



Canadian Mental
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Alberta
Mental health for all

2024 COMMUNITY GRANTS

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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PURPOSE OF RMHP COMMUNITY GRANTS

SUPPORT COMMUNITY ACTION TEAMS TO DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT LOCAL ACTION PLANS

The Rural Mental Health Project (RMHP) Community Grants program aims to support rural Action Teams as they identify local priorities and create action plans that advance community mental health, recovery, and wellbeing. Siloed approaches to community well-being are still predominant in rural Alberta; however, community advancements cannot be made by the actions of a single person or organization. The purpose of this grant is to fund community-owned, multi-sector efforts that improve community-wide collaboration. The community Action Team can discover local priorities and develop possible solutions together. Collective action is proven to increase reach and impacts related to health and wellness in rural Alberta.

FIND AND STRENGTHEN EXISTING ASSETS AND RESOURCES

There are many services, programs, and supports available in each region of Alberta. The RMH Grant encourages each community to become more aware of those assets, and to leverage local and regional strengths and assets within people, institutions, and spaces. Stronger coordination and connection across community-based and expert-based initiatives enhance the reach and use of available resources, improving community and individual outcomes.

APPLY PROJECT PRINCIPLES & TRAINING TO THE UNIQUE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The RMH Approach and principles are evidence-informed, weaving knowledge from across many bodies of knowledge, including academic, practice-based, and lived experiences. Animator training and RMH Community Grants are rooted in the RMH principles, providing flexibility for local action plans to reflect the unique circumstances and readiness within each community. Funded projects must apply these in meaningful ways in their communities. Principles are described on the following page.

PROMOTE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SUPPORT RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

The RMHP and Network aims to promote equitable access to funding and supports to rural Alberta. Often smaller communities do not receive the same amount of funds and resources as larger urban centres and may not have the capacity required to apply for funding opportunities. Different funding streams and supports are available to best suit local experience and capacity.

APPLICATION TIMELINES

- **October 2023** - Expressions of Interest open (required)
- **January 2024** – Applications open
- **January 31, 2024** - Applications are due
- **February 2024** - Adjudication team receive, review, and adjudicate applications
- **March 2024** - Applicants are notified on the results of their application. Conditions may be included in the notice, with 2-3 weeks to review and respond.
- **April 2024** - Grant agreements shared, with all parties signing off, and funds are then distributed



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RURAL MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT PRINCIPLES

COMMUNITY-BASED

This grant aims to support rural community Action Teams, comprised of citizens of all demographics, to participate in leadership, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. Successful communities will effectively demonstrate that citizens and multiple actors across sectors co-develop the goals and activities.

STRENGTHS-BASED

All communities have assets. Every community has people with valuable experiences, ideas, and talents. Every community has built, natural, social, and digital spaces that shape wellbeing. These assets are opportunities that can be celebrated, enhanced and woven into local action plans. This grant encourages communities to make better use of existing assets, which often go underused or unnoticed.

5 IN 5 PEOPLE HAVE MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness. All people have mental health. A person can have a mental illness and be mentally healthy. Conversely, a person may not have a mental illness yet but still have low mental health. Our work aims to support strategies that build better mental health for all people (5 of 5) in the community. By thinking more broadly about mental health, we can start to consider ways of supporting flourishing, mentally healthy communities.

WHOLE COMMUNITY VIEW

There are many factors within communities that shape our mental health. Services are needed, but not sufficient to improve mental health. Therefore, we aim to fund activities that weave across multiple determinants of health, creating opportunities for change, improvement, and innovation.

COLLABORATIVE

Collaboration is the only process that can lead to lasting, meaningful change related to health and wellness. Local partnerships and a collective vision are essential elements at all levels of action, decision-making, and planning. Collective leadership is proven to increase reach and impacts related to health and wellness in rural Alberta and improve capacity and skill development among citizens. Therefore, successful applicants will clearly demonstrate collective leadership from the planning process to the evaluation.

DEVELOPMENTAL, Learning & Legacy

Just like people, communities change over time. Learning cycles embedded in the action plan are needed to continually adjust actions as new information comes to light.



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ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Animators, Project, & Backbones

Carefully read all eligibility requirements before submitting an application.

1. ANIMATORS

Communities must have an active Animator to be eligible. The Animator must:

- Be *actively* facilitating the community Action team throughout the project/proposal *development* and *deployment*.
- Completed all 7 training modules
- Submitted a complete training Summary Report (i.e. Reporting on the ~\$2650 given for training and facilitation compensation)
- For multi-community grants, each participating community must have an active Animator involved in co-writing the proposal and co-implementation.

