

Grant Handbook

Strengthening Community Capacity to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant Program



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WELCOME

The **Strengthening Community Capacity to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing: COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant Program** assists community-based organizations to support populations whose mental health and wellbeing has been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects funded through this program promote mental health, prevent mental illness and/or support organizational capacity to address mental health and wellbeing needs emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Canadian Red Cross is committed to supporting organizations with successfully delivering their projects, and we are here to support you throughout the project term. The Canadian Red Cross will monitor all funded projects and will continue to engage with funded organizations throughout project implementation.

Your Canadian Red Cross grant officer will be your main point of contact for the project duration. You can communicate with your grant officer about any concerns or shifts in your project. Through ongoing communication and collaboration, we can support you with keeping your project in scope, with navigating any shifts in your plan as you implement your project, and with using the maximum approved grant amount in line with your Agreement.

This Grant Handbook will help you navigate the documentation, requirements and processes related to managing a grant from the Canadian Red Cross.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT



Email us for support at mentalhealthgrants@redcross.ca.



Visit the program website at www.redcross.ca/mentalhealthgrants for

- Program Guidelines
 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Eligible Costing Guidelines
-



Visit the application portal at www.redcross.smapply.ca for

- your original application
 - Interim Report Form
 - Project Update Form
 - Final Report Form
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AGREEMENT

COMPONENTS OF THE AGREEMENT

The Agreement is a legal contract between your organization and the Canadian Red Cross.

Important: Please make sure that all personnel involved in the project are aware of the following:

- the **Agreement**, which is the signed legal document stipulating the legal terms and the details specific to your project, such as the following:
 - the **project purpose statement**;
 - the **term** and the **eligible costing dates**, within which project activities and expenditures may occur;
 - the approved **budget** allocated across categories and across two fiscal years (FY);
 - the intended **reach** of the project;
 - the **outcomes** that the project will work towards and the **indicators** that you selected to measure
 - the project's impact (taken from your application); and
 - the payment and reporting schedules.
- the **Terms and Conditions**, which are general stipulations for all grants under this funding program;
- the **Eligible Costing Guidelines**, which outline the costs that are eligible or ineligible for reimbursement, financial management expectations and records that you should retain; and
- the Acknowledgement Guidelines (attached to your Agreement), which outline how to publicly recognize funding support from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Red Cross.

PAYMENTS AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES

PAYMENTS

Payments will be provided to your organization through direct deposit. You will need to submit the Direct Deposit Form to the Canadian Red Cross before a payment can be released.

While it is not required that you maintain a separate bank account for the project, project funds must be accounted for separately so that the Public Health Agency of Canada's contributions—through the grant from the Canadian Red Cross—are clearly distinguishable from your organization's other revenue and expenditures (see **Terms and Conditions**, article 16).

PAYMENT SCHEDULES

Expected payment amounts and schedules are outlined in your Agreement.

The Canadian Red Cross will release your advance payment once your Agreement is dually signed.

Important: Ultimately, the funds that the Canadian Red Cross transfers to you for your project will match your organization's documented actual spending ("real and actual costs").

This means that interim or final payments may be adjusted to align with actual funds spent, as reported and approved in your interim report or your final report.

These adjustments could include the following:

- If, upon submission and review of your interim report, your organization has not spent a large portion of the funds already transferred at the beginning of the project, the Canadian Red Cross may adjust your interim payment to better reflect your rate of spending.
- Upon submission and review of your final report, the Canadian Red Cross will adjust your final payment to reflect the balance owing (actual spending minus funds transferred to date).
- If any funds already transferred remain unspent at the end of the project, the Canadian Red Cross may invoice your organization for the return of the unspent funds.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The **Eligible Costing Guidelines** provide detailed guidance on the expenses that are eligible under this program. The Eligible Costing Guidelines also explain how to demonstrate that project expenses are eligible when budgeting for a project, during project implementation and when reporting back on expenditures.

All eligible expenses must be directly linked to your project, reasonable, actually and properly incurred, and supported by documentation. If these principles are not demonstrated, the Canadian Red Cross may not be able to reimburse the cost. Reimbursement for expenses will be based on actual expenditures incurred, as supported by the relevant source documents (e.g., receipts). Please ensure that you and your team are familiar with the **Eligible Costing Guidelines** and with the details in the following sections.

RECORD KEEPING

The Eligible Costing Guidelines and the Terms and Conditions contain important information about the records and supporting documentation that should be kept for your project.

Some supporting documentation may be required to be submitted as part of your interim and final reports (see **Financial reporting and supporting documentation** below). The Canadian Red Cross may also request additional supporting documentation to verify and validate your reported expenditures or in case of audit.

BUDGET VARIANCES

Budgets are a planning tool, and we know that some adjustments may be needed once projects get underway. Please review your project spending regularly and contact your grant officer if you anticipate major variances in your budget.

