



WELLNESS FUND

GUIDELINES & FAQ_s

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APPLICATION GUIDELINES

(Effective beginning 2024, until further notice)

Community Health Boards (CHBs) across Nova Scotia are now accepting applications for Wellness Fund grants. Wellness Funds are available to support projects that advance CHB health plan priorities and use a population health-based approach in addressing the social determinants of health.

Application Tip - It is important to connect with a CHB Coordinator to talk about your project.

We strongly encourage you to contact us with any questions about the application process or your proposed project before the application deadline, which is the first Monday in May.

To identify your local CHB Coordinator and get their contact information, please click on the link:

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

IMPORTANT: Applications will be considered **INELIGIBLE** if applying for:

- Health Services - Programs that provide a health service (intended to diagnose/treat/rehabilitate) or one-on-one care and support.
- Counseling or therapeutic programs and services
 - Community-based support groups are considered eligible
 - Licensed/registered therapist services, including art and music therapists, are NOT eligible.
- Existing Programs - initiatives that duplicate or attempt to expand or fill gaps in existing publicly-funded community services and programs.
- Annual operating costs for existing programs, e.g. wages*, utilities, supplies for usual operations or school curriculum
 - * Wages - Compensation is ONLY eligible if it's required to create a contracted position or increase current staff contract hours to support the project.
- Expenses for any activities that have already taken place before the applicant receives notice of approval of the Wellness Fund funding request.
- Fundraising appeals or campaigns, charitable giving.
- One-time events that do not address the community health plan priorities or awareness-raising for [priority populations named in the Nova Scotia Equity Framework](#), including the provision of entertainment or refreshments for these events.
- Needs Assessments, Research, Evaluation & Engagement - Wellness funds are intended to **implement projects** in community.
- Equipment requests – equipment or furnishing costs over \$1300 including tax.
 - Equipment purchases up to \$1300 including tax are eligible if the equipment is *essential to the described project's implementation*.
- Infrastructure projects are not eligible:
 - Building enhancements,
 - Renovations to facilities,
 - Playground equipment or splashpads,

- Trails,
- Public facilities and storage units.
- If your organization was previously funded by Wellness Funds but the CHB has not received a final report with receipts, you are not eligible to apply for a new project.
 - Please contact your CHB Coordinator to discuss:
 - <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

Purpose and Eligibility

- The funding is intended to seed new projects* in the CHB area.
 - However, projects that are not entirely new to the CHB area are eligible if they have not been funded **BY THE CHB** in the past.
 - Projects that **HAVE** been funded previously by the CHB may also be eligible for funding in some circumstances:
 - i. They are new to a specific community within the CHB area, even if they were previously offered in another community in the CHB area, and/or
 - ii. They have been enhanced in a significant way with new objectives and intended outcomes, and/or
 - iii. They have been enhanced in a significant way to be made accessible to a priority population (see NS Equity Framework) that has not previously participated in the project"
 - *Projects are:
 - Limited-term organized activities
 - with active, ongoing participation from community members
 - with defined goals and deliverables
 - driven by community needs
 - in support of the Community Health Plan priorities, social determinants of health, and "Upstream" population health goals
- Wellness funds are provided for non-profit community groups and organizations (registered and unregistered), municipalities and schools that have been **established** a minimum of six months and are able to receive and manage funds.
 - Groups that **cannot** apply include but not limited to:
 - Individuals
 - For profit groups/organizations
 - Provincial and Federal Government Departments
 - Nova Scotia Health Authority and IWK
 - These groups may be partners in projects that apply as long as the applicant is a non-profit and the partnership is community-led.

Application Tip: Upstream projects have more impact.

- "Upstream" interventions and strategies focus on improving fundamental [social, physical and economic environments](#) in order to decrease barriers and improve supports that allow all people to achieve their full health potential.

