



Indigenous Economic
Development Fund

**Regional Partnership Grant
Application Guide
2022-23**



Table of Contents

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU APPLY	4
Purpose of the Guide.....	4
Program Overview	4
Applicant Eligibility	4
SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION.....	5
General Information	5
Creating an Account	6
Tips on submitting your application	6
Required Documents Checklist.....	6
Background	7
Program Objectives	8
Funding Amounts	8
Eligible Activities.....	8
Eligible Expenses	8
Ineligible Expenses	9
In-Kind Contributions	10
Match Funding	11
Demonstrated Need.....	11
PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS.....	11
Business Case.....	11
Proposal Details	11
Business Plan	13
APPLICATION EVALUATION	13
Stage 1: Preliminary Assessment.....	13
Stage 2: Full Assessment	14
TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT	14
OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING	15
Reporting	15

Corrective Action 15

Record Keeping..... 15

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND OUTCOMES..... 16

PROCUREMENT 17

DISCLAIMER 17

CONTACT INFORMATION 18

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU APPLY

Before completing the 2022-23 Indigenous Economic Development Fund's Regional Partnership Grant Program (RPG) application in Grants Ontario, please read the entire Application Guide.

Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides information on the RPG for applicants and funding recipients.

This Application Guide is valid for the 2022-23 fiscal year. Updates to this guide may be released during this period and will be made available on www.ontario.ca/Indigenouseconomy. Any updates will be communicated in writing within three (3) business days to funding recipients.

The guide describes the application process as well as project management requirements of the RPG and provides specific information on eligibility criteria and eligible activities.

All applications will be assessed, evaluated, and approved using requirements outlined in this application guide.

Program Overview

The RPG improves access for Indigenous people to the skills training required to gain sustainable employment and support Indigenous business development and economic growth in Ontario. Projects are approved through a competitive process.

Applicant Eligibility

You may apply to the RPG if:

1. You are a:
 - First Nations community in Ontario;
 - Métis community in Ontario;
 - Political Territorial Organization (PTO) in Ontario;
 - Tribal Council in Ontario;
 - Indigenous business in Ontario; or
 - Indigenous organization recognized by the Province of Ontario;

AND

2. You are applying in partnership with one or more of the following:

- First Nations community in Ontario;
- Métis community in Ontario;
- Political Territorial Organization (PTO) in Ontario;
- Tribal Council in Ontario;
- Indigenous business in Ontario;
- Indigenous organization recognized by the Province of Ontario; or
- Non-Indigenous business and/or organization.

Note: a partner organization is referred to as a “delivery partner” for the purposes of this guide.

In addition to the above, to be eligible to receive RPG funding, an Applicant must meet all the following criteria:

1. Be a legal entity (e.g. established by or under legislation; federally or provincially incorporated; First Nation in the province of Ontario).
2. Hold governance structures and accountability processes to properly administer and manage public funds and to provide the services for which transfer payments are made.
3. Not be in default of the terms and conditions of any grant or loan agreement (i.e., reports due or surplus owed) with any ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario.

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

General Information

Transfer Payment Ontario is the Province of Ontario’s online application system for grant funding. It is important that you understand the steps for registering with Transfer Payment Ontario prior to submitting your application.

Since applicants must register with Transfer Payment Ontario to access application forms, most of the information requested in the first few sections of the application form (such as address, contact information, etc.) should be automatically filled in using data from the registration process.

Once an application has been started it may be saved or downloaded at any point and returned to later. Please refer to the Transfer Payment Ontario System Reference Guide for Applicants for instructions on how to save and submit the application.

If you have any technical questions about Transfer Payment Ontario, please contact the Transfer Payment Ontario Customer Service Line at (416) 325-6691 or

1-855-216-3090, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, or by email at TPONCC@ontario.ca.

All applications will be assessed, evaluated, and approved using requirements outlined in this Application Guide.

Creating an Account

Applicants using Transfer Payment Ontario for the first time must create an “ONE-key” account and be enrolled in the Transfer Payment Common Registration system. If an applicant has previously applied for funding from other programs through Transfer Payment Ontario, a new ONE-key account is not required, but you may still be required to enroll in the Transfer Payment Common Registration system.

Please visit Transfer Payment Ontario at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-funding-ontario-government> for information on how to set up an account.

Please note that the ONE-key account is registered at the individual level and not at the organization level. If someone in your organization has an account that is used for a different grant application, a new individual account is required if you are the one submitting the application for this program.

