

Circular Economy Initiatives Fund: Application Guidelines

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1 General Information

Peel Region serves a diverse population of over 1.5 million residents and over 200,000 businesses in Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga. Peel has the second-largest waste management program in Ontario, serving over 360,000 homes, over 120,000 multi-residential units, municipal buildings, schools, and other facilities. Peel also owns and operates six community recycling centres for items such as household hazardous waste, electronic waste, large appliances, reusable donations, and construction and renovation waste.

As Peel witnesses rapid growth, the amount and type of waste generated will increase, as will the complexity of managing it. It is crucial to promote a shift in behavior from simple disposal to resource recovery. This will help support healthy communities, address climate change, and encourage a circular economy.

1.1 About the Fund

In alignment with the [Region of Peel's Roadmap to a Circular Economy](#), Peel aims to build partnerships that will drive the shift from a linear economy to a circular economy, with a target of 75% waste diversion by 2034. Peel's Circular Economy Initiatives Fund will offer support to community-based organizations to reduce, reuse and reclaim waste. The fund will also help increase residents' understanding of and accountability for reducing consumption, increasing reuse and repair, and maximizing value of products by keeping resources in use as long as possible.

Through the development of a competitive call for applications, Peel will provide grants to community-based organizations working on waste reduction and circular initiatives within the region. The application process will take place annually as funding is approved.

1.2 Fund Objectives

The objectives of Peel's Circular Economy Initiatives Fund are as follows:

Circular Economy Opportunities: Create opportunities for Peel community members to take some form of action to reduce, reuse, and reclaim waste.

Circular Economy Education: Provide information to Peel community members that will raise their awareness and understanding on the importance of and how to contribute to a circular economy, including how to reduce consumption, increase reuse and repair, and keep resources in use for as long as possible.

1.3 Anticipated Outcomes

This fund will enable behavioral change in supporting a circular economy among Peel residents. In doing so, more residents will contribute to Peel's goal of achieving 75% waste diversion from landfills by 2034.

1.4 Measuring Success

The goal of the proposed initiative is to improve the capacity of your organization, ultimately, leading to a positive impact on the Peel community. When submitting your detailed application please include how you intend to measure success.

1.5 Available Funding

Eligible organizations can apply for grants of \$5,000 - \$25,000 per project annually. Only funding requests within this range and that meet eligibility requirements will be considered. The number of successful applicants is dependent on the availability of funding.

1.6 Funding Term

Funds are allocated for a one-year term. Projects must be delivered within this one-year timeframe.

2 Eligibility

To receive funding, applicants must meet eligibility requirements for both the organization and the applicable project. Furthermore, only eligible project costs may be submitted for funding. These eligibility criteria are shown below.

2.1 Eligible Applicants

To receive funding, organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Operate within the boundaries of Peel Region or primarily serve Peel residents.
- Be incorporated as a not-for-profit organization for a minimum of two years (registration as a charity under the Canada Income Tax Act required).
- Be governed by a volunteer board of directors that is representative of the community it serves.
- Comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code in hiring practices and provision of all services.
- Comply with federal, provincial, and municipal laws and regulations.
- Have established and documented financial management systems in place and be able to provide annual audited financial statements or equivalent.
- Provide proof of insurance coverage, including but not limited to commercial general liability insurance.

2.1.1 Ineligible Applicants

The following list of individuals, or groups are not eligible:

- Individuals.
- For-profit organizations.
- Organizations acting in the capacity of a funding body.
- Organizations affiliated with a political party or that have a political mandate.
- Programs where the federal or provincial government has the primary responsibility for funding, including but not limited to:
 - Hospital-based health programs,
 - Medical research,
 - Arts and cultural programs,
 - Formal education and training,
 - Settlement and English language instruction programs.

2.2 Eligible Projects

Projects must meet at least one of the following fund objectives to be considered:

- **Circular Economy Opportunities:** Create opportunities for Peel community members to take some form of action to reduce, reuse, and reclaim waste.

- **Circular Economy Education:** Provide information to Peel community members that will raise their awareness and understanding on the importance of and how to contribute to a circular economy, including how to reduce consumption, increase reuse and repair, and keep resources in use for as long as possible.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate innovation and do not duplicate pre-existing programs in the specific community they serve within Peel Region.

Collaborations between organizations are encouraged. To be considered, collaborative applications with two or more eligible organizations must submit only one application form. Collaborative proposals should clearly define the roles of each organization and any funding amounts to be transferred by the applicant to the collaborator.

2.3 Eligible Project Costs

Funding requests must be between \$5,000 - \$25,000. Funds may only be used for eligible project costs. Project expenses incurred during the funding period (January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025) will be approved. Eligible project costs are reasonable direct labour costs (including benefits) and direct materials costs as described below.

The following is a list of eligible project costs:

- Staff salaries for time allocated directly to the proposed project.
- Costs related to purchased services from contractors or consultants specifically related to the delivery, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the proposed project. Incurred workshop, meeting, and event costs directly related to the proposed project.
- Costs incurred from the purchase of supplies and materials used in the delivery of the proposed project, including communication and information technology. Travel costs incurred by employees and volunteers that are directly related to the proposed project.
- Capital costs for repairs and renovations.

