

GUIDELINES:

# Tumbler Ridge Community Grant Writer Services

District of Tumbler Ridge  
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This document was prepared for the District of Tumbler Ridge.

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VOC 2W0

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# 1. OVERVIEW

The District of Tumbler, with the assistance of funding from the Northern Development Initiative (NDIT) has contracted a part-time community Grant Researcher/Writer. The Grant Writing Support program provides annual funding to support a grant writing position in a local government or First Nation band. The grant writer supports communities by preparing funding applications to agencies, foundations and government programs in order to access more funding dollars to support economic development projects and initiatives.

Non-profit community groups often rely on fundraising initiatives, such as grants, to fund their programs and projects.

The Community Grant Researcher/Writer can assist you in finding suitable grants for your project;

- research and identify grant opportunities
- Conduct pre-grant application meetings with community members to determine cost/benefits, timelines, responsibilities, criteria, and application process.
- assisting with additional documentation and technical requirements required by the funder (e.g., letters of support).

# 2. IS YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP ELIGIBLE?

Tumbler Ridge Community groups may ask for assistance from the Community Grant Writer if:

1. the community group is located within the Tumbler Ridge District;
2. the community group is at least one of the following:
  - not-for-profit registered society or charity
  - church group
  - community hall operator
  - parent advisory council (PAC)
  - not-for-profit tourism provider
  - sporting group
  - emergency services association
  - organization providing services for the relief of poverty.
3. the proposed project (which requires funding) will benefit one or more communities within the Tumbler Ridge District; and
4. the community group agrees to report back to the Grant Writer on the result of any submitted grant applications (i.e., successful, unsuccessful or otherwise).

### 3. WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY GRANT WRITER

If your community group is eligible for the Community Grant Writer Services (CGWS) program and you have identified a grant you want to apply for, or you are seeking funding for a project and need to find a potential grant, then follow these next steps.

Tips for greater success:

- The more lead time you give yourself and the grant writer the better your success. The minimum is at least four weeks before the deadline of the funding.
- There is no fee for eligible community groups to access the program.
- Reviewing a project and assembling all the required information for a grant application can take a substantial amount of time—especially if the funding is competitive—so the more time you can allow for writing your grant application and gathering supporting documentation, the better chance your application will be successful.
- Collecting letters of support can also take time – allow a minimum of two weeks to obtain board or Council approval

Step	Description
1. Eligibility for CGWS program	Review eligibility criteria to ensure your group is eligible to access the services.
2. Community group completes Intake Form	To help the grant writer understand your community group and your project, download, and complete the Community Group Intake Form. Email the form to <a href="mailto:kallihopper@gmail.com">kallihopper@gmail.com</a> .
3. Discovery Meeting: Grant options, grant eligibility & suitability, organizational readiness, and timelines	Kalli will set up a meeting with you/board/committee. During this meeting, she will collect requirements and information about your organization, your project, grant readiness, grants already identified, key project contacts, and more. Collaboratively the next steps will be determined, and she will provide a summary of the meeting to keep everyone on track.
4. Grant search (if applicable)	If you are seeking grant funding for a project but do not have a grant identified, the grant writer will conduct a grant search and provide up to three top results. The grant writer will work with you to determine which grant is the most suitable.
5. Grant preparation & development	Guided by the grant writer, you will flesh out the details of your project, collect grant requirements, and draft the grant application and associated support documents. Even though the grant writer will guide the writing process, this is a collaborative part of the process.
6. Review draft with community group	The grant writer will meet with you to ensure the narrative of the application reflects your project vision and details and make any necessary changes.
7. Final review & submission	This is the final review of the grant where the grant writer will proofread the document and ensure all the required documents are included. They will guide you on how to submit the application (e.g., online or by email). Once submitted please send the grant writer a copy of the final application.
9. Inform Grant Writer of funding outcome	The grant writer will follow up with you to confirm the success of your grant application. She is required to report on funding outcomes to measure the success of this program and will use this information to collate the quarterly report to the district.