2. PROJECTS

Please pay close attention to what is and is not eligible projects and features, as there are notable changes.

- Projects must be tailored to specific communities, using and building on existing strengths and assets (i.e., cannot copy-paste the same project across several communities in the same county).
- Proposals must sufficiently demonstrate that the proposed priority areas, objectives, and activities reflect the wishes of multiple, diverse community groups and sectors, not just a single person or organization's mandate.
 - If the project is focused on *establishing* a community Action Team, the anticipated milestones and activities must be described (e.g., collective vision plan, rapport and trust activities, liberating structure processes).
- Programs, activities, or events developed solely by the backbone organization are not eligible.
- Existing programs or a duplication of previous applications and activities are not eligible.
 - Community Action Teams may apply to expand on an existing *community-led* initiatives or projects. To be eligible for this:
 - Application must sufficiently capture how the project builds upon legacy, learnings, and impacts
 - Demonstrate a reasonable change from the initial project
 - Additional funding is not guaranteed
- Compensation for Animators-only may be included but can be no more than 50% of the overall budget.
 - a. Non-Animator honorariums are eligible within reason.
- Projects focusing exclusively on service provision domain (e.g., counselling) are not eligible.
- Completion and quality of previous reporting may impact new applications.



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3. BACKBONE ORGANIZATIONS

Each proposal must have a community backbone organization. The organization must be: a Non-Profit, Registered Charity, or affiliated with a local government (i.e., FCSS Office, First Nation, Métis Settlement, Municipality, Municipal District, or Special Area). Ineligible backbones include:

- A for-profit entity.
- AHS and Health Advisory Councils
- Animator cannot be the sole director of a non-audited organization.
- The Animator cannot be the backbone main contact.
 - A separate person with signing authority (who is not directly supervised by the Animator) to be the Backbone Contact. A new Backbone Organization will have to be identified.

Non-audited organizations will have additional financial reporting requirements.

All projects must adhere to applicable municipal, provincial, and federal guidelines regarding public health and safety.



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ELIGIBLE & INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Compensation related expenses – Expenses must be for individuals whose duties are directly and primarily related to activities undertaken as part of the project as stated in the grant agreement. Ineligible items include, but are not limited to:

- Discretionary severance and separation packages

Travel and Subsistence costs – Travel and subsistence costs include reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with standard Government of Alberta rates for fieldwork, research and other related activities, provided they are directly related to and necessary to carry out the activities under the project as set out in the grant agreement. Travel and subsistence costs must comply with and must not exceed the maximums allowable under the directive applicable to Government of Alberta employees. Ineligible items include, but are not limited to:

- Commuting costs between residence and place of employment
- Passport and immigration fees
- Reimbursement for airfare purchased with personal frequent flyer points

Equipment and supplies – Expenses include reasonable costs for the purchase of equipment and supplies which are directly related to and will be used primarily for the project as set out in the grant agreement. Ineligible items include, but are not limited to:

- Insurance costs for equipment
- Costs of construction, renovation of laboratories, offices

Computers – Reasonable expenses related to the purchase of computers that are directly related to and will be used for the project as set out in the grant agreement. Ineligible items include, but are not limited to:

- Monthly telephone connection and rental costs
- Voicemail
- Cellular phones or Blackberries

Services – Reasonable expenses for services that are directly related to the funded project activities as set out in the grant agreement. Expenses where a personal benefit could be derived are ineligible. Ineligible items include, but are not limited to:

- Alcohol
- Staff awards and recognition
- Professional training or development costs
- Insurance costs
- Monthly parking fees (unless required for project field work)
- Clothing costs
- Patenting expenses



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GRANT STREAMS

MICROGRANT

MAXIMUM: \$5,000

DESCRIPTION:

The Microgrant is intended for individual communities seeking to implement small-scale projects to support Animators' work in their community. The application process involves a shorter, streamlined application form to reflect the smaller amount of funds requested.

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY GRANT

MINIMUM: \$5,001

MAXIMUM: \$25,000

DESCRIPTION:

The Individual Community Grant is intended for individual communities seeking to implement medium- to large-scale projects in their community. The application process for an Individual Grant is more comprehensive than the Microgrant.

MULTI-COMMUNITY GRANT

MINIMUM: \$5,001

MAXIMUM: \$30,000

DESCRIPTION:

The Multi-Community Grant involves partnerships between Animators in different communities who are teaming up to create a broader or regional project that will support their respective communities. This stream aims to foster collaboration and allow Animators to work together and leverage each other's strengths and assets on a broader scale. Each community in the partnership must have a trained Animator who is involved in the project.



