

**Questions and Answers for Interested Applicants
2022-23 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposal (Round 2)**

Apprenticeship Capital Grant (ACG) – GENERAL

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 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.

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.

2. What has changed under the Apprenticeship Capital Grant?

Announced in Budget 2020, 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.

In 2021-22, the ministry introduced a flexible model for distributing capital funds to TDAs:

- a three-year commitment of \$18M annually is 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

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- a yearly Call for Proposals (CFP) of \$6M.

This approach to funding gives 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 is open to both college and non-college TDAs and priorities will be set on a yearly basis informed by industry demand and government priorities.

The ministry also introduced new ACG eligible costs in 2021-22, including the construction of an addition to existing facilities.

3. What is the difference between the 2021-22 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Guidelines and the 2022-23 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals (CFP) (Round 2)?

Program Elements	Apprenticeship Capital Grant	Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposals
Objectives/Priorities	<p>The objectives of the program are to support TDAs to deliver 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 	<p>The ACG CFP objectives are the same as for the regular program guidelines, except that the CFP has additional priorities that include:</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.

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	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 2019-20 or 2020-21 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. debt 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 2022-23 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 2022-23, 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.

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This approach provides both flexibility for TDAs and stability for longer-term projects. Please refer to the **2022-23 Apprenticeship Capital Grant Call for Proposal guidelines (Round 2)** located on the [Employment Ontario Partners Gateway \(EOPG\)](#).

Please refer to section 6.6 in the ACG CFP guidelines for additional details on the priorities.

6. Is there a funding cap?

There is no funding cap for individual proposals, but the ministry does need to remain within the \$6 million budget allotted for the CFP.

7. 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:

- a. been approved to deliver in-class training for the trade(s) associated with the project in 2019-20 or 2020-21; and
- b. in-class training activity in 2019-20 or 2020-21 for the trade(s) associated with the project.

Recognizing that COVID-19 may have impacted a TDA's ability to deliver training in 2020-21, the ministry has expanded eligibility to consider training activity in 2019-20 or 2020-21. TDAs cannot request funding for a trade for which they were not approved or delivered training in 2019-20 or 2020-21.

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

The ACG is intended to support ministry-approved TDAs with capital investments to enhance the delivery of apprenticeship in-class training. Due to the nature of the Pre-Apprenticeship Training and OYAP programs, some ACG projects may result in supporting Pre-Apprenticeship and OYAP participants who receive Level 1 apprenticeship in-class 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:

- a. been approved to deliver in-class training for the trade(s) associated with the project in 2019-2020 or 2020-21; and
- b. in-class training activity in 2019-20 or 2020-21 for the trade(s) associated with

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the project.

9. 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 by March 2022.

10. 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 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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:

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

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14. Will the CFP affect base ACG 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.

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 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.

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 2022-23 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.

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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 2022-23 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 6.6 of the CFP guidelines.

18. 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:

- a. purchase of new equipment
- b. purchase of updated equipment
- c. facility improvement
- d. 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.

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19. 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.

20. Can a TDA apply for ACG CFP in addition to their base funding?

TDAs' ACG (base funding) agreements are separate from agreements for funding awarded through the ACG CFP process.

All projects approved under a TDA's base funding agreement must be completed as per the terms of the agreement. As the ACG CFP is a competitive process, separate from the process for allocating base funding, there is no guarantee that additional funding will be awarded to each TDA to supplement their ACG (base funding) projects. As such, these approved projects must be completed within the base funding provided. However, if a TDA submits a project that meets the criteria outlined in the ACG CFP, and it is supported by the local office and employers, funding for additional projects may be approved, in addition to the TDA's base amount.

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.

21. 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.

22. Please clarify what the following question means "Does the project align with the official curriculum standards developed by the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT) for the applicable 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

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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) will assume responsibility for the development and maintenance of these standards.

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

Please use the current OCOT-approved standards.

24. 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:

- a. construction of **additions to buildings** to accommodate additional training space (please refer to Section 1.7 in the CFP guidelines for additional detail);
- b. alterations, renovations and enhancements to existing facilities - an example of this is installing a mezzanine inside an existing workshop.
- c. purchase of equipment to support alternate delivery methods for in-class training, such as online and/or simulated training;
- d. replacement of existing equipment to meet industry standards and support growth in apprenticeship enrolment and completions;
- e. 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;
- f. purchase of new equipment resulting in program delivery efficiencies (i.e., affecting more than one training program);
- g. improvements to remove accessibility barriers – this can include the replacement of accessibility entrances and doors;
- h. 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).

25. 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.

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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:

- a. **contribute 50% of total project costs** (in-kind contribution cannot substitute financial contributions);
- b. 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.;
- c. prior to signing an agreement with the Province provide proof of sufficient funding of the recipient share of the project budget;
- d. provide evidence of value for money; and
- e. 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;
- f. 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.

26. 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 considered 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.

27. 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.

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28. What are the timelines for the CFP?

EVENT	DATE
Release of Call for Proposal application guide 2022-23 and supporting documents which includes Questions and Answers.	November 23, 2021
Call for Proposal questions due to the ministry	November 30, 2021
Response to Questions posted by ministry	December 14, 2021
Call for Proposal applications due to the ministry	16:00 EST, December 21, 2021

29. 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.

30. 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.

ACG BASE FUNDING

31. 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:

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

32. 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.

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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.

33. How are base funding amounts determined?

The \$18M has been allocated using the same formula for all TDAs, which is based on in-class training activity from three fiscal years (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20) 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.

34. How were TDAs notified of their base allocation amounts?

Last year, each approved TDA was advised of their allocation amount for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 by a letter from the Minister as well as from the regional director.