## 4. GLOSSARY AND TERMINOLOGY

Understanding how grants work and what you may need to consider when searching for and applying to grants is especially helpful if you are new to grant writing. In addition to knowing where to look for grant opportunities and how to write award-winning grant proposals, it also helps if you are familiar with different types of grants and the various requirements associated with them. The CGWS program is here to help you navigate many of these requirements but understanding them in advance of your next grant deadline will help you feel better prepared.

### 4.1. Grants vs. Loans

The key difference between a grant and a loan is repayment. A grant is non-repayable; however, a loan requires you to repay the money that you have been loaned. There are usually conditions associated with both grants and loans.

### 4.2. Funding Agencies

There are a variety of funding agencies and organizations that offer grants (and loans) to all types of organizations, individuals, businesses, community groups, etc. The amount of funding and the requirements associated with a grant program will vary depending on the type of funding agency. The most common types of funding agencies are

- Government, Crown Corporations, and Administrative Branches of Government – including local, provincial/territorial, and federal agencies (e.g., City of Dawson Creek, Peace River Regional District, Government of BC, BC Arts Council, Canada Post, and BC Hydro)
- Foundations – including family-based, private, public, and community foundations (e.g., Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Air Canada Foundation, and Vancouver Foundation)
- Corporations (e.g., Alta Gas, Canfor, and Air Canada)
- Co-operatives (e.g., Mountain Equipment Co-op, Vancity)

Corporations also sponsor projects and programs from time to time. This is referred to as corporate sponsorship. Both entities enter into a mutually beneficial partnership agreement. For example, Canfor may provide funds for a summer soccer camp program in exchange for the program being named the Canfor Summer 2021 Youth Soccer Program. The GWS program does not provide corporate sponsorship services but rather focuses on grant writing.

### 4.3. Grant Sectors

Funders usually specify the types of projects and programs that they will support through their grant programs. When searching for funding that is suitable for your project, you can narrow down your search to include specific sectors. These may include:

- agricultural
- arts and culture
- business
- childcare
- clean energy
- climate change
- conservation
- economic development
- education
- emergency planning and management
- employment
- energy
- entrepreneurs
- environmental
- farming
- food security
- green spaces
- harm reduction
- health and wellness
- heritage
- housing
- Indigenous
- infrastructure
- land stewardship
- language
- marketing, branding, media
- natural resources
- product development
- public safety
- recreation & sports
- research & development
- seniors
- social services
- technology
- tourism
- training
- transportation
- youth

#### 4.4. Grant Eligibility

Grant funding is available to a wide variety of groups, including

- non-profit organizations and registered charities
- unincorporated groups
- government and government agencies
- Indigenous recipients
- for-profit organizations
- social enterprises
- businesses
- academic institutions and researchers
- hospitals

Be sure to check which types of recipients are eligible for a grant before applying.



#### 4.5. Matched Funding Requirements

Grants are often conditional awards that require a community group to cover a specific amount of the project costs to offset funds awarded through a grant. This is commonly referred to as matched funding. For example, a funder will provide a grant that covers 75% of the total project costs, leaving the community group to cover the remaining 25%. A funder may request proof of matched funds as a requirement of a grant application (i.e., before a grant is awarded).

The amount of matched funds varies from grant to grant; many grant programs don't require any matched funds, with the funder covering 100% of eligible project costs.

Applicants may be required to provide to the funder, along with their application, proof of any matched funds.

#### 4.6. Grant Timelines

Funders will often define in their grant requirements that a project must start and be completed by specified dates. For example, a funder may require that a project not start until funding is awarded and start no later than July 1, 2021. They may also require that the project be completed by December 31, 2022.

It is important that when you are considering a funding stream for your project you ensure your community group has the capacity and ability to meet any specific grant timelines.

