

Frequently Asked Questions

UPDATED December 3, 2020

This FAQ document supports information on the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) webpage and provided in the CVRIS Program Guide. Applicants are advised to refer to all these resources prior to filling out the application for the program.

GENERAL

Q: What is the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS)?

A: The COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure stream consists of combined federal-provincial funding as part of the - Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) under the Investing in Canada Plan. CVRIS is a competitive, merit-based grant program, focused on upgrading public buildings, improving health and educational facilities; increasing access to active transportation; and increasing resilience/adaptation to natural disaster events. For more information on the Investing in Canada Plan, see the Government of Canada websites: [Investing in Canada Plan](#) or [Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program](#)

Q: Are there any special timelines associated with CVRIS?

A: Yes, projects submitted under CVRIS, must commence prior to September 30, 2021 and be completed before December 31, 2021. Remote communities will have until December 31, 2022 to complete their projects.

Q: Do you have any tips for preparing to apply to the program?

A: Yes, please see below for:

- Read the Program Guide and the Application Questions to ensure that the project will be eligible and that it will meet the program criteria and outcomes. These are available on the Program website and will also assist with entering project information into the online application directly through the LGIS.
- Read the **Accessing the Online Application** document on the [CVRIS Website](#) for instructions that will assist you in applying for a Business BCeID (this can take up to 10 days) if your organization does not already have access to the Local Government Information System (LGIS). Applications will only be accepted by submitting them using LGIS. The process to obtain a Business BCeID and gain access to LGIS can take some time and it is encouraged to start this process as soon as possible. Once your organization has its Business BCeID it must then request access to LGIS in order to gain access the online CVRIS Program application. Please note that the Business BCeID must be specific to the applicant (not a consultant assisting with an application).
- Check what is in your capital plans, and work towards having your asset management framework complete and up to date.
- Ensure that a potential project is ready to go, i.e. land is purchased, permits are in place where possible, and that the project timeframe aligns with program timelines (following approval, projects must commence prior to September 30, 2021 and be completed before December 31, 2021. Remote communities will have until December 31, 2022 to complete their projects.

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- Contact staff with questions **prior** to the application deadline to allow time to answer questions. Contact information for staff:
 - Email: Infra@gov.bc.ca
 - Phone: 250-387-4060
- Prepare mandatory documents such as a detailed cost estimate (see template on the Program website), and review permits and approvals necessary to proceed.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Q: Who is eligible to apply to the CVRIS Program?

A: Local governments, Indigenous Ultimate Recipients (both on and off-reserve) and Not-for-Profit organizations

Q: Can I partner with another Local Government or First Nation to apply for funding under this program?

A: Yes, one eligible ultimate recipient can partner with another eligible recipient to apply for funding. A partnership agreement or Memorandum of Understanding should be provided with the application. Another organization is considered a partner when they contribute value to the project (generally funding, either for construction of the project or for ongoing operations and maintenance). Funding will be awarded to the primary applicant, who would be expected to fulfill the requirements of the Shared Cost Agreement.

Q: I am a For-Profit organization; can I apply for funding under the CVRIS Program?

A: No, unfortunately, For-Profit organizations are not eligible for the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream

WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE

Q: What types of projects are supported by the CVRIS?

A: If your proposed project supports one of the federal outcomes and meets the additional requirements outlined in the CVRIS [Program Guide](#), as well as other program requirements, your project should be eligible. Eligible projects will be infrastructure for public use and benefit. A list of criteria around eligible projects is provided in section 3.2 of the Program Guide. A list of example projects will be available on the program website. If you are still unsure, please contact program staff. In certain circumstances, we may also discuss with federal staff at Infrastructure Canada.

Q: Will the Program support design-only projects?

A: No, projects must construct capital infrastructure. However, the design costs associated with the infrastructure constructed are eligible costs under the Program.

Q: Can we submit an application for a project that was unsuccessful under a previous infrastructure grant program?

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A: Yes, if the project has good alignment with the program outcomes and criteria. We recommend that you contact Ministry program staff to discuss your previous application and areas where improvements can be made prior to submission under the program. Note that the application questions may be different than for previous programs.

Q: Is there a maximum grant amount for projects?

A: Yes, the maximum grant amount for CVRIS is \$10 million. However, fair distribution of the funds will be considered. Project timelines should factor into a funding request. A short construction timeline must be achievable for the project, with construction being completed prior to December 31, 2021 and for remote communities Dec. 31, 2022. Projects should be scaled appropriately to fit program timelines.

