

Community Emergency Preparedness Fund

Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments

Equipment and Training

2023 Program and Application Guide – Updated July 2023

Application Deadline: October 20, 2023

1. Introduction

The [Community Emergency Preparedness Fund](#) (CEPF) is a suite of funding streams intended to support First Nations and local governments to better prepare for disasters and reduce risks from natural hazards in a changing climate. Funding is provided by the Province of BC and is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM).

As of April 2023, the funding streams include:

- Disaster risk reduction-climate adaptation
- Emergency operations centres equipment and training
- Emergency support services equipment and training
- Extreme temperature mapping, assessment, and planning
- Indigenous cultural safety and cultural humility training
- Public notification and evacuation route planning
- Volunteer and composite fire departments equipment and training

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for definitions of terms used in this guide. All defined terms are in **bold** in the program guide.

Background

Fire departments provide fire protection services in designated areas. **Fire departments** may be structured differently but all structure firefighters in BC are required to meet the published minimum training standards.

The [BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards](#) include the requirement for **fire departments** to declare their **level of service**. This applies to all local government, Treaty First Nation and any independent society-run **fire departments**. The training standards are not automatically applicable on federal reserve lands and, for the purpose of CEPF funding, non-Treaty First Nations are not required to declare their level of service if they are not prepared to do so. This will not impact the review or scoring of applications.

Under the *Fire Services Act*, all fire departments must submit all reportable fires through FIRES incident reporting to the Office of the Fire Commissioner. Compliance with fire incident reporting will be a requirement for eligible applicants under future Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments Equipment and Training funding stream intakes.

Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments Equipment and Training Funding Stream

The intent of this funding stream is to enhance the ability of **volunteer fire departments** and **composite fire departments** to prepare for and respond to emergencies. Ongoing operational costs and the purchase of major fire apparatus are not eligible.

2. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are:

- First Nations (bands and Treaty First Nations) in BC
- Local governments (municipalities or regional districts) in BC
- Legally incorporated society-run fire departments in BC that are in good standing
- Improvement Districts in BC

Eligible applicants can submit one application per funding stream intake. This includes applying as a partnering applicant in a regional application.

Please note that eligible applicants must be a **fire department** as per the definitions in order to apply. Wildfire crews are not considered to be fire departments and are not eligible.

3. Grant Maximum

The Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments Equipment and Training funding stream can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$30,000.00.

However, due to the number of fire departments that may be under their jurisdiction, regional districts can apply for a maximum of \$30,000.00 for each fire department that they have established a service area for in a single application.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, all other contributions for eligible portions of the project must be declared and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the funding. This includes any other grant funding and any revenue that is generated from activities that are funded by the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund.

4. Eligible Projects

To qualify for funding, proposed activities must enhance the ability of **volunteer fire departments** and **composite fire departments** to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

In addition, to qualify for funding, projects must be:

- A new or subsequent phase of a project (retroactive funding is not available);
- Capable of completion by the applicant within one year from the date of grant approval;
- Where applicable, eligible for required approvals, authorizations and permits; and,
- Implementing full adoption of the [BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards](#).

Regional Projects

Funding requests from two or more eligible applicants for regional projects may be submitted as a single application for eligible, collaborative projects. In this case, the maximum funding available would be based on the number of eligible applicants included in the application. It is expected that regional projects will demonstrate cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.

The primary applicant submitting the application for a regional project is required to submit a resolution or motion as outlined in [Section 7](#) of this guide. Each partnering applicant is required to submit a resolution or motion that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

5. Requirements for Funding

As part of both the development of the application package and the delivery of the approved project, local governments are encouraged to proactively engage with local First Nations and Indigenous organizations. Engagement by local governments both locally and regionally can help build relationships with First Nations, benefit both communities and enhance reconciliation. More information on engagement best practices is available [here](#).

As part of the approval agreement, approved applicants must agree to the following requirements for funding:

- Any in-person activities, meetings, or events must meet public health orders and/or guidance.
- Activities must comply with all applicable privacy legislation under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in relation to the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information while conducting funded activities. Personal information is any recorded information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information. This includes information that can be used to identify an individual through association or inference.
- Where applicable, the Qualified Professionals that manage the proposed project must be subject matter experts and any professional activities must be developed and signed by a qualified professional as per the *Professional Governance Act*.

