



Presented by



THE PARTICIPACTION COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

PRESENTED BY NOVO NORDISK

2026 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Overview:

The [ParticipACTION Community Challenge](#), presented by Novo Nordisk, is a national physical activity and sport initiative that encourages everyone in Canada to get active in search of Canada's Most Active Community. The seventh edition of the Community Challenge will take place from June 1 to 30, 2026.

The 2026 Community Challenge grants will help eligible community organizations and schools remove barriers and increase physical activity and sport participation and retention among equity-denied groups during the Challenge.

Available grants:

- ParticipACTION will award grants of up to **\$1,000** to eligible organizations that meet the requirements listed in this document.
- ParticipACTION will allocate a select number of grants specifically to schools as part of this year's increased focus on school participation in the Challenge.

Grant application period:

ParticipACTION will be accepting grant applications from **Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 9 a.m. ET to Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 5 p.m. ET**.

Notification of grant application status and distribution:

- ParticipACTION will notify organizations of the final status of their applications by **March 28, 2026**.
- 100% of the funds will be distributed in one payment to successful applicants by **April 18, 2026**.

Grant eligibility criteria:

- The application must clearly outline the **goal of removing barriers and increasing physical activity and sport participation and retention among equity-denied groups**. For the purposes of these grants, equity-denied groups include Black and other racialized people, Indigenous peoples and communities, newcomers to Canada, older adults, people experiencing low income, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.
- The program, event or initiative being funded by the grant must take place within Canada in June 2026, either throughout the whole month or for part of it.
- Each grant recipient agrees to **register their funded program, event or initiative and track the number of participants on the [ParticipACTION Community Challenge webpage](#)** during the Challenge period (June 1 to 30, 2026). Grant recipients can register their programs, events or initiatives starting in April 2026 and track the numbers of participants from June 1 to 30, 2026.
- Each grant recipient also agrees to complete a mandatory post-Challenge survey that will be emailed to them in July 2026.
- Any grant recipient that does not register their funded program, event or initiative, track the number of participants, and complete the post-Challenge survey will be ineligible to apply for future ParticipACTION grants.

- Applicants may use AI or automated drafting tools to assist in preparing application materials. Applicants remain fully responsible for the accuracy, completeness, and originality of their submissions.

Eligible organizations:

- Community and non-profit organizations and associations that meet the above eligibility criteria
- Organizations that reach one or more equity-denied groups such as Black and other racialized people, Indigenous peoples and communities, persons with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, older adults, people experiencing low income, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.
- Schools (Note: schools are encouraged to submit grant applications that include large parts of their populations as opposed to individual classes.)
- Local sport organizations
- Northern municipalities located in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut
- Remote municipalities (communities with populations of under 50,000 people and that are located over 200 km away from an urban centre with a population of over 100,000 or a provincial/territorial capital)
- First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities
- National or provincial/territorial organizations that directly serve local community groups

Ineligible organizations

- For-profit organizations
- National or provincial organizations that do not provide direct community programming
- Municipalities that do *not* meet the definition of “northern or remote municipalities” as outlined above*

** Ineligible municipalities are encouraged to partner with an eligible community organization who may apply as the grant recipient for the project. In the case of rural municipalities where there is no appropriate community organization with the ability to partner on the grant application and the delivery of the project, the municipality/town/band may be eligible to be the grant recipient. Please note the lack of appropriate partner organizations in the open-end question at the end of the grant application.*

Chapters, branches or locations from within the same organization can submit separate applications if they are hosting different programs, initiatives or events during the Community Challenge.

Note: Other sources of funding for municipalities and organizations that could support participation in the 2026 Community Challenge include:

- [Jumpstart Community Development Grants](#) – Intake Period 2 for programming in June
- [Community Foundations of Canada](#) – Applications due Feb. 25, decision notifications in April 2026

Application assessment:

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria listed above, applications will be assessed based on the following criteria, with the value of each criterion noted in brackets:

- **Equity-denied inclusion and integration (30%):**

- Demonstrate inclusive and equitable practices in your organization's program, event or initiative that maximize sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities for people belonging to equity-denied groups.
- Demonstrate how the grant and your organization's participation in the Community Challenge will help build your capacity to provide physical activity and sport opportunities for people belonging to equity-denied groups.
- Demonstrate how your organization will promote your event, program or initiative to people belonging to equity-denied groups and engage them in it.
- Each grant applicant is also encouraged to collaborate with other organizations in their community that meet the eligibility criteria listed above to deliver their program, event or initiative.