WHEN CAN I APPLY and WHAT ARE THE FUNDING TIMELINES

Q: What are the application timelines?

A: The application intake opened on December 1, 2020. Applications can be submitted until 2:00pm(PST) **January 27, 2021**. **Reminder:** If your organization does not already have a Business BCeID for you to be added as a user, it can take up to 10 business days to obtain a Business BCeID. Please account for this while creating your timelines for applying. It is suggested that applications are submitted as soon as possible

Q: When will funding decisions be announced?

A: Funding decisions are anticipated to be made in Late Spring 2021

HOW DO I APPLY

Q: What is the process for applying?

A: Applicants must complete and submit an online application form through the LGIS. It is a two-step process. New users are encouraged to start the process of requesting a Business BCeID as early as possible, as the Business BCeID will be required to then request and set up access to the LGIS. This can take up to **10 business days**. **The set up in LGIS requires verification (it is not instant) and can normally be completed within 5 business days**. Please refer to the **Accessing the Online Application** document on the CVRIS website.

Q: Do I need to answer all of the questions on the application form?

A: Yes. Please note that answering N/A to required questions (except when instructed) may affect your project's scoring and ranking in the technical assessment process. There is a need to ensure that projects align with program and senior government priorities, and to gather enough information to assess applications accordingly.

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Q: I don't know how to answer one of the questions on the application form. What should I do?

A: Please contact Ministry program staff for guidance if you do not know how to answer a question. We can provide advice. Ministry Program staff are happy to provide advice and clarify where we can. However, please note that we are a small team. With many potential applications, we are limited in capacity, we ask that applicants with questions review the program materials on the website first. This will increase the quality of the conversation and corresponding advice.

PROJECT COSTS

Q: We incurred project costs before we were approved for CVRIS funding. Are these costs considered eligible and can we claim them for reimbursement?

A: No. Only costs incurred after the final project approval date as specified in the Shared Cost Agreement with the Province of BC are eligible, except for the costs associated with Indigenous consultation, with conditions and if approved.

Q: Do invoices need to be paid prior to submitting a claim to the Province for reimbursement under the grant?

A: Yes, invoices must be paid by the applicant prior to submitting a claim for reimbursement under the program. The program is claims based.

Q: There are changes or variations to our original, approved project. Do we have to notify the Province?

A: Yes. All proponents need to advise the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, in writing, of any variation from the approved project. Before such changes are implemented, they must be approved by the Ministry otherwise costs incurred may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Q: We have decided not to proceed with our project as originally outlined. Can we use the program funds for another infrastructure project in our community?

A: The funding is specific to the project, not the community. Please contact Ministry program staff to discuss.

Q: Can we directly award a contract(s) for undertaking the project?

A: No, contracts are not allowed to be directly awarded.

Q: Are we allowed to use our own staff time to carry out project construction?

A: No, own forces are not eligible under CVRIS.

Q: If we are unable to move forward with the project after funding is awarded, can we be reimbursed for costs incurred prior to the cancellation?

A: No, any cost incurred to the cancelled project will not be reimbursed. Funding requires that projects meet the outcomes of the program.

Frequently Asked Questions

SPECIFIC OUTCOME ADVICE

Active Transportation

Q: Are there any guides available to help us design active transportation projects?

A: Yes, please refer to the [BC Active Transportation Design Guide](#) for assistance with the planning and design of your project. All active transportation applicants are encouraged to review and reference the B.C. Active Transportation Design Guide in order to build consistent infrastructure across B.C. that is accessible to all ages and abilities, using Universal Design and GBA+ (Gender Based Analysis) principles.

The Design Guide is a comprehensive set of planning and engineering guidelines offering recommendations for the planning, selection, design, implementation, and maintenance of active transportation facilities for jurisdictions of all sizes. The Design Guide incorporates theory, recent research, design concepts, best practices, new methodologies, and innovations to maximize the benefits of investing in active transportation infrastructure. The guidance provided is BC-specific, context sensitive, and province-wide. It brings together engineering principles and best practices from the municipal, provincial, national, and international levels, and includes rural-specific best practices and examples.

Q: Are there any guides available to assist with the design of temporary roadway projects?