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APPLICATION Walk-Through

The RMH Grants support the implementation of collaborative action plans that the Animator and the community Action Team develop to advance community mental health and wellbeing, according to local realities. The intention is to support rural communities as they use evidence-informed principles to guide actions and behaviours and apply them according to each community's assets, readiness and qualities.

All 3 application forms focus on the same core concepts, with some variations. There are 3 streams of grants, so communities can apply for the stream that best suits their needs and capacity, including experience with grants.

Each section of the Application has a goal. This Guide offers insight on the purpose of each section, and helpful hints. The Guide, Rubric, and other appendices shared here were pulled together to support your community's success, including referencing relevant sections of training worksheets.

OVERVIEW AND CONTACT INFORMATION

This page is straightforward, however there are often many mistakes that can become problematic during the application process. Here are helpful tips based on common mistakes

- **PROJECT TITLE** – Be descriptive and creative! It will be promoted on our website and to partners. Plus, a name created together in the community can be a source of pride and interest.
- **COMMUNITY** – For multi-community grants, include each participating community.
- **AMOUNT REQUESTED** – Don't forget to name the specific amount that aligns with the budget. If it is the for the max amount, state that.
 - **USE THE CORRECT FORM!** Each stream has a different application. Before getting started, check the top right-hand corner for the correct form.
- **ANIMATOR NAME** – Recall the eligibility section, only active Animators are eligible. If multiple communities, then EACH active Animator must be named and actively involved.
- **BACKBONE** – Check eligibility section regarding backbone and project eligibility.
- **SIGNATURES** – Each Animator and the Backbone contact (with signing authority, NOT the Animator twice).

Be sure to check the length requirements of each section. Too short, leads to Adjudicators not having sufficient information to approve the application. Too long, and key information gets diluted and is less impactful.

Ask someone to read and edit before submitting! Be sure to have a friend or colleague that is NOT familiar with the project to review it for edits. Their questions may highlight information that should be added!



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SECTION 1: COMMUNITY CONTEXT

In this section, provide an overview of the physical, social, and cultural elements of your community. This provides context to the Adjudication team to understand your rural community, as each is unique in size and features. Be sure to discuss the existing local assets and resources in your community, emphasizing the assets that the project will use and build upon. Review Module 2, Section 1 of Animator Training, where these concepts are covered.

The purposes for this section:

- Demonstrates Animators and Action Teams' are aware of community: who is in it, what is available, what is happening
- Effectively provides insight into the circumstances and context, describe key information that captures the community.
- Adjudicators can better understand the community context, to better judge if the project's approach and activities are appropriate and meaningful to the community.
- Demonstrates Animators can apply the strength-based principle.

SECTION 2: RATIONALE & OBJECTIVES

In this section, identify the key goals and objectives of the project. Explain why the approach and activities your Action team created are appropriate for your community. Using the 8-Domain Model, describe which Domains the community Action is prioritizing and intending to address. Reminder: Don't forget about how the assets you listed earlier will be used in your approach. 8 Domain and related concepts are discussed in Module 3 of Animator Training. (Research, local info)

Purpose:

- Demonstrate how this is relevant in addressing local priorities that the community Action Team has determined need further attention.
- Identify which determinants of health (8 Domains of Mental Health model) the project will impact and improve. This will demonstrate the RMH principle of the whole community view.
- Build on strengths and make better use of existing assets to inspire meaningful change.

Helpful Resources:

- 8 Domains of Mental Health Overview (pg. 12)
- Community Action Planning Using the Domains of Mental Health Worksheet (pg. 14)



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SECTION 3: PROJECT COLLABORATION

Applicants **must** effectively demonstrate that multiple people, including diverse community voices and multi-sector partners, were involved with 5D stages: setting project priorities (discover); developing and designing project ideas and activities. The section requires you to outline how all members will participate in the deployment of all project activities. To be successful, this section must clearly demonstrate that the project is citizen-led and community-driven, with a diversity of partnership that have clearly defined roles and participation. Recall: To/For/With/By model covered in Module 4.

Action team contributors and co-leaders should be identified, including the gifts that they bring. Rather than act as managers or experts, Animators are agents that unify and amplify the voices and efforts of everyone.

Projects that do not demonstrate significant meaningful involvement from community members will not receive funding. ***Attending an events or activities does not qualify as being collaborator.**

Purpose:

- Improve the long-term impact and effects of the projects in the community, aligning with RMH principles.
- Prompts applicants to consider who will be involved in the project, especially the “unusual” collaborators, growing shared ownership and reciprocity
- Build confidence, connections, skill development, and longevity to community members and wellness efforts
- **Questions 5-7:** The goal is for communities to consider who has been involved in the planning stages of the project proposal. We encourage each community to become more intentional of inviting diverse perspective and people into decision making discussions.
 - For example, if there is a group of community members that your project is planning on reaching, are they involved in the project planning (e.g. men, new Canadians, youth)?

