

GUIDELINES:

Grant Writer Services

Peace River Regional District

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This document was prepared by Clear Course Ltd. for the Peace River Regional District.

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1. OVERVIEW

Non-profit community groups often rely on fundraising initiatives, including applying for grants, to fund their programs and projects. Since applying for grants can be complex and time-consuming, the Peace River Regional District's Grant Writer Services (GWS) program is designed to support community groups and non-profit organizations within the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) with:

1. finding suitable grants for projects
2. writing grant proposals
3. assisting with additional documentation and technical requirements required by a funder (e.g., letters of support)
4. reviewing grant proposals drafted by community groups
5. providing feedback on past unsuccessful grant proposals

The PRRD's Grant Writer Services program is funded by the PRRD and the Northern Development Initiative Trust's Grant Writer Support Program.

1.1. Contacting the Grant Writer Services Program

If your community group is eligible for the GWS program (see eligibility criteria in Section 2) and is seeking assistance with a grant, please contact the PRRD's GWS program at **least four weeks before the grant deadline**. Reviewing a project and assembling all the required information for a grant proposal can take a substantial amount of time. The more time you allow for writing your grant proposal and gathering supporting documentation, the better chance your proposal will be successful.

To contact the PRRD's Grant Writer Services, email grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca.

1.2. Sign-up for Grant Opportunities

If you would like to stay in the loop on upcoming funding programs, subscribe to the *Grant Opportunities Email Newsletter* on the PRRD's website (<https://www.prrd.bc.ca/subscribe>).

2. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Carefully review the following eligibility criteria to ensure your community group is eligible to access the PRRD's Grant Writer Services (GWS) program.

Community groups may access the GWS program if they meet **all** the following requirements:

1. the community group is located within the Peace River Regional District
2. the community group is at least one of the following:
 - not-for-profit registered society
 - registered charity
 - church group
 - community hall operator
 - parent advisory council (PAC)
 - fall fair association
 - museum association
 - not-for-profit tourism provider
 - sporting group
 - emergency services association
 - organization providing services for the relief of poverty
3. the proposed project or program (which requires funding) will benefit one or more communities within the Peace River Regional District
4. the community group agrees to:
 - a) complete a short customer satisfaction survey once a grant proposal has been completed by the PRRD's Grant Writer Services; and
 - b) report back to the PRRD on the result of any submitted grant proposals (i.e., successful, unsuccessful, or otherwise).

If you are unsure if your community group is eligible,
please contact Olivia Lundahl at olivia.lundahl@prrd.bc.ca.

3. UNDERSTANDING GRANTS

If you are new to grant writing, understanding how grants work and what to consider when searching for and applying for grants is helpful. In addition to knowing where to look for grant opportunities and how to write successful grant proposals, it also helps if you are familiar with different types of grants and the various requirements. The GWS program is here to help you navigate many of these requirements in advance of your next grant deadline.

3.1. Grants vs. Loans

The difference between a grant and loan is repayment. A grant is non-repayable; however, a loan requires you to repay the money you have been loaned. There are usually conditions associated with both grants and loans.

3.2. Funding Agencies

There are a variety of funding agencies and organizations that offer grants (and loans) to all types of organizations, individuals, businesses, community groups, etc. The amount of funding and the requirements associated with a grant program will vary depending on the type of funding agency. The most common types of funding agencies are:

- Government, Crown Corporations, and Administrative Branches of Government – including local, provincial, territorial, and federal agencies (e.g., City of Dawson Creek, Peace River Regional District, Government of BC, BC Arts Council, Canada Post, and BC Hydro)
- Foundations – including family-based, private, public, and community foundations (e.g., Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Air Canada Foundation, and Vancouver Foundation)
- Trusts (e.g., Northern Development Initiative Trust, South Peace Mackenzie Trust)
- Corporations (e.g., Alta Gas, Canfor, and Air Canada)
- Co-operatives (e.g., Mountain Equipment Co-op and Vancity)

In addition to granting funds, corporations may also sponsor projects. This is referred to as “corporate sponsorship.” Both entities enter into a mutually beneficial partnership agreement. For example, Canfor may provide funds for a summer soccer camp program in exchange for the program being named the “Canfor Summer 2026 Youth Soccer Program.” The GWS program does not support corporate sponsorship applications.