Tips on submitting your application

Please take a look at this short video to assist with successfully uploading your application [How to submit for funding](#).

Required Documents Checklist

All RPG applications must include the “Required Documents” set out below. It is recommended that you gather these documents **in an electronic format** before beginning the Grants Ontario application process.

Information/Document Requirements for a Complete Submission
Completed Application Form in Transfer Payment Ontario.
Letter of commitment or approval letters for match funding demonstrating that all remaining project costs will be covered by other funders.
Letters of commitment or support from the delivery partner(s).
Contact list(s) of the Executive Committee, Chief and Council or Board of Directors (as applicable) with portfolio information.
If the applicant and/or delivery partner is a corporation that has been incorporated for less than two years, a copy of the organization’s by-laws, constitution, and

Information/Document Requirements for a Complete Submission
mandate; information on the governance structure; and information on the membership requirements.
If the applicant and/or delivery partner is a corporation, a copy of letters patent/certificate of incorporation.
Organizational Chart for applicant and/or delivery partner (if available)
<p>Complete and unabridged audited financial statements for the applicant from the most recently completed fiscal year. The audited financial statements must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditors cover letter • Auditors Management letter • Balance Sheet • Income Statement • Statement of Changes in Net Assets • Statement of Changes in Fund Balances • Summary of Significant Accounting Policies • Notes to the Financial Statements • All Schedules of Revenue and Expenditures from all sources of funding
If the applicant is a First Nation, a Band Council Resolution in support of the application.
If the applicant is a Métis community, a resolution or motion in support of the application.
If the applicant is an Indigenous business or organization, a board motion in support of the application.
CRA Business Number

PROGRAM DETAILS

Background

The RPG improves access for Indigenous people to the skills training required to gain sustainable employment and support Indigenous business development and economic growth in Ontario. Projects are approved through a competitive process.

Program Objectives

To support the success of projects that contribute to economic growth, job growth and training on a regional or province-wide basis by improving access and participation of Indigenous people in accredited training programs resulting in qualifications recognized in Ontario.

Funding Amounts

Funding will support up to 50% of eligible project costs, with a maximum contribution of \$250,000. Successful applicants will only be approved for one grant per fiscal year. Applications may be submitted for single year funding only. All delivery partners represented in an application are also limited to receiving funding for one project per fiscal year through the RPG.

Eligible Activities

To be eligible for funding, a project must:

- Be regional or provincial in scope;
- Relate to improving access to training for Indigenous people in Ontario;
- Involve the applicant and one or more eligible delivery partner; and
- Have potential to result in jobs, training and/or business opportunities for Indigenous people in Ontario.

Projects should be linked to an existing economic development plan within the geographic area of the proposed project.

Eligible Expenses

Costs that can be funded under the RPG include:

- Staff salary and mandatory employer related costs (MERCs) such as CPP, EI, WSIB directly related to the project.
- Staff training that is project specific.
- The purchase (to a maximum of \$5,000.00) of eligible office computer and equipment, software updates, and equipment repairs, to support positions funded by the RPG.
 - May include lease of equipment necessary for delivering a skills training project. The terms of the lease must only be for the duration of the project.
- Rent for premises used to deliver the project. If the project occupies only a portion of the building for which rent is paid, the rental charge in the budget must be apportioned.

- Professional fees for consultants and/or technicians providing technical expertise relating to the project. Please note that it is expected that a community/organization will be building their internal technical capacity. For this reason, large consultant fees within budgets are strongly discouraged. Applicants must provide strong justification for use of any consultant.
- Travel and accommodation expenses for activities directly related to the work plan.
- Community outreach activities such as community meetings, presentations and workshops related to the work plan.
- Honoraria payments to Elders for their attendance at a meeting/event or to individuals for their Indigenous ceremonial participation at a meeting/event. This includes payments made to Elders for their specialized knowledge (e.g., on cultural sites, traditional knowledge).
- Publicity requirements of the RPG, including for websites, promotional material, and signage.
- Administration costs directly related to the work plan. Eligible costs include utilities; telephone/fax charges; network charges; postage/courier charges; photocopying charges; financial institution service fees; office supplies and the preparation of audited financial schedules. A maximum of 10% of the total budget (pre-administration) may be allotted to administration.

Note: Ontario reserves the right to determine the eligibility or non-eligibility of any proposed project delivery costs.

