



RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND

STRENGTHENING
OUR COMMUNITIES

RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND PROJECT

Project Funding Application

Community Futures Rural Opportunities Fund
c/o Community Futures Pan West Network Inc.
4213 – 101 Sunset Drive
Cochrane, Alberta T4C 0W7



RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND PROJECT

APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

Process & Methodology:

The purpose of the Rural Opportunities Fund Project is to support project activities that will centre on *“building resilient rural communities through community economic development projects that support immigration into rural communities and targeted initiatives for Indigenous, rural and remote communities. The project will also support business retention in rural communities and assist in mitigating the economic impact of transitioning business ownership between retiring entrepreneurs and new owners.”*

Additional funding is now available to assist CFs to develop and implement local solutions to local community challenges related to COVID-19 Relief.

The goal of the project is to develop innovative strategies and solutions to assist rural communities face the challenges posed by business transitions. The resulting initiatives would be expected to promote, support and/or facilitate the transition of rural business ownership to young entrepreneurs, Indigenous entrepreneurs, new Canadians and co-operatives; or generate new business opportunities and would likely include the engagement of other community partners.

The goal of the COVID-19 relief fund is to develop and implement local solutions to address community challenges related to COVID-19 Relief.

Community Futures Pan West Network invites western Canadian Community Futures organizations (CF) to apply for funding support under the project.

CF's may apply for the Rural Opportunities Fund Project funding for projects ranging from minimum project funding of \$25,000 to a maximum project funding of \$300,000.

Depending on volume of applications received, funding requested on an application may not be the amount approved.

Preference will be given to applications demonstrating the following criteria:

- Projects that involve multiple CF organizations.
- Projects that demonstrate the engagement of and leveraged support from other community or service delivery partners.
- Projects that support target client groups such as Indigenous people, women, youth, Francophones, new Canadians, persons with disability or co-operatives.
- Projects that demonstrate CF investment or externally leveraged funds towards the project.
- Projects that build a business case demonstrating community need and how the project addresses community economic development and business succession needs in the

community, communities, region or group of regions.

- Projects that build a business case to develop and implement local solutions to address community challenges related to COVID-19 Relief.

Approved applications will be eligible for an advance based on approved project cash flow.

1. All approved funding received under the ROF Business Retention and Succession Project must be spent by March 31, 2022 or as specified on the Rural Opportunities Fund Project approval agreement. There will not be any extensions past this date.
2. All approved funding received under the additional ROF COVID-19 Relief Project must be spent by March 31, 2021 and all related activities must be completed by that date. Projects may end later than March 31, 2021, but no WD ROF COVID-19 Relief funding would be available for costs incurred after March 31, 2021. If a CF has other leveraged dollars or other sources of funding for the project, that could be used to sustain the project after March 31, 2021.

Projects can be multi-year but must be completed by the deadline as listed on the Rural Opportunities Fund Project approval agreement.

RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND PROJECT

Preamble:

With the announcement by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) of the creation of a \$6.326 million Rural Opportunities Fund, western Canada's Community Futures organizations will have more resources to help businesses implement local solutions to address community challenges related to COVID-19 in their communities.

In Canada, the population is aging, and many small business owners are interested in retiring and exiting their business. The Business Development Bank of Canada states in a 2017 survey of over 2,500 Canadian entrepreneurs that 41% of those entrepreneurs expected to exit their business in the next five years without acquiring another, and 78% of business sellers expected to either transfer the business to a younger family member (26%) or sell the business outside the family (52%).

The Rural Opportunities Fund Project with funding as approved by WD provides for approval of eligible projects ranging from a minimum project funding of \$25,000 to a maximum project funding of \$300,000; with preference given to projects that:

- involve multiple Community Futures organizations;
- engage and leverage support from other community or service delivery partners;
- support target client groups such as women, Indigenous people, youth, Francophones, new Canadians, persons with disability, or co-operatives.

With local/regional CF knowledge of local economies and CF commitment to grassroots strengthening of rural communities through the process of community economic development (CED), CF organizations are ideally positioned to develop strategies and initiatives to help these target client groups develop new business opportunities and to help their communities through the challenges to community resiliency posed by business transitions.

