

Updated September 18, 2025

Community Culture Development Fund (CCDF) Culture Development Category Q&A

The Community Culture Development Fund (CCDF), initiated in 2000, provides financial support to not-for-profit organizations delivering arts, culture, and heritage initiatives in Red Deer. The purpose of the program is to support service providers with project expenses required to deliver arts & culture programs and services within the community.

Grant funding is intended to assist organizations in building capacity to provide cultural programs and services, develop new cultural programs and services, produce a community-based special event or festival, and/or act as an umbrella organization for other cultural organizations. The Culture Development category offers funding for long-term programs, projects, or cultural events that create meaningful cultural experiences and foster community connection.

This Q&A is specific to the Development Category (3-year funding). If you're interested in applying under the Opportunities Category, please check visit reddeer.ca/CCDF for more information on eligibility and criteria.

Applications will be accepted from August 18, 2025 at 10am until September 29, 2025 at 4pm.

1. Who is eligible for funding from this grant?

Not-for-profit organizations in good standing that deliver arts, culture and/or heritage initiatives in Red Deer are eligible to apply.

2. How much funding is available through this grant?

Up to \$30,000/year for three years. The upcoming funding cycle runs 2026-2028.

Allocation of funds is a competitive process. For each application, it is possible to receive full funding, partial funding or be declined for funding.

3. What are the outcomes for this program?

Applicants are required to align their project to at least one of the following seven outcomes to be considered for funding. Explanations of outcomes are provided in the [Application Guide](#).

- Community Cohesion and Engagement
- Educational Opportunity and Attainment
- Equitable Services and Access
- Health, Safety and Well-being
- Social and Cultural Diversity
- Heritage
- Economic Value

4. How can my organization apply?

Eligible applicants can apply online via the SmartSimple platform beginning Monday, August 18, 2025, at 10am. Printed applications are not accepted. The link to the online application portal is found at reddeer.ca/CCDF.

5. How long can my project be funded for?

For the upcoming 2026-2028 funding cycle, the Development Category now supports three-year projects only. This allows for more strategic support of cultural initiatives and ensures full allocation of available funds.

6. Am I able to apply for 1- or 2-year projects like in years past?

No, this is a change to the 2026-2028 funding cycle. CCDF's Development Category now supports funding for three-year projects only. This change allows for more strategic support of cultural initiatives and ensures full allocation of available funds.

7. What does "in good standing" mean in terms of applicant eligibility?

This means that a not-for-profit must be a registered non-profit society within Alberta and provide proof that annual financials are up to date, and must not be in arrears for municipal taxes or utilities, or failed to pay any other municipal charge or invoice with the City of Red Deer.

8. Our charitable organization is not listed as an active non-profit within Alberta. Are there any other options available to us to apply for CCDF funding?

Organizations that are not registered as active non-profits in Alberta are not eligible to apply for the CCDF grant on their own. However, they may partner with a registered Alberta non-profit, which can act as an umbrella organization to receive CCDF funding on behalf of another group or organization. The umbrella organization would be responsible for holding the CCDF funds, if granted, and completing required annual reporting.

9. There are several categories of non-profit legislation in Alberta, see examples below. Are all eligible for CCDF funding?

- **Agricultural Society**
- **Alberta Society**
- **Extra-Provincial Non-Profit Corporation**
- **Non-Profit Private Company**
- **Non-Profit Public Company**
- **Private Act Non-Profit Corporation**
- **Recreation Private Company**
- **Recreation Public Company**
- **Religious Society**

The grant does not require organizations to be incorporated under a specific type of non-profit legislation. As long as an organization is a non-profit in good standing and meets all other eligibility criteria, it is eligible for funding.

10. We are a newly formed non-profit with no track record or financials yet. We hope to do small projects to help us develop our track record for funding. Are we able to apply for one of your grants? Or do we need to partner with an organization to apply?

Yes, you are eligible to apply for CCDF funding as a newly formed non-profit. In the application, you will need to include your organization's certificate of incorporation as proof of non-profit status from the Government of Alberta. The application also requests a copy of your most recent financial statements; however, since this non-profit is new, this can be omitted. Please note that if your organization is successful in receiving CCDF funding, financial statements will be required as part of the annual reporting.

11. In your application, it would be beneficial to provide information on sponsorships, donations and any past projects, if applicable, to demonstrate project feasibility and organizational capacity, as outlined in the Application Guide.

12. What kinds of projects are not eligible?

Projects that primarily serve fundraising, religious instruction or political advocacy are not eligible for funding.

13. Where can I find information on eligible and ineligible expenses for this grant?

Review the page 6 of the CCDF [Application Guide](#), which can be found at reddeer.ca/CCDF.

14. Can my project meet more than one of the outcomes?

Yes, your project can meet more than one of the outcomes, you don't have to select just one when you apply. In fact, the more outcomes a project meets, the stronger the application. It is recommended to evaluate your project based on what outcomes it meets for the people it serves.