- “Downstream” interventions and strategies focus on providing equitable access to services to mitigate the negative impacts of unfair disadvantages on health.
- **The Wellness Funds support projects taking upstream action.** Acting upstream means working to prevent poor health outcomes, rather than responding to them once they have already developed. An upstream focus addresses the [social and structural determinants of health](#). Upstream interventions take place where we live, work, learn and play, and tackle causes of poor health such as social status, racism and wealth inequality.
- See the [Health Impact Pyramid](#) for another way of thinking about upstream versus downstream work and page 4 of [Let’s Talk Moving Upstream](#) for examples

- Wellness Funds are intended to support *upstream* projects that address the *social determinants of health* (see page 6) at the population level.

Application Tip: Incorporate equity into your project.

- Equity is the fair distribution of opportunities, power and resources to meet the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, gender or background.
- Applying an equity lens means asking who will benefit from a policy, program, initiative or service, but also who may be excluded from the benefits and why.
- See the [Nova Scotia Health Equity Framework](#) for more information

- Applications may consider costs to address barriers to participation that may be faced by your priority populations. (e.g. transportation, dependent care, etc.)
- Project components must focus on healthy and safe practices
 - Projects should follow the [Canada Food Guide](#) for food and beverages served to participants
 - Wellness Funds will not be provided for projects that involve alcohol or cannabis.
 - Projects must not be sponsored by, or partnered with, the alcohol or cannabis industries.
 - Projects must not serve alcohol or cannabis to participants.
 - Projects should consider personal and environmental safety
- Funds cannot be used for operational purposes by the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) or CHBs.
- Groups/organizations that do not have the ability to accept funds (e.g. do not have a bank account) must partner with another organization that can support the financial management of the project.
- Applicants must be aware that sustained funding for future years won’t be available through Wellness Funds and they will need to consider other sources of funding.
 - Applications must be for a project that is new to a specific community within the CHB catchment area. There is no repeat funding for the same project in the same community in the CHB area.
- Grant applications will be accepted for a minimum of \$500 to a maximum \$3,500.
- If any application is incomplete, it may be considered ineligible. If you are unclear on the instructions, please contact the CHB Coordinator in advance of the [deadline](#).

Process and Responsibility

1. Before submitting your proposal, you are strongly encouraged to contact your local CHB Coordinator to ensure your project meets the application guidelines well in advance.

- Please keep in mind Coordinators availability will be limited leading up to the application deadline.
- To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link:

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

2. Applicants must identify the specific CHB to which they are applying. Please see the listing of CHBs by Zone below.

- If applying to multiple CHBs for the same project, a separate and unique application will be required for each CHB.
- Applications for each CHB area must identify unique and local budgets, community partners, and local impacts in each of the CHB areas to which you are applying.

Community Health Boards by Zone	
Western Zone	Northern Zone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annapolis • East Kings • Kings West • Clare • Digby and Area • Lunenburg County • Queens • Shelburne • Yarmouth County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along the Shore • Central and East Pictou • East Hants • North Shore Area • Pictou West • Springhill, Oxford, Amherst and Region (SOAR) • Southampton, Parrsboro, Advocate and Region (SPAR) • South Colchester • Truro and Area • Wallace, Wentworth, Pugwash and Area
Eastern Zone	Central Zone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antigonish Town and County • Central Cape Breton • Central Inverness • East Cape Breton County • Guysborough County • North Inverness • Northside the Lakes • Strait Richmond • Victoria County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chebucto West • Cobequid • Dartmouth • Eastern Shore Musquodoboit • Halifax • Southeastern • West Hants/Uniacke

To identify which CHBs support your geographical area, please click on the link below:

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

3. Applicants are required to sign a contract before receiving funds. Cheques must be cashed within 30 days of receipt. Failure to do so may mean that you do not receive funding for your project.

4. It is the responsibility of the group/organization/individual receiving the grant to ensure that all provincial and federal regulations are followed. This includes the requirements of Revenue Canada that a T4/T4A is issued to all personnel being paid an hourly wage, or hired by contract of more than \$500.

5. Reports, receipts and a budget summary must be submitted to the CHB. Mid-term interviews may be conducted. Final Reports must be received within 60 days of project completion. Failure to submit reports will impact future funding applications. NSH may request a funding review if a final report is not received.

6. Projects must be completed within 12 months upon receipt of funds. For more information on eligibility and funding criteria, please review the Wellness Fund FAQ.