Project Eligibility:

Eligible projects include initiatives targeted to Indigenous, rural and remote communities and community-based projects designed to facilitate the transition of business to new owners or to develop new business opportunities; specifically, young entrepreneurs, Indigenous entrepreneurs, new Canadians, persons with disability, Francophones, or co-operative organizations.

Funding can also be used to assist CFs to develop and implement local solutions to local community challenges related to COVID-19 Relief.

Project activities will center on building resilient rural communities through community economic development projects that:

- Support immigration into rural communities
- Target initiatives for Indigenous, rural and remote communities
- Support business retention in rural communities
- Assist in mitigating the economic impact of transitioning business ownership between retiring entrepreneurs and new owners
- Involve multiple CF organizations and engage and leverage support from other community or service delivery partners that support target client groups such as women, Indigenous people, youth, Francophones, new Canadians, or persons with disability.

Additional funding is also available to assist CFs to develop and implement local solutions to local community challenges related to COVID-19 Relief.

Eligible/Ineligible Project Costs:

Eligible costs

All proposed costs should demonstrate how they are essential to the implementation of the project and incremental to those expenditures incurred in the delivery of the Community Futures program as identified with Community Futures organization operational plans

Ineligible costs

Costs that are deemed unreasonable, and/or not directly related to project activities will be ineligible for reimbursement. These include, but may not be limited to:

- Costs incurred before project approval will not be eligible.
- Losses on investments, bad debts and associated expenses, other projects and contracts;
- Refinancing of existing debts.
- Provisions for contingencies or commissions paid to consultants to secure funding;
- Lobbying activities.
- Donations, dues and membership fees.
- Entertainment expenses as per treasury board guidelines

- Capital Expenditures
- Leasehold improvements
- Business grants

Project Reporting Requirements:

Applicants receiving ROF project funding approval are required to provide targets and at minimum, to report to the Community Futures Pan West Network as follows:

- 1) Quarterly commencing within ten business days of the end of the first quarter following approval and initial project funding disbursement.

Performance Indicator * see definitions section	Target
Number of SMEs assisted	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded – TOTAL	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded – Women	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded – Youth	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded – Indigenous	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded – Persons with disability	
Number of businesses created, maintained or expanded- New Canadian	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- TOTAL	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- Women	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- Youth	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- Indigenous	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- Persons with disability	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project)- New Canadian	
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project)- TOTAL	
Value and type of community-based projects \$\$	
# Participants trained	
# Partners engaged in community-based projects	
# Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	
# New Canadian clients assisted	
# of co-operatives assisted	
\$\$ Leverage from External project sources	

- 2) A **final report** will be submitted within 45 days of the agreed upon project end date. The final report will be required to include all of the above including the following performance indicators:

- Project Summary Lessons learned
- Project – Project framework and/or lessons learned transferred to other CFs or CED organizations
- Project – Budget to Actual reporting

Definitions:

1. **# of SMEs assisted:** Refers to the number of small to medium enterprises that receive support or services through the project.
2. **# of businesses created, maintained or expanded:** Refers to the number of businesses created, maintained or expanded as a result of this project.
3. **# of non-HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of jobs that are not considered highly qualified personnel (HQP).
4. **# of Indigenous-owned businesses expanded or maintained:** Refers to the number of majority-owned Indigenous businesses that are maintained and/or grown as a result of support or services provided through the project.
5. **# of female-owned businesses expanded or maintained:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by women and are sustained or grown as a result of support or services provided through this project.
6. **# of youth-owned businesses expanded or maintained:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by youth and are sustained or grown as a result of support or services provided through this project.
7. **# of persons with disability-owned businesses expanded or maintained:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by persons with disability and are sustained or grown as a result of support or services provided through this project.
8. **# of new Canadian-owned businesses expanded or maintained:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by new Canadians and are sustained or grown as a result of support or services provided through this project.
9. **# of co-operatives assisted:** Refers to a legally incorporated corporation that is owned by an association of persons seeking to satisfy common needs such as access to products or services, sale of their products or services, or employment.
10. **# of new Canadian clients assisted:** Newcomers to Canada who have established residential ties with Canada may be: protected persons (including refugees) within the meaning of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. People who have applied for or received permanent resident status from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Project Overview:

Indicate the Community Futures Region(s) where your project will take place:

--

Provide the physical address or geographic location(s) where the project will primarily take place:

--

Project Applicant Organization(s) Profile:

What is the legal name of the Applicant or Applicant CFs?

