

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 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. This can be done 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.

Need More Information

We know you may be unsure where to start or how to achieve your projects and we're here to help. Over the next 1-2 months we will organize:

- **Weekly information sessions—every Tuesday 10am-11:30am**

We will have a drop-in zoom call to go over the details of the grant and answer any questions you have. These workshops will be offered weekly from **June 6th** to **July 25th**. You can register for the workshop on our website.

- **On-going Capacity Building Workshops**

As we begin to work with local governments, we will be hosting regular capacity building workshops to educate and assist teams in their project ideas and planning. Please reach out to Lily, contact details below, to discuss the type of assistance or resources you may need.

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:

Lily Connor

Manager—Accessibility Initiatives, SPARC BC

Phone: 604-718-7748

E: accessibility@sparc.bc.ca