

Questions and Answers for Interested Applicants
Responses to January 21, 2021 Teleconference and Emailed Questions
Apprenticeship Capital Grant

ACG – GENERAL

Please note that many similar questions were raised in the January 21 Questions and Answers (Q's and A's) session, and those have been streamlined as appropriate in these Q's and A's.

1. What is the purpose of the Apprenticeship Capital Grant (ACG)?

The Apprenticeship Capital Grant (formerly the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund) provides capital funding for Training Delivery Agents (TDAs) to upgrade their equipment and training facilities in order to keep up with evolving technology and to train apprentices on equipment that is relevant to employers.

This new investment will help prepare people for jobs by creating a flexible skilled trades and apprenticeship system that will best prepare Ontario workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

The objectives of the program are to support TDAs to deliver relevant, high-quality in-class training by:

- modernizing and/or expanding training equipment and facilities to enhance the apprenticeship in-class training experience and meet the needs of employers;
- increasing capacity to deliver training for trades that are in demand;
- improving the health and safety, condition and efficiency of apprenticeship instruction and/or facilities; and
- improving access to in-class training, including removing accessibility barriers and addressing gender equity.

2. What is changing under the Apprenticeship Capital Grant?

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development is investing an additional \$10 million annually in the Apprenticeship Capital Grant, starting in 2021-22, bringing the total annual investment to \$24 million.

Starting in 2021-22, the ministry is introducing a flexible model for distributing capital funds to TDAs:

- a three-year commitment of \$18M annually (previously \$14M) will be provided to eligible TDAs through an updated funding formula, which is allocated proportionally, based on each TDA's share of the total provincial training activity; and
- a yearly Call for Proposals (CFP) of \$6M.

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This approach to funding will give TDAs the opportunity to develop longer-range plans while also providing flexibility to apply for additional funding to pursue larger-scale capital investments through a CFP. The CFP will be open to both college and non-college TDAs and priorities will be set on a yearly basis informed by industry demand and government priorities.

Note that the Ministry has revised both the 2021-24 guidelines and CFP slightly to further clarify and expand on eligible costs for capital projects. ACG eligible costs now include additions to existing facilities.

Projects in areas that are not used for hands-on apprenticeship training (e.g., student residences, automobile parking, recreation facilities, faculty space, classrooms that are not exclusively used for apprenticeship training) or that primarily accommodate administrative functions will not be considered eligible.

3. Please provide clarity on the difference between the 2021-24 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Guidelines and the 2021-22 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals (CFP)?

Program Elements	Apprenticeship Capital Grant	Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals
Objectives/Priorities	The objectives of the program are to support TDAs to deliver relevant, high-quality in-class training by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modernizing and/or expanding training equipment and facilities to enhance the apprenticeship in-class training experience and meet the needs of employers; • increasing capacity to deliver training for trades that are in demand; • improving the health and safety, condition and efficiency of 	The ACG CFP objectives are the same as for the regular program guidelines, except that the CFP has additional priorities that include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase capacity to deliver training for trades that are in demand; b. Support innovative approaches to apprenticeship in-class training delivery; and c. Include partnerships with employers/industry/sector.

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	apprenticeship instruction and/or facilities; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to in-class training, including removing accessibility barriers and addressing gender equity. 	
TDA eligibility	TDA's that are approved and received funding for apprenticeship in-class training in the past 3 years (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20) may be eligible	TDA's that are approved and received funding for apprenticeship in-class training in the past year (2019-20) may be eligible.
Evaluation Criteria and Weighting	The proposal is broken into three main sections: Project Description and Delivery Plan, Project Impact and Budget; there is no weighting as the proposal is negotiated at the same time as in class training contracts are negotiated.	The proposal is broken into the following sections: Project Summary (5%) Project Description and Delivery Plan (20%), Project Impact (60%), and Budget (15%) plus Employer support letters are optional.

4. Are some activities more appropriate under the CFP or regular funding (e.g. dust collectors)?

TDA's are responsible for determining which funding stream best fits their projects but should be aware that there is no guarantee of funding under the CFP.

ACG CALL FOR PROPOSAL

5. What is the purpose of the 2021-22 Call for Proposal?

To provide a flexible model of funding that responds to the varying levels of support required by TDA's, to complement the \$18 million that will be allocated annually from 2021-22 to 2023-24 through the ACG Program Guidelines, the ministry will release an annual Call for Proposal (CFP) for an additional \$6 million to provide support for capital investments. For 2021-22, this CFP will prioritize projects that:

- a. Increase capacity to deliver training for trades that are in-demand;

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- b. Support innovative approaches to apprenticeship in-class training delivery; and
- c. Include partnerships with employers/industry/sector.

