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**Indigenous
Innovation
Initiative**

**Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality through
Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship:
Frequently Asked Questions**

Last updated: April 13th, 2023

Document overview:

Below are some questions you may have about this Request for Proposals. These questions are grouped together by topic, and you can click on a question in the list to jump to the answer. If you need more information or do not see your question, please email info@indigenouslyinnovate.org.

General questions:

- [What is the challenge statement?](#)
- [What is Indigenous innovation?](#)

What is the challenge statement?

The challenge statement is part of the Request for Proposals, which is a document that outlines what the Advancing Indigenous Gender Equality through Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program is, what funding is being provided, and the key challenges that we are looking to solve with this funding.

When we review your application, a key thing we are looking for is how well it responds to the content of this challenge statement (Section 2 of the Request for Proposals). See Section 4.2 of the Request for Proposals for more details about how your application will be assessed.

What is Indigenous innovation?

Indigenous innovation is a new program, product, or service that is developed, designed, and/or led by an Indigenous person which supports the resurgence of Indigenous culture, systems, and/or economies, and aims to maintain the existence and wellbeing of all our relations. It is a necessary tool to allow Indigenous Peoples to uphold their responsibility to all their relations, particularly as caretakers for the planet and its inhabitants. We recognize Indigenous innovation as not exclusively something new, but something that can be based on Indigenous cultural, traditional and/or ancestral knowledges, worldviews, and practices and applied to a new situation or context.

Questions about the funding that is available:

- [Why is this funding available?](#)
- [Where is this funding coming from?](#)
- [How much funding can I apply for?](#)
- [What is the difference between “Seed” and “Transition-to-Scale” funding? What type is this Request for Proposals providing?](#)
- [What can I use the funding for?](#)
- [What can for-profit corporations use this funding for?](#)
- [How many projects will be funded?](#)
- [Is this the only time you are offering funding?](#)

Why is this funding available?

This funding aims to increase access to capital for innovation led by Indigenous women, Two Spirit, trans, queer, non-binary, and gender-diverse individuals.

Where is this funding coming from?

This round of funding is coming from the department of Women and Gender Equality (Canada) (WaGE), the McConnell Foundation, the Pathy Foundation, and the Tree of Life Family Foundation. There may be other funders in the future.

How much funding can I apply for?

You can apply for up to \$125,000 for a funding period of up to 12 months (one year) for the Seed program.

If you are applying for Transition to Scale funding, you can apply for up to \$300,000 for a period of 18 months. If you need more than this amount, you may have to bring in other funders to cover the remaining amount.

What is the difference between “Seed” and “Transition-to-Scale” funding? What type is this Request for Proposals providing?

This Request for Proposals is for both Seed and Transition to Scale funding. Seed funding supports innovators and entrepreneurs to build and test their innovative ideas to see if they work, which is called demonstrating a “proof of concept.” Innovators have up to 12 months to complete this work.

Transition-to-Scale funding supports innovators and entrepreneurs to refine and test innovative ideas that have been proven to work or have achieved a “proof of concept” and want to implement these solutions at a larger scale (make it more cost effective or available to more people/communities, etc.). Innovators have up to 18 months to complete this work.

What can I use the funding for?

Successful applicants will sign a Grant Agreement with Grand Challenges Canada outlining all the activities that can or cannot be funded using this grant. This funding **cannot** be used to purchase land or office space for you to work on or in.

This funding can only be used to pay for activities related to testing and improving your innovative idea. It can take place through a new or a pre-existing business. Activities that could be funded using this grant must be for developing and testing your new idea. For example, expenses for outreach, research and development, consulting services, Elder or knowledge keeper honoraria, technical calls, travel, training, salaries, buying computers and other equipment, paying for childcare so you can travel, etc. It cannot be used for general operating expenses. Please review the [Grand Challenges Canada cost directive](#) for more details.

The final list of eligible expenses will be confirmed with all successful applicants.

What can for-profit corporations use this funding for?

This funding aims to develop, test, and refine Indigenous innovation. We are **not able to fund project activities that generate a profit during the project cycle**; however, this does not mean it cannot generate revenue. "**Revenue**" is the money you receive from selling goods and services. "**Profit**" is the amount of money you have left after operational costs, salaries, debts,

and other expenses have been deducted from your revenue. During the funded innovation development and testing phase, you can use this funding to cover the cost of activities that bring money into your organization **only if** these activities are not intended to generate a profit from the innovation. If any profit *is* made based on this activity, the money must be reinvested into your initiative during the timeframe of this funding or returned to Grand Challenges Canada. Please note that the timeframe for Seed projects is 12 months, while that of Transition-to-Scale is 18 months. Here are two examples to help explain this:

Business A is a manufacturing company with an innovative idea requiring them to modify one of the processes they follow to make their product. They will hire someone to develop and test this new process internally to make dummy products that will not be sold to anyone. This business uses the funding to pay for activities that are not intended to bring in revenue or profit.