***Reminder- if you plan to apply to more than one CHB for funding, a separate application is required for each submission.*

Confirmation of receipt of application will be sent. Please contact your CHB Coordinator if you do not receive this within two business days.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The **social determinants of health** are the interrelated social, political and economic factors that create the conditions in which people live, learn, work, play and age.

The **intersection of social determinants of health** means these determinants shift and change in different settings and over time, impacting the health of individuals, groups and communities in different ways.

Source: National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, *Glossary of Essential Health Equity Terms*, 2015.

Community Health Boards are committed to addressing the social determinants of health in order to create better conditions for good health. Some sub-populations (e.g., people living with low incomes, people with disabilities, members of visible minority groups) have fewer resources to support their health, and may require additional resources and supports to reach the level of health enjoyed by more advantaged segments of the population.

The following are critical determinants of health for individuals, families and communities:

Income and Social Status: There is a gradient in health across the income spectrum. Lower income populations often experience economic and social exclusion, and tend to have poorer health and shorter lives than higher income populations.

Social Support Networks: People who have the support of family, friends and communities feel more connected to others and have better health.

Education and Literacy: Education is tied to income, to social networks, and to the resources needed to meet basic needs and to feel included in the economic, social and political life of the community.

Employment/Working Conditions: Employment provides income, a sense of personal identity, and the means to acquire the resources needed for health. Unemployment or precarious employment can contribute to stress and exclusion.

Social Environments: Feeling included and psychologically safe from harm in social settings (community, school, work) contributes to health and wellness.

Physical Environments: Clean air and water, adequate housing, safe neighbourhoods and adequate transportation are needed for health, and for engagement in education, employment and community life.

Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills: Adopting healthy practices and having skills to cope with life circumstances help people to stay healthy and safe.

Healthy Child Development: Early life experiences lay the foundation for lifelong health. These experiences impact brain development, school readiness and the ability to cope with life stresses.

Biology and Genetic Endowment: Some people have health advantages or disadvantages due to their biological make-up, but even people with disadvantages live full and healthy lives when their environments support their growth and development.

Health and Social Services: Everyone needs access to services that can support prevention of illness and injury, and provide timely and appropriate treatment and other supports when needed.

Persons belonging to Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity (SOGI) groups:

2SLGBTQIA+ populations can experience discrimination that has adverse health effects. Society places different demands and expectations on people of various genders, including transgendered people. Gender intersects with other health determinants to create circumstances that either support or challenge health and wellness

Culture: Language, social norms, and gender roles vary across cultures. Culture can be a source of strength and inclusion, but also a source of discrimination and exclusion.

Aboriginal Ancestry: First Nations and Aboriginal people have higher rates of food insecurity, lower levels of education and employment, and higher rates of illness and injury, all tied to their history of colonization and discrimination.

Race/Racism: Racialized populations (immigrants, members of visible minorities) experience higher rates of unemployment and under-employment, and both economic and social discrimination. New immigrants tend to experience deterioration of their health over time, known as the “immigrant health effect”.

Adapted from Source: J. Mikkonen & D. Raphael. (2010) *The Canadian Facts*.

WELLNESS FUND - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This FAQs are a resource to support and address questions related to wellness funds. You can also find helpful information on the CHB website at <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds> or by contacting your local CHB Coordinator.

What if I have questions about the application or need assistance filling it out?

All applicants are **strongly encouraged** to check in with your local CHB Coordinator prior to submitting your application. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:*
<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

Who is eligible for funding?

Who can apply?

Non-profit community groups and organizations (registered and unregistered), that have been together for a minimum of six months and are able to receive, manage and track funding can apply. Groups/organizations that do not have the ability to accept funds (e.g. do not have a bank account) must partner with another organization that can support the financial management of the project.

If my group or organization cannot accept funds, can a government department, municipality or another community organization can accept the funds on our behalf as a partner?

Yes, they can act as the holder of your funds. You must ensure that the funds are used appropriately, as you will be accountable for these funds.

Can an organization apply if it is still in the middle of a project previously supported by wellness funds from last year?

Yes, as long as the application is for a NEW project to the CHB. Repeat funding for previously funded projects will not be considered.