“Budget variances” refers to spending a little more or a little less in a budget category. Per the Agreement, you may spend up to 10% more in one category without prior approval provided that the following applies:

- there is room elsewhere in your budget for this variance (i.e., you spend less in another category and your total budget does not change); and
- the items or expenses are already listed and approved in the budget as expenses that support the project purpose.

Variances in spending beyond 10% of the approved amount in any category must be approved in advance by the Canadian Red Cross.

MANAGING YOUR BUDGET OVER THE PROJECT TERM

For this funding program, organizations are asked to budget for and keep expenses separate, from one fiscal year to the next.

FY 2022–2023:
Start of project to March 31, 2023

FY 2023–2024:
April 1, 2023, to end of project

Furthermore, there are some important restrictions around managing your budget over the two fiscal years (please see the Agreement, clause 2.3):

- You will be asked to report on total spending to date at the end of FY 2022–2023.
- At that point, if you have spent less than the planned budget for FY 2022–2023, you **will not be able to carry over budgeted funds to FY 2023–2024**.
- As such, the total approved budget, per your Agreement, may be less than originally planned to reflect the total of actual expenditure in FY 2022–2023 (not to exceed the budget for FY 2022–2023) plus actual expenditure in FY 2023–2024 (not to exceed the budget for FY 2023–2024).

In other words, the maximum available funds for FY 2023–2024 will not change, regardless of spend in FY 2022–2023. See the example in the tables below.

Example: An organization has been approved for a \$40,000 project with the following breakdown:

FY 2022–2023 Budget	FY 2023–2024 Budget	Total Budget
\$15,000	\$25,000	\$40,000

At the end of FY 2022–2023, the organization reports that it has actually spent \$10,000. Although the FY 2022–2023 budget is underspent, the FY 2023–2024 budget does not change, and the total budget is adjusted:

FY 2022–2023 Actuals	FY 2023–2024 Budget	New Total Budget
\$10,000	\$25,000	\$35,000

PROCUREMENT AND SUBCONTRACTING

The **Terms and Conditions** contain important details regarding procurement and subcontracting (article 25). Generally, you should follow the financial management policies and procedures your organization already has in place, provided that those procedures enhance access, transparency, competition and fairness, and result in best value.

The following tips may be helpful when procuring materials and equipment or when contracting subcontractors for the project:

- Seek more than one quote so that you can establish and document the best value.
- Ensure that subcontractors are at arm's-length from the organization and its staff. In other words, document that you have avoided conflicts of interest and any potential or perceived biases towards subcontractors.
- Check that subcontractors have the relevant insurance, registration and qualifications, particularly for professional service providers such as clinical counsellors, social workers and psychologists.
- Ensure that you have a written agreement in place with all subcontractors and that they are equipped to invoice the project for services provided.

As with all expenses, it is good practice to keep records and documents that support your work.

REPORTING

The purpose of reporting is to share the story of your project! We love to hear about the impact of funded projects, and it helps to recognize the important work your organization is doing. Together, projects funded by this program are having an impact on communities across Canada.

Reports also help confirm that each project is progressing well and is in alignment with the shared expectations set out in the Agreement. Finally, reports are a tool to demonstrate shared accountability for use of public funds.

Templates for reporting will be made available online through the SM Apply platform in advance of the due dates. Reports are due according to the dates in your Agreement and are summarized below.

You are welcome to contact your grant officer if you need any support to complete your reports.

Report	Period covered	Due date	Description
Interim Report	Project start date to March 31, 2023 <i>(Financial report for FY 2022–2023)</i>	April 30, 2023	The interim report captures the main elements of the project for FY1, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an update on the progress of your project, achievements and any challenges;• data you collected on who and how many clients and/or service providers have been reached so far;• data you collected for the indicators you selected in your application;• stories, quotes or reflections you would like to share;• a detailed financial report; and• supporting financial documentation (uploaded).
Project Update	April 1, 2023, to August 31, 2023	September 30, 2023	The progress report is a brief update provided partway through FY 2023–2024. It includes brief questions about the progress of the project and your overall actual spending to date.
Final Report	Project start date to project end date <i>(Financial report for FY 2023–2024)</i>	February 29, 2024	The final report captures the overall achievements for the full project term, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a summary of and reflections on your project, achievements, impact and any challenges faced;• data you collected on who and how many clients and/or service providers were reached;• data you collected on the indicators you selected in your application;• stories, quotes or reflections you would like to share;• a detailed financial report; and• supporting financial documentation (uploaded).

Please keep in mind that the interim and final payments are linked to the submission, review and approval of the interim and the final reports. Late reporting can result in delayed payments.

Upon satisfactory review of reporting and financials, the Canadian Red Cross will confirm approval of the report and will release the next payment (if a payment is required).

