

Renewable Energy & Improvements to Buildings 2024 Program Guide

What are Non-Profit SMART Grants?

Non-Profit SMART Grants support Basin non-profits and First Nations to increase their energy efficiency, generate renewable energy, adapt to the impacts of climate change, and/or reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

This program has two funding streams:

- **Stream 1:** Electric Vehicles & Charging Stations.
The Program Guide for Stream 1 can be found [here](#).
- **Stream 2:** Renewable Energy & Improvements to Buildings.
This Program Guide is for Stream 2.

How much will the Trust fund and which types of projects and costs are eligible?

The cumulative maximum grant amount for Non-Profit SMART Grants for Stream 1 and Stream 2 is \$200,000 total per applicant.

Eligible projects for Stream 2 must fit at least one of the following categories:

Renewable Energy Generation

Eligible Project Costs

The purchase and installation of solar photovoltaic arrays (Arrays) on buildings, structures or property that are owned or leased by the non-profit or First Nation.

Eligible Arrays must:

- show a positive return on investment;
- be eligible to participate in net-metering with their local utility company; and
- not generate more electricity than their estimated annual consumption.

Maximum Grant Amount

Up to 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$75,000.

Improvements to Buildings or Property

Eligible Project Costs

Improvements to buildings, structures, or property owned or leased on a long-term basis by the non-profit or First Nation that:

- improve the energy efficiency while demonstrating a positive return on investment;
- result in a measurable reduction of GHG emissions produced by your organization; and/ or
- increase resiliency and reduce vulnerability to the impacts of a changing climate including but not limited to flooding, wildfire or extreme heat events.

Eligible Projects include but are not limited to:

- increasing roof or exterior wall insulation and/or air sealing;
- installing fire resistant exterior siding;
- installing air source heat pumps or completing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) upgrades;
- transitioning to LED lighting;

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- installing automatic thermostats and other controls;
- adding exterior rolling shutters, sunscreens, and shade structures;
- installing rooftop sprinklers;
- installing flood alarms, backflow prevention valves, and sump pumps; and/or
- improving property drainage.

Maximum Grant Amount

Up to 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$150,000.

For building or property related improvements and renewable solar energy generation projects you must show ownership of the property or provide a long-term use/lease agreement with a minimum term of five years.

Depending on an applicant's ability to contribute, the Trust may consider a larger contribution than 75%.

Who can apply?

You can apply if you are a registered non-profit with broad community impact or a First Nation in the Columbia Basin region (ourtrust.org/map).

Eligible non-profit organizations include but are not limited to:

- Social service agencies, organizations or societies;
- BC Métis societies, associations and Chartered Communities;
- Food banks/food recovery initiatives;
- Libraries/reading centers;
- Seniors societies or associations;
- Community halls, visitor centres;
- Arts, culture, and heritage venues (theatres, galleries and museums); and
- Non-profit societies that operate childcare facilities.

What is the application process and when is the deadline?

Stream 2: Renewable Energy & Improvements to Buildings has a two-stage application process.

1. Submit an expression of interest (EOI) application by **May 9, 2024, at 2:00 pm PT / 3:00 pm MT.**
2. If selected to move forward, you will hear from us by **July 4, 2024**, and will be connected with the Trust's program advisor (Advisor). The deadline for the full application is **October 24, 2024, at 2:00 pm PT / 3:00 pm MT.**

Final applications seeking funding for building related improvements must be developed with support and guidance from the Advisor. The Advisor will assess your needs in detail and produce a report with a project scope and cost estimates that will form part of your final application.

What types of projects are not eligible?

Ineligible projects include projects that:

- focus on research, planning, communications or involve advocacy or lobbying;

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- improve buildings or properties that:
 - contain personal residences;
 - are rented out to individuals and/or commercial enterprises to generate income; or
 - are a sports facility or a place of worship.
- involve the adoption of technologies that are not market-ready; or
- relieve any level of government of its obligations.

Individual project eligibility is determined by the Trust at its sole discretion.

What types of costs are not eligible?

Ineligible costs include but may not be limited to:

- maintenance and administration costs;
- GST amounts that are subject to rebates;
- costs that are incurred before funding approval (retroactive costs); and
- enhancements that would result in the displacement of any current employee(s).

How does the Trust select projects for funding?

The Trust often receives requests for more funding than what is available and will prioritize requests from eligible applicants that demonstrate:

- the project meets the program eligibility listed above;
- significant and measurable project impacts that align with the program intent;
- readiness to move forward in the stated timelines;
- planning for ongoing and scheduled asset management, maintenance, and repairs; and
- confirmed financial commitments and local economic benefit.

The Trust strives to distribute Program funds across communities, organizations and project types and will consider this as part of the adjudication of all applications.

When can a project begin?

Funds can only be used for approved project expenses that occur **after** Trust approval of funding has been received and the Contribution Agreement has been signed.

What else to keep in mind?

Even if a project meets eligibility criteria, it may not be selected for funding as the Trust often receives requests for more funding than what is available. The Trust retains the right to determine project eligibility and the amount of funding allocated to each project; this may be all or part of what was requested.

Depending on the nature of the project, applicants may have to obtain specific permits and approvals prior to receiving Trust funds.

Ready to apply?

1. Email nonprofitSMART@ourtrust.org or call 1.800.505.8998 if you have questions or to discuss your project idea.
2. Start your EOI application. Use the [EOI application worksheet](#) to develop it offline, if

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preferred.

3. Complete the [online EOI application before the deadline](#).