Ontario

MINISTRY FOR SENIORS AND ACCESSIBILITY

2026-27

ENHANCING ACCESS TO SPACES FOR EVERYONE (EASE) GRANT GUIDELINES

Applications and all supporting material must be submitted

through Transfer Payment Ontario

by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on May 7, 2026.

Applications that do not have all applicable mandatory supporting documents attached will not be considered for funding.

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ENHANCING ACCESS TO SPACES FOR EVERYONE GRANT

INTRODUCTION

Ontario is committed to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities and older adults by supporting them to live active, healthy, safe, and socially connected lives.

Launched in 2025-26, the Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone (EASE) Grant focuses on improving accessibility in Ontario communities to create more welcoming spaces. With 28% of people in Ontario living with at least one form of disability, there is an ongoing need for accessible and inclusive environments.[1] Accessibility needs also increase with age; 43% of seniors aged 65 and over – either age with a disability or age into a disability.[2] The EASE Grant provides funding for projects that improve accessibility in Ontario communities' outdoor spaces and built environments, including housing, through the funding of small capital projects (including retrofits). These projects should not only remove barriers but also create opportunities for wider community engagement and inclusion, helping communities become safer and more welcoming for all.

The ministry will prioritize projects that:

- Go above and beyond the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) (specifically the Design of Public Spaces Standards) and/or the accessibility requirements in the Ontario Building Code.

The EASE Grant could support projects such as installing assistive kayak and canoe launches, charging stations for mobility devices, installing mobility mats at beaches, and building accessible washrooms at parks to improve access and remove barriers to outdoor spaces for people of all ages and people with disabilities. It could also fund accessibility upgrades such as automatic doors, accessibility ramps or adaptive workstations so community centres and employment hubs can better support people with disabilities in accessing economic opportunities. Such projects could also enable older adults, including those with a disability, to attend programs that would make them more active in their communities and reduce their social isolation, as well as facilitate intergenerational activities, thus helping to combat ageism.

Please see the list of Examples of Potentially-Eligible Projects that go above and beyond the AODA and Ontario Building Code.

A proposed project **must** support an existing relevant plan, such as a municipal multi-year accessibility plan, age-friendly community plan, or organizational strategic plan. Applicants are strongly encouraged to upload a copy of the plan with their application, as extra points will be awarded.

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[1] Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2022
[2] Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2006

The 2026-27 EASE Grant will provide up to $60,000 per successful applicant for projects that take place **between October 1, 2026 and October 31, 2027,** that align with the following priority:

- Implement improvements to outdoor spaces and the built environment, including housing, to increase accessibility for people with disabilities and older adults.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU APPLY

Before Filling Out the Application

Review these tips to help make sure your application is complete, eligible, and compelling.

- **Start now!** It can take up to two (2) weeks to enrol in Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON), and time to organize your mandatory supporting documents. Plan ahead and ensure that you submit your complete application prior to the deadline as late applications will not be accepted.

  If you have any technical questions about the application process, please contact:

  TPON Client Care at (416) 325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, or by e-mail to: transferpaymentontarioCC@ontario.ca.
- **Read these program guidelines carefully** to help with submitting a complete and eligible application.
- **Select the correct TPON category for your applicant type.** There are two categories for the EASE Grant:

  1) For not-for-profit organizations

  2) For municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies

  The two categories require different mandatory supporting documents to be uploaded. Check the title at the top of your application form to make sure it matches your organization type.
- **Review the assessment criteria**. Think about each question carefully and provide enough detail in your answers so that your application can be evaluated against the assessment criteria. Application evaluators are looking for evidence in your application that demonstrates how your specific project meets the program priority and how your project will benefit older adults and people with disabilities in your community.
- **Consult with a Regional Development Advisor (RDA)** if you have questions about the content of your application (e.g., regarding eligibility or completeness). Use the provincial directory to find an RDA in your area. It is strongly recommended that you contact an RDA as early in the application period as possible to discuss your plans and questions related to your project proposal.
- **Attend a webinar** to learn more about the program and tips on completing the application. A webinar will take place the week of **April 6** and **April 20**. Additionally, a recorded webinar will be posted on TPON. Ask your RDA for details.
- **Review the application checklist** in these guidelines to make sure you provide all information and applicable mandatory supporting documents required to submit your application. **Applications that are missing mandatory supporting documents**

will not be considered for funding. Additionally, incomplete applications cannot be submitted in TPON.