#### 4.7 Limitations on Use of Grant Funds

Funders will often limit how funds can be used on a project, i.e., eligible expenditures. For example, a grant may be used to cover project costs including professional consultants, materials, labour, and marketing; however, the funder may not allow for the funds to be used to purchase land, pay for staff salaries, and cover any regularly scheduled maintenance costs. Be sure to read through the requirements of a grant before applying.

#### 4.8. Grant Reporting

Often a funder will require that a grant recipient complete one or more progress reports throughout the duration of their project and a final report (or "close-out" report) that provides information about the completed project and grant expenditures.

A progress report may include a summary of funds spent to date, completed milestones, and any variances or concerns about the progress and cost of the project to date.

The final report may include financial statements, a summary of what was completed, items that weren't completed (but may have been part of the initial proposal), the number of jobs created by the project, photos, and testimonials from the project partners.

It is important that when you are considering a funding stream for your project you ensure your community has the capacity and ability to meet any specific reporting requirements and timeline.

#### 4.9. What is a grant-ready project?

A grant-ready project means that your community group is prepared to submit detailed information about your project with the grant application and, if successful, use the awarded funds to implement your proposed project within the required timeframe. This usually means that:

- you have a solid understanding of your project goals and objectives;
- you have a confirmed budget (which includes estimates from contractors);
- you have a timeline for implementation and completion (e.g., a commitment from all contractors to commence work and/or tenders ready to post);
- you have support from your community and other involved or affected groups;
- you've secured matched funding; and
- you have staff, volunteers and/or a project manager available to oversee the project.

While it is preferable that you have a grant-ready project when working with a grant writer, they can support community groups to move projects from an idea to a grant-ready project, if appropriate.

#### 4.10. Project Checklist

Most grant programs are targeted at grant-ready projects. If you are unsure if your project is grant-ready, use this checklist to flush out the details of your project. The complexity of grant applications varies significantly, so be prepared with as much information as possible.

- Project name
- Project description
- Statement of need – why is this project needed? Why is it important? How does this project align with your organization's mission and objectives?
- Benefits – who and how many people will benefit and how will they benefit? How many communities will benefit and what are their populations?
- Timeline – start date, key milestones, and completion date
- Project budget (see Appendix 1 for budget example) – be as detailed as possible, seek multiple quotes, if possible, and ensure that you include a contingency, especially if the grant isn't awarded for a few months or there are high risk activities (e.g., infrastructure projects that are subject to construction increases)
- Jobs – will there be any new part-time or full-time jobs as a result of this project?
- Ongoing maintenance – can you demonstrate that your community group can afford to maintain any project assets once the project is complete?

- Project sustainability – for longer term initiatives, how will they be sustained/funded over time? For example, if funding is being requested for seed funding for a new program, how does the organization plan to sustain the initiative once the seed funding has been spent?
- Environmental and Indigenous impacts (mostly larger projects that involve infrastructure) – what are they, and how will they be addressed?

Another important thing to consider when preparing to apply for a grant is whether you have access to the following documents for your application. Note that these documents are not always required to apply for grants. Required documents are typically listed in the grant application guidelines.

- Financial statements (often from the last two fiscal years)
- Current organization budget
- Annual Report
- Current Strategic Plan
- Organizational information (articles of incorporation and bylaws, charity or society registration certificate, number of employees, organization structure, governance structure, etc.)
- Letters of support from partners, agencies, local government, supporters, and other community champions
- Certified documents for infrastructure grants (e.g., Engineering reports, certified estimates)
- Board or Council Resolution to show support for the project (note that this often takes a minimum of two weeks to obtain)
- Greenhouse gas calculations (often required for infrastructure and clean energy grants)

## 5. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What if I'm unable to confirm all of the details about my proposed project, e.g., a final budget?

Often funders recognize that you may not have all of the final information required to start your project. You may only be required to provide estimates. However, if the funding is for a “shovel-ready” project, you will be required to provide estimates, drawings, plans, and other project details that are as final as possible so that the project can begin as soon as funding is awarded. Each grant is different, so reading the guidelines is important.

