

Local Community Accessibility Grants

About this initiative

Under the *Accessible BC Act*, local governments are required to develop a feedback mechanism, Accessibility Committee and Accessibility Plan.

This initiative provides one-time funding for local governments, of up to \$25,000, to support the implementation of projects or priorities identified in their Accessibility Plan or in partnership with their Accessibility Committee.

Who can apply?

All local and regional governments in British Columbia can apply provided you meet the conditions of Part 3 of the Accessible B.C. Act.

Funding Streams

Eligible organizations can apply for funding **up to \$25,000** and may select one of the following streams:

Stream 1—Local Government led projects	Stream 2—Capacity Building and Support
<p>This funding stream is designed to provide support for local governments who have a clear project in mind that they would like to implement.</p>	<p>This funding stream is designed to assist local governments who are unsure about where to start in terms of implementing a project.</p>
<p>Under this stream are projects and initiatives designed to identify barriers and improve the overall level of accessibility and inclusion related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Built Environment: This could include projects designed to improve the overall physical accessibility of existing spaces and places to better meet the needs of the community. • Education and Awareness: This could include using information and education as a tool to build a deeper awareness and understanding of the disability needs in your community. • Policy and Programs: This could include developing local policies, bylaws, guidelines, or other materials designed to promote and support greater accessibility and inclusion across different policies and programs. • Modelling Inclusive Practices: This could include undertaking a review of current practices and programs to explore ways to identify and remove potential barriers to participation. • Communication and Engagement: This could include exploring ways to strengthen current communication and engagement practices to meet a broader range of needs and to promote and support a deeper sense of belonging and inclusion. • The Use of Technology: This could include exploring ways to support more active participation and engagement of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community life (economic, social, cultural and recreational) through the use of assistive devices and technology. 	<p>Under this stream, SPARC BC will assist in the development and delivery of a capacity building workshop to be delivered in person or held over zoom with a focus on supporting your community in advancing shared accessibility goals.</p> <p>Supports Available: For those choosing this stream, SPARC BC will assist in the design and delivery of a workshop that will include the development of tools, resources, or other materials.</p> <p>Identifying a Specific Project Priority Area: Each of the workshops will be customized to meet the specific needs/ interest of your community and could include the design and delivery of workshops related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Built Environment – Education and Awareness – Policy and Program Design – Modelling Inclusive Practices – Communication and Engagement – The Use of Technology <p>Moving To Implementation: Once a project has been identified, SPARC BC will work with the community to assist with the preparation of the grant application form as well as help to provide relevant contact information, materials, and other resources.</p>

Examples of Projects that You Might Want to Consider:

The Built Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing or building ramps - Adding elevators or lifts - Making washrooms and other facilities more accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making entrances more accessible including adding automatic door-openers) - Adding audio signals, tactile strips, hearing loops and other features
Education and Awareness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in anti-bias training to develop knowledge of conscious and subconscious bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training workplaces in service delivery to enable employees to meet a broader range of needs
Policies and Programs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of local policies (parking, housing, building standards, bylaws) - Funding for legal and consulting advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and implementation of local recreation or other types of programs
Modelling Inclusive Practices	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training to review and amend interview processes - Including ASL interpreting for events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility audit of workflow - Remuneration for Accessibility Advisory Committee etc.
Communication and Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating job task checklists in pictorial form - Creating wayfinding signage in braille - Creating an ASL version of information, training materials or policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application forms accessible to screen readers - Reprinting hardcopies of material in large font - Update web pages for accessibility, etc.
The Use of Technology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchasing software that enables production of accessible documents - Flashing fire alarms for deaf employees - Specialized headsets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A tablet for communication - Laptops for remote working - Buying specialized tools for workplaces

Funding

- All projects must be completed by the end of the grant program, which ends on March 31, 2026.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a final report to SPARC BC by March 31, 2026.
- For projects \$10,000 or less funding will be disbursed in 1 transaction of 100%. Grants above \$10,000 will be dispersed in 2 transactions—80% upon return of the Terms & Conditions document and 20% upon receipt of Final Report.

Council and Accessibility Support

The project that is to be funded through this grant program, must be part of your local Accessibility Plan and must have the support of the local Council and Accessibility Committee. Please supply a letter of support from your Accessibility Committee. Council support can be shown in the form of a formal council or Board resolution, or in the form of a letter of support from the CAO for the local/ regional government.