CF Legal Name	Mailing Address	Postal Code

What is the mailing address of the host/lead Applicant CF Organization?

Sponsor Applicant CF Organization	Mailing Address	Postal Code

Project Contact Information:

Who is the primary contact for the project?

First Name	Last Name	Title	Phone	Email Address

Who is the signatory for the sponsor organization?

First Name	Last Name	Title	Phone	Email Address

Do you have any non-CF project partners associated with your project?

Yes No

If yes, please list in-kind and/or monetary partners you are working with on this project, including contact names and related details:

	Name of Partner	Contact Name	Contact Position
1			
2			
3			
4			

Project Details:

Project Title: _____

Provide a description of the project, including specifics around what the project intends to accomplish and what work and actions will be completed. Please also describe the community/region need and how the project addresses:

- Business retention
- Business succession
- Local solutions to local community challenges related to COVID-19.

Indicate the estimated start and end dates of the project:

Estimated Project Start Date	Estimated Project End Date	Full Project Duration (months)
		___ Months

Is the project ready to commence immediately upon receipt of funding?

Yes No

Indicate the key milestones and associated deliverables that support the intended project actions and accomplishments as well as an approximate timeline for each component of the project leading to completion:

Will project activities be ongoing after the estimated end date?

Yes No

If so, describe how:

Budget

(Minimum project funding request per eligible CF is \$25,000/ Maximum of \$300,000):

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME:					
PROJECT TITLE:					
BUDGET					
Source of Funding					
For each activity, list eligible expenses by cost category. Applicants are encouraged to add lines as needed.	Activity Costs	Funds from ROF	Recipient Contribution		Other Contribution (Government or Partner)
			Cash	In-kind	Cash
Staffing Costs – Wages, Benefits, MERCS, etc.					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel, Meals, Accommodations					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Communications – Phone, Internet, etc.					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Occupancy Costs – Rent, Utilities, Maintenance, etc.					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Marketing & Promotion					

Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Office Equipment and Supplies					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administration – incl. Insurance, Bank Fees, etc.					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other – please specify					
Sub-Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Cost Project	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Percentage		%	%	%	%

ROF requested funding by fiscal year	Fiscal year 2019-2020	Fiscal year 2020-2021	Fiscal year 2021-2022

	Amount
Funding through the ROF Project:	\$
What is the total project cost?	\$
What is total financial contribution from applicant and/or partners	\$

Are other organizations providing funds or lending money regarding this project? Yes No

If yes, please list all sources of funds to be used to complete the project. **Please specify cash and in-kind.**

Funding Source	Amount	Status of Funding (specify confirmed vs unconfirmed)
TOTAL (should match Total Uses of Funds below)		

Use of Funds (Expenses)	Amount
TOTAL (should match Funding Sources above)	

Project Application Documents

Do you have any other documents that should be attached to support your application? Yes No
(ie: support letters, Partnership letters etc.)

If yes, please list all additional **OPTIONAL SUPPORTING** documents below and attach as part of your Application submission:

Supporting Document	Brief Description	Attached (yes/no)

Project Submission Agreement

By submitting this Application, I/we confirm that I/we have the authority to submit this request and agree to the conditions described below:

- a. All information contained herein is correct and complete to the best of my/our knowledge.
- b. Awarding of ROF project funding to successful applicants will be conditional upon finalization of the approval agreement that sets out the terms and conditions of the ROF project funding.
- c. I/we consent to receiving email notifications I regarding this application and any subsequent emails from the Community Futures Pan West Network Inc. or from those working on behalf of the Rural Opportunities Fund Project relating to this application.

NOTE: Applications submitted under the program are subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The information being collected is for the purpose of administering the project and will be used for the purpose of evaluating eligibility under the project.

I have read the Agreement above and agree to all the terms therein:

On behalf of the Applicant CF organization(s):

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please complete and submit applications ASAP to the attention of:

Brenda Samborski, Project Coordinator

E: projectcoordinator@communityfuturespanwest.ca

and/or

Colette Close, Executive Director

E: leadership@communityfuturespanwest.ca