual report, donor report, annual general meeting report, or reporting to stakeholders on activities (such as a newsletter)
- ✓ Website of the organization, social media pages or accounts (Facebook, Instagram or Twitter), if any, where the mission/vision and services of the organization are listed. If this isn't available online, a one-page document listing this information must be included with your application.

Registered Non-Profits

- ✓ Local or federal registration information (number and registry body)
- ✓ Governance documents, preferably including your local or federal registration number, such as:
 - Incorporation documentation, if incorporated (i.e., Articles or Letters Patent)
 - Provincial Registry document
 - Trust Deed, if a trust
- ✓ Most recent tax filings (2020 or 2021)
 - T2 return or T2 Short Form (if incorporated)
 - Non-profit organization information return (Form T1044)
- ✓ Most recent financial statements
- ✓ Last annual report, donor report, annual general meeting report or reporting to stakeholders on activities (such as a newsletter)
- ✓ Website of the organization, social media pages or accounts (Facebook, Instagram or Twitter handle), if any, where the mission/vision and services of the organization are listed. If this isn't available online, a one-page document listing this information must be included in your application.



Determining your organization's eligibility is the first step in the [Selection Process](#). Organization eligibility will be determined prior to considering the details of the proposed project and funding request.

If you are unsure whether your organization or proposed initiative could be considered eligible to apply, please consult our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or contact us at mentalhealthgrants@redcross.ca.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

This program will support community-based organizations to promote mental health, prevent mental illness, and/or enhance capacity to address mental health needs of populations whose mental health has been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The goals below are the broad aims for projects that can be funded under this program. The **activity areas** further define the activities to be undertaken in a project, to work towards the intended outcomes of this program.

Applicant organizations will be asked to select the **goal(s)** and **activity area(s)** that best describe their proposed project activities.

PROGRAM GOALS

Projects funded under this program can fall under one or more of the following goals:

-
- **Promote** mental health and wellbeing in the context of COVID-19 by building protective factors and/or reducing risk factors and enhancing resilience.

Mental health promotion is concerned with strengthening protective factors (and reducing risk factors) for good mental health, and enabling access to skills, resources, and supportive environments that enhance equity and keep individuals and populations mentally healthy.

-
- **Prevent** longer-term mental health illnesses including those associated with COVID-19-related traumatic experience.

Mental illness prevention builds skills, knowledge and resilience to prevent challenges from developing into mental illness, or mental illness from worsening.

-
- **Respond** by equipping organizations and service providers to offer safe, responsive, and effective programming and support for those whose mental health and wellbeing has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
-

ACTIVITY AREAS

In recognition that community-based organizations are continuing to meet the heightened ongoing mental health and wellbeing needs of populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 by increasing their capacity to deliver services and/or adjusting how services are delivered, projects funded under this program can include activities that fall into one or more of these activity areas:

- Enhancing organizational capacity to address the current surge in demand for mental health promotion/mental illness prevention programs

Examples of activities:

time-limited increases in staffing (counsellors, outreach workers, community facilitators, etc.), delivering training, purchasing technology

- Adapting to new models of promotion and prevention program delivery

Examples of activities:

adapting to virtual programming, creating alternative spaces, innovative collaboration across community service providers, adapting program material



INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

While the Canadian Red Cross aims to be able to respond to community-identified needs, there are some activities that we are unable to fund. Given the time-limited nature of this funding opportunity, it is intended to support community-based organizations to strengthen or adapt their existing mental health and wellbeing programming in response to COVID-19 impacts and it is not intended to support the development or pilot of new programs or interventions.

The following activities are not eligible for funding under this program:

- ✘ Ongoing or core operational costs of an organization not related to the proposed project
- ✘ Direct provision of services that are the responsibility of governments, including delivery of primary health care services or long-term care services
- ✘ Initiatives that would unnecessarily duplicate existing services
- ✘ Sub-granting activities or provision of funding or financial assistance to other organizations
- ✘ Disbursement of financial assistance or non-material support for individual clients (for example rent coverage, utilities, or personal internet subscriptions)
- ✘ Activities that take place outside of Canada
- ✘ Fundraising events or any initiatives where a profit is made by the organization
- ✘ Activities that do not fall within Canadian Red Cross charitable objects or that do not adhere to the [Fundamental Principles](#) and humanitarian values of the Canadian Red Cross
- ✘ Initiatives that require adherence to a specific faith for participation or religious causes that do not serve the general public on a non-denominational basis (the Canadian Red Cross is committed to the [Fundamental Principles](#) of neutrality and impartiality)
- ✘ Activities that do not fall within the current objects or mandates of the applicant organization
- ✘ Initiatives that support direct or indirect partisan political activities
- ✘ Research projects
- ✘ Activities that would result in double recovery of funds, for example for items or services covered by other funding, government assistance, or through insurance
- ✘ Rental cost for space owned by the organization
- ✘ Costs for major capital equipment purchases or renovations
- ✘ Construction of housing or shelter structures
- ✘ Purchase or lease of land
- ✘ Financing of deficits, debt reduction campaigns, contributions to endowment funds, or building larger reserves
- ✘ Activities that are inconsistent with public health directives related to COVID-19
- ✘ Activities that are illegal
- ✘ Activities that involve purchase of alcohol or cannabis
- ✘ Activities whose administrative expenses are greater than 9% (please see the [Eligible Costing Guidelines](#) for more detail)

BUDGET & FINANCIALS

Projects funded under this program need to align to the following parameters:

- Project budgets must be a minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$75,000
- Projects must begin between October 1 and December 1, 2022
- Project activities must be complete no later than January 31, 2024

Please review the [Eligible Costing Guidelines](#) for important information regarding eligible expenses and tips for building your budget.

For this program, applicants will be asked to identify budget expenses for fiscal year (FY) 2022-2023 (from the start of project to March 31, 2023) and FY 2023-2024 (from April 1, 2023, to end of project). At the end of FY 2022-2023, grantees will be asked to report on activities and expenditures so far. If a grantee spends under their planned budget for FY 2022-2023, that remaining unspent budget will not be permitted to be carried forward into FY 2023-2024. Unspent funds that have already been disbursed to the grantee in FY 2022-2023 will be used for expenses incurred in FY 2023-2024 against the FY 2023-2024 budget.

For example

A grantee has been approved for a \$40,000 project with this breakdown:

FY 2022-2023 Budget	FY 2023-2024 Budget	Total Budget
\$15,000	\$25,000	\$40,000

At the end of FY 2022-2023 the grantee spent \$10,000 on the project. Although the FY 2022-2023 budget is underspent, the FY 2023-2024 budget does not change.

FY 2022-2023 Actuals	FY 2023-2024 Budget	New Total Budget
\$10,000	\$25,000	\$35,000

Applicants are encouraged to carefully consider any ramp up time required for their projects when building their budgets (e.g., time to hire, time to procure materials) to ensure realistic planned spending in each of FY 2022-2023 and FY 2023-2024.

SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Unfortunately, not all organizations or projects can be funded, and some may not be funded at the level requested. All applications will be reviewed, and all applicants will receive notification of the outcome of their application.

Applications will be assessed on a rolling basis; however, decisions will not be made until after the application period closes on July 29, 2022, and all applications have been assessed. Additional consideration will be made to equitably distribute the available funding, for example across geographic areas.

The [Fundamental Principles](#) will be considered when assessing all applications. As noted in these Guidelines, organizations and their proposed activities must align to the Canadian Red Cross charitable objects and adhere to the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the Canadian Red Cross.

Selection Process

1. Determination of Organization Eligibility

Applications will first be screened to determine the eligibility of the organization based on the eligibility criteria outlined in these Guidelines. If the organization is eligible, the application will proceed to step two.

2. Assessment of Project

Applications will then be assessed for eligibility of activities and budget items, alignment with the purpose of this funding opportunity, and relative strength of the application against the Assessment Criteria. Assessment scores will then be used to help guide decision making.

3. Selection of Funded Projects

High-scoring applications will then be considered for funding, and selections may be guided by the Additional Considerations listed below if required.

Assessment Criteria

Projects submitted by eligible organizations will be assessed against the following project assessment criteria:

1. Alignment to program objectives and principles, and anticipated contribution to the mental health and wellbeing needs of populations whose mental health and wellbeing has been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Organizational experience in delivering mental health and wellbeing services and/or strengthening social connectedness within their communities.
3. Alignment of project design in response to identified community needs, and reflection of community representation and engagement.
4. Organizational capacity to deliver the proposed activities and manage the funding (which will be considered based on the size of the grant requested and activities proposed).
5. Quality of the application and reasonableness of the budget and timeline relative to the proposed activities.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Available funds: To support as many organizations as possible, the Canadian Red Cross will be balancing requests against the available funds and taking into account the activity type, population(s) served, and dollar value requested.
- Geographic distribution: The Canadian Red Cross will also seek to ensure that funded activities are distributed across the country, based on available population numbers from Statistics Canada.

