CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Capacity-Building Initiatives for Grassroots and Ethnocultural Organizations Supporting Newcomers

The Equity Project will fund grassroots and ethnocultural organizations across Atlantic Canada to grow stronger, become more sustainable, and build their capacity to support newcomers.

Organizations will be funded for up to 21 months for capacity-building activities, while receiving mentorship, training, and networking opportunities. This project will prioritize funding groups that are led by equity-deserving individuals who are collaborative and who strive for sustainability.

✓ Eligible Organizations

- Non-profit organizations (registered non-profits, societies, or charities)

✗ In-eligible Organizations

- Organizations that are, or have been, funded by Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
- Organizations supporting newcomers outside of Atlantic Canada
- Individuals
- For-profit corporations and businesses
- Groups that have an operational budget of more than $500,000

FUNDING STREAMS

Stream 1: Grow
$75,000 - $100,000

For grassroots organizations that want to strengthen their internal capacity - for example in governance, planning, funds development, evaluation, leadership, service delivery, and expanding reach.

Stream 2: Connect
$100,000 - $140,000

For organizations that want to collaborate with others to increase collective impact - for example - plans for joint service delivery, shared resources and spaces (rent) that strengthen coordination and efforts to serve newcomers.

In both streams, each application must have one clear organization that will enter into a contractual agreement, and will be responsible for complying with the requirements of the agreement. Organizations cannot transfer funds to other organizations.

All streams will be accompanied with optional Equity Project learning opportunities for boards, financial management, funds development, human resources development, and settlement service delivery. **Some training and networking opportunities will also be available for organizations that are not selected for funding.**

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

These funds are for capacity building activities. Capacity building activities are activities that build organizational capacity, organizational sustainability, and newcomer service delivery capacity. This means strengthening your organization to grow and sustain your work. It can include improving leadership, planning, and collaboration, as well as building the knowledge and structures needed to deliver or expand newcomer services. We invite applicants to think about projects that will include sustainability planning so that your work will last well beyond this funding.

Examples of activities include:

People

- Hire staff or consultants to support capacity-building activities for your organization such as improving board governance, the development of a strategic and/or sustainability plan, funds development, holding training, marketing/media to expand reach, conduct needs assessments, providing support and tools to develop legal, financial, or compliance systems, etc.
- Hire staff for volunteer recruitment, training, and retention.

Sustainability

- Develop a strategic and/or sustainability plan.
- Learn about diversified funding and revenue streams.
- Hire support for financial planning or grant development (applying for grants for your organization's services and activities).

Learning

- Participate in professional development training not covered in the ARAISA-NBMC learning plan (the ARAISA-NBMC training includes board training, financial management, funds development, human resources management, delivering government-funded services for newcomers – for staff and volunteers).

Increase Visibility and Reach

- Develop websites, social media, or print materials - to increase your community presence.
- Setting up digital communication systems (team messaging platforms, cloud file sharing, shared calendars, etc).
- Outreach to groups of newcomers that have been underserved in regions (ex. newcomers with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ newcomers, rural newcomer groups).

Networking and Collaboration

- Host local networking or peer-learning events.
- Create resources that can benefit multiple grassroots groups.
- Support other grassroots organizations to learn from traditional wisdom (ex. Indigenous, afro-centric, collaborative community care models).

Shared Space

- Shared office, meeting space (rent), or collaborative workspace for multiple grassroots and/or ethnocultural groups (must have a plan to sustain beyond this funding).
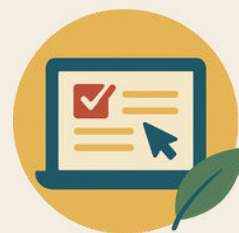- Equipment, software, or subscriptions to support coordination.

Measuring Impact

- Develop simple, culturally-appropriate tools for tracking and reporting impact and outcomes.
- Assessing needs and how your organization responds.

HOW TO APPLY

1 **Download** application, budget and capacity assessment tool

2 **Complete the 20-40-minute self-assessment tool**. The tool will help each organization assess their needs and priorities for growth, but the results will NOT be assessed by the selection committee.