6. Eligible and Ineligible Costs and Activities

Eligible Costs and Activities

First Nation and local government applicants are encouraged to review the [2024 FireSmart Community Funding and Supports](#) program guide before completing this application. Depending on wildfire risk, FireSmart funding can provide up to \$200,000 for eligible activities – including all of the interface fire equipment and training that is included in this guide.

Eligible costs are direct costs that are approved for funding, properly and reasonably incurred, and paid by the applicant to carry out eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of application submission until the final report is submitted.

Table 1 identifies activities that are eligible for funding. Other activities that support the intent of the program may be considered for funding. Eligible activities must be cost-effective.

Table 1: Activities Eligible for Funding.
1. Purchase of new or replacement equipment to enable or enhance the ability of eligible fire departments to meet the needs of the community and Training Standards in accordance with declared level of service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equipment required to support response to structure fire (other than major fire apparatus) including turn out gear and equipment identified in Appendix 2• Equipment required to support response to interface fires, <u>limited to</u> wildland firefighting personal protective equipment and equipment identified in Appendix 3

2. Training to enhance the ability of eligible fire departments to meet the needs of the community and Training Standards.

Applicants are encouraged to identify qualified local providers for training. The following list includes examples of commonly used course names.

For all virtual courses, eligible costs include: course fee (if any), required course materials, and travel (including accommodations and per diems) only if required for internet connection or access to necessary technology. For all in-person courses, eligible costs include: course fee, required course materials, and travel (including accommodations and per diems).

- All courses and functions defined in the [BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards 2022](#) in accordance with declared level of service
- Other specific training intended to build the resiliency of fire departments, including:
 - Mental wellness (e.g., Resilient Minds™)
 - Incident Command System (relevant levels to capacity of fire department)
 - Drafting suppression water from water courses (streams, creeks and lakes)
 - Pumping courses
 - Ropes and knots
 - Strategy and Tactics
 - Fire Officer training
 - Level 1 and 2 first aid
 - Indigenous Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility Training, in alignment with the [CEPF funding stream](#)
- Fire-related training props to assist with in-house training, including live burn training structures (limited to live burning using Class B fuels only)
- Cross training required to support response to interface fires limited to:
 - [Wildfire Risk Reduction Basics Course](#) (free, online course for non-forest professionals that provides an introduction to the key concepts to minimize the negative impacts of wildfires in BC.)
 - [Fire Life & Safety Educator](#) (public education course for fire safety education)
 - ICS-100 (Incident Command System - introduction to an effective system for command, control, and coordination of response at an emergency site; available online)
 - SPP-WFF1 Wildland Firefighter Level 1 (includes S-100, S-185, ICS-100)
 - [S-100](#) Basic fire suppression and safety (basic fire suppression training for contract crews) and S-100A (annual refresher)
 - [S-185](#) Fire entrapment avoidance and safety (general knowledge course on wildfire safety and entrapment avoidance for local governments, contract crews, and First Nations)
 - [S-231](#) Engine Boss (training for structure protection program in a WUI event)
 - [WSPP-115](#) (training for structure protection unit crews) and WSPP-FF1 (train the trainer)
 - Task force leader (for structure protection only; course for wildfire personnel to monitor and assess specialty resources that work together to accomplish a common wildfire task)
 - Structure Protection Group Supervisor (GrpS) (for structure protection only; course for wildfire personnel to implement assigned portion of the Incident Action Plan and be responsible for all operations conducted in the division/group)

Additional Eligible Costs and Activities

In addition to the activities identified in Table 1, the following expenditures are also eligible provided they relate directly to eligible activities:

- Incremental applicant staff and administration costs (e.g., creating a new position or adding new responsibilities to an existing position);
- Consultant/contractor costs. Please note: if you intend to hire a qualified professional to support proposed activities, professional consultant rates will only be considered for activities that represent respective professions. For other activities (e.g., planning events) consultant rates are expected to be commensurate with the type of activity being undertaken;
- Identification/incorporation of community and cultural values through engagement. This includes seeking advice from Indigenous Knowledge Holders and other experts (e.g., health authorities, First Nations Health Authority, biologists, etc.) and engaging the community (e.g., equity-denied populations, Indigenous organizations), Indigenous Nations, local governments, agricultural sector, critical infrastructure owners, etc.;
- Honoraria for cultural leaders, Elders, Indigenous knowledge keepers, and/or cultural keepers when they are scheduled to speak, present, or teach. Note: these honoraria should reflect the role of Indigenous Peoples as subject matter experts and be equitable to consultant rates;
- Costs related to local cultural protocols (e.g., gifts, cultural ceremonies);
- Honoraria for equity-denied populations or service organizations that support equity-denied populations;
- Translation costs and the development of culturally appropriate education, awareness, or engagement materials;
- Presentation to Band Council, Treaty First Nation government, or local government Council or Board, or community organizations, etc.;
- Where applicable, costs related to required approvals, authorizations and permits;
- Public information costs. Please note, public information costs (e.g., workshops, printed materials) need to align with the intent of the funding stream and provide benefit to the community at large.

Ineligible Costs and Activities

Any activity that is not outlined in Table 1 or is not directly connected to activities approved in the application is not eligible for grant funding. This includes but is not limited to:

- Routine or ongoing operating costs or activities (e.g., heating, cooling, and lighting; security; software or service subscriptions; or membership fees);
- Routine or ongoing planning costs or planning activities that are not incremental to the project;
- Regular salaries and/or benefits of applicant staff or partners;
- Duplication of recently developed information, maps, or imagery (e.g., LiDAR) provided the information remains accurate;
- Project-related fees payable to the applicant(s) (e.g., permit fee for installation of eligible equipment);
- Costs related to individual or household preparedness or **mitigation** work, including workshops and purchase of emergency supplies (e.g., first aid kits, evacuation supplies) for community members or households;
- Development of curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 education;
- Major capital improvements or major renovations to existing facilities and/or construction of new, permanent facilities (excluding live burn training structures);
- Purchase of promotional items, door/raffle prizes, give-away items, and/or gifts for community members (except costs related to local cultural protocols);

- Use of a fire department during an emergency;
- Training offered through the [Provincial Emergency Management Training Program](#);
- Training required for chain saw operation, helicopter landing zones, search and rescue, high angle rescue, road rescue and/or medical assist;
- Conferences;
- Trailers and/or canopies for utility vehicles;
- Refer to [Appendix 2](#) for examples of specific equipment that is not eligible for funding.

Local Government applicants are encouraged to review the [Community Works Fund](#) (Canada Community Building Fund) program materials. New and retrofit/modernization fire halls and fire stations are eligible under CWF, as well as the acquisition of a fire truck as part of an overall capital upgrade to an existing fire hall or construction of a new fire hall.

7. Application Requirements and Process

UBCM is in the process of implementing an online application tool. Information on this tool will be available later in 2023.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is **October 20, 2023**. Applicants will be advised of the status of their application within 90 days of the application deadline.

Required Application Contents

EMCR and GeoBC respect the First Nations principles of OCAP®. Any product, data or information which may include Indigenous knowledge may be submitted at the discretion of the applicant.

All applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete application, including:

- Completed Application Form and all required attachments;
- Evidence of declared service level (e.g., bylaw, resolution);
- Detailed budget that indicates the proposed expenditures from CEPF and aligns with the proposed activities outlined in the application form. Although additional funding or support is not required, any other grant funding or in-kind contributions must be identified;
- For regional projects only: resolution or motion from each partnering applicant that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive and manage the grant funding on their behalf. Resolutions or motions from partnering applicants must include this language.

If the applicant is a local government, First Nation or improvement district, the following must also be submitted:

- Band Council resolution, Treaty First Nation resolution, or local government Council or Board resolution indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management.

If the applicant is a legally incorporated society-run fire department, they must also submit:

- Board of Directors motion indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management;
- Current Certificate of Good Standing.

Submission of Applications

Applications should be submitted as Word, Excel or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20 MB.

All applications should be submitted to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities by e-mail: cepf@ubcm.ca.

Review of Applications

UBCM will perform a preliminary review of applications to ensure the required application contents have been submitted and to ensure that basic eligibility criteria have been met. Only complete application packages will be reviewed.