How to Apply

Proposals must be completed using the Local Community Accessibility Grant Program Application Form which you can find on SPARC BC's website.

The Province has allocated five million dollars to support local communities and regions. Applications will be received and approved on a rolling basis and are open from June 5th 2023.

Please ensure to provide a current e-mail address as ALL correspondence and documentation will be forwarded via this e-mail address.

Applications will be reviewed by SPARC BC and representatives from the Accessibility Directorate at the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. All applicants will be notified about the status of their application within three weeks of their submission to accessibility@sparc.bc.ca.

Compliance Questions

For questions related to compliance with the Accessible B.C. Regulation please contact: engageaccessibility@gov.bc.ca

Thank you for your interest in the Local Community Accessibility Grants Program. If you have questions, please contact:

Louise O'Shea

Chief Operational Officer , SPARC BC

Phone: 604-718-7748

E: accessibility@sparc.bc.ca

Local Community Accessibility Grant

About this initiative

To provide local governments with up to \$25,000 in funding to remove barriers for persons with disabilities by implementing one of the initiatives identified in their Accessibility Plan, or by their Accessibility Committee. It could also be an initiative that the community would like to implement based on feedback received from service users based on their feedback mechanism.

Eligible Applicants

All municipalities and regional districts in British Columbia are eligible to apply for this funding.

1. Each municipality or regional district is eligible to submit an application
2. Priority will be given to local governments that are fully compliant with Part 3 of the *Accessible B.C. Act*.

Nature of the Funding

Each local government is eligible for up to \$25,000 and may select one of the following streams:

Stream 1—Local Government led projects – new

This stream is designed for local governments that already have a project that will advance accessibility or build the local-level capacity when responding to local accessibility needs or priorities.

Stream 2—Capacity support – existing/expanding

This stream is designed for local governments that may be unsure of where to start, and will focus on working together with others to build a deeper sense of existing and emerging accessibility needs or priorities.

Local governments in this stream will work with SPARC BC to define their needs and select a specific area of focus (built environment, attitudes, practices, policies, information and communication or technology). The funding will then be used to implement the specific projects or initiatives identified.

- Stream 1—Local Government led projects – new
- Stream 2—Capacity support – existing/expanding

Please provide a short overview of your proposed initiative or area of focus:

About your Project

The funding is available to support projects of varying sizes, types and complexity including projects, both new and existing, designed to:

- Remove physical barriers in the built environment
- Understand and address attitudes, practices, and policies
- Enhance information, communication, and technology

Please describe the needs or types of barriers that your initiative will address:

Which specific needs or disability groups will be served through your initiative?

What geographic area does your initiative cover?

What is the type of knowledge or insight that you hope to gain?

Types of Activities Covered

What types of activities will be delivered through your initiative?

- Ramps, elevators, lifts, accessible washrooms, power door operators, accessible doors, audio signals and loops and lighting/color contrasting for visually impaired etc. (The completed infrastructure must be open for public use)
- Anti-bias training, service delivery training
- Training or supports needed to promote safer economic inclusion, interview processes, ASL interpretation and supports for events, Accessibility Audits of workflow, remuneration for Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewing and members.
- Funding for legal and consulting advice as well as internal staff resources.
- Funding to strengthen communication designed to allow for greater inclusion
- Job task checklists in pictorial form, wayfinding signage, ASL version of policies, application forms accessible to screen readers, reprinting hardcopies of material in large font, Braille versions of documents, accessibility enhancement to the website.
- Purchasing software that enables the production of accessible documents, specialized equipment and productivity tools (headsets, tablets, laptop screenreaders).
- Other ideas as identified through your Accessibility Committee.