The results will:
- Help applicants focus on the areas where they most need support
- Provide tailored suggestions of eligible funded activities or training opportunities that organizations may choose

3 **Fill in the application form and budget form.**

4 **Ensure you have a digital copy of your latest financial statement** (does not need to be audited)

5 **Submit your filled document (self-assessment, application and budget) and attach your latest financial statement by email to: equityequite@araisa.ca on or before January 31, 2026.**
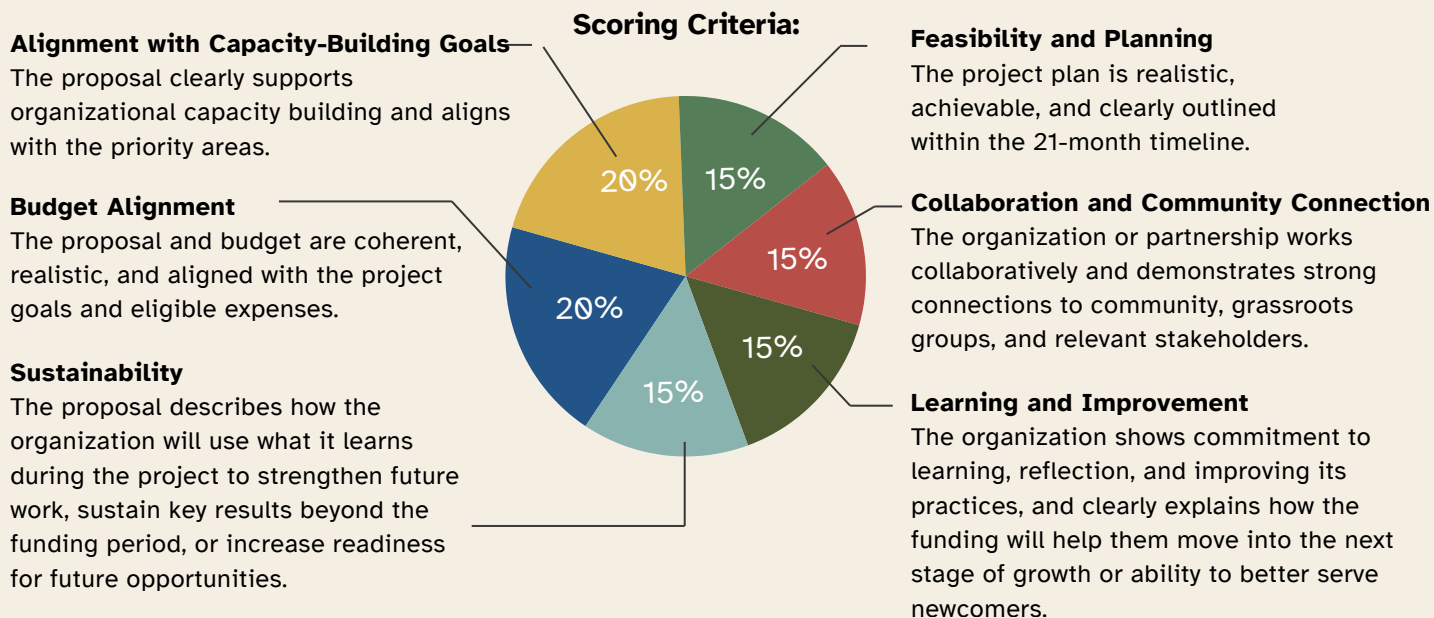
The application process described above is designed for written applications; however:

Oral applications can be provided when a request is emailed to equityequite@araisa.ca on or before January 15, 2026
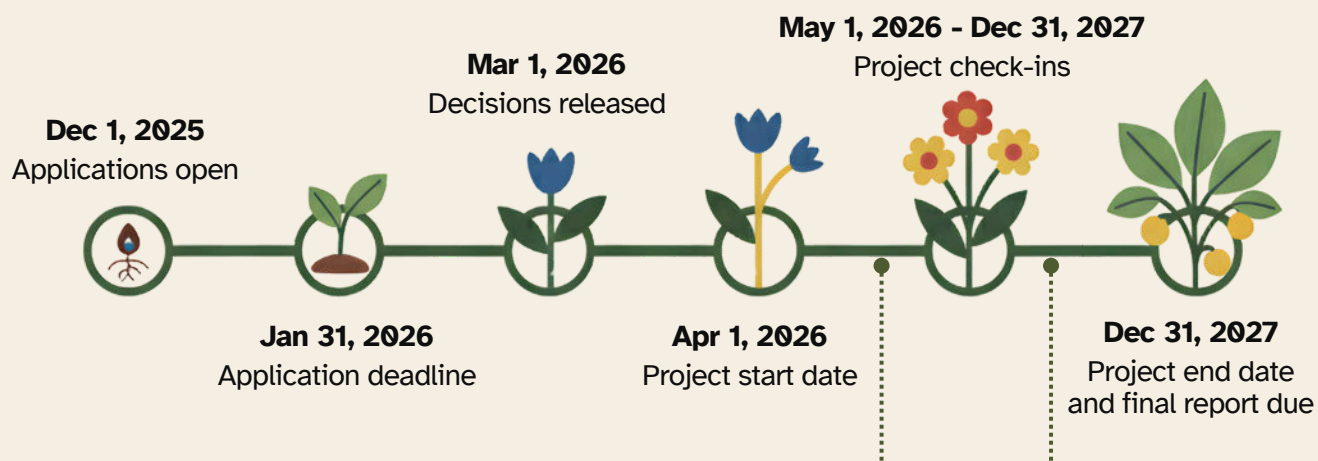
REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by an impartial panel of people with a diverse combination of experience. The combined experience may include backgrounds with lived experience, anti-oppression lens, granting, finances, economic development, organizational capacity building, and services for newcomers. They will score based on the following assessment criteria:

Scoring Criteria:

Alignment with Capacity-Building Goals
The proposal clearly supports organizational capacity building and aligns with the priority areas.

Budget Alignment
The proposal and budget are coherent, realistic, and aligned with the project goals and eligible expenses.

Sustainability
The proposal describes how the organization will use what it learns during the project to strengthen future work, sustain key results beyond the funding period, or increase readiness for future opportunities.

Feasibility and Planning
The project plan is realistic, achievable, and clearly outlined within the 21-month timeline.

Collaboration and Community Connection
The organization or partnership works collaboratively and demonstrates strong connections to community, grassroots groups, and relevant stakeholders.

Learning and Improvement
The organization shows commitment to learning, reflection, and improving its practices, and clearly explains how the funding will help them move into the next stage of growth or ability to better serve newcomers.

Pie chart values: 20%, 15%, 15%, 15%, 15%, 20%

Balance (This will be considered during selection)
The final selection will be comprised of a balance of organizations representing all four provinces, organizations in rural and different size centres, francophone and anglophone organizations, and smaller and larger organizations. Organizations led by equity-deserving individuals will be prioritized. Equity-deserving individuals refers to people and communities who experience systemic barriers to full participation, opportunities, and resources as a result of historic and ongoing discrimination, marginalization, or exclusion.

TIMELINE

Dec 1, 2025
Applications open

Jan 31, 2026
Application deadline

Mar 1, 2026
Decisions released

Apr 1, 2026
Project start date

May 1, 2026 - Dec 31, 2027
Project check-ins

Dec 31, 2027
Project end date
and final report due

Progress Updates and Learning Exchanges:

- Take part in monthly sharing circles with other grassroots organizations organized by ARAISA / NBMC
- Recipients will share short progress updates and related cost submissions

OPTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR APPLICANTS

CFP

DEC 1
Call for Proposals (CFP) launch and info session

DEC 2 - 17
Group Support Sessions for applicants to walk-through the self-assessments together, begin completing key sections of the assessment, network with other organizations, and brainstorm potential equity funding activities with other local grassroots groups.

JAN 8 & 13
Online Drop-in Q&A

Any questions?
Please see our FAQ,
or e-mail us at equityequite@araisa.ca