If a project previously funded by Wellness Funds is complete but the CHB has not received a final report (with receipts) can I still apply for a new project?

Maybe. Please contact your CHB Coordinator to discuss the reasons why the report has not been submitted. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:*
<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

Can Schools and School Advisory Committees (SACs) and Schools Plus apply?

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their project meets the other eligibility criteria.

Can Universities and Community Colleges apply?

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their project meets the other eligibility criteria (Wellness Funds are not intended for research). Universities and Community Colleges are strongly encouraged to demonstrate in their application that the project is community driven and not part of core operational programming.

Can Municipalities apply?

Yes. They are eligible to apply for funding as long as their project meets the other eligibility criteria. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to demonstrate in their application that the project is community driven and not part of core operational programming.

Who cannot apply?

Groups that **cannot apply** include but not limited to: individuals, for profit groups/organizations and, Provincial and Federal Government Departments. These groups may be partners in projects that apply as long as the applicant is a non-profit and the partnership is community-led. Funds cannot be used for operational purposes by the Nova Scotia Health (NSH) or CHBs.

Can (NSH) Youth Health Centres apply for funding?

No. Youth Health Centres are a Nova Scotia Health program, so are not eligible. They may support a community partner in their application process and collaborate on the projects.

What can Wellness Funds be used for?

Wellness Funds are intended to support new and innovative projects that advance community health board priorities and use a population health-based approach in addressing the social determinants of health.

Can Wellness Funds be used to fund a health service in the community?

No. Wellness Funds are not meant for programs and services that diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, or provide one on one care and support. The intent is to support community health promotion initiatives to offer new and innovative projects that address community need.

Can Wellness Funds be used to provide a similar service to one that already exists in community to increase its availability?

No. Wellness Funds are not intended to address perceived gaps/shortages in existing programs/initiatives.

Can Wellness Funds be used to support our fundraising campaign?

No. Wellness funds are intended for specific projects and are not eligible for fundraising campaigns.

Can I apply for a Wellness fund grant for overall expenses to run my organization's program - we offer many great programs?

No. Wellness Funds are intended for specific projects. Operating costs for existing projects are not eligible.

Can Wellness Funds be used for infrastructure and building projects?

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based project ideas to help create healthier communities. Some minor equipment/infrastructure purchases are eligible as a portion of the total funding if the equipment/infrastructure has a new project associated with its direct use.

Can Wellness Funds be used to purchase playground equipment?

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based projects that impact on the health of the population rather than providing recreational equipment. Some minor equipment/infrastructure purchases are eligible as a portion of the total funding if the equipment/infrastructure has a new project associated with its direct use.

Can Wellness Funds be used to support the building or maintenance of trails?

No. Wellness Funds are intended for community based projects that impact on the health of the population rather than providing recreational opportunities, spaces or equipment.

Can Wellness Funds be used to support needs assessments, research or broad engagement projects?

No. Wellness funds are intended for projects that improve health outcomes in our communities. However, CHBs also have operating funds that could support these initiatives if it is deemed to be in alignment with their priorities and implementation plans. Contact your CHB Coordinator to discuss.

Can I apply for a grant to fund an existing program offered by our organization?

Maybe. The intent of this funding is not to cover annual operating costs for services and programs offered by their organization. Organizations applying to a CHB for a previously funded project by that CHB are ineligible. If they have never received Wellness Funding from the CHB before for the project, they are eligible to apply. Project applications must be for a new project to the CHB catchment area. There is no repeat funding for the same program in the same CHB. Please contact the CHB Coordinator before applying to discuss eligibility. *To identify your local CHB Coordinator, please click on the link below:*

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

Can I use the funding to buy equipment/capital items?

Maybe. Equipment or furniture may be purchased at the discretion of the CHB and Nova Scotia Health if it is

essential to the project. If the program cannot be sustained beyond the life of the project the equipment must be transferred to another organization offering a similar project in accordance with the funding agreement. We do not fund equipment that is not part of a project.

Can I use the funding to pay for an employee?