Funding Amounts

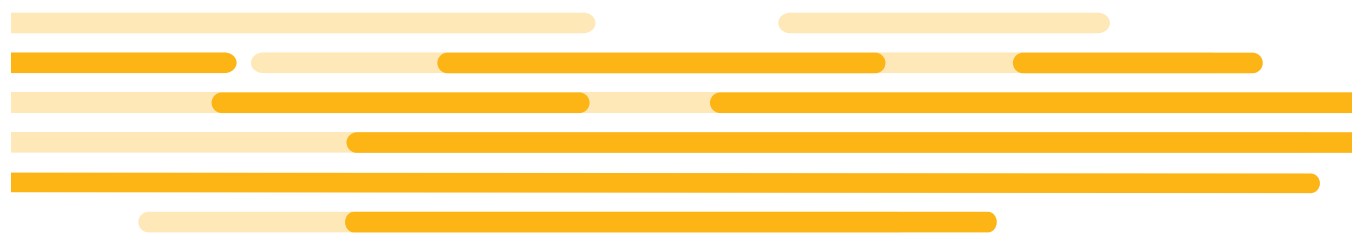
Funding will be dispersed in the following methods, all successful applicants must have all project completed by end of the grant programme and are required to submit a final report to SPARC BC by 31st March 2026.

1. For projects \$10,000 or less funding will be disbursed in 1 transaction of 100%.
2. Grants above \$10,000 will be dispersed in 2 transactions—80% upon return of the Terms & Conditions document and 20% upon receipt of Final Report

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS: KEY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS INCLUDING KEY MILESTONES

Please tell us about the specific steps and actions to be taken, key milestones and critical dates. Please note, it is possible to add additional pages if required. However, project applicants are only expected to provide high-level details and that SPARC BC will seek additional information or clarification if required. Completion of this table is optional for stream 2.

Key Steps and Actions	Key Milestones/Outcomes	Critical Dates
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
Conclusion: Project Outcomes Report Submission		



REQUESTED PROJECT BUDGET

The following sets out the proposed budget to complete the scope of work as outlined in the previous section. Completion of this table is optional for stream 2.

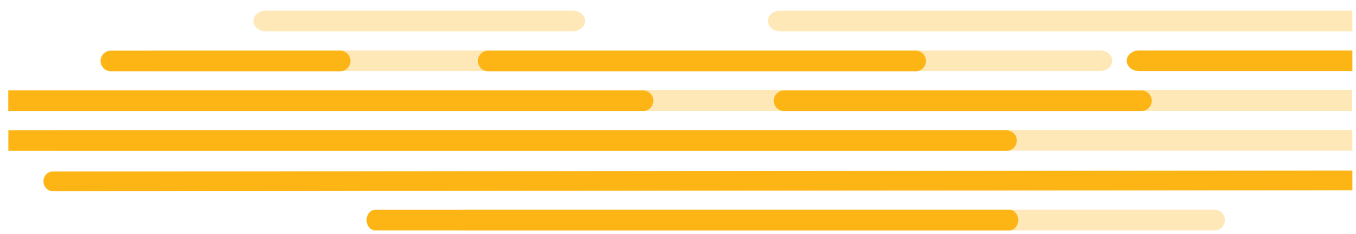
Specific Steps and Actions	Proposed Budget
1.	\$
2.	\$
3.	\$
4.	\$
5.	\$
6.	\$
7.	\$
8.	\$
9.	\$
10.	\$
11.	\$
12.	\$
TOTAL REQUESTED BUDGET AMOUNT	\$

Third-party contributions

Third-party means any person or legal entity, other than the Province, who participates in the implementation of an eligible project by means of contract. The Province's share is calculated once all third-party contributions (provincial, federal, and private funds) have been deducted from the total eligible costs of the project. If third-party funding is available, it may be applied to the project outside the provincial grant portion.

In-kind Contributions

In-kind or donated contributions are not an eligible cost. In-kind contributions may include volunteer hours and/or donated professional labour, services, space and materials, which are provided at no cost or below fair market value to the Recipient.



ABOUT THE APPLICANT

Tell us about your organization and key project implementation partners for this initiative:

Organization Name _____

Address _____

Contact Information

Name: _____ Position: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Population:

Population size: Less than 15,000 Between 15,000 and 25,000 Over 25,000

Accessibility in your organization

Please provide a link to your organization's accessibility plan

Please provide a link to your organization's feedback mechanism

Does your organization currently offer service delivery training to staff? yes no

Does your organization measure the number of employees who identify as persons with disabilities? yes no

Which service area is responsible for advancing accessibility in your community?

Do you have existing partnerships and relationships which focus on advancing shared accessibility goals?

Letter of Support

Please provide a letter of support from your accessibility committee. This letter should be submitted alongside this application form as a Word document or PDF.

Signature

The signature below certifies that all the information provided in this application is complete and correct.