Ineligible Expenses

Costs that cannot be funded include:

- Annual general meetings, budget deficits, membership fees, fundraising activities, committee, and political meetings.
- Costs covered by other government funding or private funding.
- Costs not incurred in Ontario, including activities and travel that take place outside of Ontario.
- Costs outside the scope of the RPG or are not related to economic development.
- Honoraria to individuals already salaried with the applicant and/or delivery partner.
- Stipends for project participants.
- Contingency or unexplained miscellaneous costs.
- Infrastructure or large capital expenses including the renovation, construction or transformation of permanent spaces, parks, or grounds; furniture, fixtures, or other non-portable equipment other than the purchase of eligible office equipment for staff funded by the RPG.

- Acquisition or leasing of motorized vehicles and other forms of transportation.
- Hospitality-related costs.
- Costs associated with the development of an RPG proposal and/or application.
- Debt reduction costs.
- Litigation or other legal costs.
- Costs related to the Government of Ontario's consultation or engagement initiatives.
- Costs related to other provinces' consultation or engagement initiatives.
- Research undertaken for the purposes of pursuing land claims or litigation.
- Activities that could be deemed discriminatory, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Portion of harmonized sales tax (HST) costs that are refundable.
- Insurance fees necessary for the project, including Commercial General Liability Insurance.

Applicants are discouraged from incurring any costs for activities anticipated to be funded by the RPG until an application has been approved. Any expenses incurred prior to the agreed effective date or after the agreed end date in the Transfer Payment Agreement will be ineligible.

In-Kind Contributions

Eligible in-kind contributions (for the purpose of being calculated towards match funding) include the following:

- Donations of travel services (e.g., vehicles, airfare).
- Time donated by various relevant contributing organizations in the development and/or delivery of the project or for consulting and professional services required for the project. This must be valued at the individual's actual salary for the time spent on the project, and not any other value.
- Donation of applicant's premises to deliver the project on a pro-rated basis.
- Donation of space at a location other than the applicant's premises necessary for the applicant or another participant to conduct the project.
- Discounts greater than or above regularly discounted prices.

The following will not be considered as in-kind contributions:

- Donations in the form of knowledge, goodwill, and other such intangibles.
- Guest speakers that would normally not be paid for services.
- Costs for roles that would traditionally be filled by volunteers.
- All remunerations and fees paid to the Board of Directors.
- Opportunity costs.

- Standard discounts.
- Interest charges.
- Any items or services not directly related to the project.

Ontario reserves the right to determine the eligibility or non-eligibility of any proposed in-kind contributions.

Match Funding

Applicants should identify any match funding leveraged (planned or actual) from other provincial, national, or local public funders and/or private funders that would complement RPG funding. Evidence should be provided for any actual match funding identified in the form of official correspondence between the funder and the applicant or delivery partner, such as a letter of approval or commitment.

Applicants must match RPG project funding via financial and/or in-kind contributions from other provincial, federal, and local funders and/or private funders. The amount of match funding should equal 50% of total project costs. In exceptional circumstances, the Ministry may consider proposals that include less than 50% match funding.

Demonstrated Need

Applicants must show how a proposed project would not proceed and/or achieve its desired outcomes without support from the RPG.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The following section outlines additional requirements of the RPG. Proposals must also be consistent with the requirements outlined in Program Details, of this guide.

Information on how a proposed project meets RPG requirements must be included in the business case, proposal details and business plan.

Business Case

Applicants must provide a business case outlining why RPG funding is required to enhance the applicant's ability to provide training supports to Indigenous businesses and communities on a regional or province-wide basis.

Proposal Details

Proposed deliverables must be consistent with and contribute to the objectives of the RPG. Specifically, proposals must show how funding and the proposed project will advance the following objectives:

- Increased training opportunities for Indigenous people;
- Increased employment opportunities for Indigenous people;
- Increased business opportunities for Indigenous people;
- Increased participation of Indigenous people in high-potential sectors (e.g., resource development, social enterprise, cultural industries, and tourism).

Proposals must focus on regional or province-wide projects related to training. Proposals that are aimed at addressing community-level capacity or other business development needs may be accepted if a sound market need or gap analysis and evidence is provided. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Ministry to discuss potential projects that may align with government priorities. If a project relates to an existing project, the proposal must clearly show the market need for expansion.

When developing proposals, consider projects that have the potential to:

- Deliver tangible benefits to Indigenous people, including jobs, training, and business opportunities; and/or
- Enhance the impact of Indigenous businesses and community projects.