OR

Business B is a manufacturing company with an innovative idea requiring them to modify one of the processes they follow to make their product. They will hire someone to develop this new process but will test it in their real production line. This means they will use this new process to make the product that will be sold; however, they will reinvest any revenue or profit into more testing and refinement of the new process.

How many projects will be funded?

This funding call has a rolling intake. We are looking for the best ideas with the biggest potential to impact gender equality, cultural reclamation, climate action, and/or community well-being.

A Selection Committee made up of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals, and potentially some non-Indigenous industry experts, with lived and/or professional experience will support the review and scoring of applications to create a ranked list of top-scoring projects. Starting at the top of this list, we will fund as many projects as possible with the money available. There is at least \$3,000,000 available in the fiscal year 2023-2024 (April to March). Based on this ranked list, the number of projects we approve for funding will depend on the amount of funding each applicant requests.

Is this the only time you are offering funding?

No. This opportunity is open on a rolling basis. You can re-apply as often as you wish as long as you address any feedback from a previous submission. Visit www.indigenousinnovate.org for updates as they are available, and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and/or [Twitter](#) to stay informed.

Questions about the application:

- [What is the application deadline?](#)
- [What does it mean to “apply a gender lens” to my application?](#)
- [Can my proposal cover multiple provinces or territories in Canada?](#)
- [Can you share a sample Grant Agreement so I can align my proposal to the terms and conditions?](#)
- [Can I submit my application in a language other than English?](#)
- [Can I mail in my application?](#)
- [Can I send a video instead of applying through Fluxx?](#)

- Can I save my application, so I can work on it over multiple days?
- Do you have examples of successful applications from the past?

What is the application deadline?

There is no deadline; however, Grand Challenges Canada may close the call at any time. Applications are accepted on a rolling quarterly to semi-annual basis. Deadlines for each cycle will be posted on our website www.indigenoussinnovate.org. If you have not previously applied for funding from Grand Challenges Canada, you will need to register on Fluxx first. It can take up to 3 days to process your registration.

What does it mean to “apply a gender lens” to my application?

This means that you develop a proposal that considers how all genders may be impacted by your innovation. Think about how your innovation impacts or empowers women, Two Spirit, trans, queer, non-binary, and gender-diverse peoples in the following ways:

- Are they the people being hired to work for your business, venture or organization, or to lead your project?
- Are they full or partial owners of your business, venture or organization?
- Are they leading your project or playing a key decision-making role for your innovation?
- Are they members of your Board of Directors?
- Are they filling executive or leadership roles in your business, venture, project or organization?
- Will they directly use or benefit from your innovation?
- Does your idea, if funded, include a plan to improve gender equality across any of the above areas?

Can my proposal cover multiple provinces or territories in Canada?

Eligible projects must be led by an Indigenous woman, 2-Spirit, trans, non-binary, or gender-diverse person who can demonstrate a meaningful connection or relationship with an Indigenous community in Canada, inclusive of First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis communities. There is no restriction on the geographic boundaries for your proposal, as long as project activities are based in Canada.

Only organizations that are **legally registered** within Canada can apply for this funding opportunity. Projects can be based in urban, rural, and/or remote communities from coast to coast to coast.

Can you share a sample Grant Agreement so I can align my proposal to the terms and conditions?

No. We are not able to share a sample Grant Agreement with you at this stage. If your application is successful, we will share all terms and conditions with you during the due diligence process. Please review the Request for Proposals carefully.

Can I submit my application in a language other than English?

Yes. Applications can be submitted in English or French. If you need support for translation, please email info@indigenousinnovate.org and we will do our best to connect you with someone to support this.

Can I mail in my application?

All applications ultimately need to be submitted using the Fluxx platform, <https://gcc.fluxx.io>, the online application system Grand Challenges Canada uses for all its Requests for Proposals. If you have internet connectivity challenges or cannot access Fluxx, please email info@indigenousinnovate.org as soon as you can, and we will do our best to support you.

Can I send a video in instead of applying through Fluxx?

All applications must be submitted using Fluxx, the online application system Grand Challenges Canada uses for all its Requests for Proposals. However, you can use and/or include videos, images, and other documents, like PowerPoint Presentations, for your application if you like. This can consist of information about past work, research about your innovation, or other information you think will support your application.

We have added recommended sizes for videos and audio files in Section 6 of the Request for Proposals. Reviewers will be asked to spend no more than one (1) hour reviewing each application. Any content above the suggested sizes may not be reviewed. Please note that materials **should not** include intellectual property, such as patents or detailed plans.

Can I save my application so I can work on it over multiple days?

Yes.

Do you have examples of successful applications from the past?

No. To protect those applicants' privacy, knowledge, and ideas, Grand Challenges Canada does not share previous applications.