Applicant Name: _____

Digital Signature: _____

Date: _____

Application Checklist

- Accessible Communities Grant Application Form
- Workplan (only required for applicants in Stream 1)
- Proposed budget (only required for applicants in Stream 1)
- Letter of Support from Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Board Resolution/Letter of Support from CAO

Submit your Application

If you have any questions or would like to submit your application, please email accessibility@sparc.bc.ca

Thank you for your application!



Accessibility includes *all*

Requirements for Local Governments under the Accessible B.C. Regulation

Local governments are among over 750 public sector organizations listed in the [Accessible B.C. Regulation](#) and are required by September 1, 2023 to establish:

- An accessibility committee
- An accessibility plan
- A tool to receive feedback on accessibility

These requirements are intended to get organizations planning for accessibility in a way that is informed by people with disabilities. They are flexible and there are lots of different ways to approach the requirements.

Accessibility Plan

- An Accessibility Plan outlines the activities the organization plans to do to identify, remove and prevent barriers.
- Organizations can determine the content of their own plans.
- Organizations must consult with the accessibility committee, and make the plan publicly available.
- The plan must be reviewed and updated every 3 years.
- **By September 1, 2023** local governments must have a publicly available accessibility plan. This can be a draft plan, a plan that the organization is consulting on, an existing plan that is amended to include accessibility, a plan developed jointly with others, a webpage with links to strategies and plans that already exist that remove barriers, etc.

Strategies to comply:

- Local governments could adapt existing plans or strategies, such as Healthy Community Plans, Disability Assessments, Age-Friendly Plans, Official Community Plans, or Diversity and Inclusion Strategies to include language on accessibility. For example, the City of Nanaimo has included an “Access for All” section in their [City Plan – Nanaimo ReImagined](#).
- Local governments could choose to work together to create plan for a wider region.

Local governments might have a web page listing next steps in developing their accessibility plan.

Accessibility Committee

- An Accessibility Committee provides advice to the organization on their accessibility plan and how to remove and prevent barriers.
- Accessibility committees should aim to have at least half of its members be persons with disabilities and/or represent a disability-serving organization.
- Membership should also aim to reflect the diversity of British Columbians and include Indigenous peoples.
- **By September 1, 2023** local governments must have an accessibility committee.

Strategies to comply:

- Local governments could adapt an existing committee such as an Age-friendly committee or a Healthy Communities Network with an updated terms of reference to include accessibility.
- Local governments could work with other organizations to develop a joint committee.
- Local governments could start small with a group of employees to be their first accessibility committee.
- Local governments can list their initial actions and intent to create an accessibility committee on the local government website

Feedback Mechanism

- A feedback mechanism provides a way for those in or interacting with the organization to provide feedback on barriers and the accessibility plan.
- Feedback received must be considered when updating the accessibility plan
- Feedback can be shared with the accessibility committee to support their work
- **By September 1, 2023** local governments must have a way for people to provide feedback on barriers.

Strategies to comply:

- This might be an email address, a webform, a designated individual in the organization such as a social planner, etc.

For more information please visit: [Frequently Asked Questions about the Accessible B.C. Regulation for Organizations.](#)

For questions about compliance requirements please contact:
engageaccessibility.gov.bc.ca

Resources to Support Compliance

1. DABC has created the [BC Accessibility Hub](#) website with shared resources that support all prescribed organizations. DABC also recently launched an [Accessibility Toolkit](#) that guides prescribed organizations through the process of establishing an accessibility committee, an accessibility plan and a feedback mechanism.



Scan the QR code on the right side of this page to access the Accessibility Toolkit.

Please reach out to DABC with your questions or requests for support:

aop@disabilityalliancebc.org

Current Funding Opportunities (as of May 10, 2023)

- Local governments are eligible to receive free workplace disability management assessments, and up to \$7,500 in funding to implement the recommendations. This initiative can help local governments meet requirements under the *Accessible BC Act* to have accessibility plans in place by September 2023. Please contact NIDMAR staff, Bill Dyer at bill.dyer@nidmar.ca with questions about this initiative.
- Age-Friendly Planning grants. Grants open May 16, 2023. More information can be found on the [Plan H website](#)

Future Opportunities

- Watch out for further announcements of funding during AccessAbility Week May 29 to June 3, 2023!