15. Can CCDF funding be used as 'seed money' for a fundraiser?

No. CCDF is not intended for fundraising events or seed campaigns. However, fundraising expenses may appear in your overall project budget, if they relate to your broader cultural initiative.

16. Are administration costs allowed to be included in my project budget?

Yes. Administration or overhead costs are allowed to a maximum of 20% of the expense and 20% of the total budget submission. Items such as rent, insurances and non-direct support salaries or supplies may be included as administration or overhead costs.

17. Can you provide clarity about the Ineligible Expense "Cost charged by the City for events (i.e. Facility rentals, Public Works charges for street closures, etc.)"? What is the rationale?

Cost charged by the City for events (i.e. Facility rentals, Public Works charges for street closures, etc.) are not allowed as it could undermine the intent of the taxpayer-funded grant by redirecting funds back into municipal revenue.

18. Can you please provide clarity about the Eligible Expense "The applicant should be able to demonstrate that a minimum of 50% of the organization is Red Deer based and whose primary target population is from Red Deer"? How does this specifically get applied? Is it applied to membership?

The CCDF grant supports projects and programs that serve Red Deer residents. An organization's membership does not need to be exclusively local, as long as the organization is based in Red Deer, conducts most of its activities locally, and benefits the local community. When reporting on CCDF funding, organizations must confirm that at least 50% of attendees or participants are from Red Deer.

19. Can applicants apply more than once?

Yes, provided each submission is for a project not already included in any other application(s).

20. When applying, is an organization able to group similar smaller programs into one larger project application?

Multiple programs can be included under one project application—provided they contribute to a shared goal and produce similar outcomes. When reporting, data collection from the programs under one project must accurately reflect how they are meeting an outcome.

21. Can funds carryover from year one to two to three, etc. within the funding cycle?

No. All funding awarded for a project in a given year must be spent within that same year. For example, if an organization receives \$10,000 per year as part of a 3-year CCDF funding cycle, the full \$10,000 must be spent each year in order to receive the next year's payment.

22. Do funds have to be evenly dispersed each year? Or, can different amounts be spent each year? For example, if an organization is approved for \$90,000 total for the funding cycle, can it be spent \$20,000/\$50,000/\$20,000, or does it have to be \$30,000/\$30,000/\$30,000?

All funding allocated to a project each year must be spent within that same year. For example, if an organization is awarded \$30,000 per year as part of a 3-year CCDF funding cycle, the full \$30,000 must be spent each year to receive the next year's payment.

23. What happens if we don't spend all of the money allocated to us in a given year? Do we have to give it back? If we have to return a portion of the funding for one year of the funding cycle, are we still eligible to receive subsequent years of funding?

The intent of the CCDF grant is for organizations receiving funding to spend all the money allocated to the approved project. If the funding is not fully spent, the CCDF funding agreement states that any unspent funds must be returned. For small unspent amounts (less than \$500), how to handle the remaining funds will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Remaining and continued funding will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

24. What if there is a change in scope in our project, how do we handle this?

The intent of the CCDF grant is for the funding to be used for the project reviewed and approved by the adjudication committee. Any changes in project scope must be communicated to the grant administrator and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

25. What specifically needs to be included for "copy of most recent financial statements" as an attachment in the application?

A Statement of Operations - revenues, expenses, net profit/loss - should be included in the requested attachment "copy of most recent financial statements". A Statement of Financial Position - assets, liabilities, net assets - is valuable to help evaluate an organization's financial stability, but is not necessary to include.

Please note that if an organization is successful in receiving CCDF funding, it will be included in the Agreement that the City can request an Audited Financial Statement or a Financial Review.

26. Which financial statements should be included with the application - the most recent full year numbers or current year-to-date numbers?

The most recent financial statements from a full fiscal year should be included in the application.

27. Can I apply if I'm partnering with another organization?

Yes, partnerships are welcome. A lead applicant must be identified and meet the applicant eligibility criteria, which are:

- Be a registered non-profit society in good standing serving Red Deer (i.e. provide proof that annual financials with the Province are up to date)
- Contribute to at least one of the seven outcomes outline in the [Application Guide](#)
- Be in good standing with the City of Red Deer (i.e. not be in arrears for municipal taxes or utilities, or failed to pay any other municipal charge or invoice).

28. Can religious or faith-based organizations apply?

Yes, these not-for-profit organizations are welcome to apply provided the proposed project serves a broad public audience and otherwise meets the purpose and outcomes criteria of the grant.

29. How are applications evaluated?

Complete applications will first be reviewed for applicant eligibility. See below for criteria. Following this, eligible applications are assessed by a review committee based on alignment with program outcomes, community impact, feasibility and financial planning.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria:

- Be a registered non-profit society in good standing serving Red Deer (i.e. provide proof that annual financials with the Province are up to date)
- Contribute to at least one of the seven outcomes outline in the [Application Guide](#)
- Be in good standing with the City of Red Deer (i.e. not be in arrears for municipal taxes or utilities or failed to pay any other municipal charge or invoice).

