

Questions and Answers for Interested Applicants

2023-24 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposal

1. What is the difference between the 2021-24 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Guidelines (Base Allocation) and the 2023-24 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals (CFP)

Program Elements	Apprenticeship Capital Grant Base	Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals
TDA eligibility	TDAs that are approved and received funding for apprenticeship in-class training over the past 3 years (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20) may be eligible	TDAs that are approved and received funding for apprenticeship in-class training over the past year (2021-22) or 2020-21 may be eligible.
Objectives/Priorities	<p>The objectives of the program are to support TDAs in delivering relevant, high-quality in-class training by:</p> <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 apprenticeship instruction and/or facilities; and • improving access to in-class training, including removing accessibility barriers and addressing gender equity. 	<p>In general, objectives of the ACG CFP objectives are aligned with those of the ACG Base. However, the CFP includes the following additional priorities:</p> <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. <p><i>Please refer to the 2023-24 ACG CFP guidelines for more information.</i></p>

	<i>Please refer to the 2021-24 ACG Base guidelines for more information.</i>	
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.
Application Process	<p>For the current three-year cycle (2021-2024), initial ACG Base applications were due to the ministry on January 21, 2021. Each organization that was approved in 2021 for ACG Base funding received an allocation for each year.</p> <p>Recipients of ACG Base funding must submit an application template every year within the three-year cycle for which they were approved. For the 2023-24 fiscal year, ACG Base applications are due on January 31, 2023.</p>	<p>Through an annual, competitive CFP process, the ministry welcomes TDAs to submit project proposals for additional capital funding, separate from ACG Base Allocation.</p> <p>Applications for the 2023-24 ACG CFP were released on February 7, 2023 and due on March 21, 2023.</p>

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

TDAs 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.

3. What is the purpose of the 2023-24 CFP?

The CFP provides a flexible model of funding that responds to the varying levels of support required by TDAs and complements the ACG Program Guidelines. The ministry releases an annual CFP to support TDAs in making capital investments. For 2023-24, this CFP will prioritize projects that:

- 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.

Combining the multi-year base allocation with the CFP provides both flexibility for TDAs and stability for longer-term projects. Please refer to the **2023-24 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposal guidelines** located on the Employment Ontario Partners Gateway (EOPG). Please refer to Section 1.2 of the ACG CFP guidelines for additional details on the priorities.

4. 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 2020-21 or 2021-22; and
- have had in-class training activity in 2020-21 or 2021-22 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 2020-21 or 2021-22.

5. Do Pre-Apprenticeship or Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) providers qualify for capital funding?

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.

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 2020-21 or 2021-22; and
- have had in-class training activity in 2020-21 or 2021-22 for the trade(s) associated with the project.

6. Can the CFP fund the purchase of equipment that will be used on site, as well as be used on a mobile basis, and/or at tradeshow?

Projects that support the alterations, renovations, and enhancements of existing facilities, including 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. Please refer to section 1.5 in the 2023-24 ACG CFP guidelines for more information on eligible expenditures.

7. Are all projects approved under the CFP funded at 50%?

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

8. Are professional costs pertaining to additions to facilities, such as engineering, architectural or consulting fees, 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 cost sharing stipulation.

9. How many applications can a TDA submit? Can TDAs submit multiple applications 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 project that includes either:

- Purchase of equipment (equipment may be new and/or used or replacement of existing) for one primary trade
- Facility improvement
- Addition to building

10. Will the CFP affect ACG base funding?

No, the 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.

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

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 sign 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.

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

While approval of all funding requested is not guaranteed, there is no cap to how much funding a TDA can request through the ACG CFP.

13. What criteria will be used to evaluate applications for the 2023-24 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. Ministry staff will review submitted applications and evaluate eligible applications against the program criteria. Notwithstanding the eligibility criteria set out, the ministry will have sole authority to decide which projects are funded. All proponents will be contacted at the conclusion of the evaluation process.

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 2023-24 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.

Additional information on the CFP priorities can be found in section 6.2 of the CFP guidelines.

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

Applications may only include one project. A project is limited to one of the following activities:

- Purchase of equipment (equipment may be new and/or used or replacement of existing) for one primary trade
- Facility improvement
- Addition to building

Projects that include the purchase of equipment may include minor modifications to facilities to accommodate installation, the details of this should be included in the description of the equipment expense.

Applications that include more than one activity, will be deemed ineligible and not reviewed.

An application will be reviewed in its entirety and those that meet the eligibility criteria will either be recommended for approval based on a scoring matrix or not recommended.

