

# Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Organizational Capacity Building Program Guidelines

2025-2026



## Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a 5-year, \$3.5-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5-billion commitment that is cost-shared 60% federally and 40% provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.

In Nova Scotia, \$46 million will be invested through a federal-provincial partnership that is linked to five program streams: 1) Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness; 2) Climate Change and Environment; 3) Market Development and Trade; 4) Science, Research, and Innovation; and 5) Resiliency and Public Trust.

We support the development of diverse and inclusive industries and welcome individuals from underrepresented and underserved communities to apply to programming.

## Program Objective

The objective of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Organizational Capacity Building program is to support organizations representing underrepresented and underserved groups. This program will help create or support organizations in finding pathways to food growing, while working towards removing the systemic barriers that prevent members of underrepresented and underserved communities from fully participating in the food and agriculture sectors.

## Eligible Applicants

- Agricultural industry associations
- Non-profit organizations representing, led by, or demonstrating an authentic relationship with underrepresented and underserved communities
- Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions

## Program Criteria

### Applicants must:

- help underrepresented and underserved groups in accessing resources and support to grow food and advance agricultural initiatives and/or start agricultural businesses in their communities; and/or
- provide members of underrepresented and underserved communities with access to networking, training, capacity building and leadership events; and/or
- assist agricultural organizations with support in initiatives to remove barriers to participation by members of underserved communities.

**Note:** Underrepresented and underserved groups in agriculture for the purposes of this program include women, persons with disabilities, Black and African Nova Scotians, Mi'kmaq, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ and racialized individuals.

## Financial Assistance

Applicants can apply to receive Program funding up to 100% of eligible expenses, to an overall maximum of \$75,000.

| Project             | Level of Assistance | Maximum Funding |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Consultant services | Up to 100%          | \$20,000        |
| Projects            | Up to 100%          | \$75,000        |

**Note:** This program is anticipated to be offered again in 2026-27 and 2027-28. However, programs may be modified or discontinued based on budget availability, industry feedback, and government priorities.

## Evaluation Criteria

**Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:**

- Degree of potential impact to the community (25 points)
- Collaboration with other stakeholders (25 points)
- Organizational capacity and resources to support project, including having secured other funding sources and/or in-kind contributions (25 points)
- Alignment of project outcomes to objectives (25 points)

## Eligible Expenses

The following items are eligible in this program:

|   |
|---|
| <b>Consultant Services</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workshops, conferences, field days, networking events, specified training</li> <li>• translation services</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Market Access and Development</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advertising, marketing and media</li> <li>• graphic design</li> <li>• labour for custom work</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Equipment/Supplies (specific to approved project)</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equipment</li> <li>• shipping and installation fees</li> <li>• lab supplies</li> <li>• agricultural resources (seeds, soil)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Research Initiatives</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incremental salaries, wages pertaining directly to project</li> <li>• travel to field sites (fuel/mileage)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Other Project Costs</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other supports to promote food growing and development of agricultural businesses (will be looked at on a case-by-case basis)</li> <li>• Up to 10% project administrative costs</li> </ul> |

## Additional Expense Eligibility Requirements

- The non-recoverable portion of HST may be provided as an eligible cost for certain organizations (i.e. non-profit organizations). Appropriate documentation showing the applicant's eligibility for HST reimbursement must be provided at the time of the application. Any amounts for HST reimbursement requested must be included in the project application.
- Used equipment must be purchased from a recognized dealer and be in good condition. Applicants must identify at time of application if they are purchasing used equipment, and these applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Program funding will only be offered on transactions (invoices) that do not involve a supplier/service provider that is associated with the applicant, unless it is proven that an associated supplier/service provider is the only registered company providing that service in the area. In such cases that it is necessary to proceed with an associated supplier/service provider, the applicant must apply for a pre-approval from Programs before proceeding or submitting a claim to ensure that the associated costs will be approved for reimbursement.

## Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses are expenses that will not be compensated under this program and include but are not limited to, the following expenses:

- buildings/building modifications/sea containers
- in-kind contributions
- vehicles
- multiple pieces of equipment per applicant with the same function
- purchase of ongoing software licensing costs or fees
- purchase of standard software programs
- operating expenses/existing staff wages/salaries
- entertainment
- recoverable HST

## Application Process

To apply for the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Organizational Capacity Building program:

1. Contact one of our Agricultural Representatives or Diversity Programming Specialists to discuss your application prior to submitting to Programs (contact information at end of guidelines).
2. Submit a complete application to [prm@novascotia.ca](mailto:prm@novascotia.ca) by **November 16, 2025**.

| Application Intake                    | Activity Period                   | Claim Deadline    |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| September 1, 2025 - November 16, 2025 | April 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026 | February 28, 2026 |

**Note:** An applicant may only complete one application for this program per year.

**Note 2:** Applicants new to Programs since 2023 must complete the Program Funding Registration (PFR) form. Returning applicants must update the form as needed with any changes to business information including contact information, structure, commodities, environmental farm plan and Premise ID.