Helpful Resources:

- 5D Worksheet (pg. 15)
- Usual Suspects Worksheet (pg. 16)
- Who Do We Want to Engage? Worksheet (pg. 17)
- Inclusivity Checklist (pg. 19)
- [Liberating Structures](#)
- [Measuring Community Engagement](#)



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SECTION 4: PROJECT ACTIVITIES & BUDGET

These two tables require that you outline the specifics of the project. Activities and budget should directly correspond to the rationale, objectives, and assets sections that take those ideas and bring them to life.

Tips for Success:

- Activities and budgets communicate different information; yet all items should correspond with each other.
 - If there are activities that DO NOT require a budget line, that is great! Capture those in the budget as 'in-kind donations' (e.g. people contributions, spaces that are free to use)
- All key milestones, events, and activities should be included. Each minor activity does not need to be included, unless it offers helpful insight on 'process' and community involvement for the Adjudication team.
- Be sure to include any in-kind donations, contributions from partners, and other funding sources to support the project. This demonstrates partner buy-in and community support, which will strengthen the application.
 - TIP: Before sourcing a contractor, consider people in the opportunities to get community members involve who hold that skill or passion (e.g. artists, retired professionals/trades)
- Timelines and Budget often require some flexibility, in case planned project activities change. Minor changes will be included and justified in the reporting process.

SECTION 5: REFLECTION & EVALUATION

This section prompts applicants to consider how they will debrief on project activities throughout the life of the project. Specifically, how activities and events will be discussed to consider learning and growth opportunities and celebrating success.

This section asks each Action Team to create a plan on how they will collect and capture related to progress over the year. For example, the number of attendees, the number of volunteered hours, how people have been contacted; change in community awareness or access of resources, and other relevant community impacts from the project. Consider the long-term legacy of the project on community wellbeing.

Purpose:

- Enables space and time to debrief on all project activities, making adjustments as new information comes to light. Time to consider what is working and what can be tweaked or let go, if it is not helpful.
- Describe the anticipated changes related to the Domains your project is tackling
- Demonstrate collective learning that helps to inform future ideas and activities.
- Celebrate and capture (document) the milestones, changes, improvements, and other successes that are taking place. Along with time to gather insights from all perspectives and grieve change.
- Aligns with Developmental principle, encouraging growth and transformation over time.

Helpful Resources:

- 5D Worksheet (pg. 15)



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SECTION 6: NETWORK BUILDING

Rural community success is most possible when support and inspiration from other rural communities is accessed. This section highlights how you will leverage other rural Animators, communities, or partners to support your project's success. This also allows you to contribute your community's knowledge and experiences in support of others. The RMH Network includes a variety of activities, events, and ways to connect with and learn from others including Regional Meetups, Animator exchange events, the Rural Chronicles, topic-based workshops & webinars, online forums, and an Animator-led Design Teams.

Purpose:

- Encourages Animators to interact with other members of the Network and consider how they can contribute to the Network.
- Enhances the sharing of stories, successes, and resources through the Network.
- Provides insight into the lasting impacts of projects.
- To offer and gain additional resources, ideas, and inspiration from other rural communities and invested stakeholders.

QUESTION FOR BACKBONE ORGANIZATION

The Adjudication Team would like to better understand the backbone organizations that support the project, including their unique style and contributions to the project; and how the project is similar and different from the organizations typical operations.

The RMH Team would like to better support Backbone Organization too. The goal is to help build their understanding of the RMH Project, and create more spaces that add value for Backbone organizations via events, tools, communications in the future. This section will provide input to inform what types of supports and activities would be valuable.



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ADJUDICATION Process

Applications in the Microgrant stream will be evaluated by RMHP staff while applications for larger amounts in the Individual and Multi-Community Grant streams will be reviewed by the Adjudication Team.

The Adjudication Team will include people with diverse perspectives, experiences, and knowledge, including:

- People involved in mental health and wellness promotion, community development, education, and non-profits, among others;
- Animators and residents of rural communities;
- People with lived experiences; and
- People from all regions of the province.

If any members of the Adjudication Team are affiliated with an application, they will recuse themselves from the adjudication and discussion regarding that particular application.

All applications will be evaluated by the same criteria, as outlined in the Rural Mental Health Project Community Grants Application Rubric, attached on the following page.