2.3.1 Ineligible Project Costs

Funding will not be provided to support any costs associated with the following activities:

- Purchase of property,
- Religious or political activities or proselytizing,
- Event sponsorship and fund-raising activities.

Examples of indirect project costs that the Fund will not support:

- Overhead and administration costs, including accounting and legal fees, rent, utilities, membership fees, fines, and so forth.
- Capital expenses such as office furniture.

3 Application Process

The application process includes three stages (see below). All applicants must complete the required tasks of the first two application stages before they can advance to the final detailed application stage. Peel Region staff will notify applicants of their approval status after their submissions are reviewed and assessed.

Please direct any questions about the application process to the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund Coordinator at ceifund@peelregion.ca.

The Circular Economy Initiatives Fund application stages are as follows:

Preliminary Applications will be open from July 3 to July 31, 2024. Applicants will use the online software Survey Monkey. This step is included to help applicants determine whether they are eligible to receive a grant from the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund before submitting a detailed application. Peel Region's Circular Economy Initiatives Fund Coordinator will review completed applications, and selected applicants will be invited to move forward to the detailed application stage.

Service Provider Profile (SPP) Registration: To access the detailed application form, you will need to complete your Registration and Service Provider Profile in [GovGrants](#). This stage includes submitting financial statements, documents, and related information to GovGrants – an online fund management platform. Please allow sufficient time to complete this process, especially if you are registering for the first time. Direct questions related to GovGrants and the Service Provider Profile to cip@peelregion.ca.

Detailed Applications will be open from August 12 to September 16, 2024. Once the preliminary application and Service Provider Profile are approved, applicants will be invited to submit a detailed application form. Complete the template form and email the PDF to the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund Coordinator at ceifund@peelregion.ca.

The Fund Review Committee will review completed detailed applications and determine which applicants will receive funding for their projects.

3.1 Funding Conditions

- Incomplete applications will not be assessed.
- Applications submitted after the applicable deadlines will not be assessed.
- Each applicant can only submit one application per year. If the same applicant submits more than one application, only the first application will be reviewed.

Please direct any questions about the application process to the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund Coordinator at ceifund@peelregion.ca.

3.2 Preliminary Application

Once the preliminary application opens, applicants may visit www.peelregion.ca/community-investments/funds/ to submit a preliminary application using Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is an online data management platform that securely collects and stores survey data. You do not require a Survey Monkey account to submit an application. After Peel staff review the preliminary applications, applicants with eligible proposed projects will be invited to advance to the detailed application stage.

Preliminary applications will be received from July 3 to July 31, 2024.

The preliminary application process involves answering the following questions:

Question 1: Please provide the following: Organization name, website, Primary contact name, and email

Question 2: Is your organization an incorporated Registered Charity?

Question 3: Does your organization have a Service Provider Profile in GovGrants?

Question 4: Is your organization's Service Provider Profile up to date?

Question 5: Will your project occur within Peel Region?

Question 6: Will your project start and end within the one-year timeframe of January – December 2025?

Question 7: Tell us roughly how much money you are requesting through the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund. This can be between \$5,000 and \$25,000.

Question 8: Select one or more of the options below which describe your project's objectives:

- Circular Economy Opportunities - Create opportunities for Peel community members to take some form of action to reduce, reuse, and reclaim waste.
- Circular Economy Education - Provide information to Peel community members that will raise their awareness and understanding on the importance of and how to contribute to a circular economy, including how to reduce consumption, increase reuse and repair, and keep resources in use for as long as possible.
- Other (please specify)

Question 9: Provide a brief overview of your proposed project (300 characters max).

3.3 Service Provider Profile (SPP) Registration

[GovGrants](#) is a website and cloud-based grants management system where community agencies can apply for Peel Region grants. This is a centralized platform that streamlines the grant application process and allows applicants to submit their applications online. All not-for-profit organizations who apply for Peel Region funds are required to register, complete a Service Provider Profile, and update their profile before submitting future grant application. Please review the [Training Guide](#) and [How-To](#) document. This procedural guide will help you navigate this online platform and submit the required documents and information.

3.3.1 Overview

The steps involved in this stage can be divided into two main groups of tasks:

1. **Registering a Head Office/Primary User:**

- Opening a user account
- Registering a "Head Office"
- Designating users
- Receiving approval from Peel Region

2. **Completing a Service Provider Profile**, which involves uploading documents and answering questions about your organizations in the appropriate application folder, referred to as a "tab." There are six tabs: Overview, Nature of organization, Operations, Financials, Collab, and Documents.