## Approval Process

1. Applications will be reviewed by the Department of Agriculture.
2. If approved, applicants will receive a **Letter of Agreement (LOA)** that identifies the Program funding offered and the terms and conditions under which Program funding is approved.
3. The applicant is responsible for reporting any errors in the Program funding amounts provided in the LOA.
4. Review, sign and return the LOA to Programs within **30 days** of the date of the LOA or your Program funding will be forfeited.

**Note:** Approval of applications is subject to availability of Program funding. The total amount of Program funding awarded to each applicant, or to associated applicants, may be limited at the discretion of the Department of Agriculture to ensure opportunities for additional applicants to access Program funding.

## Claiming Process

1. After Programs receives your signed LOA, a **Program Claim Form** will be sent to you.
2. Complete and sign the Program Claim Form by **February 28, 2026**.
3. Attach copies of all invoices for eligible project costs incurred and paid for by the applicant.
4. Attach proof of payment for each invoice – e-transfer confirmation, debit slips, cleared cheques, or credit card/bank statements. (invoices marked paid and signed by the supplier are not accepted).
5. Submit your claim with the required supporting documentation to the Programs office by February 28, 2026.

**Note:** No payment will be made for claims under \$20.00.

## Final Report

Projects approved for Program funding have mandatory reporting requirements. Applicants will receive the reporting template with their claim form.

Applicants will be subject to a **25% holdback** on their submitted claim if the final report is not submitted at the same time. Final Reports may be made available publicly on the Department of Agriculture website and a follow-up review may be conducted after project completion.

## Leased Land

Eligible projects must be directly applicable to the registered farm qualifying for Program funding on agricultural land owned or leased. A copy of the long-term lease of at least 10 years or rental agreement must accompany the application for all physical projects applicable to the leased/rented land. It is a condition of approval that the lease be of at least 10 years duration and must last for at least 5 years after the project funding has been received. You must advise us immediately, in writing, if the lease is terminated, if the term of the lease changes or if the identity of the lessor changes in any way (for example, if the lessor assigns the lease or if the lease changes in composition).

## Authority

The Department of Agriculture shall have the authority to deny an application if the application does not meet the requirements described in these Program Guidelines or there is evidence of misrepresentation of pertinent information.

## Evaluation and Audit

Review and evaluation of projects may be carried out by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Canada, or other parties chosen by the Department of Agriculture for the purpose of audit, analysis, evaluation, program development and determining financial assistance. This review and evaluation process may be conducted prior to project commencement, during work and/or upon project completion. Applicants may be asked to complete an evaluation survey related to their final claim.

## Conflict of Interest

No current or former Federal public servant or public office holders will receive benefits from this funding except in compliance with Conflicts of Interest Act (Canada), the Conflicts of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, or the Federal “Values and Ethics Code” for the public sector and the Federal “Policy on Conflicts of Interest and Post-Employment”. No MP or Senator will be allowed to obtain financial benefit from this funding except in accordance with the Parliament of Canada Act.



## Contact Information

Submit all documents to Programs at the address or email below. For more information, contact Programs or your regional office.

**Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture  
Programs Office**  
74 Research Drive  
Bible Hill, Nova Scotia B6L 2R2  
Telephone: 902-893-6377  
Toll Free: 1-866-844-4276  
Email: [prm@novascotia.ca](mailto:prm@novascotia.ca)

| Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture<br>Regional Offices   |              |   |
|---|--------------|---|
| Western<br>(Covering West Hants, Kings,<br>Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth,<br>Shelburne, Queens, and Lunenburg<br>counties)   | Yarmouth     | 902-223-8085  |
|   | Digby        | 902-638-2395  |
|   | Kentville    | 902-679-6021  |
|   | Lunenburg    | 902-634-7575  |
| Eastern<br>(Covering Colchester, Cumberland,<br>East Hants, Halifax - including HRM,<br>Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough,<br>Richmond, Inverness, Cape Breton,<br>and Victoria counties) | Truro        | 902-893-6575  |
|   | Nappan       | 782-370-2278  |
|   | Antigonish   | 902-863-7180  |
|   | Sydney       | 902-563-2000  |
| Diversity Programming Specialists   | All Counties | 902-893-6575 or<br><a href="mailto:EDIAagprograms@novascotia.ca">EDIAagprograms@novascotia.ca</a> |