This approach provides both flexibility for TDAs and stability for longer-term projects. Please refer to the **2021-22 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposal guidelines** located on the Employment Ontario Partners Gateway (EOPG).

6. Is there a rough estimate on how long it will be from deadline submission (March 5th) to the date when we could potentially hear back?

It is anticipated that TDAs will be informed of the outcome of their submission in April 2021.

7. Are we able to purchase equipment that will be used on site, as well as be used on a mobile basis, and/or at tradeshow?

Projects that support mobile apprenticeship training units are allowed if the units are used for hands-on apprenticeship training that supports a TDA's approved in-class training activity and will improve the condition and efficiency of apprenticeship training facilities overall.

Equipment for trade shows is not an eligible cost.

8. Are all projects that are approved funded at 50%?

No, projects related to the construction of additions to existing buildings require a 50:50 matching from the TDA. All other approved projects will receive 100% funding.

9. We are wondering if professional costs pertaining to additions to our facility like engineering, architectural or consulting fees are considered eligible costs?

All costs required to "bring the asset into service", such as any professional fees, permits and other municipal or provincial charges directly related to the completion of the addition can be included. This too however would be subject to the 50/50 split.

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10. Who is eligible to apply for the CFP?

ACG funding is designated for Ministry-approved apprenticeship in-class training activities. College and non-college TDAs that are approved and receive funding for apprenticeship in-class training may be eligible to apply to this Call for Proposal if they have:

- been approved to deliver in-class training for the trade(s) associated with the project in the last full year of in-class activity, or 2019-20; and
- a full year of in-class training activity in 2019-20 for the trade(s) associated with the project.

TDAs cannot request funding for a trade for which they were not approved or delivered training in 2019-20.

11. How many proposals can a TDA submit?

Can TDAs submit multiple proposals per region?

While a TDA may have more than one campus in a region, they can only submit a maximum of one application per region. Each application is limited to one proposal that includes either:

- new equipment;
- updated equipment;
- facility improvement; or
- addition to a building.

12. I offer Pre-apprenticeship training how do I qualify for capital funding?

The ACG is intended to support TDAs with capital investments to enhance the delivery of apprenticeship in-class training. Due to the nature of the Pre-apprenticeship program, some ACG projects may result in supporting Pre-Apprenticeship participants who receive Level 1 apprenticeship training as part of their program. However, in order to be eligible to apply to the ACG CFP, TDAs must be approved and have received funding for apprenticeship in-class training and have:

- been approved to deliver in-class training for the trade(s) associated with the project in the last full year of in-class activity, or 2019-20; and
- a full year of in-class training activity in 2019-20 for the trade(s) associated with the project.

13. I am an OYAP provider; how do I qualify for capital funding?

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The ACG is intended to support TDAs with capital investments to enhance the delivery of apprenticeship in-class training. Due to the nature of the OYAP program, some ACG projects may result in supporting OYAP participants as part of their program. However, in order to be eligible to apply to the ACG CFP, you must be a TDA as well as must be approved and have received funding for apprenticeship in-class training and have:

- been approved to deliver in-class training for the trade(s) associated with the project in the last full year of in-class activity, or 2019-20; and
- a full year of in-class training activity in 2019-20 for the trade(s) associated with the project.

14. Will the CFP affect my base ACG funding?

No, the new CFP will not affect ACG base funding. The CFP can be used to supplement, not replace the existing approved funding under the guidelines or for special initiatives announced in the CFP as determined by the ministry.

15. Can costs be transferred between projects funded by base funding, and projects funded by competitive funding, or between years? For example, can the construction be phased over the 3-year cycle?

Audit and accountability requirements do not allow the transfer of funds between fiscal years or between contracts. TDAs may be approved for projects under both the base and competitive funding models in contracts that pertain to the same year; however, funds must be recorded and tracked separately. TDAs will be signing a separate contract for the base funding.

If a project is funded with base allocation and CFP funding, the funding for each project must be tracked separately as well as be audited separately at the end of the contract term.

However, if a TDA has a larger project that could span over the three years of their base allocation, they could work with their local ministry office to seek approval for a phased approach which spreads the cost of the project and associated milestones over multiple years.

If a TDA applies to the CFP for a phase of a larger project, they should be aware that the CFP is a competitive process and there is no guarantee that a phase of the project will be approved.

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16. Is there a cap to how much funding a single application can request through the CFP?

No, there is no cap to how much funding can be requested.

17. What criteria will be used to evaluate applications for the 2021-22 CFP?

In order to receive full consideration during evaluation, applications must provide a clear and detailed response to all sections listed in the Application Template. Each section will be weighted in the evaluation, as indicated below in brackets, with **5%** to be awarded for viability of project based on overall strength of the application.

