

Innovation, Evidence, and Capacity Building Fund

Call for Grant Proposals

April 2017

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INTRODUCTION

The Province of Ontario recognizes that throughout Ontario there are communities with diverse needs, resources and capacities related to housing and homelessness. Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) Update facilitates significant change across the housing and homelessness system. The system is made up of service providers, housing providers, municipalities, Service Managers (including District Social Services Administration Boards), and associations. Their ability to manage change, develop new skills and take advantage of new opportunities will be more critical than ever.

The Ministry of Housing (ministry) is launching an Innovation, Evidence, and Capacity Building (IEC) Fund that will provide up to \$1 million total funding in 2017-18 to address the varying levels of capacity amongst communities and to support local system transformation. The IEC Fund will provide grants of varying amounts up to a maximum of \$100,000 for each approved project/initiative.

OBJECTIVES

The proposals recommended for funding should:

- increase sector capacity to manage change, develop new skills and/or take advantage of new opportunities
- encourage evidence-based orientation and/or a culture of continuous improvement within the housing and homelessness sector
- support the capacity of the system in relation to at least one of the key themes of the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update
 - a sustainable supply of housing stock (public and private)
 - a fair system of housing assistance
 - coordinated and accessible support services
 - goal of ending homelessness
 - indigenous housing strategy
 - effective use of evidence and best practices to inform policy and program development, and to define and measure outcomes

Applicants must consider these program objectives and government housing and homelessness priorities when completing their proposals. Consideration will be given to funding proposals across a range of the LTAHS Update themes.

In addition, this year, the ministry is encouraging proposals that focus on capacity building within the Indigenous sector and the transformation of housing providers.

The ministry is also encouraging proposals that represent a range of Ontario's diverse demographics and geography, including but not limited to covering population in urban, rural/remote, and northern locations.

FUNDING

The IEC Fund will provide grants of varying amounts up to a maximum of \$100,000 in 2017-18 for each approved proposal. Individual funding would depend on the type of project/initiative proposed.

Through this fund, the Ministry's objective is to support short-term projects/initiatives lasting up to 12 months.

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Eligible applicants include not-for-profit organizations, municipal associations, registered charities, municipalities, District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), and other public bodies (e.g. academic institutions, and school boards).

Individuals, for-profit entities, and non-legal entities are not eligible to apply.

In order to receive funding, selected organizations will be required to enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) with the ministry that sets out the roles and responsibilities for both parties and the accountability framework for the project including, but not limited to, the terms for funding, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Organizations are eligible to apply if the organization:

- is a non-profit that has been incorporated in Ontario for at least one year and has a Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) business number
- has a governance structure to administer, manage and oversee any funding received from the Ministry
- provides proof of Commercial General Liability Insurance coverage in the amount of not less than \$2 million, if the application is successful
- has demonstrated capacity to provide on-going reports, as will be specified in the TPA and/or at the request of the Ministry

LEAD APPLICANT REQUIREMENT

For projects/initiatives with multiple organizations participating, a single lead applicant must be identified that meets the criteria of an eligible organization as defined above. The lead applicant will be the signatory to the TPA and accept all responsibility for meeting the terms and conditions of the funding, including the accounting and reporting on the project/initiative, should the application be selected. The lead applicant will be identified as the grant recipient.

Notwithstanding any arrangements among various organizations that are identified in the application for sharing of responsibilities, in any way or any role related to the project/initiative, the lead applicant would assume full responsibility and liability for those organizations pursuant to the TPA for the project.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS

To be eligible to receive funding under the IEC Fund, proposals must support the capacity of the housing and homelessness system and meet the criteria listed below. Decisions to fund a proposal will take into account how well an applicant's project/initiative meets the criteria.

1. **Alignment:** Proposals must meet at least one of the key themes of the LTAHS Update.
 - A sustainable supply of housing stock (public and private)
 - A fair system of housing assistance
 - Coordinated and accessible support services
 - Goal of ending homelessness
 - Indigenous housing strategy
 - Effective use of evidence and best practices to inform policy and program development, and to define and measure outcomes

For additional information regarding these themes, please refer to the document 'Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update' available on the ministry's website (<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=13683>).

2. **Innovation, Evidence, and Capacity:** Proposals must demonstrate at least one of the following.
 - an approach that enhances services currently provided in the sector
 - potential to build and increase sector capacity – manage change, develop new skills and/or take advantage of new opportunities
 - encourage the development of an evidence-informed system that has the capacity to respond effectively to changing needs and/or promote a culture of continuous improvement
3. **Outcomes Approach:** Proposals must demonstrate the following.
 - a positive and broad impact to an area of the housing and homelessness sector where there is demonstrated need
 - identify the need being addressed and clearly describe the broader public benefits that the project/initiative will achieve relative to the need
 - an approach to assess at least one of the following
 - the results of the project/initiative (e.g. performance indicators, a summary of the outcomes, a deliverable that was provided)
 - best practices
 - lessons learned
 - commits to publically share the information.