3.3. Grant Sectors

Funders usually specify which types of projects and programs they support. When searching for funding that is suitable for your project, you can narrow down your search to include specific sectors. These may include:

- agricultural
- arts & culture
- business
- childcare
- clean energy
- climate change
- conservation
- economic development
- education
- emergency planning & management
- employment
- energy
- entrepreneurs
- environmental
- farming
- food security
- green spaces
- harm reduction
- health & wellness
- heritage
- housing
- Indigenous
- infrastructure
- land stewardship
- language
- marketing, branding & media
- natural resources
- product development
- public safety
- recreation & sport
- research & development
- seniors
- social services
- technology
- tourism
- training
- transportation
- youth

3.4. Grant Eligibility

Grant funding is available to a wide variety of groups, including:

- non-profit organizations and registered charities
- unincorporated groups
- government and government agencies
- academic institutions and researchers
- hospitals

Grants for individuals and for-profit entities, such as businesses or social enterprises, are harder to come by. Be sure to check which types of recipients are eligible for a grant before applying. The GWS program does not support funding for individuals and for-profit entities.

3.5. Matched Funding Requirements

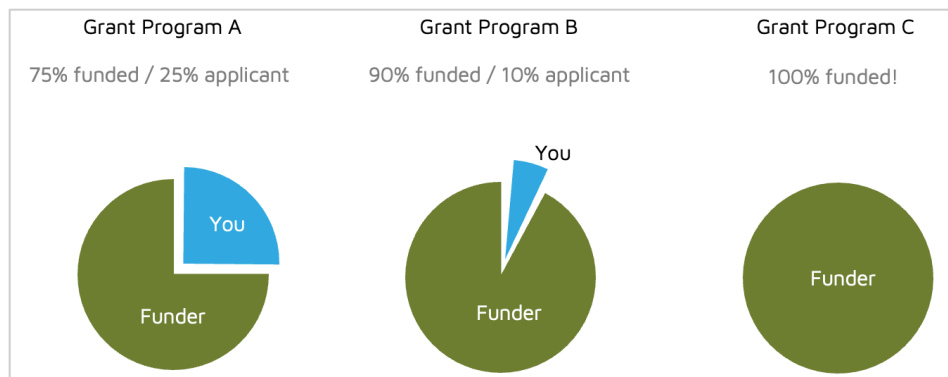
Some funders require that a community group cover a portion of project costs. This is commonly referred to as “matched funding.” For example, a funder will provide a grant that covers 75% of the total project costs, leaving the community group to cover the remaining 25%. A funder may request proof of matched

funds as a requirement of a grant proposal (i.e., before a grant is awarded). This may be in the form of a Council or Board motion or a copy of the applicant’s financial records.

Depending on the funder’s requirements, project costs covered by a community group may be cash or in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are non-cash contributions provided to the project in the form of goods or services to which a value can be attributed, and that would have been otherwise purchased and paid for during the project, e.g., volunteer labour, equipment, or donated services.

The amount of matched funds varies from grant to grant; many grant programs don’t require any matched funds, with the funder covering 100% of eligible project costs.

Matched Funding Examples



3.6. Grant Timelines

Funders will often define project start and end dates. For example, a funder may require that a project not start until funding is awarded and start no later than a specific date. They may also require that the project be completed by a specific date.

Grant outcomes (also referred to as award announcements) also vary and are typically stated in the grant guidelines. For example, the funder may state that grant outcomes will be announced by a certain time of year (e.g., spring) or by a specific date. A final decision can take anywhere from one to eighteen months from the time a proposal is submitted.

When you are considering a funding program, it is important that you ensure your community group has the capacity and ability to meet any specific grant timelines.

3.7. Limitations on Use of Grant Funds

Funders often specify how funds can be used by an organization, i.e., “eligible expenditures.” For example, a grant may be used to cover project costs, including professional consultants, materials, labour, and marketing; however, the funder may not allow the organization to use funds to purchase land, pay for

staff salaries, and cover any regular scheduled maintenance costs. Be sure to read through the requirements of a grant before applying to ensure there aren't limitations on the use of the grant funds.

Grant recipients also need to report on how funds were spent, so adhering to the grant budget is imperative for building trust and rapport with funders that sometimes fund organizations year after year.

3.8. Grant Reporting

Funders often require that grant recipients complete one or more progress reports throughout the duration of a project plus a final report (or "close-out" report) that provides information about the completed project and grant expenditures.

A progress report may include a summary of funds spent to date, completed milestones, and any variances or concerns about the progress and cost of the project to date.

The final report may include financial statements, a summary of what was completed, items that weren't completed (but may have been part of the initial proposal), the number of jobs created by the project, photos, testimonials from project partners, and impact statements from participants.