- **Project Description and Delivery Plan** (20%)
- **Project Impact**
 - Part 1 Objectives of the Apprenticeship Capital Grant (30%)
 - Part 2: Priorities of the ACG CFP (30%)
- **Budget** (15%)

Eligible projects must meet at least **one objective and one priority as outlined in the CFP guidelines.**

To maximize the impact of these projects, the 2021-22 CFP will give priority to applications that support the following government priorities:

- a. Increase capacity to deliver training for trades that are in-demand;
- b. Support innovative approaches to apprenticeship in-class training delivery;
and
- c. Include partnerships with employers/industry/sector.

18. Can one application contain multiple items within the same scope of project? If so, would parts be approved, and other parts not approved?

An application will be reviewed in its entirety and either recommended for approval or not recommended.

19. Where can I find more information on these priorities?

1. Increase capacity to deliver training for trades that are in-demand.
 - Priority will be given to the high-volume trades listed in Appendix A of the CFP guidelines
2. Support innovative approaches to in-class training delivery.

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- Priority will be given to projects that are exploring alternative options to the traditional in-person block release delivery model. TDAs should demonstrate how the new approach will improve upon existing methods.
 - Projects may include, but not be limited to:
 - Investing in technology and/or equipment to improve access to in-class training.
 - Online and/or virtual learning to accommodate social distancing in response to COVID-19.
3. Include partnerships with employers/industry/sector.
- Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how the partnership(s) will benefit the apprenticeship system, for both employers and apprentices, as well as contribute to the project and strengthen the proposal.
 - Projects may include:
 - Financial and/or in-kind contributions from employers;
 - Collaboration and/or support from multiple TDAs delivering the applicable trades

20. Is there a definition of innovative teaching technology use?

The ministry is looking to TDAs for new ideas on innovative teaching technologies in their application. Innovation takes original, different, out-of-the-box, and/or creative ideas and turns them into new approaches in order to improve the quality of training and have a positive impact within the province's Apprenticeship program.

21. Can an organization that delivers training but is not an approved TDA for apprenticeship in-school training, apply for the ACG CFP?

No, the organization must be approved to train and received funding to train for the trade/(s) associated with the project for the last full fiscal year of in class training (i.e., 2019-20)

22. If a TDA intends to update equipment or facilities though the program guidelines, can I apply for ACG CFP to supplement the funding?

This may be appropriate assuming that the equipment or renovation contributes to apprentices learning skills, is supported by employers, and the project otherwise meets the criteria outlined in the ACG CFP.

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If approved, funding for each contract must be tracked and audited separately, and the CFP application must clearly identify the separate deliverables, timelines and budget for the project. A proposal for a construction project should be broken into phases and clearly state for which phase the TDA is requesting funding under this CFP.

23. Can I partner with an organization that is not an approved training delivery agent?

Yes, in-kind or monetary contributions to support a project can be provided by entities outside of the Training Delivery Agent network, such as employers or industry associations.

24. Please clarify what the following statement means “Does the project align with the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT)-authored curriculum standards for the applicable trade(s)?”

ACG is meant to support apprenticeship in-class training. TDAs approved for and delivering in-class training must follow OCOT’s curriculum standards. As part of the CFP application TDAs should link projects to the curriculum as evidence for why the project is needed.

25. For curriculum standards that are under review, which version do we align with?

Please use the current OCOT-approved standards.

26. What kinds of projects are eligible for ACG funding?

The ACG is a capital acquisition program. ACG-approved projects are meant to support apprenticeship in-class training, including Level 1 in-class training provided to Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) and Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program participants.

Projects can include:

- construction of **additions to buildings** to accommodate additional training space (please refer to Q27 for additional detail);

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- alterations, renovations and enhancements to existing facilities - an example of this is installing a mezzanine inside an existing workshop.
- purchase of equipment to support alternate delivery methods for in-class training, such as online and/or simulated training;
- replacement of existing equipment to meet industry standards and support growth in apprenticeship enrolment and completions;
- purchase of new equipment to support training capacity growth - this can include purchase of a piece of equipment used for training that was previously leased;
- purchase of new equipment resulting in program delivery efficiencies (i.e., affecting more than one training program);
- improvements to remove accessibility barriers – this can include the replacement of accessibility entrances and doors;
- purchase of new equipment that supports the inclusion of women in trades (e.g., proper fitting safety equipment and gear for women and gender appropriate washrooms/changerooms onsite).

Construction of a freestanding building, portable, or foundation is not an eligible cost. TDAs must be approved to train and received funding to train for the trade/(s) associated with the project for the last full fiscal year of in class training (i.e., 2019-20).

27. What qualifies under Additions to Building Projects?

In certain circumstances, TDAs can apply for funding for a project that involves the construction of an addition to an existing building to accommodate additional training space. An addition is a part added to an existing building and generally requires demolition, an architect, contractor and a building permit.

