



**PRAIRIES
RURAL
OPPORTUNITIES
FUND 2.0**

STRENGTHENING
OUR COMMUNITIES

PRAIRIES RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND 2.0

Project Funding Application

Prairies Rural Opportunities Fund 2.0
c/o Community Futures Pan West Network Inc.
4213 – 101 Sunset Drive
Cochrane, Alberta T4C 0W7



PRAIRIES RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND 2.0

PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

Process & Methodology:

The goal of the Prairies Rural Opportunities Fund (ROF 2.0) is to support Prairies Economic Development Canada's (PrairiesCan) Community Futures organizations to:

- Assist with the development of innovative business strategies
- build business and community capacity through partnerships
- devise solutions to assist rural communities face the challenges posed by an aging population and the closure of major local employers
- promote and assist with the development and adoption of advanced technologies
- offer specialized training that will enable businesses to reach their goals, and
- facilitate the transition of rural small businesses

Funded initiatives are expected to promote, support and/or facilitate sector development and the building of greater capacity in rural communities and small businesses, including startups, existing businesses, young entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, Indigenous entrepreneurs, new Canadians, and co-operatives. It is also anticipated that ROF 2.0 funded initiatives will help generate new business opportunities, and include the engagement of other community partners.

ROF 2.0 initiatives should strongly align with the mandate and strategic priorities of PrairiesCan, as well as with the mandate of the Community Futures Program to support Community Economic Development (CED) and build the self-reliance and capacity of communities to realize their full sustainable potential.

The objectives of the Community Futures Program in support of this mandate include fostering economic stability, growth, and job creation; helping to create diversified and competitive local rural economies; and helping to build economically sustainable communities.

Community Futures Pan West Network invites PrairiesCan Community Futures organizations (CF) to apply for funding support under the ROF 2.0 project.

Guidelines Developed by CFPWN: Assessment Criteria for Evaluating Proposals:

Given the broad range of potential initiatives, target communities, and targeted outcomes, applications with the greatest potential to generate impactful change in their regions will be highly considered for approval.

The guidelines have been developed by the CF Pan West Network to assess project proposals which generate meaningful impacts in multiple regions across rural prairies Canada.

Preference will be given to applications demonstrating the following criteria:

- 1. Benefit multiple CF organizations.**
 - Our aim is to make sure that projects have input from and can benefit as many CF organizations as possible.

2. **Are initiatives that can be easily replicated by other CFs, and do not duplicate other initiatives.**
 - Our objective is that ROF 2.0 funding is not used to support duplication of other initiatives but rather to fund projects that can be easily transferred and replicated throughout the Prairies region. This guideline will ensure that the projects are adaptable and scalable, maximizing their impact and benefiting communities across the Prairies.

3. **Propose measurable impacts/benefits aligned with project indicators.**
 - In this guideline we are looking for projects that make a measurable difference based on our indicators. While the project's KPI benchmarks may be modest, we have added and will still track additional KPIs to highlight its positive impact to our funders.
 - Number of non-HQP jobs created (Total)
 - Number of HQP jobs created (Total)
 - Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded (Total)
 - Number of community-based projects funded
 - Number of participants trained
 - Number of partners engaged in community-based projects.

4. **Involve multiple CF organizations.**
 - The ROF 2.0 Adjudication committee values collaborative work and tend to prioritize projects that involve multiple CF organizations. Although partnerships are not a requirement, we strongly encourage participation in our ROF 2.0 projects. The ROF 2.0 fund was intended to encourage CFs to collaborate.

5. **Engage and leverage supports from other community or service delivery partners.**
 - Working in collaboration with others can play an essential role in amplifying the reach as well as the effectiveness of outcomes of the project. Through building strong relationships and understanding their capacity can maximize their role leveraging the support from them.

6. **Support service delivery to federal government inclusivity client groups such as women, Indigenous people, youth, new Canadians, or persons with disabilities.**
 - The ROF 2.0 Fund was created to provide support services to PrairiesCan inclusivity client groups. Through careful design, this fund identifies and serves all inclusivity client groups, resulting in measurable and tangible outcomes.

The ROF 2.0 fund goal is to make a significant impact and invest in rural communities. Communities of all shapes and sizes will be able to benefit from the approved projects moving forward as they can be implemented regionally and transferred across the prairies. Our overarching objective is for CFs and their communities to see tangible, positive results from projects funded through this initiative.

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

All approved ROF 2.0 funding must be spent by March 31, 2026 or as specified in the Prairies Rural Opportunities Fund 2.0 Project Agreement. **There will not be any extensions past this date.**

Projects can be multi-year but must be completed by the deadline as listed in the Rural Opportunities Fund Project 2.0 Project Agreement.