NB: As there is limited funding available for this program, the Canadian Red Cross reserves the right to apply one or more of the following preference statements to funding applications:

- Preference may be given to organizations who have at least two years' experience in delivering mental health and wellbeing services.
- Preference may be given to organizations that have annual revenues of \$1,500,000 or less.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF MY APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL?

- **Grant Agreement:** The Terms and Conditions applicable to all grants can be found [here](#). By submitting an application your organization agrees to abide by these terms. The Canadian Red Cross may amend these Terms prior to contracting in its sole and absolute discretion as new information arises in program administration and/or the context is better understood. You will also be required to sign a Granting Agreement that stipulates the purpose of the funding, your activities and budget, and other key requirements.
- **Insurance and professional certifications:** It is the grantee organization's responsibility to have in place appropriate insurance for their activities. It is also the grantee organization's responsibility to ensure that professionals delivering specialized services as part of the activities have the relevant certifications (for example when delivering mental health interventions) and criminal record and police checks (for example a Vulnerable Sector check for those working with children).
- **Compliance with regulations:** It is the responsibility of all grantees to comply with all applicable legislation, regulations, Canada Revenue Agency rules and guidelines, health and safety standards, and privacy legislation relevant to the organization and funded activities.
- **Monitoring:** Grantee organizations are required to actively monitor their activities for success. The Canadian Red Cross will also monitor all funded projects and continue to engage with funded organizations until project completion. Project monitoring by the Canadian Red Cross will include regular check-ins by phone or email. We will be available to provide support and answer any questions throughout the duration of the grant.
- **Reporting:** All grantee organizations will be required to submit narrative and financial reports for the project. Templates will be made available online through the application platform [SM Apply](#). Grantee organizations will be required to submit documentation supporting your financial reports, such as a general ledger or financial accounting, timesheets for personnel, procurement documentation, and/or invoices and receipts for purchases.

- **Financial management:** Grantee organizations are expected to have financial management practices in place, including appropriate accounting practices, procurement processes and documentation to support, and be able to demonstrate how these have been followed if requested (for example in case of audit by the Canadian Red Cross or the Government of Canada). Grantees must maintain the project funds as separate to other organizational funding so that the charitable activity of the project is clearly identifiable. A separate bank account is not required; however, the funds must be separately identifiable within the organization's accounting system.
- **Project recognition:** We ask that grantee organizations recognize the financial assistance from the Canadian Red Cross and the Public Health Agency of Canada. This recognition is important as it will identify the contributions of the Canadian public and government to those impacted. For approval of communications and media materials please contact us. The Canadian Red Cross may also post basic information regarding approved funding on our website.

TIMELINES & PROCESS

All activities and expenditures must take place between October 1, 2022, and January 31, 2024.

1. Applicants apply via [SM Apply](#)
 - a. Application period closes July 29, 2022
2. Canadian Red Cross validation of organization eligibility and assessment of applications
3. Selection of successful projects
4. Offers of funding and signing of Grant Agreements
5. Projects begin
 - a. Projects will begin between October 1 and December 1, 2022
6. Projects are active
 - a. Interim reporting and ongoing monitoring and support
7. Project completion and final reporting
 - a. Projects must end no later than January 31, 2024, with final reports submitted no later than February 29, 2024

HOW TO APPLY

After you have reviewed these Guidelines in full and when you are ready to apply:

1. Registration: Register in [SM Apply](#).
2. Eligibility: Complete the organization profile form and upload your supporting documents.
3. Application: Complete the project application form and budget.
4. Submission: Review your application to ensure it is complete and make sure to submit it.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE

- Please ensure your application is complete. Unfortunately, incomplete applications will not be considered, and you will not be able to edit your application once submitted.
- Please ensure you hit the Submit button when ready. Applications submitted after the official deadline cannot be considered.
- Submitted applications will be treated as confidential, however they will be reviewed internally by the Canadian Red Cross and may be shared with the Public Health Agency of Canada and trusted partner organizations as required.
- At any time during the review process, the Canadian Red Cross reserves the right to decline or remove from further consideration any application, for any reason that it deems appropriate.

Contact Us For Application Support

For support, or if you are unable to submit an application online, please contact us at **1-833-966-4225** or [**mentalhealthgrants@redcross.ca**](mailto:mentalhealthgrants@redcross.ca).