- **Program, event or initiative reach (20%):**

- The total number of participants expected to take part in your program, initiative or event throughout the month of June.

- **Accessible and inclusive programs, initiatives and/or events (15%):**

- Demonstrate how your organization will provide a supportive, accessible and inclusive environment for participants of your program, initiative or event.
- Demonstrate how your organization will reduce potential barriers to participation, such as physical obstructions, skill level requirements, lack of equipment, transportation, etc.
- Demonstrate how your organization's program, initiative or event will accommodate the varying abilities and needs of participants.
- Ensure that your organization's initiative, event or program is provided at little or no financial cost for participants.

- **Quality sport and physical activity (15%):**

- The goal of quality sport and physical activity is to create positive experiences in supportive environments. Quality sport and physical activity is safe, inclusive and well run.
- Each grant applicant is strongly encouraged to use qualified instructors for their program, initiative or event where appropriate (e.g., National Coaching Certification Program [NCCP], First Aid, High Five, Sport for Life Physical Literacy 101, Diplôme d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur [DAFA] or other skill development program certification).

- Training should promote safe sport and physical activity and align with the [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport \(UCCMS\)](#).
- For more information on safe sport and how to report maltreatment concerns, please visit the [Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport \(CCES\) website](#).
- Overall quality of the proposed program or event

- **Municipal and partner engagement (10%):**
 - Each grant applicant is strongly encouraged to connect with their municipal government to ensure that they are aware that they are participating in the Community Challenge and to encourage them to get involved by registering for, promoting and participating in the Challenge.

Eligible expenses:

Expenses must be directly related to costs incurred from delivering your physical activity or sport event, initiative or program and/or helping to make it accessible and inclusive. They include the following:

- Training in delivering quality, safe sport and physical activity and/or for equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility training for staff, volunteers, coaches and/or instructors
- Partnerships to co-develop the program, event or initiative with people belonging to equity-denied groups
- Marketing and communications related to the program, initiative or event
- Sport or physical activity equipment
- Staffing, coaching and training
- Venue, facility or space rental costs
- Transportation
- Nutrition
- Costs that help the program, initiative or event meet public health guidelines
- Childcare for participants during an event
- Honoraria, small prizes and incentives for participants and volunteers
- Any accommodation that may be required for full participation, such as ASL, closed captioning, personal assistance, etc.
- A maximum of 15% of the funding can be used for administrative expenses

Ineligible expenses include the following:

- Public year-end team celebrations, private parties or banquets
- Prize money or gift cards
- Capital expenditures (e.g., renovations, construction, computer equipment, etc.)
- Deficits incurred from past activities
- Alcohol
- Competitions or expenses incurred before funding is issued
- Expenses that have already been claimed from another grant submission or funding source

Conditions and limitations:

To receive funding, each grant recipient agrees to the following conditions:

- Acknowledge ParticipACTION and the Government of Canada as funders of their program, initiative or event. Please refer to the [Guide on the public acknowledgement of financial support - Canadian Heritage](#) when recognizing the Government of Canada.
- Keep a record of how the grant funds were used to support their program, initiative or event and agree to share the details in case ParticipACTION is audited.
- Register their program, event or initiative and track the number of participants on ParticipACTION's website and complete a post-Challenge online survey. ParticipACTION will email the survey link to the program, initiative or event organizer.
- Indemnify ParticipACTION and the Government of Canada for any damages as a result of the activities undertaken with the funding.
- Protect themselves through an appropriate insurance policy against any liability resulting from anything done or omitted in carrying out activities under the application.
- Agree to ParticipACTION having the right to publish the grant recipient's organization name and final funding amount.
- Upon being selected as a successful grant recipient, agree to signing a contract that summarizes the conditions noted above, if deemed necessary by ParticipACTION.

For additional information, please visit the [Community Challenge webpage](#).

**The ParticipACTION Community Challenge
presented by Novo Nordisk is also proudly supported by:**