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

Eligible Recipients:

The following entities are eligible to receive ROF 2.0 funding:

- Community Futures organizations in the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan
- Community Futures provincial associations in the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Eligible Projects:

The fund will support the following types of activities:

Community-based projects and special initiatives that:

- facilitate the development of business innovation and capacity building, including coaching
- assist businesses with the challenges they face in adopting and utilizing advanced technologies
- provide specialized training
- assist communities in dealing with the challenges of an aging population
- facilitate the transition of businesses to new owners, and/or
- develop new business opportunities, with a special emphasis on helping young entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, Indigenous entrepreneurs new Canadians, or cooperative organizations

Projects may vary considerably from one community to another and include a wide range of initiatives focused on, but not limited to:

- Business Innovation, technology solutions, automation
- Integration, partnerships and collaborative projects
- Cyber security training and the use of technology to improve business operations
- Promoting/facilitating business transitions, succession planning
- Providing training to help build business capacity and improve the leadership and management skills of business owners/operators
- Providing on-site technical assistance (Specialized Training)
- Support for training in marketing, social media, and the use of customer management software
- Assisting businesses achieve an online presence
- Support for specific training to enable businesses to meet the challenges of a changing economy
- Developing new business opportunities in rural communities

It is anticipated that Community Futures organizations will play a lead role in ROF 2.0 funded initiatives and will be the proponent of the application for ROF 2.0 funding.

Projects will be limited to maximum ROF 2.0 funding per project of \$300,000.00 and minimum funding per project of \$25,000.

Funds provided to the Recipient are for costs incurred by the Recipient. The Recipient cannot further distribute PrairiesCan funding.

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 within the Community Futures organization’s 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
- 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:

Projects must demonstrate clear, measurable economic outcomes for rural Prairies Canada in accordance with PrairiesCan’s strategic priorities:

- **Recovery:** PrairiesCan will equip communities, businesses, and organizations for a successful post-pandemic economic recovery.
- **Growth and Transformation:** PrairiesCan will invest in projects and help businesses and communities to grow and develop capacity in emerging sectors such as clean technology, digital technology, value-added agriculture, and precision healthcare.
- **Inclusivity:** PrairiesCan will help increase economic participation by Indigenous people, Black Canadians, women, and youth

Applicants receiving ROF 2.0 project funding approval are required to provide quarterly reports to the Community Futures Pan West Network that include updates on the progress being made in reaching the following targets:

Performance Indicator * see definitions section	Target
Number of HQP jobs created (Total)	
Number of HQP jobs created (Women)	
Number of HQP jobs created (Indigenous)	
Number of HQP jobs created (Youth)	
Number of non-HQP jobs created (Total)	
Number of non-HQP jobs created (Women)	
Number of non-HQP jobs created (Indigenous)	
Number of non-HQP jobs created (Youth)	
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded (Total)	
Number of community-based projects funded	

The quarterly reports are to be provided on the following dates: July 15, October 15, January 15 and April 15 each year, for the duration of the project.

A **final report** will be submitted within 30 days of the agreed upon project end date. The final report will include all the above performance indicators, as well as the following:

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

Expected Results/Methodology & Timing

The Recipient shall continue to provide information and reports with respect to the Performance Indicators, as requested by the Minister, until the Final Client Reporting Date.

Progress on funded projects shall be evaluated against the performance indicators which are defined as follows:

Definitions:

1. **# of HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of jobs that are considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
2. **# of Indigenous HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of majority-owned Indigenous businesses that are considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
3. **# of women HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by women and are considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
4. **# of youth HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by youth and are considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
5. **# of non-HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of jobs that are not considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
6. **# of Indigenous non-HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of majority-owned Indigenous businesses that are not considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
7. **# of women non-HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by women and are not considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
8. **# of youth non-HQP jobs created:** Refers to the number of businesses that are majority-owned by youth and are not considered highly qualified personnel (HQP)
9. **# of businesses created, maintained or expanded:** Refers to the number of businesses created, maintained or expanded as a result of this project
10. **# of community-based projects funded:** Refers to the number of community-based projects that received financial support as a result of this project

Project Overview:

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

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Project Applicant Organization(s) Profile:

What is the legal name of the Community Futures Organization Applicant:

CF Legal Name	Mailing Address	Postal Code

Project Contact Information:

Who is the primary contact for the project?

First and Last Name	Title

Phone	Email

Who is the signatory for the Community Futures organization?

First and Last Name	Title

Phone	Email

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:

	Name of Partner	In-Kind	Monetary
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.

Indicate the estimated start and end dates of the project:

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

Is the project ready to commence immediately upon approval and/or 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

Must complete and submit the excel spreadsheet which is posted on the CFPWN website under ROF 2.0.

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

	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 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
(i.e.: 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 2.0 project funding to successful applicants will be conditional upon finalization of the Project Agreement that sets out the terms and conditions of the ROF 2.0 project funding.
- c. I/we consent to receiving email notifications regarding this application and any subsequent emails from the Community Futures Pan West Network Inc. or from those working on behalf of the Prairies Rural Opportunities Fun 2.0 Project relating to this application.

NOTE: Applications submitted under this 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:

Ron Trepanier, Project Manager

E: ROF@communityfuturespanwest.ca

and/or

Colette Close, Executive Director

E: leadership@communityfuturespanwest.ca