3.3.2 Mandatory Documents

1. Articles of Incorporation (Letters Patent)
2. Certificate of Insurance
3. Financial documents such as Statement of Financial Position or Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenue or Expenses/Income Statement, Statement of Operations and Net Assets, and Statement of Cash Flow, dependent on organizational revenue:

| Total annual operating budget \$ reported | Minimum Submission Requirements |
|---|--|
| \$0 to \$150,000 | Notice to Reader statement for the last two years |
| \$150,001 to \$250,000 | Review Engagement Report for the last two years |
| Greater than \$250,001 | Audited financial statements for the last two years |

4. Equity Statement, which describes your organization's diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging (DEIB) values, objectives, and ongoing efforts.
5. Organization's YTD financial statements from the last two years.

Reminder:

Financial statements (other than Review Engagement Reports and Notice to Reader Reports) must be prepared by a qualified professional and audited by a Certified Accountant.

3.4 Detailed Application

Applicants must be invited to advance to the final stage of the application process. Peel Region staff will issue the detailed application via email as a PDF application form template. The detailed application will be submitted via email to the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund Coordinator at ceifund@peelregion.ca. GovGrants will not be used for application submission.

3.4.1 Detailed Application Questions

The detailed application will ask applicants to describe their proposed project plan, budget, and communications strategy. Applicants will be asked questions similar to the following examples:

- Does the project address gaps in the Peel community? Does this project duplicate existing efforts within Peel Region?
- What does the project aim to achieve?
- How will the project objectives help the ensure that project goals are achievable?
- What capacity and experience does your organization have to deliver this project?
- What risks are associated with your project? How will you mitigate these risks?
- How will you promote the project and recruit participants?
- How will you measure project impact?
- In what ways have you been able to minimize project costs?

3.4.2 Financial Assessment

The Fund Review Committee uses a scoring matrix tool to assess the detailed application and an organization's financial statements. Applications are scored based on the following criteria:

1. **Demonstrated Need**

Applications are evaluated based on how well organizations use an evidence-based approach to identify and assess the nature of the project needs.

2. **Financial Sustainability**

Applicants must demonstrate financial health and accountability before fund disbursement. The mandatory documents list organizations' assets, liabilities, revenue, Expenses, and Net Assets (Capital). Financial statements are used to assess financial and organizational capacity and risk. This financial assessment process involves the use of objective assessment methods to analyze organizations that encourage transparent and fair decision-making regarding eligibility and funding rewards.

3. **Alignment with Fund Objectives**

Anticipated outcomes of initiatives must demonstrate the ability to meet fund objectives.

4. **Organizational Health**

Applicants must demonstrate strong organizational management skills in the areas of financial management, board leadership, and operational capacity.

5. **Alignment with Peel Region Directives and Eligible Criteria**

Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the funding will benefit the organization and align with Peel Region's directives, as mentioned in these guidelines.

3.4.3 Deadlines

Detailed applications will be received from **August 12 to September 16, 2024**.

In the event application deadlines are extended or changed, an announcement will be posted on the [Community Investment Program website](#).

All applicants will be notified whether their applications are approved or declined for funding. Funding decisions are anticipated to be communicated 4-8 weeks after the detailed application submission deadline.

Funding recipients will be required to enter into a written agreement with Peel Region. Funding recipients will also be required to meet reporting requirements as a condition of funding. Peel Region will cancel the funding approval and will not advance funds to any recipient who refuses to enter into such an agreement or who fails to adhere to reporting requirements.

4 Reporting Requirements

All funding recipients must submit a midterm status report and a final report. Funding is conditional upon receipt of these reports. Funding recipients will receive an email notification to complete these reports. These reports will demonstrate whether funding recipients have adhered to the project plans submitted during the application stage and have made progress towards or achieved the fund objectives.

Requirement to Keep Supporting Documentation

To demonstrate the Circular Economy Initiatives Fund was used to support eligible expenses, fund recipients must retain all original supporting documentation for a minimum of seven years.

Reconciliation

Agencies receiving funding are required to reconcile the amount of funding received at the end of the funding term. The reconciliation provides confirmation the funding was allocated according to the funding guidelines and identifies surplus funds to be recovered.

The reconciliation will be submitted through GovGrants as outlined in your Funding Agreement. The reconciliation covers actual expenditures for each eligible and approved expense and other information that may include KPIs. Peel Region may conduct check-ins at any time to assess whether funding has been used for its intended purpose and may request receipts, invoices, and proof of purchase to assess expenditures.

Recoveries

Agencies will return unused funds or funds not utilized in accordance with the conditions outlined in this Guideline and the Funding Agreement. Agencies will repay Peel Region or the Community Investment Program all or part of their Circular Economy Initiatives Fund funding in the following situations:

- Eligibility criteria was not met,
- Funds were not fully spent,
- Funding was not used in accordance with the terms of this Guideline or the Funding Agreement.

5 Recognition of Community Investment Program Funding

The Community Investment Program encourages funding recipients to acknowledge Circular Economy Initiatives funding in promotional and program materials. The Community Investment Program will provide logo and terms of usage in various digital formats upon request.

Funding recipients may also be asked to provide photos or video documentation of their project activities that may be used by Peel Region in various promotions.