Program Timelines

Item	Time Frame	Notes
Application Deadline	**May 7, 2026, at 5pm ET**	• **New applicants:** Must create a My Ontario Account before you can register and access the TPON system. This may take up to five (5) business days. Please plan accordingly to meet the program's deadline.
Evaluation Period	May – September 2026	• Applications will be measured against program criteria.
Funding Status Notification	September - November 2026	• Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email. • Please ensure that your organization's contacts are up to date in your TPON account.

GRANT INFORMATION

- Maximum grant size is $60,000 per recipient. 100% of eligible project costs can be requested. A single project may include multiple accessibility improvements and/or occur across multiple locations. However, the maximum funding available remains up to $60,000 per eligible recipient, regardless of the number of improvements or locations included within the project.
- While no cash or in-kind contribution is required, applicants are encouraged to establish partnerships to cover the remaining costs of their projects, if any.
- The grant funding amount should be based on activities proposed to achieve the program priority to implement improvements to outdoor spaces and the built environment, including housing, to increase accessibility for people with disabilities and older adults.
- Please ensure that all activities proposed in the application (i) are undertaken within the province of Ontario, (ii) benefit older adults and/or people with disabilities, (iii) are intended for public use or located in a shared/common setting; and, (iv) are provided by an Ontario-based vendor if possible.
- Applicants are required to itemize and describe additional funding they are requesting or have received from other sources if that funding is directly relevant to the outcomes of the EASE Grant project.
- EASE Grant funding can be used to support accessibility improvement projects that are funded by other grants to achieve outcomes towards a broader project. However, the project plan and budget should clearly describe which outcomes will be supported by the EASE Grant.
- Applicants may not use EASE Grant funding to cover any cost that has or will be funded or reimbursed by any other party including but not limited to (i) other ministries; (ii) other governments, their ministries, departments, or organizations; (iii) not-for-profit entities; or (iv) for-profit entities.
- The EASE Grant is designed to fund accessibility-enhancing retrofits and small capital improvements to existing spaces. Projects involving new building construction fall outside the scope of this program and are not eligible for funding.
- The EASE Grant is a discretionary and non-entitlement program. As such, notwithstanding that an applicant has submitted a complete application and met all program criteria, there is no guarantee, including to past recipients, that the applicant will be approved for funding. The ministry reserves the right to fund or not fund applications submitted to the program. The decision to fund all or part of an applicant request will depend on its alignment with the program objectives and priorities, assessment criteria and the availability of funds in the program. There is no appeal process for unsuccessful applicants to the program.

EXAMPLES OF POTENTIALLY-ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Going above and beyond the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and the Ontario Building Code (OBC) means proposing a project that clearly aims to exceed the minimum accessibility requirements listed in the AODA's Design of Public Spaces Standards and OBC. These projects could incorporate innovative and inclusive design elements that significantly enhance accessibility and usability for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

    1. **Universal Design Features**: Adjustable-height countertops, touchless faucets, automatic locks, or other accessible building fixtures, and wide doorways that accommodate all types of mobility aids.

    2. **Retrofits**: Permanent entrance ramps, additional barrier free entrances, multiple universal washrooms or enhancements to current universal washroom(s), change stall(s), and adding additional accessibility features at swimming pools.

    3. **Enhanced Wayfinding Systems**: Expanded braille signage, expanded tactile directional indicators, and high-contrast, large-print maps.

    4. **Outdoor Accessibility Enhancements**: Enhanced and/or expanded accessible parking, wider exterior paths of travel, mobility mats at beaches, charging stations for mobility devices along an accessible trail, adding lights, benches, or ramps to a public trail, accessible outdoor fitness equipment and/or adaptable sporting facilities.

    5. **Public Transportation Improvements**: Accessible transit stops with shelters that have a barrier free path of travel to and from the pickup point, as well as expanded and/or enhanced priority seating on conventional transit vehicles.

    6. **Inclusive Playgrounds**: Additional sensory play area features, accessible swings, and firm, stable, non-slip surface material installation.

    7. **Safe Evacuation Measures**: Emergency evacuation chairs, enhanced safety features in Designated Waiting Areas, increased signage to support evacuation protocols for people with disabilities.