When you are considering a funding stream for your project, it is important to ensure your community group has the capacity and ability to meet any specific reporting requirements and timelines. Details of reporting requirements may also be noted in a funding agreement between the recipient and the funder.

4. ENSURING YOUR PROJECT IS GRANT READY

4.1. What is a grant-ready project?

A grant-ready project (also referred to as “project-ready” or “shovel-ready”) means that your community group is prepared to submit detailed information about your project with the grant proposal and, if successful, use the awarded funds to implement your project within the required timeframe. This usually means that:

- you have a solid understanding of your project goals and objectives
- you have a confirmed budget (which includes estimates from vendors and contractors)
- you have a timeline for implementation and completion (e.g., your contractors are committed to commence the work, and/or you have tenders ready to post)
- you have support from your community and other involved or affected groups
- you’ve secured matched funding, if required
- you have staff, volunteers, and/or a project manager available to oversee the project

While it is preferable that you have a grant-ready project when working with a grant writer, they can support community groups to move projects from an idea to a grant-ready project, if there are sufficient resources and time.

4.2. Project Checklist

Most grant programs are targeted at grant-ready projects. If you are unsure if your project is grant-ready, use this checklist to flush out the details of your project. The complexity of grant proposals varies significantly, so be prepared with as much information as possible.

- Project name
- Project description
- Statement of need – why is this project needed? Why is it important? How does this project align with your organization’s purpose, vision, and strategic priorities?
- Benefits – who and how many people will benefit and how will they benefit? How many communities will benefit and what are their populations? Are there wider benefits such as environmental benefits?
- Timeline – what is the start date and completion date? What are the key milestones?
- Project budget (see Appendix 1 for budget example) – be as detailed as possible, seek multiple quotes, if possible, and ensure you include a contingency, especially if the grant isn’t awarded for a few months or there are high-risk activities (e.g., infrastructure projects that are subject to construction cost increases)
- Jobs – will there be any new part-time or full-time jobs because of this project?

- Ongoing maintenance – can you demonstrate that your community group can afford to maintain any project assets once the project is complete?
- Project sustainability – for longer-term initiatives, how will the project be funded over time? For example, if seed funding is requested for a new program, how does the organization plan to sustain the initiative once the seed funding has been spent?
- Environmental impacts (mostly larger projects that involve infrastructure) – what are they and how will they be mitigated?
- Impacts on Indigenous peoples and communities – what are the impacts and how have they been addressed?

Another important consideration when preparing to apply for a grant is whether you have access to the required documents for your proposal. Required documents are typically listed in the grant guidelines; they may include:

- financial statements (often from the last two fiscal years)
- operating budget
- annual report
- strategic plan
- organizational chart
- Articles of Incorporation or other incorporation documents
- Constitution and Bylaws (for registered non-profits and charities)
- Letter or Certificate of Good Standing (for registered non-profits and charities)
- letters of support from partners, agencies, local government, supporters, and other community supporters
- certified documents for infrastructure grants (e.g., engineering or environmental reports)
- Board or Council Resolution to show support for the project (note that this often takes a minimum of two weeks to obtain)
- greenhouse gas calculations (often required for infrastructure and clean energy grants)

If a letter of support is required from the PRRD for a grant proposal, you will need to allow a minimum of three weeks to obtain board approval.

5. WORKING WITH A PRRD GRANT WRITER

If your community group is eligible for the PRRD Grant Writer Services (GWS) program and you have identified a grant you want to apply for, or you are seeking funding for a project and need to find a suitable grant, then:

1. complete the Community Group Intake Form at www.prrd.bc.ca/parks-recreation-community/grants-and-scholarships/grant-writer-services-program; and
2. email your completed form to grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca.

A grant writer from the GWS program will contact you and set up a virtual meeting to initiate the grant proposal writing process. At times, the grant writing team may be at capacity, so it is best to initiate the process as early as possible. There is no fee for eligible community groups to access the program.

If you have submitted a past grant proposal that was unsuccessful and would like feedback from a grant writer on how you could improve your proposal (either for a resubmission or to apply to a different funding program), please email grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca to discuss.

If you would like to stay in the loop on upcoming funding programs, subscribe to the *Grant Opportunities Email Newsletter* on the PRRD's website (www.prrd.bc.ca/subscribe).

If you are unsure if your community group is eligible to use the GWS program,
please contact Olivia Lundahl at olivia.lundahl@prrd.bc.ca.