Questions about eligibility:

- [Who can apply for this funding?](#)
- [Can I apply for funding if I do not meet the eligibility criteria?](#)
- [Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?](#)
- Can I apply for funding if the proposed idea is already being used elsewhere?

Who can apply for this funding?

Section 4.1 of the RFP outlines eligibility. The organization must be legally registered within Canada. This includes not-for-profit corporations, for-profit corporations, partnerships, sole-proprietorships, and co-operatives. You do not need to be officially registered as a social enterprise. You may be asked to provide evidence of your relationship to the Indigenous community at a later stage.

We cannot fund individuals.

Can I apply for funding if I do not meet the eligibility criteria?

No. To apply for funding, you must meet the eligibility criteria noted in Section 2 of the Request for Proposals (Program Scope).

Do I need any specific academic qualifications to apply?

No. Anyone can apply for funding, regardless of their academic qualifications. However, the team leading the project must have the skills required to carry out the proposed activities of the innovation.

Can I apply for funding if the idea I propose is already being used elsewhere?

Our definition of Indigenous innovation includes trying existing ideas in new contexts. For example, if an idea is being used in non-Indigenous communities already and may be able to meet the needs of Indigenous communities but has yet to be used in this context before, an adaptation of that idea to work in or with Indigenous communities would be considered innovation. Applicants must clearly define why they believe the idea would apply in this new context and what modifications make it innovative.

If the innovative idea has been proven to work in an Indigenous context already (proof of concept) and the proposed project is to scale it for more people or communities to benefit from it, please consider the Transition to Scale funding category request.

Questions about submitting multiple applications:

- If I am leading a project, can I submit two separate applications for two separate projects?
- If I lead a project for one application, can I support (but not lead or apply for) the work for another application?
- Can one organization or entity submit more than one proposal?
- Can one organization or entity receive more than one grant?

If I am leading a project, can I submit two separate applications for two separate projects?

No. Each Project Lead is only allowed to submit one application.

If I lead a project for one application, can I support (but not lead or apply for) the work for another application?

Yes.

Can one organization or entity submit more than one proposal?

Yes. One organization, business, institution, Indigenous government, etc., can submit more than one application so long as separate Project Leads lead the work for each proposal.

Note: Please register the Project Lead. This name will appear on the application's Project Lead section and cannot be edited, so ensure proper spelling and formatting.

Can one organization or entity receive more than one grant?

Yes.

Questions about the selection process:

- How will you decide who receives funding?
- Who will be reviewing applications?
- If I submit an application, does that mean I will receive funding?
- How will I know if I am selected to receive funding?
- What if I have a good idea but am not selected for funding?

How will you decide who receives funding?

The review process is outlined in Section 4 of the Request for Proposals. For all applicants who meet the eligibility criteria, their proposal will be assessed based on the criteria noted in Sections 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 5 of the Request for Proposals.

Applications will not be prioritized based on what type of organization or entity is applying.

Who will be reviewing applications?

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative team will confirm eligibility and screen for whether they meet the criteria of being innovative and relevant. Indigenous Innovation Initiative team members will then review eligible, innovative, and relevant applications. Top projects will then be reviewed alongside a group of external community members on our Selection Committee. This group is comprised of people with experience in social innovation, business and entrepreneurship who are familiar with the Indigenous context in Canada.

A final list of recommended applications for funding will be prepared based on the ranked list by the Selection Committee, and final selection decisions will be approved by the Board of Directors of Grand Challenges Canada.

For all the details related to the review and selection process, refer to Sections 4 and 5 of the Request for Proposals.

If I submit an application, does that mean I will receive funding?

No. You will only receive funding if your application is approved, and Grand Challenges Canada enters into a legally binding grant agreement with your organization. Funding depends on you meeting all the terms and conditions in the grant agreement.

If I am invited to an interview, does that mean I will receive funding?

No. You will only receive funding if your application is approved, and Grand Challenges Canada enters into a legally binding grant agreement with your organization. Funding depends on you meeting all the terms and conditions in the grant agreement.

How will I know if I am selected to receive funding?

Successful applicants will be notified via email if they have received funding.

What if I have a good idea but am not selected for funding?

In the future, we may develop a program to support applicants who have good ideas but may need more time to be ready for funding. This program would support people in developing their ideas for future Requests for Proposals.

What if I have a good idea, but the application form indicates that I am not eligible for funding?

We are only offering funding for Seed and Transition to Scale projects. If you self-select into an innovation stage that is not Seed or Transition to Scale, you are not eligible for this funding program. We encourage you to reapply when your project meets the Seed or Transition to Scale requirements.

Questions about help and support:

- Is there anyone who can help me apply?
- Who can I ask for help when using Fluxx?

Is there anyone who can help me apply?

Yes. We have defined a number of supports for applicants. Please see our website for the most up-to-date information.

Who can I ask for help when using Fluxx?

If you require any support for Fluxx, please visit <http://www.grandchallenges.ca/fluxxsupport/>, email info@indigenouinnovate.org.