

WINTER ROADS PROGRAM BRIDGES AND CULVERTS STREAM

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth

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What do you need to know before you apply?

Please read the entire program guidelines before completing your application. Applications must be submitted through Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON).

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. The Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth will assess projects during the assessment periods listed in Appendix A.

Who do I contact for more information?

- If you have any accommodation requests, require alternative formats, or have any program-specific inquiries related to the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream, please contact: Winter.Roads@ontario.ca.
- For questions related to the TPON system, please contact TPON Client Care at 1-855-216-3090, or 416-325-3408, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST, or by email at TPONCC@ontario.ca.

What is the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream?

The Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream provides funding to Northern Ontario remote communities for projects involving the installation of water crossing infrastructure (pre-engineered bridges and culverts) and repairs to existing structures that are aligned with the program stream objectives.

The Ontario winter roads network provides vital seasonal connections between the Far North and the provincial highway network.

Ontario is investing \$5 million per year to support these projects.

Program Stream Objectives

- To improve safety across the entire winter roads network.
- To increase the duration of the winter roads season.
- To mitigate the environmental impact of ice bridges on the winter roads network.
- To support remote communities and planning for future all-season roads.

Who is eligible to apply?

Project funding is open to remote communities in Northern Ontario that are not connected to a provincial highway network by an all-season road. Eligible applicants include Indigenous communities, Indigenous organizations such as Tribal Councils, corporations or partnerships formed by eligible applicants to build or maintain winter roads, and the Town of Moosonee.

Applications may be submitted by:

Single applicants – one eligible applicant.

Joint applicants – two or more eligible applicants.

Applicants are encouraged, wherever possible, to submit applications with multiple projects that cover the same road network, and to work together to maximize the benefits of available funding through joint applications.

Joint applications must be accompanied by a resolution in support of the application from each applicant represented on the application. The applicant responsible for maintaining the corridor where the project is located should be identified as the project lead and submit the application.

What projects are eligible for funding?

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase and installation of pre-engineered bridges to replace ice crossings.
- Purchase and installation of culverts to replace ice crossings.
- Repairs to existing bridges or water crossings that are currently on the winter roads network.
- Technical studies to support a specific bridge and/or culvert capital project.
- Realignments of existing corridors that are necessary for the installation of new bridges or culverts. For projects with realignments greater than five (5) kilometres, the applicant must provide engineering studies, or other supporting documentation acceptable to the ministry, demonstrating why the realignment is necessary for the bridge or culvert installation. Realignment projects would also require a rehabilitation plan satisfactory to the ministry for the abandoned section of corridor.

What expenses are eligible?

Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of pre-engineered bridges, culverts, and materials required for their installation.
- Delivery of materials.
- Labour for construction, repairs, and installation.
- Technical drawings, engineering costs, geotechnical studies, and detailed designs.
- Materials and labour related to the rehabilitation of any sections of abandoned corridor due to realignments.

Expenses are only considered eligible if they have been incurred on or after April 1st in the year of the intake round.

What are some examples of expenses that are not eligible?

- Costs not directly associated with meeting the project milestones as specified in the funding agreement with the ministry.
- Any costs incurred before April 1st in the year of the intake round.
- Administrative costs exceeding 10% of the overall project costs.
- Costs associated with feasibility studies and preliminary designs.
- Road improvements not directly related to bridge/culvert installation or repair.

Please note that the above list is not exhaustive.

How will the applications be evaluated?

The factors used to evaluate applications will include, but are not limited to:

- Number of communities utilizing the proposed water crossing.
- Project feasibility based on information provided in the application, including the work schedule and the budget.
- Improved public safety (e.g., repairs of existing bridges, eliminating risks of ice bridge collapses).
- Need for repair and reducing environmental impacts.
- Project readiness (e.g., feasibility studies complete, permits issued).
- Whether the project supports repurposed infrastructure (e.g., modular bridges that can be moved or repurposed).

How does funding work?

The total amount of funding available to applicants will be based on the proposed project and available funding for the program stream.