    8. **Employment and Economic Engagement**: Accessible co-working spaces, barrier-free entrances and universal washrooms in job training centres, accessible vendor stalls at farmers' markets or craft fairs, and digital accessibility upgrades such as voice-assisted kiosks or screen-reader-friendly job boards in employment resource hubs.

    9. **Housing:** Enhanced common area navigation supports (e.g., enhanced wayfinding systems in lobbies, corridors, and shared amenity spaces within a

group home); accessible building entry and exit improvements (e.g., additional barrier-free access to shared main entrances and exits within a multi-unit social residential home); and the installation of universal design features in shared bathroom, kitchen, and lounges (e.g., adjustable-height or accessible counters in communal living and gathering spaces in a not-for-profit retirement home).

Helpful Links:

- How to make public spaces accessible
- How to comply with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
- Accessibility in Ontario's Building Code
- Building Code updates

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Who Can Apply?

Eligible Applicants	Notes
Municipalities	**Municipalities should consider working together with their Accessibility Advisory Committee if one has been established:** • Under the AODA, municipalities with more than 10,000 residents are required to have an Accessibility Advisory Committee in place. The work of these committees can make a meaningful difference for people with disabilities in their communities. Find more information about Accessibility Advisory Committees.
Not-for-profit organizations	• Must be legal entities (you will be required to submit documented proof of legal status as part of the application). • Must have been incorporated in Ontario or Canada and in operation for at least one year prior to the application submission date (i.e., incorporated before May 7, 2025). • Examples of potentially eligible not-for-profit organizations include conservation authorities, district social services administration boards, business improvement areas, faith- based groups, and non-governing bodies that serve the interests of or provide services to First Nation, Inuit, Métis or other Indigenous Peoples.
Indigenous Governing Bodies	• An Indigenous governing body is a council, government or other entity that is authorized to act on behalf of a First Nation, Inuit, Métis or other Indigenous group, community or people that holds rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
Ineligible Applicants	**Notes**
	The following groups are **not** eligible to apply for funding: • Individuals • For-profit organizations • Agencies, boards or commissions of the federal or provincial governments • Private foundations • Unincorporated associations, organizations, and other non-legal entities

	• Organizations whose purpose is related to political activity (lobbying), as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency • Organizations that are currently in default of any provincial government grant • Residential housing organizations such as condominium boards and building/housing co-ops – this does not include organizations such as group homes, transitions homes or women's shelters that serve older adults or people with disabilities • Schools, postsecondary institutions, hospitals, long term care homes If you are not sure if your organization is eligible, contact an RDA.

Applicants are not required to own the property, building, or land where the proposed project will occur. However, applicants must have all necessary permissions and ability to complete their project as stated in their application form. A letter of support from the property or landowner confirming this permission is required.

What Costs are Eligible for Funding?

Eligible Expenses	Examples of eligible expenses
All project costs must be itemized and explained in the project workplan.	Eligible project costs that can be included as part of the grant funding request include, but are not limited to: Personnel Costs (Internal Human Resources): • Salaries for existing or newly hired staff that are directly related to the project Professional and Contracted Services: • Architects, landscape designers, engineers • Building Permits • Accessibility consultants or age-friendly design specialists • Construction companies or general contractors • Vendors supplying and installing equipment or infrastructure Capital and Infrastructure Costs:

	• Installation of accessibility features (e.g., ramps, tactile paving, handrails) • Age-friendly enhancements (e.g., benches, shade structures, lighting) • Pathway improvements, signage, or wayfinding systems • Minor renovations or retrofits to existing structures Equipment and Materials: • Construction materials • Fixtures (e.g., outdoor seating, accessible playground equipment) All applications must include a detailed budget outlining all anticipated project costs. Approved recipients will be required to submit a final report within sixty (60) days of the project end date which must identify actual expenditures related to the project. All project costs must be reasonable and reflect current market rates. The Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility has the discretion to deny any unreasonable project expenditures and any expenditure that was not pre-approved by ministry staff. Please contact your RDA with any questions. For public transparency and accountability, as part of the final reporting process, some recipients will be asked to provide a summary of their project expenses, followed by copies of invoices and/or receipts to verify that funding was spent on eligible expenses.

What Costs are Ineligible for Funding?