If you are unsure if your project is grant-ready or have questions about the GWS program,
please email grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca.

6. PRRD'S GRANT WRITING SERVICES (GWS) PROCESS

Step	Description
1. Ensure eligibility for GWS program	To ensure your group is eligible to access the GWS program, review the eligibility criteria in Section 2 of this guide or at www.prrd.bc.ca/parks-recreation-community/grants-and-scholarships/grant-writer-services-program .
2. Community group completes Intake Form	To help the grant writer understand your community group and project, download the Community Group Intake Form available at www.prrd.bc.ca/parks-recreation-community/grants-and-scholarships/grant-writer-services-program . Email the completed form to grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca . If you would like feedback on an unsuccessful grant proposal, you are not required to complete this intake form; instead, send an email to grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca detailing your request and attaching the unsuccessful grant proposal.
3. Discovery Meeting: Grant options, grant eligibility & suitability, organizational readiness, and timelines	At this stage of the process, you will have been assigned a grant writer. During the first discovery meeting, they will collect requirements and information about your organization and project, determine your grant-readiness, discuss any grants already identified, review key project contacts, and more. They will also identify next steps and provide a summary of the meeting to keep both you and the grant writer on track.
4. Grant Scan (if applicable)	If you are seeking grant funding for a project but do not have a grant identified, the grant writer will conduct a grant scan. The grant writer will send you the results of this scan and work with you to determine which grant is the most suitable.
5. Grant preparation & development	The grant writer will flush out the details of your project, collect grant requirements, and draft the grant proposal and associated supporting documents, if applicable. Even though the grant writer will guide the writing process, this step requires collaboration.
6. Review draft with community group	The grant writer will meet with you to ensure the narrative of the proposal reflects your project vision and details and make any necessary changes.
7. Final review & submission	This is the final review of the grant proposal where the grant writer will proofread all documents and ensure all necessary documents are ready for submission. They will provide you with instructions on how to submit your proposal package (e.g., online or by email) and email you final copies of all documents for you to submit and keep on file.
8. Inform Grant Writer of funding outcome	The PRRD is required to report on funding outcomes to measure the success of this program. The grant writer will follow-up with you to confirm the success of your grant proposal. If you receive hear back from the funder (successful or unsuccessful), please follow-up with your assigned grant writer, or email grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca , to share the outcome.

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if I'm unable to confirm all the details about my proposed project, e.g., partners on my project?

Do the best you can to provide as much detail as possible. If you are successful with your proposal and there are changes down the road, contact the funder to obtain approval for those changes. If in doubt, contact the funder.

Can you help obtain estimates or quotes to inform the project budget?

No. Clear Course does not support organizations with obtaining quotes or cost estimates for a project.

Can you help me write a grant to the PRRD Grant-in-Aid program?

No. The GWS program does not support proposals to the PRRD's Grant-in-Aid program, as one of the goals of the GWS program is to secure funds from *outside* the regional district.

Can I still access the GWS program if a grant deadline is less than three weeks away?

The more time you can allow for preparing your grant proposal, the better chance you will be successful. However, we recognize that sometimes this isn't possible. Depending on the number of grant proposals currently being prepared, the PRRD's grant writers will do their best to support you within the limited timeframe.

Who is the PRRD's Grant Writer?

The PRRD's Grant Writer Services program is provided by Clear Course Ltd. Clear Course has a team of experienced grant writers who assist community groups with their grant proposals. Please email grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca to connect with a grant writer.

What if I need a PRRD Board resolution for my proposal?

Community groups need to plan for a minimum of three weeks to obtain a PRRD Board resolution. Clear Course can support this process or draft the necessary documents.

Can you help prepare corporate sponsorship packages?

No. Corporate sponsorship is outside the scope of the GWS program.

What is my role during the grant proposal writing process?

Even though the grant writer will be assisting with your grant proposal (and likely doing most of the writing on your behalf), they will most likely require your support as they learn about your project and begin to build your proposal. Depending on the funder and the type of grant, the amount of information required can range from simple to very complex. The grant writer will work with you (and possibly other members of your community group) to flush out details about your project (including history, benefits, jobs created, and long-term operational plans) and assist you with gathering all the required documentation to support your proposal.

Who submits the grant proposal?

Ideally, a grant proposal is submitted by the organization or the community group that is applying for funding. The grant writer will work with the applicant to coordinate submission. Submission often happens through an online portal or by email. Online portals often require that a user first register for an account; this can take upwards of two weeks to confirm, so please ensure you allow enough time to apply for an online account to meet your grant deadline.