No. Wellness Funds cannot be used to cover the costs for employees of the organization, as this is operational costs. Compensation is only eligible if it's required to create a contracted position or enhance current staff contract hours. **Funding for people contracted to deliver programming or enhancing current contracted staff hours would be eligible.** It is the responsibility of the organization or individual receiving the grant to ensure that all provincial and federal regulations are adhered to. This includes the requirements of Revenue Canada that a T4 or T4A is issued to all personnel being hired with an hourly wage, or hired by contract of more than \$500. The organization or individual receiving the grant should contact Revenue Canada to determine what is required to adhere to such regulations.

Can I use Wellness Funds to advertise my organization?

Maybe. Advertising costs associated with running a particular Wellness Fund project would be considered eligible. Advertising costs associated with promoting your overall organization would not be considered eligible.

How can I apply?

You must fill out a Wellness Fund application online. To access the application please visit <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds> or contact your local CHB Coordinator.

How will I know what CHB to apply to?

Applicants must identify the **specific CHB** to which they are applying. Please see the listing of CHBs by Zone below. You may apply to more than one CHB if your project covers a large geography. However, **a separate application will be required for CHB each submission.** Applications must identify local community partners and identify local impacts in each of the CHB areas to which you are applying.

COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARDS BY ZONE	
<p>WESTERN ZONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annapolis • East Kings • Kings West • Clare • Digby and Area • Lunenburg County • Queens • Shelburne • Yarmouth County 	<p>NORTHERN ZONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along the Shore • Central and East Pictou • East Hants • North Shore Area • Pictou West • Springhill, Oxford, Amherst and Region (SOAR) • Southampton, Parrsboro, Advocate and Region (SPAR) • South Colchester • Truro and Area • Wallace, Wentworth, Pugwash and Area
<p>EASTERN ZONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antigonish Town and County • Central Cape Breton • Central Inverness • East Cape Breton County • Guysborough County • North Inverness • Northside the Lakes • Strait Richmond • Victoria County 	<p>CENTRAL ZONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chebucto West • Cobequid • Dartmouth • Eastern Shore Musquodoboit • Halifax • Southeastern • West Hants/Uniacke

To identify which CHBs support your geographical area, please click on the link:

<https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/find-your-chb/>

Can I apply to more than one CHB?

Yes, but you must fill out a separate application for each CHB you apply to and outline which other CHBs are you applying to on each application. Each application must demonstrate local impacts and identify local community partners.

When is the application deadline?

First Monday of May by 5:00 pm.

Where can I find a paper copy of the application?

Please contact your local CHB Coordinator for a paper copy.

What are the typical amounts of grants awarded?

Grant applications are awarded for a minimum of \$500 to a maximum \$3,500.

When will I know whether or not our application has been successful?

Grant applications are reviewed by a CHB Review Committee in May to June. We do our best to notify all applicants by the end of July. **PLEASE CHECK JUNK MAIL folder for emails as notifications could go there.**

When will I receive my funding?

As part of the Wellness Fund process—funding agreements must be signed before a cheque will be issued to the successful organization. Many CHBs have Wellness Fund celebrations where applicants can share their project with the community, sign the contract for funding and be presented with their cheque. These usually take place in June to September. The CHB will advise you of the process when they send your application response letter.

How long do I have to spend the funding?

Successful grant applicants must spend their wellness funds within twelve months of receiving it. If funds remain after the twelve months, the CHB must be notified immediately. The CHB will then determine whether the remaining funds must be returned or, if appropriate, be used to continue the project as outlined in the application. Cheques must be cashed within thirty days of receipt.

Am I responsible for submitting any paperwork once I get my funding?

Yes, the CHB Coordinator or member of the CHB will likely check in with you about half way into your project. In addition, a Final Report must be submitted no later than sixty days after the end date of the project. Copies of receipts of expenses must be kept and copies sent with the Final Report. Interac and credit card statements are not acceptable.

What if I am successful in getting a CHB Wellness Fund grant but I don't spend the full amount or my organization wants to spend it on something different?

If you wish to spend the wellness funding you received in a way that is different from what was indicated on your funding application you must fill out a "Change of Grant Request" available from your local CHB Coordinator. Any unspent funds must be returned to NSH.