Ineligible Expenses	Examples of ineligible expenses
	The following costs are **not** eligible for funding. If your project includes these components, your project workplan and budget should explain how costs will be paid, and that they will not be paid using EASE Grant funding. **Examples of ineligible expenses:** × Ongoing operating or regular planning activities. This includes regular maintenance and operating expenses, ongoing staff training, core administrative and overhead costs such as rent, office supplies,

	telephone, and communications services such as internet. × Refundable taxes and expenses – funding will not pay for any tax or expenses that the organization can claim refunds, rebates, or credits for, such as HST. × Contingency costs. × Purchase of commercial general liability insurance. × Purchase of land. × Banking fees. × Fundraising, lobbying or sponsorship campaigns. × Marketing, communications and outreach. × Legal, audit or interest fees. × Purchase of vehicles, fuel. × Vehicle modifications, such as adaptive driving equipment or wheelchair lifts. × Portable assets unless they serve an ongoing or recurring community need and are permanently assigned to the space. × Upgrades to private suites or dwellings, including accessibility improvements in private residences. × Grants or funding to other organizations. × Deficit reduction plans. × Project components already completed or fully funded by another organization. Applications where ineligible activities or costs represent more than 20% of the proposed budget will not be evaluated.

KEY APPLICATION INFORMATION

Mandatory Supporting Documents

Different organization types require different mandatory supporting documentation. When submitting your application in TPON you must include the completed application form and all relevant supporting documentation. Applications that do not have all required mandatory documents attached will not be considered for funding.

The table below summarizes the mandatory documents required for each type of applicant and each type of document.

Mandatory Document Type	Not-for-profit incorporated organizations	Municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies
Prior-year Financial Statements	Mandatory	Not mandatory
Proof of incorporation	Mandatory	Not mandatory
Letter of Support*	Not mandatory	Not mandatory
Relevant Plan	Not mandatory	Not mandatory
Financial Quotes	Not mandatory	Not mandatory

*Exceptions may apply.

- ✓ **Proof of incorporation:** Not-for-profit organizations must provide one of the following: Certificates of Status, Articles of Incorporation, Letters Patent, or Special Acts of Incorporation. These documents must show that the organization has been incorporated and operating for at least one year in Ontario or Canada (i.e., since at least May 7, 2025).
    - Conservation authorities may provide the Order in Council that established the authority as their proof of legal status.
    - Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) may provide the municipal by-law that formally established the BIA as their proof of legal status.
    - Unincorporated branches, chapters or members of incorporated provincial or national organizations are eligible to apply under the incorporation of their parent organization but must provide the parent organization's proof of incorporation, along with a letter of support confirming that the local branch, chapter, or unit operates under that corporation.
    - Municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies are **exempt** from this requirement.
- ✓ **Prior-year financial statements:** Provide prior-year financial statements, independently audited, including a review engagement, or board-endorsed or treasurer-certified financial statements including a statement of revenue and expenditures and balance sheet. Financial statements should be no older than two

years and must be for a complete financial year (either calendar or fiscal, whatever the organization uses).

- Municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies are **exempt** from this requirement.

Optional Supporting Documents

The following documents are not mandatory but are strongly encouraged to support your project application:

- ✓ **Plan that the proposed project supports:** An applicant's proposed project must support an existing relevant plan, such as a municipal multi-year accessibility plan, age-friendly community plan, or organizational strategic plan. Extra points will be awarded during the evaluation for applications where a relevant plan is attached.

- ✓ **Financial quotes:** Applicants are encouraged to provide financial quotes to support the proposed project budget and demonstrate the reasonableness of estimated costs. Extra points will be awarded during the evaluation for applications that provide full quotes from appropriate vendors for costs of $5,000 or more.

- ✓ **Letter of support:** Applicants may provide a letter of support from their local municipality or community to endorse the proposed project and validate the project plan.
    - A letter of support from any project partner may be provided to confirm that they will participate in the project, as well as their in-kind and/or cash contributions towards the project, if any. This type of letter of support may include a letter of agreement with the project partner or an endorsement in the form of a by-law or resolution from a governing body of the project partner.
    - Where the proposed project will take place on property not owned by the applicant, a letter of support from the property owner or landowner confirming permission to undertake the project must be provided.
    - Where the applicant is an unincorporated branch, chapter or a member of an incorporated provincial or national organization, a letter of support confirming that the local branch, chapter, or member is under the parent organization's corporation, must be provided.
    - Letters of support may also validate the capacity of the applicant to carry out the project, the impact of the project and support the relevance of the proposed project.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Carefully review the following information to ensure you have everything you need for a complete application.