Preference will be given to projects that build capacity on a broad scale (i.e. beyond one organization or community).

4. **Feasibility & Value for Money:** The proposed budget must represent good value for public money and the proposed timelines and budget must be realistic.

Proposals must include the following:

- the budget provides sufficient details and a clear breakdown of proposed expenditures
- a maximum upper limit of \$100,000 for each successful project/initiative
- milestones, indicators and outcomes have been identified
- expenditures identified must be directly related to the project/initiative
- full disclosure of current or anticipated other funding sources that are being leveraged for the project/initiative

Funding is limited. Therefore, the proposal must include details on how the project could be adjusted to require a smaller budget.

5. **Experience & Expertise:** The applicant must demonstrate its capacity and expertise to carry out the proposed project/initiative. This includes, but is not limited to, demonstrating familiarity with the sector and past success in implementing initiatives of similar size and scope.
6. **Sustainability:** The applicant must identify risks to delivery and mitigation strategies along with a well-articulated sustainability plan, where relevant. If the project is expected to continue beyond the end date of the grant, there must be a reasonable plan in place to ensure completion of the project is not dependent on additional ministry funding.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Applicants are required to list all project/initiative costs in the budget section of the application form.

The budget must provide sufficient details and a clear breakdown of expenditures to help substantiate and assess the funding request.

Applicants are encouraged to combine funding sources in support of their project/initiative. Budgets should also fully disclose all other funding sources that are being leveraged as part of the project/initiative proposal.

Costs deemed reasonable and necessary for the successful completion of the project/initiative are allowed with the exceptions noted under the section 'Ineligible Costs'. Costs will need to be supported by clear evidence that is acceptable to the ministry.

INELIGIBLE COSTS

The following types of expenditures and activities are **not** eligible for funding under the IEC Fund.

- budget deficits
- capital loans and capital expenditures
- costs covered by other government funding

- costs related to homelessness enumeration implementation; however, initiatives to develop capacity to support enumeration activities (e.g. the development of a toolkit) would be eligible
- interest expenses incurred on operating loans
- legal challenges, costs, and settlements
- mortgage financing/loan guarantees
- operational funding to enhance existing ministry-funded programs or to provide bridge funding that does not contribute to the objectives of the IEC Fund
- professional organization fees paid on behalf of staff for membership in professional organizations
- profit making activities
- property tax expenses
- public relations and fund raising expenses
- travel, accommodation, and meals expenditures related to special events, such as tournaments, receptions, and parties

Travel, meal and hospitality expenses will not be funded unless approved by the Minister of Housing in accordance with the Province's Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive.

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

In order to receive funding, selected applicants will be required to enter into a TPA with the ministry that sets out the roles and responsibilities for both parties and the accountability framework for the project/initiative including, but not limited to, the terms for funding and monitoring, and reporting requirements.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applicants must submit information related to their proposals using the application form entitled "Innovation, Evidence, and Capacity Building Fund 2017-18 Funding Application Form" and must ensure eligibility requirements are met. To receive a copy of the application form please email IECFund@ontario.ca.

Applicants should submit their completed application form in PDF format to IECFund@ontario.ca no later than 5:00 pm (EST) on Friday, May 26, 2017. Time of submission will be determined by the date stamp per the Ministry's e-mail system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply before the deadline date.

Applicants will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their electronic proposal. Key contact information must be provided in the event the applicant needs to be contacted.

Any questions about the application process may be forwarded to IECFund@ontario.ca.

RESERVED RIGHTS OF THE MINISTRY

Due to funding limitations, the ministry makes no commitment to fund any applicant.

The ministry may choose which applicants to fund, if any, at its sole discretion.

The ministry shall not be liable for any expenses, costs, losses or any direct or indirect damages incurred or suffered by any applicant or any third party resulting from the ministry exercising any of its express or implied rights under this Call for Grant Proposals.

The ministry reserves the right to contact any applicants to obtain further clarification on its proposal during the evaluation process.

TIMELINES

Item / Milestone	Deadline
Deadline for application form to the ministry	May 26, 2017, 5:00 PM (EST)
Successful applicants are notified	As approved – expected Summer 2017

MINISTRY OF HOUSING

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ISBN 978-1-4868-0035-3 (HTML)

ISBN 978-1-4868-0036-0 (PDF)

04/17

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