30. How is the grant adjudicated?

A panel of 4-5 City of Red Deer staff with experience in arts and culture and/or grant adjudication. In the past, community members were included, but this practice was reconsidered due to concerns about limited adjudication experience and potential bias.

31. What are the reporting requirements if I am successful in receiving CCDF funding?

Mandatory year-end reporting must be completed by January 31 of the year following CCDF funds received. Reporting must be completed online via the SmartSimple platform. Failure to report will result in non-compliance and ineligibility for future funding. Mid-year project monitoring will also be conducted in collaboration with a City of Red Deer representative.

32. How can I learn more about this funding opportunity?

Visit reddeer.ca/CCDF to view the [Application Guide](#), which includes detailed instructions about eligibility, funding use, and the application process.

If you're new to the SmartSimple platform, or applying for the first time, support is available—please contact our Community Development team.

For more information contact: Community Development

- Phone: 403-406-8820
- Email: culturemailbox@reddeer.ca (include "CCDF- Development" in the subject line)
- Note: If you contact us within three days of the deadline, we may be unable to provide full support.

33. Can I apply for the Opportunities Category for my project?

This grant intake is only for the Development Category (3-year funding). The Opportunities Category is a separate funding stream under CCDF funding up to \$3000. It has a separate application process and criteria. Learn more at reddeer.ca/CCDF and view the [Application Guide](#).

34. I am having trouble with the application. Who can help me?

For assistance with the SmartSimple platform or the application process, contact the Community Development team:

- Phone: 403-406-8820
- Email: culturemailbox@reddeer.ca (include "CCDF- Development" in the subject line)
- Note: If you contact us within three (3) days of the deadline, we may be unable to provide full support.

35. When is the application deadline?

The application deadline is Monday, September 29, 2025, at 4pm.

Q&A: SmartSimple Platform**36. Can I be added to my organization's SmartSimple account so that I have access to the online application for grant funding?**

The grant software, SmartSimple, is set up to allow only one login per organization. You will need to obtain the login information from your organization's previous grant contact. Once you have access to SmartSimple, you can update the contact information to reflect your own.

37. Can I upload a Word document into a response field?

No, you can't upload files into response fields. However, you can compose your answers in a Word doc and use the copy & paste function to enter your text into the response fields. Be aware that each text box has a character limit, so be brief and succinct. Note: SmartSimple does not have an Autosave function – you must click Save on the bottom of each page.

38. I started work on my application in SmartSimple but when I returned to it, all the fields were empty! What happened to my work?

You must "SAVE" your work at the bottom of every screen before you choose "NEXT" or click on one of the other tabs of the application. The red "SAVE" button is found at the bottom of each screen.

39. Why does the system open a new draft every time I try to go back into the application I have already started?

If you are having trouble finding the draft you started or if you unintentionally started new applications, this may help:

- When you begin an application and save your work, it will become a draft. You can leave SmartSimple and return to edit your draft until you submit the finished application.
- When you open SmartSimple and arrive at the landing page, there are several icons. Below you will see "My Applications". "Drafts" is the first item under "My Applications". It will indicate how many drafts have been started in (#) brackets. The drafts will be listed in a chart at the bottom of the screen. All drafts will have an application ID like this: FCSS-26-07XX. Click on the draft you want and continue with the application.
- If you have unintentionally created extra drafts and would like them deleted to avoid confusion, please e-mail culturemailbox@reddeer.ca. Be sure to double check for work you may want to copy or keep before asking us to permanently delete a draft.

40. In the budget tab, do I have to include all the revenue items listed?

No. You don't have to include all revenue types in your budget. It is recommended to consider all potential sources of revenue as an important part of planning.

41. Do I need to submit the entire organization's budget, or just the project budget?

In the Budget tab in SmartSimple, you only need to submit the project budget. However, in the Attachments tab, you must upload a copy of your organization's most recent financial statements as part of the application.

42. Do I need to include revenue lines for membership or operations in my budget, even if they aren't related to the project I'm submitting with my application?

CCDF provides funding for projects or programming that delivers arts, culture and heritage initiatives. The budget submitted in SmartSimple should include only the revenues and expenses related to the specific project that the requested funding would support, if approved. Please note that a complete application must also include a copy of the organization's most recent financial statements as an attachment.

43. When entering my budget for year 1, 2 and 3, I anticipate that costs will increase year-over-year. Should this be reflected in the number submitted?

Try to submit budget numbers that are as accurate as possible to provide a complete picture of the project. We understand that things can change over the course of a three-year funding cycle, and it's not possible to predict everything. If funding is granted, the budget submitted with your application will be revisited annually during reporting. At that time, you'll have the opportunity to explain any changes or variances. To remain eligible for the next year's funding allotment, your submitted reporting must show that all funds provided by the City of Red Deer were fully spent.

44. I am having trouble with the application or my password. Who can help me?

Please contact our Community Development team for assistance:

- Phone: 403-406-8820
- Email: culturemailbox@reddeer.ca (include "CCDF" in the subject line)