A: Yes, please refer to the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure's [Reallocation of Roadway Space for Physical Distancing Guidelines](#) as well as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' [COVID-19 Street Rebalancing Guide](#). These guidelines will help local governments ensure space is available for active transportation opportunities for the community.

Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation

Q: Are flood related disaster mitigation and adaptation projects eligible under CVRIS?

A: Flood related disaster mitigation and adaptation projects are being administered by Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC). For more information please see the program website at: [EMBC Adaptation, Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Program](#)

USE OF OTHER FUNDING SOURCES AND BORROWING

Q: Can we use funding acquired from other federal grant programs, including Gas Tax, as our contribution to project funding under the CVRIS program?

A: **No**, because of the short time period between approval and project completions, as well as projects being 100% funded for all applicant types, funding from other programs will not be allowed.

Q: Are there any restrictions to applying under the CVRIS if we have already applied under a different program [such as the Environmental Quality (EQ) or Community, Culture and Recreation (CCR) Programs]?

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A: If the project is eligible, an applicant may apply to more than one program for the same project, however, the project will only be funded through one program. If an application is submitted to more than one program (for the same project) and is subsequently successful, it will be funded under the program as determined by the Ministry. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

If a project is approved under one program, it becomes ineligible for funding under another program. For example, if a project is approved for funding under the Community, Culture and Recreation Program, the same project will be ineligible for funding under the CVRIS Program. If an application is submitted under the CVRIS Program for the same project, it will still count towards the application limit for the program.

PROJECT SELECTION

Q: What is the evaluation process for applications under the funding?

A: The Program is merit based and projects are subject to a comprehensive technical ranking assessment and internal provincial review, recommendation are then submitted to Canada for final approval. Applications will be assessed as they are received and if it is deemed a strong project, may be moved forward for consideration. The internal provincial review may include consideration of factors such as regional distribution of funding, previous funding, communities in need, and unmitigated project risks.

Applicants are responsible for and must ensure that their application demonstrates how the project will be eligible for funding (See CVRIS Program guide), how the project benefits align with one or more of the outcomes (See CVRIS Program guide), how the project aligns with program criteria described in the application form and in this CVRIS Program guide, and how the project is supported by sustainable management and planning.

Q: How do I create a strong application?

A: A strong application clearly demonstrates how the project aligns with program objectives, describes the need for the project within the community clearly, has a detailed budget, demonstrates that appropriate stakeholders have been consulted and required permits have been identified, demonstrates a plan for operation and maintenance, and has good alignment with organizational objectives. A well written application is clear and concise, with full but succinct answers that directly address all questions. There are character limits for questions within the application form which are visible when using the online application form.

When answering questions, do not leave them unanswered or with N/A; please contact the Ministry program staff for assistance before submitting if you are having trouble with an answer. Ensure that attachments are in a searchable format. Include letters of support from organizations such as health authorities where applicable and from any project partners (or a partnership agreement / Memorandum of Understanding).

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do we get reimbursed for expenditures?

A: To receive both the federal and provincial governments' contributions for approved projects, claims must be submitted for eligible costs to the Ministry. Only costs incurred, paid and consistent with and comparable to those identified in the signed shared cost agreement are eligible for reimbursement. Where multiple projects are ongoing (e.g. through different grant funding programs or through a phased approach), please ensure that claims are specific to the approved project only.

Q: Will an Impact Assessment be required?

A: Applicants are expected to determine whether all applicable legislative or regulatory requirements will or have been met, including requirements for federal or provincial environmental assessments as defined in the *Impact Assessment Act 2019*.

Q: What should I expect in terms of reporting requirements for an approved project?

A: Ultimate recipients will be required to submit quarterly progress reports and monthly budget forecast reports to Ministry program staff. The payment of claims will be conditional upon submission of requirements that support sustainable infrastructure management, such as relevant plans or confirmation that required permits have been obtained. Reporting on federal targets and indicators will be required, as related to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, accessibility standards, increased broadband access, long-term drinking water advisories, compliance with federal effluent regulations and increased active transportation and transit. The CVRIS Program guide contains additional details on reporting requirements.

Q: Do I need to retain ownership of infrastructure assets once the project is complete?

A: Yes. There will be a requirement in the Shared Cost Agreement with the Province that ultimate recipients will need to maintain ongoing operations and retain title to and ownership of the asset for at least 5 years following completion of the project. Assets may be able to be transferred to Canada, British Columbia, or a municipality or regional district in certain circumstances with agreement from the Province and Canada.