COLLECTING DATA ON REACH AND INDICATORS

Important: Remember to make a plan at the beginning of your project for how you will count the number of people your project reaches and how you will measure its impact. Communicate this plan to all personnel involved in the project.

You will need to track the number of unique individuals your project reaches. “Unique individuals” means that if an individual participates in or accesses programming or services offered by the project multiple times or in multiple ways, they would only be counted once. Through your activities, your project may be reaching **participants or clients** (individuals reached through interventions or service delivery) or **service providers** (individuals such as staff or volunteers who provide services)—or both.

We also encourage organizations to collect data to analyze who is being reached by the project. If possible (and if appropriate in the context of your work), we encourage you to collect information on the age and gender of your project participants.

Impact is measured according to the indicators you selected in your application form, which are also listed in your Agreement. Some of the indicators measure change, so you will need to ask participants to reflect on their experiences. Below are some ways you could approach this:

- Conduct participant surveys before and after activities.
- Run participatory reflection activities (e.g., using a show of hands or giving each participant a sticker to answer anonymously on poster paper).
- Collect information through your usual client case management practices.

Finally, if your organization has other ways of measuring the project's impact or other indicators that you feel are important to your work and the community you work with, please feel free to share that information with us.

FINANCIAL REPORTING AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

You will need to report back on actual expenditure of funds against the approved budget outlined for the project (see Terms and Conditions).

In its review process, the Canadian Red Cross will validate the following:

- that actual costs correspond to the expenses approved in the budget, as part of the Agreement; and
- that actual costs are eligible in accordance with the **Eligible Costing Guidelines**.

Keeping strong supporting documentation is important because all eligible expenses need to be verifiable, detailed and supported by proper documentation. Reimbursement by the Canadian Red Cross will be based on actual expenditures incurred, as supported by the relevant documents.

Budget category	Required supporting documentation to upload with your interim and final reports
Personnel	List of names, roles and hours worked
Subcontractors and Professional Service Providers	Invoices for all subcontractors and professional service providers
Direct Aid	Receipts for purchases of \$2,000 (single purchase) or greater
Materials and Supplies	Receipts for purchases of \$2,000 (single purchase) or greater
Project Equipment	Receipts for purchases of \$2,000 (single purchase) or greater
Travel	None
Training and Events	Receipts for purchases of \$2,000 (single purchase) or greater
Administrative Costs	None

Remember the following:

- The Canadian Red Cross may request additional supporting documentation to help validate the eligibility of claimed expenditures.
- **Please ensure that your accounting and financial documentation reflect the Eligible Costing Guidelines.**
- If you anticipate major variances in spending (over 10% between budget categories), please communicate with your grant officer well in advance for approval. We will collaborate with you to ensure your project's outcomes can be achieved and to make any necessary adjustments.

ASSETS & CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

An asset is any non-consumable item newly purchased to support the delivery of your project. For example, you may have been approved to purchase technology or other assets as required for your project (e.g., laptops). Assets are most often budgeted for under the Project Equipment category.

There are some critical things to keep in mind when purchasing and managing assets for the project:

- Assets may be purchased when approved in the project budget, as required in direct support of the project's purpose.
- Maintain a list of all assets purchased throughout your project, including the item, quantity and unit price. Remember to retain receipts for all purchases over \$2,000.
- Assets purchased remain property of the project—and by extension the Canadian Red Cross—for the duration of the project.
- At the end of the project, we will generally offer to transfer ownership of the assets to your organization if they can still be used for your charitable or community work (and will not be used for private benefit of any kind).

We will confirm these details with you in writing after reviewing your final report and as part of formally closing your project.

CHANGES TO YOUR PROJECT

We understand that activities and spending do not always go according to plan and may require adjustments. If you need to make changes to your project, please contact your grant officer as soon as possible. It is our goal to ensure that the maximum amount of the grant funding is used to support your community's needs.

Your grant officer may request that you submit a change request in writing (by email), outlining the details. Your grant officer will guide you through the process. The following are some examples:

- Reallocating budgeted funds towards unanticipated expenses
- Budget variances beyond the 10% variance limit across categories
- Activity changes such as cancellations, delays or shifts in priorities that affect the project.

When requesting a change, consider the following key points:

- Does the request explain why the change is needed and how it will contribute to achieving the project purpose?
- With the changes described, how will the project continue to support populations whose mental health and wellbeing have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Your grant officer will work with you on the changes needed to help ensure your project is a success. In some cases, changes will not be possible. Examples include the following:

- A request to revise expenses related to FY 2022–2023 is submitted after January 31, 2023.
- The request is submitted less than 60 days before the Eligible Costing End Date of your Agreement.
- The new activities and/or expenses are not aligned to your project purpose.
- The new activities and/or expenses requested are ineligible.