- ✓ Contact an **RDA** to discuss any questions you have about your project.
- ✓ Register in **TPON** at least two (2) weeks before the deadline.
- ✓ It is recommended that completed applications are submitted at least two (2) days before the deadline to give time to address any technical challenges. **Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.**
- ✓ Only one (1) application per applicant will be accepted. The application must be from an eligible group (not-for-profit organization, municipality, Indigenous governing body).
- ✓ Ensure that all fields of your application are complete and validated, and that it includes a detailed workplan and budget.
    - All costs must be identified in the budget and correspond with an explanation in the workplan. Costs must be reasonable.
- ✓ Attach all mandatory supporting documents (required from not-for-profit applicants) and any optional supporting documents. Applications that are missing mandatory supporting documents will not be considered for funding. Additionally, incomplete applications cannot be submitted in TPON.
- ✓ Ensure project eligibility: to be eligible for funding, applications **must meet all of the following eligibility criteria**:
    - Application is from an eligible applicant.
    - Funding requested does not exceed $60,000 and at least 80% of budget items are eligible.
    - Project will take place between October 1, 2026 and October 31, 2027.
    - Project addresses the program priority.
    - Project supports an existing plan, such as the municipality's multi-year accessibility plan, age-friendly community plan, or organizational strategic plan.
    - Project focuses on and/or benefits older adults or people with disabilities and will take place in Ontario.

- The organization is compliant with its requirements under Ontario's accessibility laws, as applicable.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND CRITERIA

- Applications must be complete and include all documents required. Incomplete applications will not be assessed for funding.
- Applications must meet eligibility requirements. Ineligible applications will not be assessed for funding.
- Applications must meet minimum scoring requirements to be eligible for funding.
- The ministry will prioritize funding projects that demonstrate benefits with a wider community impact.
- The ministry may consider as a higher priority, applicants that did not receive an EASE Grant funding in 2025-26.
- Note, geographic distribution across the province will also be considered when selecting applications for approval in order to ensure that program funding is equitably distributed.
- To ensure equitable distribution of funding and maximize the program's impact across Ontario, the ministry may limit grants to one (1) project per commonly established geographic area, municipal boundary, etc.
- Funding decisions are final, and there is no appeals process.
- Applications are evaluated by the ministry against the specific criteria outlined below:

Project quality, relevance (25%)

1. Workplan is clear, with clear details about how it will be implemented. The project is achievable by October 31, 2027.
2. Roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in the project make it clear who will do what.
3. Project goes above and beyond the AODA and/or Ontario Building Code (not mandatory). **Note:** Extra points will be awarded.
4. Copy of existing relevant plan, such as a municipal multi-year accessibility plan, age-friendly community plan, or organizational strategic plan, that supports the proposed project is attached to application (not mandatory). **Note:** Extra points will be awarded.

Anticipated impact of project (25%)

5. The project will impact the target priority populations and has a wide community impact
6. Need for the project is clear and convincing. It is understood why the project is needed and how it will impact the community and its residents.
7. The process for measuring performance indicators is evident and metrics are clear.
8. Demonstrates realistic short, medium and long-term impacts.
9. Social characteristics (for example, age, gender, economic status) of each group are addressed and accounted for.

Budget, financial feasibility (25%)

10. Costs are eligible and the budget information provided is clear and consistent with the program requirements.
11. Costs align with the project plan.
12. There is evidence of good value for money.
13. Full quotes are provided from appropriate vendors for costs of $5,000 or more (not mandatory). **Note:** Extra points will be awarded.
14. Estimated costs are likely sufficient to deliver the project.

Organizational capacity (25%)

15. The organization's mandate aligns with the project and target audience. The organization has the capacity to deliver the project.
16. The organization is financially stable and has provided recent financial statements.
17. The project is backed up by an existing strategic plan, multi-year accessibility plan, age-friendly community plan, or similar.
18. The organization has sufficient staff and/or volunteers in place to deliver the project.
19. The organization has a track record of success, has undertaken similar work in the past, and does not have a record of non-compliance.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Please read this section carefully and discuss the information in this section with anyone in your organization who will be involved with signing the agreement or managing the funding.