Applicants must have all required permits and approvals for the project issued by the appropriate authorities prior to the release of any funding.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into funding agreements with the ministry and will receive their approved funding after achieving project milestones that have been set out in their funding agreements, up to 100% of eligible expenses. Payment schedules will also be outlined in the funding agreements.

If applicants need funds in advance of incurring costs on their projects, they should make that request, together with an explanation for such need, in their applications, and the ministry, in its sole discretion, will review and decide on such requests on a case-by-case basis.

When can I apply?

Applications to the program stream are accepted on an ongoing basis, starting on August 1, 2023. Complete applications to the program stream will be assessed during the assessment periods listed in Appendix A.

Applicants must have submitted applications for the permits and approvals required for the project *prior to* submitting a funding application. The ministry will request evidence of permits issued or copies of permit applications submitted. Any approved funding will not be provided until all required permits and approvals are issued for the project.

Permits and approvals may be required from:

- the Ministry of Natural Resources (Ontario), and/or
- the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ontario), and/or
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (federal).

The above list is not exhaustive, and applicants are solely responsible for determining which permits and approvals are required for their projects.

How do I apply?

Eligible applicants must submit applications online through TPON, which will be used to administer the program stream. Applicants must be registered and have access to TPON to submit their application and participate in the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream.

Step 1: Enroll in TPON

My Ontario Account Set-Up

New users to the TPON system start by creating a My Ontario account. After the account is created and authenticated, new users complete a TPON profile. This is a one-time process. For detailed instructions see [Creating a My Ontario Account](#) (for new TPON users).

TPON users who have an existing account using ONE-Key or GO Secure credentials create a My Ontario Account using the same email address that is registered to their TPON profile. After the My Ontario Account is created, the user data is migrated over automatically. This is a one-time process. For detailed instructions see [Creating a My Ontario Account](#) (for existing TPON users).

Technical questions regarding TPON may be directed to Transfer Payment Ontario Client Care from Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST (except for government and statutory holidays) at:

Email: TPONCC@ontario.ca.

Telephone: 1-855-216-3090 or 416-325-3408.

Please note that the information you provide for registration (such as address, contact information, etc.) will be automatically filled into the application form for the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream.

Applications with the required supporting documentation are to be submitted online through TPON.

Once an application has been started, it may be saved or downloaded at any point and returned to later. Please refer to TPON for instructions on how to submit the application.

Please note that applicants will need to complete the supplier registration and application in TPON for direct deposit of funding payments.

For program-specific inquiries related to the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream, please contact: Winter.Roads@ontario.ca.

Step 2: Complete the Application

Once you are registered and have access to TPON, the next step is to complete an application online by following these steps:

1. Log into TPON.
2. Click on “Submit for Funding” and select the “Winter Roads Program: Bridges and Culverts Stream.”
3. Review or complete sections in the online application per the guidelines below.
4. Submit your application along with all mandatory attachments.

If you require alternative formats, or have any accessibility accommodation requests, please contact: Winter.Roads@ontario.ca.

When you submit your application, you will receive a confirmation email. If you have not received a confirmation email within 48 hours of your submission, please call TPON Client Care at 1-855-216-3090, or 416-325-3408.

Complete applications submitted to the program stream will be assessed during the assessment periods listed in Appendix A.

Following the assessment period, the ministry will inform the primary contact (as listed in the application) by email about the status of the application.

How do I get assistance with the application?

For help in applying through TPON, please refer to the “Get Help” section of [Ontario.ca/GetFunding](https://ontario.ca/GetFunding).

If you have any questions or issues during this process, do not hesitate to contact TPON Client Care at 1-855-216-3090, or 416-325-3408, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST, or by email at TPONCC@ontario.ca.

For program-specific inquiries related to the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream and the program guidelines, please contact: Winter.Roads@ontario.ca.

What are applicants' obligations if approved for project funding?