15. Understanding that a proposal can only include one activity, can a project proposal to purchase equipment, include the purchase of multiple pieces of equipment?

Yes, multiple pieces of equipment can be proposed under one project. However, the purchase of equipment must be within the same scope of **project and activity** and

be for one primary trade. For example, the purchase of 2 stove tops for the kitchen lab to deliver training for Cook (415A).

Please refer to section 6.2 in the 2023-24 ACG CFP guidelines for more information on application requirements.

16. Is there a definition of innovative teaching technology?

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.

17. Can a TDA apply for ACG CFP to supplement base 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.

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.

18. Can a TDA 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.

19. Please clarify what the following statement means "Activities and projects must align with curriculum standards) for the trade(s)?"

ACG is meant to support apprenticeship in-class training. TDAs approved for and delivering in-class training must follow current curriculum standards.

As part of the CFP application, TDAs should link projects to the curriculum as evidence for why the project is needed. Please note, effective January 2022, Skilled Trades Ontario (STO) has assumed responsibility for the development and maintenance of these standards.

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

Please use the current STO-approved [curriculum standards](#).

21. What kinds of projects are eligible for ACG CFP 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 Section 1.7 for more detail);
- Alterations, renovations and enhancements to existing facilities, including mobile apprenticeship training units, used for hands-on apprenticeship training purposes to improve the condition and efficiency of apprenticeship training facilities;
 - Mobile training units should be used to deliver training that supports a TDA's approved in-class training activity.
- Purchase of equipment to support alternate delivery methods for in-class training, such as online and/or simulated training, including:
 - Purchase of online learning, simulator and/or virtual reality software;
 - Purchase of videoconferencing equipment and software
 - Purchase of hardware and software (e.g. servers, networking equipment) to operate Virtual Private Networks or other supports for online learning;
 - Purchase of externally created digital content, such as training videos, learning modules, etc.;
 - Purchase of hardware, such as laptops, videoconferencing equipment, equipment to support simulator/virtual reality training, etc.
- Replacement of existing equipment to meet industry standards and support growth in apprenticeship enrolment and completions;
- Purchase of equipment that supports:
 - Training capacity growth;
 - Program delivery efficiencies, i.e., affecting more than one training program;
 - The inclusion of women in trades, (e.g., proper fitting safety equipment and gear for women and gender appropriate washrooms/changerooms onsite).
 - Improvements to remove accessibility barriers

Please refer to section 1.5 in the 2023-24 ACG CFP guidelines for more information on eligible expenditures.

22. 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.

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** (in-kind contribution cannot substitute financial contributions);
- 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;
- provide evidence of value for money; and
- make every effort to pay for and complete the project within 12 months. The ministry will not pay for any costs overruns nor make provisions for when the project is not completed within 12 months;
- 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.

23. 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. 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 considered as an amendment to a construction project and not an eligible addition to an existing building as specified in the guidelines. The construction of a freestanding building or structure is not an eligible expense.

24. What happens in the event a project runs overtime, i.e., beyond 12 months?

All project activities must be completed within 12 months of contract start date. For equipment, this means it must be installed and functional by the end of the project agreement. The ministry will not pay for any cost overruns nor make provisions for when the project is not completed or goes beyond 12 months. 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.

25. What are the timelines for the CFP?

EVENT	DATE
Release of Call for Proposal application guide 2023-24 and supporting documents which includes Questions and Answers.	February 7, 2023
Call for Proposal questions due to the ministry	February 14, 2023
Response to Questions posted by ministry	March 13, 2023
Call for Proposal applications due to the ministry	March 21, 2023

26. When will TDAs be informed of the outcome of their application?

It is anticipated that TDAs will be informed of the outcome of their submission in June 2023

27. Can proponents connect with their local MLITSD office with questions regarding the content of their proposal submission?

In order to ensure that consistent and accurate information is provided, proponents will have the opportunity to submit questions through a formal Questions and Answers process. Questions regarding the 2023-24 ACG CFP should be submitted by e-mail by **February 14, 2023** to:

- Northern Region mailbox: MLTSDNorthernRegion@ontario.ca
- Western Region mailbox: ETDWesternRegion@ontario.ca
- Eastern Region mailbox: EastRPU@ontario.ca
- Central Region mailbox: CentralRegionApprenticeship@ontario.ca

Responses to any questions submitted will be added to the ACG CFP Question and Answer document and posted on the Employment Ontario Partner's Gateway by March 13, 2023.

Following February 14, 2023, no further questions on proposals will be accepted to ensure a fair and competitive process. If you have questions about the form itself, not the content of your proposal, you may contact your local regional office.