Successful applicants will receive an approval letter from the ministry confirming that the applicant will receive a grant for the proposed project together with the grant amount. On receipt of the letter, the applicant becomes bound by the terms and conditions that are included with the application form. The application form, program guidelines, approval letter and subsequent correspondence from the ministry, form the agreement between the applicant and the Province of Ontario. For more information, please see the terms and conditions in the application form.

Applicants must review the terms and conditions prior to applying to ensure they can comply with all the requirements.

Once a project has been approved for funding, ministry staff will complete a final review of the application to ensure all expenses and activities listed are eligible for funding. If adjustments are required, ministry staff will contact the applicant, in writing, shortly after notification that the project has been approved in principle and outline the changes required. All changes which are confirmed in writing shall be deemed to be part of the original agreement.

Organizations that are approved for funding will be asked to provide proof of insurance consistent with the terms and conditions (specifically Article A10.0), including having an inclusive limit of not less than two million dollars ($2,000,000) on a per occurrence basis.

The following outlines some of the requirements that apply to projects:

- All funded activities must take place after the agreement is in place (expected in October 1, 2026), and be completed by October 31, 2027**. All funding must be spent within this time period.**
- Unspent portions of the grant must be returned to the Province.

Funding limitations: The maximum grant amount per recipient is $60,000. Only eligible expenditures will be funded. The combination of financial assistance received from the EASE Grant, and other sources cannot exceed the actual budget for the project that is included in the application.

Additional external funding: Cash and in-kind contributions for the difference between the approved grant and total cost of projects can come from the recipient, a partner, or another funding source. Funding from other provincial programs or federal and municipal programs is permitted.

Heritage Properties: Applicants, where applicable, must understand their obligations under the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA) and acknowledge that if the property is designated or contains protected heritage elements, they are responsible for complying with all applicable OHA and municipal requirements. For further information, please consult the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit.

Payment Process: Grants are typically paid in two (2) installments: 1) upon finalizing of the contractual agreement, and 2) upon submission of satisfactory final report.

Performance Measurement: Performance metrics and survey statements are outlined in the application form. During the funding year, you are required to conduct a survey of end users using four outcome metrics listed in Section K of the application form to assess the outcomes of your project. For example, you will have to ask community members how much they agree with the following statement: "This project helped me feel more engaged in my community." The feedback collected through this survey must be included in your final report.

Project Activity Changes: Recipients are required to inform the ministry, as well as any project partners, of any proposed changes that could impact the project. Changes to the project involving scope, budget, or timelines require written approval from the ministry prior to making any of the changes. Requests to the ministry must be made in writing (email is preferred). Where significant changes are required and have been approved, a subsequent correspondence may be required to amend the agreement.

Safety and Security: Project locations must provide a safe environment for staff, volunteers and participants and must adhere to municipal by-laws and all applicable legislation.

Reporting: Recipients will be required to submit a final report within sixty (60) days of the completion of the project, outlining actual activities and expenditures. Recipients are required to include proof of expenditures such as copies of all receipts and financial statements signed by the responsible party. All recipients are required to keep all financial and non-financial records relating to the grant or to the project for a period of seven (7) years. These records include records of all expenditures related to the grant and records substantiating project staffing costs.

Site Visits: As part of ongoing community development activities, RDAs will visit a sampling of EASE Grant recipients during the fiscal year.

Acknowledgement of Provincial Funding and Communication Protocols:

To demonstrate transparency and accountability related to how public funds are spent, recipients must credit the support of the Province of Ontario in any communications related to the project funded through the EASE Grant. This includes all media, publicity, and marketing materials developed for the promotion of project activities, as well as all other project materials developed, including reports, visual and oral presentations.

Successful applicants are required to adhere to the communication protocol set out in the terms and conditions in Article A8.0. This includes:

- Notifying the ministry at least seven (7) days in advance of any event being held in relation to the project or any local media announcement related to the project.
- Obtaining the approval of the ministry before issuing any media releases related to the grant project.
- Obtaining the approval of the ministry on all promotional and/or resource material that uses the Government of Ontario's visual identity prior to publication.

Organizations receiving EASE Grant funding may be required to provide the ministry with additional information regarding the success and sustainable impact of their project.

Collection and Sharing of Information: The ministry is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). Personal information related to the EASE Grant is collected by the ministry for the proper administration of the program, for purposes including evaluation of the project application and the administration and management of funding agreements. Information about organizations and projects that receive funding under the EASE Grant may be made public by the Province of Ontario, which also reserves the right to make a public announcement about any approved grant. Information can include:

- The organization's name, address, telephone/fax numbers, email addresses, website, and other social media platforms; and/or,
- The project's name and description.