### Can you help obtain estimates or quotes to inform the project budget?

No. Clear Course is not able to support you in obtaining quotes or cost estimates that may be required for a grant application.

### What if a grant deadline is less than three weeks away?

The more time you can allow for preparing your grant application, the better chance your application will be successful. However, we recognize that sometimes this isn't possible. Depending on the number of grant applications currently being prepared, the DTR's grant writers will do their best to support your grant application within the limited timeframe.

### Who is the DTR's Grant Writer?

As of March 2022, the DTR's Community Grant Writer Services program is provided by Kalli Hopper. A grant writer who will assist community groups with their grant applications. Please email [kallihopper@gmail.com](mailto:kallihopper@gmail.com) to contact.

### Can you help prepare corporate sponsorship packages?

Corporate sponsorship is outside of the scope of the Grant Writing Services. DTR focuses on researching and writing grant applications.

### What is my role during the grant application writing process?

Even though the grant writer will be assisting with your grant application (and likely doing most of the writing on your behalf), they will most likely require your support as they learn about your project and begin to build your application. Depending on the funder and the type of grant, the amount of information required can range from simple to very complex. The grant writer will work with you (and possibly other members of your community group) to flush out details about your project (including history, benefits, jobs created, long-term operational plans, and marketing plans) and assist you with gathering all of the required documentation to support your application.

### Who submits the grant application?

Ideally, a grant application is submitted by the organization or the community group that is applying for funding. The grant writer will work with the applicant to coordinate submission. Submission often happens through an online portal or by email. Online portals often require that a user first register for an account; this can take upwards of two weeks to confirm so please ensure you allow enough time to apply for an online account in order to meet your grant deadline.

### What are stacking limits?

Stacking limits are most often linked to grants where applicants can apply for both federal and provincial funds. Limits are set to ensure that funds contributed to applicants do not account for more than 100% of eligible costs.

### What does it mean to leverage grants?

Often grants do not cover 100% of project costs. Applicants are required to contribute cash or in-kind contributions (also referred to as matching funds). Applicants can apply to multiple sources to secure the required matching funds so that the total project costs are covered by grant funding, from multiple sources. Stipulations may apply, especially with respect to government funding.

### How will I know that my grant application has been successful?

The community group that is officially applying for a grant (i.e., the Grant Applicant) must designate a person as the main contact. The funder will notify the Grant Applicant with the outcome of their funding decision.

### How much do the Grant Writer Services cost?

Nothing. There is no cost to eligible community groups to use the DTR's GWS program.

### Can I include in my grant application the costs associated with applying for the grant (e.g., hiring professionals for estimates)?

Usually, no. Unless a funder is offering seed funding to help develop a project so that it's grant-ready, the costs associated with applying for a grant are the responsibility of the applicant.

### When are the Grant Writer Services available?

There is no time limit on when you can access these services. Services are available year-round; however, please know that service availability will depend on the current volume of applications in progress. Please contact [kallihopper@gmail.com](mailto:kallihopper@gmail.com) to discuss your grant application.

I have more than one grant application that I need help completing. Can I use the DTR's Grant Writer Services?

Depending on the volume of grant applications currently underway, the DTR's GWS may or may not be able to assist with multiple applications for one group. Preference may be offered to community groups that are seeking assistance with one grant application before multiple applications for the same community group are considered.

I would like to work on my community group's grant application, but I need some support. Can I contact the DTR's Community Grant Writer Services for assistance?

The DTR's Grant Writer Services are available to support eligible community groups with their own grant writing. Please contact [kallihopper@gmail.com](mailto:kallihopper@gmail.com).

Why is it important to execute projects as outlined in the grants?

Granting agencies provide funds to community groups and organizations for projects that typically align with the vision and strategic priorities of the agency. When grant recipients stray too far from the original project, the alignment between the funder and the project can be compromised. This can cause mistrust, disqualify applicants from applying for future funding, and impact any final payments for funds awarded. If you need to change your project, contact the funder and explain the proposed changes. This is why project planning for grant funded projects is important.