As required, the Evaluation Committee will assess and score all eligible applications. Point values and weighting have been established within each of these scoring criteria. Only those applications that meet a minimum threshold point value will be considered for funding.

Higher application review scores will be given to projects that:

- Align with the intent of the Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments, Equipment and Training funding stream:
 - Clearly demonstrate how the proposed project will build the resiliency of volunteer and composite fire departments in preparing for and responding to emergencies, based on the declared level of service;
 - Support eligible fire departments with limited resources that impede the ability to purchase essential equipment and/or obtain training.
- Provide training to specifically address the mental and physical health and wellbeing of eligible fire department staff and volunteers;
- Demonstrate partnerships, transferability or mutual aid with neighbouring jurisdictions;
- Contribute to a comprehensive, cooperative and regional approach and benefits; and,
- Are cost-effective.

As required, the Evaluation Committee will consider the provincial, regional, and urban/rural distribution of proposed projects, and previous CEPF funding. Recommendations will be made on a priority basis. All funding decisions will be made by UBCM.

UBCM may share all applications with the Province of BC and the First Nations' Emergency Services Society

8. Grant Management and Applicant Responsibilities

Grants are awarded to eligible applicants only and, as such, the applicant is responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

Applicants are also responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining acceptable accounting records for the project. UBCM reserves the right to audit these records.

Notice of Funding Decision

All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions. Approved applicants will receive an Approval Agreement, which will include the terms and conditions of any grant that is awarded, and that is required to be signed and returned to UBCM within 30 days.

Grants are awarded in two payments: 50% when the signed Approval Agreement has been returned to UBCM, and the remainder when the project is complete and the final reporting requirements have been met.

Please note that in cases where revisions are required to an application, or an application has been approved in principle only, the applicant has 30 days from the date of the written notice of the status of the application to complete the application requirements. Applications that are not completed within 30 days may be closed.

Progress Payments

To request a progress payment, approved applicants are required to submit the [Interim Report Form](#). The form will require the following information:

- Description of activities completed to date;
- Description of funds expended to date; and,
- Written rationale for receiving a progress payment.

Changes to Approved Projects (Amendment Requests)

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the approved application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Generally speaking, this means funds cannot be transferred to an activity that was not included in the approved application or to a new or expanded location.

Approval from UBCM and/or the Evaluation Committee will be required for any variation from the approved project. Depending on the complexity of the proposed amendment, requests may take up to 90 days to review.

To propose changes to an approved project, applicants are required to submit the [Interim Report Form](#). If UBCM determines the amendment is eligible for consideration, applicants will be required to submit:

- Amended application package, including updated, signed application form, required attachments, and an updated resolution or motion;
- For regional projects only, evidence of support from partnering applicants for proposed amendments will be required; and,
- Written rationale for proposed changes to activities and/or expenditures.

Applicants are responsible for any costs above the approved grant unless a revised application is submitted and approved prior to work being undertaken.

Extensions to Project End Date

All approved activities are required to be completed within the time frame identified in the approval agreement and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by UBCM.

The [Interim Report Form](#) will be required to be submitted for all extension requests over six months. Extensions will not exceed one year from the date of the original final report deadline.

9. Final Report Requirements and Process

All funded activities must be completed within one year of notification of funding approval and the final reports are due within 30 days of project completion.

EMCR and GeoBC respect the First Nations principles of OCAP®. Any product, data or information which may include Indigenous knowledge may be submitted at the discretion of the applicant.

Final Reports

Applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete final report, including the following:

- Completed Final Report Form with all required attachments;
- Detailed financial summary that indicates the actual expenditures from CEPF and other sources (if applicable) and that aligns with the actual activities outlined in the Final Report Form;
- Copies of any training or capacity building materials that were produced with grant funding;

- Photos of funded activities and/or completed projects; and,
- Links to media directly related to the funded project.

Submission of Final Reports

Reports should be submitted as Word, Excel or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20 MB.

All applications should be submitted to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities by e-mail: cepf@ubcm.ca.

UBCM may share all report materials with the Province of BC and the First Nations' Emergency Services Society.
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10. Additional Information

For enquiries about the application process or general enquiries about the program, please contact:

Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: cepf@ubcm.ca

Phone: (604) 270-8226 extension 220