What does it mean to leverage grants?

Often grants do not cover 100% of project costs. Applicants are required to contribute cash or in-kind contributions (also referred to as matched funds). Applicants can apply to multiple sources to secure the required matching funds so that the total project costs are covered by grant funding. However, stipulations (like “stacking limits”) may apply, especially with respect to government funding.

What are stacking limits?

Stacking limits are most often associated with grants where an applicant can apply for both federal and provincial funds. Limits are set to ensure that funds contributed to applicants do not account for more than 100% of eligible costs.

How will I know that my grant proposal has been successful?

The community group that is officially applying for a grant (i.e., the grant applicant) must designate a person as the main contact. The funder will most often notify the main contact with the outcome of their funding decision. Please ensure you inform the GWS program contact of the outcome of your grant proposal.

How much do the Grant Writer Services cost?

There is no cost for eligible community groups to access the PRRD’s GWS program. The program is funded by the PRRD and Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Can I include in my grant proposal the costs associated with applying for the grant (e.g., paying our staff to collaborate with the PRRD GWS grant writer)?

Usually, no. The costs associated with applying for a grant are typically the responsibility of the applicant.

When are the Grant Writer Services available?

Services are available year-round; however, please know that service availability depends on the current volume of proposals in progress. Please contact grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca to discuss your grant proposal.

I have more than one grant proposal I need help completing. Can I use the PRRD's Grant Writer Services for them all?

Depending on the volume of grant proposals currently underway, the PRRD's GWS program may or may not be able to assist with multiple proposals for one group. Preference may be offered to community groups that are seeking assistance with one grant proposal before multiple proposals for the same community group are considered.

I would like to work on my community group's grant proposal, but I need some support. Can I contact the PRRD's GWS program for assistance?

The GWS program is available to support eligible community groups with their *own* grant writing. Please contact grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca.

I submitted a grant that was unsuccessful and would like feedback from a grant writer on how I can improve my proposal for future submissions. Is this service provided?

Yes, please send an email to grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca detailing your request and attaching the unsuccessful grant proposal. A grant writer will review your proposal and provide feedback.

Why is it important to execute projects as outlined in the grants?

Granting agencies provide funds to community groups and organizations for projects that typically align with the vision and strategic priorities of the agency. When grant recipients stray too far from the original project, the alignment between the funder and the project can be compromised. This can cause mistrust, disqualify applicants from applying for future funding, and impact any final payments for funds awarded. If you need to change your project, contact the funder and explain the proposed changes as soon as possible. This is why project planning for grant-funded projects is important.

If you have another question,
please contact the PRRD's Grant Writer Services at grantwriter@prrd.bc.ca.

8. APPENDIX

8.1. Budget Sample

Budget - Art Gallery Community Art Celebration

PROJECT EXPENSES		Description of Expense	Funders requested from funder (funding request)	Funds from other sources (matching funds)	Totals
Artist fees	10 artists, \$1000 each		\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Artist supplies	Paint, easel, canvas for 30 participants		\$ 2,300	\$ 200	\$ 2,500
Room rental	5 nights at \$300 each			\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Subtotal			\$ 12,300	\$ 1,700	\$ 14,000
Total Expenses (requested and matched funds)			\$ 12,300	\$ 1,700	\$ 14,000

GRANT REVENUES		Description	Status	Date to be confirmed (if applicable)	Amount
Peace River Regional District Grant in Aid	Artist fees		Pending	April 1 2026	\$ 2,000
Subtotal - Grant Revenues					\$ 2,000

PRIVATE REVENUES		Description	Status	Date to be confirmed (if applicable)	Amount
Corporate Gift - Encana	Artist fees		Confirmed	N/A	\$ 1,000
Communiyt Hall	Room Rental - in kind		Confirmed	N/A	\$ 1,500
Subtotal - Private Revenues					\$ 2,500

EXPECTED REVENUES		Description	Status	Date to be confirmed (if applicable)	Amount
50/50 draw at event	Project materials		Pending	June 1 2026	\$ 200
Subtotal - Expected Revenues					\$ 200

TOTAL BUDGET		Expenses	Confirmed Revenues (other grants, private revenues, and expected revenues)	Pending Revenues (other grants, private revenues, and expected revenues)	FUNDING REQUIRED
Total Amounts	\$	14,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 200	\$ 9,300