The proposal must provide information on the proposed geographic area and industry sectors that may be supported. Information should also be provided on anticipated jobs, training positions and/or businesses that could be created and/or sustained with support. The proposal should outline any links to other government supports where the RPG would add value or increase the impact. Proposals must include information on delivery partners and information on how projects will continue once RPG support concludes. Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate sustainability, where appropriate.

The proposal should also include information on any linkages to existing economic development plans or strategies, as well as existing or planned economic development projects or opportunities within the geographic area of the proposed project. Proposals involving skills and training projects should also indicate support from industry employers to ensure that training leads to existing or anticipated employment opportunities.

The proposal must detail how the project will align with provincial and/or federal regulations and all requirements related to accreditation. Projects must ensure that any training is recognized by employers and the Province and complies with any applicable legislation.

Business Plan

Proposals must include a business plan showing that the applicant has the capacity and infrastructure required to implement the proposed project. Business plans must include:

- Roles and responsibilities of delivery partners;
- Information on the selection process used to identify training participants;
- Viable and innovative approaches for supporting training participants' access to offered training programs;
- Methods to capture and report on the performance of training participants, including milestones and targeted performance measures;
- Process used to identify and engage beneficiaries of the training programs. Beneficiaries include an Indigenous business and/or organization in Ontario;
- Financial viability and the appropriate fiscal management systems to ensure accountability of public funds, including appropriate board experience and management structure;
- Proven ability to deliver success (e.g., the identification of any organizational experience that would be applicable to the project); and
- Appropriate conflict of interest guidelines.

APPLICATION EVALUATION

After the application form has been submitted and all required documents have been uploaded through Transfer Payment Ontario Network, or submitted by email, if required, the Ministry will initiate the evaluation phase. The evaluation process for RPG funding has two stages.

Stage 1: Preliminary Assessment

A preliminary assessment will be undertaken by the Ministry to ensure each application is complete. This assessment will determine compliance and suitability with the program. The Ministry will confirm applicant and delivery partner eligibility and undertake a risk assessment and financial review of applicants and delivery partners to confirm that they have the capacity to undertake and complete the proposed project.

The Ministry may request additional information if an application is deemed incomplete. Applicants must provide the requested documentation within the time provided or the application will be deemed ineligible.

Stage 2: Full Assessment

During the second stage of the evaluation process, all eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by an inter-ministry review panel. The review committee will consider:

- The business plan, including the project management approach and governance structure;
- The business case, including overall need and demand for the project;
- The anticipated results of the project within the proposed timeframe;
- Applicant's history of managing projects funded by the Government of Ontario;
- The extent to which the project contributes to increased economic activity for Indigenous communities;
- The extent to which project training participants would gain access to employment opportunities;
- The extent to which project training participants that would obtain or be eligible to obtain recognized provincial certification; and,
- The extent to which the project budget demonstrates value for money, budget accuracy and eligible project costs.

Each applicant will be informed of the funding status of their application, and if approved for funding, will be provided with copies of the Transfer Payment Agreement to sign. Applicants will be advised of any changes required to the project prior to finalizing the Transfer Payment Agreement. Ineligible or unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing and provided with a brief explanation as to why the project was not funded. The applicant may request a debrief on why their proposal was not approved.

TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT

In order to receive funding, successful applicants will be required to:

- Sign a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario outlining the terms and conditions for receiving funds;
- Have or seek at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage, and to add "Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario" as an additional insured on this coverage before the Transfer Payment Agreement can be executed; and
- Identify the project management structure/staffing model which has been agreed to and implemented.

OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING

Funding recipients will be required to report back to the Ministry on the use of funds, deliverables and outcomes achieved. Funding recipients must submit a Final Report to provide this information. Funding recipients must also permit the Province to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended.

Reporting

A final report is required at the end of the project. The final report includes financial information on the use of funds as well as information on outputs and results of the project, as outlined in the Funding Agreement. Full reporting requirements for the final report are outlined in the reporting tab of the project's link on the Transfer Payment Ontario Network.

Any unspent funds must be returned to the Ministry at the end of the project. The final report must also include data on performance measures for the project.

The Ministry will analyze reports for accuracy and eligibility of expenditures. During the review of any reports or visits, the Ministry will verify that expenditures and outputs are eligible and compliant with the EDG. Funding recipients may be asked to provide copies of invoices or other documentation for any expenditure item.

Corrective Action

When a project is found to be non-compliant with RPG requirements, the Ministry may act in accordance with the Transfer Payment Agreement. This may include requiring funding recipients to take corrective action to resolve any breach in funding conditions, poor management, or inadequate control of the project.