Applicants should be aware that any information provided to the ministry in connection with their application may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of FIPPA.

Compliance with Environment, Labour and Tax Laws:

Prior to entering into a new agreement, renewing an existing agreement, or amending an existing agreement to receive new funding, some organizations may need to complete both an attestation to confirm good standing with environment and labour laws, and a Tax Compliance Verification (TCV) to confirm compliance with tax laws.

You must complete the attestation and tax compliance verification if your organization received cumulative transfer payment funding of $10 million or more from the Province of Ontario in the previous fiscal year or is entering into a transfer payment agreement with a contract value of $10 million or more.

The attestation and TCV are valid for one (1) year from the date of completion. You can complete your attestation and TCV in TPON, under your organization profile. Please contact TPON Client Care (TPONCC@ontario.ca) if you need assistance to complete the attestation and the Ministry of Finance (TCV@ontario.ca) for assistance with TCV.

Promotional Material

Recipients are invited to share high-quality photos and videos of their EASE Grant projects with the ministry, provided you have obtained the written consent of any identifiable individuals depicted in the images. The provincial written consent form is available from an RDA. Photos and videos may be used in promotional activities such as the ministry's social media channels.

TRANSFER PAYMENT ONTARIO PROCESS

Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) – Getting Registered

Applications for an EASE Grant must be submitted through TPON. You will need to register or update your organization's contact information to ensure you receive all important communications. For help logging in, applying for funding, or updating your organization's profile in TPON, review the Get Help section to see a list of resources.

Registration set up can take up to two (2) weeks, so register or update your information as soon as possible so you can submit your application without any delay. You can get started on these steps now, even before you are ready to apply.

Technical questions regarding this online system may be directed to TPON Client Care:

Email: TPONCC@ontario.ca
Telephone: (416) 325-6691 or 1-855-216-3090, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET

Since applicants must register with TPON to access EASE Grant applications, most of the information requested in the first few sections of the application form (such as address, contact information, etc.) will be automatically filled in using data from the registration process.

Please note that the My Ontario account is registered at the individual level and not the organization level. If someone in your organization has an account that is used for a different government grant application, but you are the one submitting this new application, you will require your own separate account.

Once you are registered and have access, the next step is to complete an application online through TPON.

Once an application has been downloaded and started to be filled in, it may be saved at any point and completed before the deadline. Please refer to the TPON website for technical instructions on how to submit the application.

Upon receipt of 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 the number listed above.

All submitted applications will be assessed following the closing of the application period.

Following the evaluation period, the primary contact provided by the applicant will be notified by email regarding the application status. It is therefore important to provide accurate and up-to-date contact information and to regularly monitor the primary contact's phone and email to enable timely communication regarding the status of the application.

Questions

Please refer to the TPON contact information above if you have technical questions about the steps involved with the application system.

If you have other questions about the grant program in general or any of the information listed in these program guidelines, please contact your **RDA** who can address questions you have regarding this program.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES' GLOSSARY

The following definitions are for the purposes of the 2026-27 Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility EASE Grant Program Guidelines:

AGEISM: According to the World Health Organization, ageism refers to the negative stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age.

COMMUNITY: For the purposes of the performance measure listed in Section K of the application form, a community has a population of at least 1,000 and/or a population density of 400 or more people per square kilometer.

DISABILITY: Under the AODA disability is defined as:

a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*;

EASE GRANT: The Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility's Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone (EASE) Grant.

EVALUATION: The systematic collection and analysis of information on the performance of a policy, program, project or initiative to make judgements about relevance, progress or success and cost-effectiveness and/or to inform future programming decisions about design and implementation.

FINAL REPORT: The final report is to be submitted by the grant recipient within sixty (60) days after the project is completed. The final report will provide information on both the project administration as well as the financial activity. It will provide details related to whether the project's objectives were met, how the success of the project was measured, the level of community participation and response, and any other details required as outlined in the agreement. As part of the final report, all details of financial activity must be documented and reported, such as a financial statement summarizing all project costs, expenses, and income (such as in-kind contributions).

GRANT: Transfer payment for a specified purpose for which obligations are outlined in program guidelines, the agreement, and program correspondence.