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Sign a funding agreement with the ministry, outlining the terms and conditions for receiving funding. No funding disbursements will be made until funding agreements are executed and all conditions to funding have been satisfied.
- Provide a copy of a duly executed resolution (or other documentation acceptable to the ministry), demonstrating and documenting the applicant's acceptance of the terms and conditions of the funding agreement.
- Carry and provide proof of insurance as outlined in the funding agreement.
- Report back to the ministry by the due dates provided in the funding agreement using the ministry's reporting mechanism.
- Provide an itemized progress and final expense claim and maintain all receipts for auditing purposes.
- Maintain all permits and approvals in good standing for the duration of the project.

What are the reporting requirements during and after the project?

As will be fully detailed in the funding agreements between the ministry and successful applicants, reporting requirements during and after the project may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Progress Report(s)

Funding recipients will submit progress report(s) periodically, including project milestone updates. Specific deadline(s) for progress report(s) will be set out in the funding agreement.

Final Report

Funding recipients will submit a final report, detailing the results of the project and final expenditures. The specific deadline for the final report will be set out in the funding agreement.

Additional Information

The ministry is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. F. 31, as amended from time to time. Any information provided to the ministry in connection with a project or an application may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act.

Approved projects may be the subject of public announcements.

Disclaimer

The Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream is a competitive program stream with a limited annual budget. It is also a discretionary, non-entitlement program stream. The ministry does not guarantee funding to applicants, including applicants that meet all eligibility requirements, nor does the ministry guarantee that the total amount requested by successful applicants will be granted. The ministry reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to fund or not fund any particular project for which an application is submitted. The ministry also reserves the right to impose whatever conditions it deems advisable in the acceptance of an application and in the funding agreement. In the event of any conflict between the program guidelines and an executed funding agreement, the executed funding agreement prevails.

Applicants should not take any action, or incur any costs related to the program stream, predicated on receiving funding from the ministry until an application is approved and all parties have entered into a funding agreement acceptable to the ministry. The ministry is not responsible for paying any costs incurred by an applicant should the application not be approved, or if the applicant fails to enter into a funding agreement acceptable to the ministry.

For clarity, until the execution of a funding agreement between a successful applicant and the ministry, no contractual obligation exists between the province and an applicant, and the province is not subject to any contractual obligation in respect of the Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream.

Appendix A: Winter Roads Program - Bridges and Culverts Stream - Application Assessment Dates

The province's fiscal year runs from April 1 to March 31. All references to "fiscal year" mean the province's fiscal year.

In the 2023-24 fiscal year, the ministry will undertake one (1) Application Assessment Period. For subsequent fiscal years, the ministry will undertake two (2) Application Assessment Periods.

Application Assessment Period 1

For all fiscal years, applications submitted by the Application Submission Deadline 1 will be evaluated for funding during Application Assessment Period 1. Applications received after the Application Submission Deadline 1 will be evaluated in the next available Application Assessment Period.

Fiscal Year	Application Submission Deadline 1	Application Assessment Period 1
2023-24	September 22, 2023	September 2023 to December 2023
2024-25	April 28, 2024	May 2024 to July 2024
2025-26	April 28, 2025	May 2025 to July 2025
2026-27	April 28, 2026	May 2026 to July 2026
2027-28	April 27, 2027	May 2027 to July 2027

Application Assessment Period 2

For all fiscal years, applications submitted by the Application Submission Deadline 2 will be evaluated for funding during Application Assessment Period 2. Applications received after the Application Submission Deadline 2 will be evaluated in the next available Application Assessment Period.

Fiscal Year	Application Submission Deadline 2	Application Assessment Period 2
2023-24	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
2024-25	August 31, 2024	September 2024 to November 2024
2025-26	August 31, 2025	September 2025 to November 2025
2026-27	August 31, 2026	September 2026 to November 2026
2027-28	August 31, 2027	September 2027 to November 2027

Note: The ministry may, in its sole discretion, modify the timelines associated with the Application Submission Deadlines and the Application Assessment Periods, and/or open additional Application Assessment Periods.