Construction of a freestanding building, portable, or foundation is not an eligible cost. TDAs must be approved to train and received funding to train for the trade/(s) associated with the project for the last full fiscal year of in class training (i.e., 2019-20).

Due to the known risks associated with new construction projects, any TDA applying to ACG for the construction of additions to buildings must:

- **contribute 50% of total project costs;**
- do their due diligence to assess the building envelope and land involved in the project for potential risks that could cause cost or time overruns, e.g. asbestos in the walls, hidden oil tanks in the ground etc.;
- prior to signing an agreement with the Province provide proof of sufficient funding of the recipient share of the project budget;

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- provide evidence of value for money; and
- make every effort to pay for and complete the project by March 31, 2022. The Ministry will not pay for any costs overruns nor make provisions for when the project is not completed within 12 months or goes beyond March 31, 2022; provide a contingency plan to address cost or time delays should these occur including evidence that funding has been set aside to complete the project.

Please note, Ministry payments will be adjusted according to project billings.

28. Are there any restrictions on what is eligible for additions to buildings?

The additional space must be added onto an existing building owned (not leased) by the TDA on an existing campus. A portable, currently owned by the TDA, may be considered an existing building to which an addition could be made. Building a second floor or adding a room within an existing building, would be considered an addition and would be subject to the 50/50 cost sharing stipulation.

An addition to a building under construction is consider as an amendment to a construction project and not an eligible addition to an existing building as specified in the guidelines. Building an addition onto mobile training centres is not an eligible expense. The construction of a freestanding building or structure is not an eligible expense.

29. What happens in the event a project runs overtime, i.e. beyond March 31, 2022?

All project activities must be completed by March 31, 2022. For equipment, this means it must be installed and functional by March 31, 2022. The ministry will not pay for any cost overruns nor make provisions for when the project is not completed or goes beyond March 31, 2022. As part of the application, TDAs should provide a contingency plan to address cost or time delays including evidence that monies have been set aside to complete the project.

30. What are the timelines for the CFP?

EVENT	DATE
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Release of Call for Proposal application guide 2021-22 and supporting documents	December 23, 2020
Call for Proposal questions due to the ministry	January 8, 2021
Teleconference response to TDA questions	Week of January 18, 2021
Response to Questions posted by ministry	February 5, 2021
Call for Proposal applications due to the ministry	16:00 EST, March 5, 2021

31. Should proponents connect with their local MLTSD office regarding their proposal submission?

No, as this is a competitive process, all proponents will be given the same information at the same time to ensure a fair and competitive process.

32. Are we able to reach out directly if we have questions about the application form during the process?

Yes, if you have questions about the form itself, not the content of your proposal, you may contact your local regional office.

33. Can you share the contact information for individuals on the teleconference?

No, contact information for participants is not public information.

34. Can you share the contact information of the ministry staff on the teleconference?

Yes, contact information of ministry staff involved in the teleconference will be provided in a follow-up email, however we would encourage you to reach out to your local regional office with any follow-up questions that you have on the process.

ACG BASE FUNDING

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35. What are the criteria for TDAs to receive base funding?

ACG funding is designated for Ministry-approved apprenticeship in-class training activities. College and Non-college TDAs that are approved and receive funding for apprenticeship in-class training may be eligible if they:

- demonstrate the three consecutive years of in-class training activity (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20); and
- have been approved to deliver the trade associated with the project in the previous three full fiscal years (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20).

36. How are base funding project applications evaluated?

Each base funding project application will be reviewed for completeness and against ACG program objectives. If the application is not aligned with the objectives, the ministry will contact the TDA to discuss options.

Each application must include a description, cost estimate and rationale. The application template may contain more than one proposed project.

Detailed lists of equipment purchases should not be submitted in the initial application. Rather, details of actual expenditures should be provided in the interim and final reports.

37. How are base funding amounts determined?

Unlike in previous years, program funding is no longer split between college and non-college TDAs. The full \$18M has been allocated using the same formula for all TDAs, that is based on in-class training activity from the previous three fiscal years plus a base amount of \$20,000. The formula reflects the hours of apprenticeship training provided by each approved TDA and includes all delivery models. Each approved TDA has been advised of their allocation amount by letter.

As in the last funding cycle, in order to allow TDAs to conduct better long-term capital planning, there will be a three-year funding commitment for all TDAs.

38. How are TDAs notified of their base allocation amounts?

Each approved TDA has been advised of their allocation amount for 2021-22, 2022-

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23 and 2023-24 by a letter from the Minister as well as from the regional director.

If you have not yet received your allocation letter on January 15, 2020, please contact your local Employment and Training Consultant.