Record Keeping

Compliance may be checked at any point during the life of the project by the Ministry. Checks may also be undertaken after project completion. Checks may include the review of financial information and other documentation related to the project. The Ministry may request documentation as part of its reporting and monitoring processes. Funding recipients must maintain records to support expenditures and demonstrate compliance with the RPG.

Examples of documentation that should be maintained include:

- Documents related to work carried out during project development, the application process, and during and after the project.
- Any invoices and bank statements to show payments were made for work done.
- Records of eligible beneficiaries and the steps taken to determine their eligibility, including proof that a beneficiary is eligible.
- Evidence of match funding, such as copies of funding acceptance letters and bank statements showing receipt of match funding.
- Copies of all promotional and publicity materials, including press releases and marketing to demonstrate the correct use of the RPG identifier logo and any required text.
- The Transfer Payment Agreement including any amendments.
- Correspondence between the Ministry and the funding recipient.
- Claim forms for RPG-related expenditures and financial reports.
- Documentation showing how RPG-related expenditures were calculated, including any flat rate and pro rata methodologies for indirect overhead costs and salaries allocated to the project.
- Documentation related to any procurement undertaken for the RPG project, such as proof of invitation to suppliers to bid or advertising of procurement opportunities, procurement submissions received from suppliers and the scoring methodology used for selecting a supplier.
- Documentation and evidence related to any claims or statements made regarding outcomes of an RPG-funded project, such as evidence of the number of jobs created because of support from the RPG.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND OUTCOMES

Funding recipients are required to track and report on RPG performance measures as part of the reporting process.

Performance measures will help ensure the RPG is meeting its objectives, will inform program changes to improve the delivery and administration of the program and will track the progress of the program in achieving results.

The following are performance measures established by the Ministry:

Outcome	Performance Measures
Increased economic development capacity including community economic planning and access to skills and employment training to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Ontario-based Indigenous people accessing skills and training programs because of support. • Number of jobs created or sustained because of support.

Outcome	Performance Measures
participate in economic opportunities	

PROCUREMENT

If purchasing goods or services, funding recipients are encouraged to select suppliers through an open and transparent tendering process. Value for money must be sought when purchasing any good or service.

Funding recipients are encouraged to promote the participation of Indigenous suppliers in their projects. Funding recipients may accomplish this using evaluation criteria or competitive processes involving eligible Indigenous suppliers (i.e., a “set aside”). A “set aside” competition is a procurement process for only Indigenous suppliers and should only be undertaken when enough capacity exists among suppliers to successfully deliver procurement requirements, as determined by the funding recipient.

DISCLAIMER

Please Note:

- Any payment by the Ministry under the RPG is subject to there being an appropriation from the Ontario legislature for the fiscal year in which the payment is to be made and there being funds available.
- Consideration of an application by the Ministry does not guarantee funding. Funding is dependent on the availability of funds, the Ministry’s review of the application, and on the recipient’s entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement.
- Approved funding is contingent upon meeting the eligibility criteria. However, meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding. Approved funding and entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement is at the discretion of the Government of Ontario.
- Funds received in a given funding year may only be spent on eligible activities carried out during that funding year and specified in the budget and work plan attached to the Transfer Payment Agreement.
- All projects must comply with relevant Canadian and Ontario laws, regulations, standards, and policies.
- All applications submitted to the Ministry are subject to the access to information provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the “Act”). The Act provides all persons with a legal right of access to information in the custody and/or control of the Ministry, subject to a limited set of exemptions. One such exemption is information that reveals a trade secret, or scientific, technical,

commercial, financial, or labour relations information supplied in confidence, where disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in certain harms. If an applicant believes that any of the information it submits in connection with its application is confidential and wishes to protect the confidentiality of such information, the applicant should clearly mark the information “confidential.” If the Ministry receives a request for access to the information marked “confidential”, the Ministry will contact the applicant so that it may, if it wishes, make representations concerning the release of the requested information. Marking the information “confidential” does not mean that the information will not be released if and as required under the Act.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email or telephone enquiries about program guidelines may be directed to:

The Program and Services Branch Office, Ministry of Indigenous Affairs

Email: Indigenouseconomicdevelopmentfund@ontario.ca

Technical questions regarding Grants Ontario may be directed to:

The Grants Ontario Customer Service Line at:

Email: GrantsOntarioCS@Ontario.ca.

Telephone: (416) 325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST.