



**Support for Indian Residential School Burials Investigations
Indian Residential School Community Engagement Fund**

2023-24 Application Guidelines

Effective July 2023

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Program Details

Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides information for prospective funding recipients for the Indian Residential School Community Engagement Fund, a funding stream from the Support for Indian Residential School Burials Funding program of the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs (IAO).

This funding stream is intended to support the broader network of First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities and Indigenous organizations seeking funding to support IRS-related community engagement, staffing supports, research activities, public education and awareness, mental health and addictions supports, and/or commemoration initiatives. This funding stream is not intended to support IRS-related field work, ground searches, or archaeological work.

For inquiries about other IRS-related funding that may be available, please contact the Ministry's Residential Schools Unit at RSU@ontario.ca.

This application guide is effective as of July 2023. Updates may be released periodically and will be made available on: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/available-funding-opportunities-ontario-government>

Any updates to the application guidelines will be communicated in writing within five (5) business days to funding recipients.

The guide describes the application process, program details and information on eligibility criteria and eligible activities. All applications will be assessed, evaluated, and approved using requirements outlined in this application guide.

Overview

The Support for Indian Residential Schools Burials Funding program was developed to support work related to the identification, investigation, protection and commemoration of burials at the sites of the 18 former Indian Residential Schools (IRS) in the province recognized in the federal [Indian Residential School Settlement Act](#) (IRSSA).

Under this funding program, the province is launching a new IRS Community Engagement Fund. This stream will support the broader network of First Nations communities and Indigenous organizations who are impacted by or involved in IRS burial investigations and related activities. Ontario recognizes that many Survivors of Residential Schools live outside of the communities where investigations are taking place. Indigenous partners have identified the need for community-based funding to directly support those Survivors and families who wish to take part in planned or ongoing engagement related to burial investigations, oral history gathering, and/ or IRS-related public awareness and education initiatives. This funding is designed to be Indigenous-led, Survivor-centered and culturally sensitive, and to be as flexible as possible in responding to and supporting Survivors' initiatives.

Ontario recognizes that this work must be community driven, and community supported, informed by the knowledge of IRS Survivors, archival records, and access to necessary technical expertise. To this end, Ontario is committed to engaging in ongoing discussions with Indigenous communities as work progresses to better understand ongoing and emerging community needs.

Note:

- This funding stream is separate to the dedicated funding being provided to First Nation communities or Indigenous organizations leading burial investigations at former Indian Residential Schools.

- This funding stream is not intended to fund any IRS activities which are already funded. In some instances, funding may be used to expand existing activities or service delivery (e.g., funding to expand delivery of mental health services, or to expand engagement activities), but the rationale, existing funding received, and new funding being sought should be clearly identified.
- All activities related to other schools or institutions outside of those identified in the IRSSA are not eligible under this funding stream.
- Any activities related to IRS field work such as ground searches or archaeological work are not eligible under this funding stream.

Funding Objectives

All initiatives under the IRS Community Engagement Fund must seek to advance one or more objectives of the broader Support for Indian Residential School Burials funding program:

- Investigate deaths of Indigenous children who attended Indian Residential Schools
- Commemorate or memorialize the lives lost and the children's final resting places
- Repatriate remains (where/ if appropriate and agreed upon by communities/ families of the deceased)
- Increase public awareness and education of the legacy of Indian Residential Schools
- Provide culturally appropriate, trauma-informed mental health and wellness supports for Indigenous Survivors, intergenerational Survivors, communities, and families.

Additionally, the IRS Community Engagement Fund may be used to provide supports to IRS Survivors and their families who live outside of communities leading burial investigations but may wish to:

- Participate in Indian Residential School investigation processes, including oral history gathering, research, and/or protocol development;
- Engage or coordinate with other Survivors, either as part of their own community-based initiatives or joining other initiatives that seek to support the wellbeing and healing journeys of IRS Survivors and their families.

Funding Amounts

- Eligible applicants may receive **up to \$150,000 for the 2023-24 fiscal year** (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, to fund eligible activities outlined in this application guide. Joint applicants may receive up to \$150,000 for each participating community and/or organization that is proposing to partner on the project (e.g., up to \$450,000 for a project involving three eligible communities and/or organizations).
- Funding can be provided to recipients via a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA).
- The Ministry will work with successful applicants to confirm funding amounts for eligible activities prior to finalizing the Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA). Ontario also encourages applicants to work with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) - through their [Residential schools missing children - community support funding program](#), to seek additional funding, as required.

Application Details

Deadline

The 2023-24 application proposal period will run from July 31 – September 5, 2023.

Applicant Eligibility

You may apply to the IRSCEF if you are a:

- Political Territorial Organization (PTO) in Ontario;
- Tribal Council in Ontario;
- First Nation community in Ontario;
- Métis community in Ontario; or,
- A regional or provincial organization representing First Nation, Métis, Inuit or urban Indigenous peoples or an Indigenous service provider.

in addition to the above, to be eligible to receive funding, an applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a legal entity (e.g., established by or under legislation; federally or provincially incorporated; First Nation in the province of Ontario).
- Hold governance structures and accountability processes to properly administer and manage public funds and to provide the services for which transfer payments are made. The following should be considered as part of the eligibility criteria:
 - Expertise and experience necessary to conduct/carry out its responsibilities in compliance with ministry requirements;
 - Appropriate governance and control structure in place (e.g., Board of Directors, Chief and Council, membership processes, annual reports, etc.);
 - Reliable and up-to-date financial reporting;
 - Establishment of a Canadian bank account; and
 - Use of funds for activities taking place in Ontario and benefiting Indigenous peoples;
- Not to 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.

Joint Applicants

- All applicants must meet the above criteria.
- Ontario encourages joint applications that link two or more First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities or Indigenous organizations to promote collaborative and regional initiatives that may support a number of Survivors and communities.
- Joint applications can be submitted on behalf of, and with the support of, the Ontario-based Indigenous community/communities they represent. Applicants must provide proof of support from the community they are representing, as appropriate.
- **Disclaimer:** A joint application will be assessed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. An applicant's total requested funds may not be guaranteed.

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 TPON Client Care, available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time:

- **Phone: (416) 325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090**
- **TTY/Teletypewriter (for the hearing impaired): (416) 325-3408 / Toll-free: 1-800-268-7095**
- **Email: 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 a "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](#).

Quick Reference Guides and steps on submitting for funding are posted here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-funding-ontario-government>

Eligible Activities

This funding is designed to provide flexible supports in response to the planned or ongoing IRS burial investigations and may accommodate a broad range of community needs, priorities, activities and

expenditures, including:

- **Community Engagement**, including planning, coordinating and implementing ongoing engagement with Survivors and their families and other community members, Survivors or Survivor networks, and other First Nations and Indigenous organizations connected to IRS burial investigations, as well as participating in IRS protocol development (e.g., ceremonial; research; archaeological; repatriation; or protocols between communities involved in burial investigations).
- **Mental Health and Addictions Supports**, to ensure trauma-informed mental health, addictions and/or wellness supports are available for Survivors, their families, and communities as burial investigations and related initiatives proceed.
- **Staffing Supports**, including hiring staff or retaining consultants to address challenges in response to planned or ongoing IRS burial investigations and to assist with capacity to communicate and coordinate Survivor supports, and/or address the mental health and addictions (MHA) and trauma impacts arising from planned or ongoing investigations.
- **Research Activities**, such as undertaking historical and archival research and/or community-based oral history gathering and documenting traditional knowledge related to IRS experiences and the ongoing IRS investigations.
- **Public Education and Awareness**, including communications, implementing public education/awareness programming and/or campaigns related to planned or ongoing burial investigations and/or to the broader legacy and ongoing impacts of the IRS system.
- **Commemoration Initiatives**, including planning and implementing commemorative community or Survivor-based initiatives, conducting ceremonies, and/or undertaking other traditional protocols as required.

Eligible Expenditures

The following is a list of expenditures that are eligible under this funding in connection with eligible activities:

- **Salaries and wages** of staff hired to support of IRS burial investigations, including:
 - Project managers, coordinators and administrative staff;
 - Community engagement coordinators and traditional knowledge holders; and,
 - MHA and trauma service providers, such as social workers, counsellors, therapists and psychologists. MHA salaries may also include traditional healers and non-western services.
- **Mandatory Employee Related Costs (MERCs)** – capped at 17.5% of salaries and wages.
- **Community and Other Related Expenses** for initiative planning, training sessions and program implementation, including:
 - Rental of facilities for initiative implementation;
 - Basic supplies, e.g., food and drinks for meetings, print materials and related items as required; and,
 - Preparations and supplies for ceremonies, traditional healing activities, and/or IRS commemoration initiatives.
- **Professional Fees¹ and Other Fees** in support of planned or ongoing IRS burial investigations, including:
 - Hiring project consultants to support initiative planning, research, engagement and communications;

¹ Costs for Professional Fees must be relevant to work plan activities and can include fees for consultants, translators, interpreters, note takers, etc.

- Honoraria for Elders or Community Knowledge Holders²;
- Contracts for MHA and trauma consultants/service providers, including social workers, counsellors, therapists and psychologists.
- **Travel Expenses**, including:
 - Cost of flights and/or reimbursement of kilometres driven for transporting staff, project consultants and community members to initiative meetings, ceremonies, or IRS locations in the course of burial investigations and related activities; and,
 - Accommodations for consultants hired to support initiative implementation and community members travelling to participate in engagement activities.
 - Travel and meal expenses will be paid in accordance with [Ontario's Travel, Meal and Hospitality Directive](#) and will only be paid for actual expenses incurred. If an applicant has adopted a travel and meal policy that exceeds the amounts outlined in the Ontario policy, they will be responsible for any additional costs incurred.
- **Administration costs** including utilities; telephone/fax charges; network charges; postage/courier charges; photocopying charges; office supplies, etc.
 - Where administration is appropriate for a transfer payment, a maximum of 10% of the transfer payment's sub-total budget (pre-administration) will be applied.
 - Administration costs incurred in excess of the approved administration budget will not be funded.

Ineligible Activities:

This funding is designed to be as flexible as possible. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs with any questions about activity and expenditure eligibility.

At this time, this funding stream is unable to support work at other institutions not directly tied to the 18 federally recognized former Indian Residential Schools.

The following identified activities and expenditures are not eligible under this funding:

- Fieldwork or ground searches related to planned or ongoing burial investigations;
- Costs associated with activities related to school locations and other institutions not identified in the IRSSA;
- Purchase of capital assets with a market value in excess of \$5,000;
- Purchase of automobiles, land, or buildings;
- Stipends for project participants International travel;
- Contingency/miscellaneous fees;
- Compensation for an individual's administration of, or participation in, an initiative where they are already receiving compensation (salary, honoraria or per diem) for the same period of time; and,
- Deficit recovery.

² Honoraria are defined as payments to Elders or Community Knowledge Holders for their attendance and participation at a meeting or event. Honoraria are not intended to be payments in lieu of travel and meal expenses, legal fees and/or other professional fees.

Performance Measures and Outputs:

Applicants will be required to identify how proposed activities align with the overall program objectives of the Support for Indian Residential Schools Burials Program. This can be achieved by identifying a minimum of two performance measures (qualitative or quantitative). Given the highly sensitive nature of this Indigenous-led work, funding recipients will be asked to identify their own qualitative performance measures and outcomes in order to integrate culturally responsive measurements of success. Funding recipients will be required to track and report on their identified performance measures as part of the end of year activity and expenditure reporting process.

Additionally, recipients are encouraged to share achievements and obstacles encountered during the implementation of initiatives. This information will help IAO improve future IRS-related funding supports.

Applicants can identify a broad range of qualitative Key Performance Indicators, such as:

- The extent to which lead communities have been able to access IRS-related records to inform historical archival/research.
- The level and nature of Survivor, intergenerational survivor, family and community input into the burial investigations process.
- The extent to which traditional languages has been incorporated into the initiative.
- Successful sharing of research and knowledge regarding Indian Residential Schools, impacts, survivors, history, locations, resources, intergenerational trauma, and healing.

Funding Request Process:

How to Request Funding:

Please submit an overview of your proposed activities within the applicant form, with an accompanying budget through the Transfer Payment Ontario Network portal.

Required Documentation:

1. Description of the initiative.
2. Initiative work plan. Please provide clear activities, statements of objectives and project timelines which support the activities and expected outcomes or benefits for interest of the Survivors and/or communities represented.
3. Initiative budget, including funding required to support the initiative and activities and expenditures the funding will cover.
4. Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) Business Number, if applicable
5. Note: For joint applications, please provide proof of support from the community/communities being represented by the applicant, as appropriate.

Please note the following:

- Recipients must not be in default of the terms and conditions of any grant or loan agreement (e.g., reports due or surplus) with any ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario.
- Per the terms of the Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA), successful recipients will be required to obtain at least \$2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage by providing a valid Certificate of Insurance (COI). The COI must be consistent with section A10.0 of the TPA.

- The COI should specify “**His Majesty the King in right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, His ministers, agents, appointees and employees**” as the indemnified party and list the “**Support for Indian Residential Schools Burials Funding**” as the indemnified project.
- As set out in the [Transfer Payment Operational Policy | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/government/transfer-payment-operational-policy), all transfer payment recipients external to government are required to be registered in the Transfer Payment Common Registration (TPCR) system. This process is mandatory in order for funds to be released to the recipient. For more information on Transfer Payment Ontario, refer to [Get funding from the Ontario government | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/government/get-funding).

Evaluation Criteria

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

Preliminary Assessment

A preliminary assessment will be undertaken by the Ministry to ensure each application is complete. The Ministry may request additional information if an application is deemed to be incomplete.

Full Assessment

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

- Alignment with the objectives of the broader Support for Indian Residential School Burials funding program
- The strength and clarity of project rationale and the community-identified need
- Initiative details should be clearly identified with key activities, a detailed budget and timeline with focused outcomes that are achievable during the funding period and with costs that are reasonable and in accordance with program objectives).

Recipient Obligations

Agreement Execution

- Once the terms of the TPA have been finalized, an electronic copy of the TPA will be sent to Recipients.
- The Ministry will determine the payment schedule based on the nature of activities and need for funding outlined in the initiative work plan.
- The first payment will be released upon execution of the TPA and submission of required documents. Subsequent payment/s will be processed upon reconciliation of work completion.
- The TPA must be signed by the recipient’s signing authority and dated.
- Recipients must email a scanned copy of the signed TPA to the Ministry for signing and execution.
- A fully executed TPA will be emailed to recipients for their records.

Reporting Requirements:

- Recipients must submit project end and/or final activity and expenditure reports as per the agreed upon timelines outlined in the recipients' transfer payment agreements. Reports will provide an overview of the use of the funds, actual expenditures and achieved outcomes and challenges encountered during the implementation of the initiatives. KPIs – timing (include this here)
- Periodic check-ins (through phone calls and emails) may be conducted between the Ministry and the recipient at an agreed upon frequency to assess implementation of the initiative including issues, and any potential amendments that may be required moving forward.

Disclaimer

Please Note:

- 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.
- All projects must comply with relevant Canadian and Ontario laws, regulations, standards and policies.
- All funding requests 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. If an applicant believes that certain information it submits in connection with its funding request or reporting is confidential and wishes to maintain the confidentiality of such information, the applicant should clearly mark the information "confidential." Marking the information "confidential" does not mean that the information will not be released if and as required under the Act.

INQUIRIES

ontario.ca/Indigenous
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Inquiries about this funding can be directed to:

Residential Schools Unit (RSU)

Strategic Policy and Planning Division
Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
160 Bloor Street East, ON, M7A 2E6

Attention: Lareina Rising, Manager

Lareina.Rising@ontario.ca

Cc: RSU@ontario.ca

NOTE: To learn about the other IRS-related funding streams outlined below, please contact RSU@ontario.ca:

Funding Streams Include:

- Operational Base Funding for Lead Communities
- Operational Base Funding for Regional/ Urban Indigenous Organizations
- IRS Specific Mental Health and Addictions Supports
- Indigenous Partner-Driven Communications and Marketing
- Indigenous Community/ Coordination Supports