INTERGENERATIONAL: Intergenerational activities are social engagements and interactions that aim to recognize, address, and reduce ageism, bringing together younger and older generations for a common purpose. They build on the strengths that different generations have to offer, nurture understanding and mutual respect, and challenge ageism. Participation in intergenerational programs and meaningful cross-age relationships may decrease social isolation and increase older adults' sense of belonging, self-esteem, and well-being, while also improving social and emotional skills of children and youth participants.

LETTER OF SUPPORT: A letter from an independent person or organization that endorses the applicant by validating the mandate of the organization and supporting the proposed project. When a project will occur on property not owned by the applicant, a letter from the property owner or landowner confirming permission to undertake the project must be provided. If the applicant is an unincorporated branch, chapter, or member of an incorporated provincial or national organization, a letter confirming that the local entity operates under the parent organization's incorporation must also be provided.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION: A not-for-profit organization is a club, society, or association that's organized and operated solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, or any other purpose except profit. These organizations must be incorporated (or be a branch, chapter or member of an incorporated entity) and, for the purposes of the program, must provide proof of incorporation and not-for-profit status by producing a copy of the Articles of Incorporation, letters patent, or other applicable documentation requested by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

OLDER ADULTS: Individuals aged 55 and older.

OUTCOMES: The significant changes, effects or impacts that are the result of implementing the project. Outcomes must be measurable and may occur within organizations, communities, and/or individuals. They may relate to behaviour, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, conditions, or other attributes. There is a direct relationship between outputs (i.e., quantitative results) and outcomes, but they are not the same thing.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Indicators that provide qualitative and/or quantitative information needed to measure whether a project is achieving its intended outcomes. Qualitative data can be expressed in terms of change or comparison between two states (e.g., "The student reported she felt more capable solving math problems by the end of the semester than she did at the beginning"). Quantitative indicators can be in the form of a ratio, percentage, comparison, or figure (e.g., "The student's math test scores increased by 20% over the course of the semester.").

PROJECT: A set of activities or functions that a recipient proposes to undertake. A project has a clear start and end date, occurs within a reasonable period, and demonstrates measurable outputs and outcomes.

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **How can I learn more about the Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone (EASE) Grant and the application process?**
   Attend a webinar! To support applicants, the ministry will be hosting four webinars during the application window to provide program information, and guidance on completing and submitting the application form. Webinars in English and French will be held the week of April 6, 2026 and the week of April 20, 2026. Contact your Regional Development Advisor to learn about the specific webinar dates and how to register. Following the first set of webinars in April, recordings of the webinars will be posted in TPON.

2. **What mandatory supporting documents do I need to submit with my application?**
   Not-for-profit organizations must include their most recent financial documents and proof of incorporation with their application. Financial statements should be no older than two years and must be for a complete financial year (either calendar or fiscal, whatever the organization uses). Municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies are exempt from this requirement.

   When submitting your application in Transfer Payment Ontario you must include the completed application form and all mandatory supporting documents. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and cannot be submitted in TPON. For more information, see the Application Checklist.

3. **Why do some applications not get considered for funding?**
   Applications that are missing mandatory supporting documents and/or do not have a detailed project plan or budget will not be considered for funding. Applicants and applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements will also not be considered for funding.

   For details on the mandatory additional documentation required for type of organization, please refer to the Mandatory Supporting Documents section in the guidelines.

4. **Is it possible to save the application form as draft and come back later to continue to populate the information needed?**
   Yes, you are able to save the form as a draft and come back to it at a later date before the deadline. Completed forms with all mandatory supporting documents must be submitted by the deadline.

5. **There is no Submit button on the application form. Do we attach it to an email to submit it?**
   No. Completed and validated forms must be submitted by uploading the form into Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON). Once you have completed your application, select the Validate button to ensure all mandatory fields are complete. If the form cannot be successfully validated, you will be directed to the mandatory sections that are missing information. Only successfully validated forms can be uploaded and submitted in TPON.

6. **My application will not validate so I can not submit it. What's wrong?**
   Make sure you have completed all mandatory fields (indicated by an asterisk), and electronically signed the application or you will not be able to validate and submit the application form.

   Select the Validate button to ensure all mandatory fields are complete. If the form cannot be successfully validated, you will be directed to the mandatory sections that are missing information. Only successfully validated forms can be uploaded and submitted in TPON.