

Working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara

# Niagara Prosperity Initiative

## Application Guidelines



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## About the Niagara Prosperity Initiative

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative (NPI), established by Niagara Region in 2008, provides an annual investment to support poverty reduction. To help implement the [Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy](https://www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx), (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx>) Niagara Region will distribute three-year grants through NPI between 2025 to 2027 for projects aimed at **working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara**. To be considered for funding, applicants must meet all eligibility criteria outlined in these application guidelines.

## Important dates

Application Intake Opening: Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Application Intake Deadline: Thursday, October 31, 2024, by 4:30 p.m.

Information Sessions for Grant Applicants:

Applicants are encouraged to attend an information session to learn more about the program and the application process. To attend a session, email [csgranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csgranting@niagararegion.ca).

- Session 1: Monday, Sept. 16, 2024, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00p.m. (Virtual)
- Session 2: Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to noon (Virtual)
- Session 3: Thursday, Sept. 19, 2024, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (In-person – Welland Community Centre, 145 Lincoln Street)

Niagara Region plans to communicate funding decisions in December 2024. It is anticipated that agreements will be issued to applicants approved for funding in early 2025. Please note that dates and funding decisions are subject to change at the discretion of Niagara Region. Execution of agreements is contingent on Council budget approval. Annual funding is subject to Council budget approval and to that end agreements may be subject to adjustment and may be subject to adjustment with 30 days notice.

## Eligible projects

### Alignment to Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

Niagara Region has identified six projects for investment in this round of funding. These projects will help implement Areas of Focus outlined in the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy. The projects reflect local needs and are based on best or promising practices. Applicants must demonstrate alignment to the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy by selecting one of the following projects and developing a proposal that outlines how they will create change to address the corresponding Areas of Focus outlined in the strategy:



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- **Project 1: Indigenous well-being.** Develop a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives
- **Project 2: Mental health and addiction (Social Assistance).** Provide mental health and addiction supports for individuals on social assistance or those experiencing homelessness
- **Project 3: Mental health and addiction (Situation Tables).** Provide supports for individuals referred to Niagara Situation Tables who need mental health or addiction support
- **Project 4: Income and employment.** Increase opportunities for decent work, living wage employment and financial empowerment initiatives
- **Project 5: Housing and early child development.** Provide housing stability services for survivors of domestic violence and their children
- **Project 6: Food security.** Improve access to fresh, culturally appropriate, affordable and nutritious foods

For details on the projects see Appendix A or visit [Niagara Prosperity Initiative Funding Areas](https://www.niagararegion.ca/social-services/niagara-prosperity-initiative/funding.aspx) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/social-services/niagara-prosperity-initiative/funding.aspx>). For details on the strategy and the Areas of Focus the projects are based on, refer to the [Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy](https://www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx>).

## Project types

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative may support new projects or existing projects with incremental changes based on lessons learned that are designed to increase the impact of the project. Funding cannot be used to support projects and ongoing core operations as they exist currently, as determined by Niagara Region in its sole discretion. If applicants are seeking funding for an existing project, they must explain how their proposal will implement a change based on lessons learned that are designed to increase the impact of the project in order to be considered.

## Priority populations

Applicants must identify which populations their proposed project will serve and how they will modify services to meet needs of priority populations. Projects are required to target at least one of the following populations that are more likely to experience poverty:

- Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (2SLGBTQ+) people



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- Black and other racialized communities
- Children and youth in care
- Indigenous peoples
- People who are experiencing homelessness
- People who are involved in the criminal justice system
- People who are living in institutions
- People who are living in rural and/or remote areas
- People who have emigrated to Canada
- People with disabilities
- People with refugee status or who are undocumented or non-status
- Women

NOTE: As Indigenous peoples are historically underserved, we request that all projects include programming for Indigenous peoples.

## **How to create change**

Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal how they will create change by addressing the conditions for change featured on pages 22-25 in the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy. Meeting this criterion will impact scoring as outlined in the scoring matrix in Appendix B.

## **Measuring success**

Applicants must demonstrate in their work plan how they will deliver their proposed project within the three-year term and the anticipated impact their proposed project can have on lifting people out of poverty. See the project descriptions in Appendix A for outcomes applicants should consider in their response. For details on indicators Niagara Region will use to measure long-term success towards ending poverty and becoming an Equitable Region, see page 27 of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy.

## **Funding limit**

Applicants to the Niagara Prosperity Initiative may request between \$100,000 to \$300,000 per year, for up to three years. Funding decisions are at the discretion of Niagara Region and subject to annual budget approval by Regional Council.

## **Individual and collaborative applications**

Niagara Region encourages collaborative applications that demonstrate a coordinated, integrated or collective impact approach to meet community needs. Collaborative applications



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refer to when two or more organizations with a well-defined relationship submit an application for funding to achieve a common goal; with one of the organizations taking the lead and being fully accountable for the delivery of the proposal. Characteristics of well-defined relationships may include mutual benefit, shared organization decision-making and accountability to partners and the communities they serve.

There is no limit to the number of projects an organization can apply to or be listed on as a supporting partner. Each proposed project requires a separate application and a letter of support from any identified partners to confirm their commitment to the project in order to be considered.

## **Submission instructions and contents**

Applicants must submit their application using the Good Grants online platform available at <https://niagararegion.grantplatform.com/>.

### **Some considerations as you prepare your submission:**

- Applicants may be requested to modify their proposal at the discretion of Regional staff
- Applications can include operational/administrative costs and capital items/equipment required to implement and deliver the project or improve service delivery<sup>i</sup>
- Administrative costs must not exceed 10% of the overall request

### **The application submission on Good Grants must include the following:**

- Completed Niagara Prosperity Initiative Application Form: All required sections must be completed. Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.
- Quotes (if applicable): Three quotes/prices must be provided if the submission includes capital equipment or other capital items (including computers) where the dollar value of these items total \$5,000 or more
- Letter(s) of Support (if applicable): Letters of support are required for all collaborative applications from all supporting partners such as those who provide free space or are essential for the delivery of the project

Note: If approved for a grant, applicants will be required to provide proof of insurance before funds will be issued. Applicants may also be required to provide financial statements. These materials are not required with the application submission.



## Eligibility criteria

**To be considered for funding, applicants must meet all the following criteria:**

- Incorporated as a non-profit organization, registered charity, or be an urban off-reserve Indigenous-led organization; and have been in existence for a minimum of one year. Grassroots groups are encouraged to apply as a supporting partner within a collaborative grant application.
- Governed by a volunteer board of directors that is democratically elected, active, with a minimum of three members not related by blood or marriage
- Provide financial statements signed by at least one director of the organization for the most recent fiscal year end and include comparative information for the prior fiscal year, upon request<sup>ii</sup>
  - Organizations with annual revenues of over \$500,000 in the most recent fiscal year may be required to submit financial statements that have been audited by a licensed public accountant
  - Organizations with annual revenues between \$100,000 - \$500,000 in the most recent fiscal year may be required to submit financial statements that have been subjected to a review engagement by a licensed public accountant provided that an extraordinary resolution according to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act has been passed by its members to have a review engagement instead of an audit
  - Organizations with revenues of less than \$100,000 may be required to submit internally prepared financial statements that include a statement of revenues and expenses and a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year provided that an extraordinary resolution according to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act has been passed by its members to not appoint an auditor and to not have an audit or review engagement
- Shall not be or have not been indebted to the Region or be in default of the terms and conditions of any agreement with Niagara Region
- Provide information that demonstrates it does not, in the absence of the grant, have the financial resources necessary to undertake the activity for which the grant is requested



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- Submit a completed application form and confirm that all information provided in the application form and related documents is true, correct and complete, as verified by an authorized official of the organization
- Must be willing to enter into and comply with a funding agreement in the form provided by Niagara Region

### **The project for which funds are requested must:**

- Focus on one of the six projects identified for investment and demonstrate alignment with the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Ensure equitable and inclusive service delivery to support the priority population(s) identified in the proposal
- Provide services to Niagara residents within the boundaries of the Niagara region
- Possess minimum insurance requirements, as detailed below<sup>iii</sup>
  - Commercial General Liability (CGL) Policy with coverage of a minimum of \$2 million per occurrence, including Non-Owned Automobile Liability. The CGL Policy shall not contain a sexual abuse and molestation exclusion and shall provide a limit of liability for this coverage of not less than \$2 million per occurrence
  - If applicable, Owned Automobile Liability insurance (minimum of \$2 million per occurrence)
  - If applicable, Professional/Errors and Omissions Liability insurance (minimum of \$2 million per claim)
  - Applicants are encouraged, and may be required, to have Employee Dishonesty Coverage or a Comprehensive/Commercial Crime Policy
  - Organizations approved for funding must add The Regional Municipality of Niagara as an additional insured under the organization's CGL policy
  - Certificates of Insurance must be on [Niagara Region's Certificate of Insurance Forms](https://www.niagararegion.ca/business/fpr/cert-insurance.aspx) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/business/fpr/cert-insurance.aspx>).
- Ensure that each employee of the organization working directly with, or that may come into contact with children and youth has provided a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector screen, conducted by a police force within six (6) months before commencing work pursuant to the proposal; and ensure that each employee or agent of the organization has





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provided to the organization, prior to the employee commencing work pursuant to the proposal, a signed declaration, in a form satisfactory to Niagara Region, with respect to the period since the date of the last criminal reference check. The organization shall retain all record checks and declarations and make same available to Niagara Region. This requirement shall not impose any obligation upon Niagara Region to request copies of these documents and the organization accepts full responsibility in this regard.

- Operate in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Be compliant with all applicable rules, regulations and laws of the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario, including those which apply to the regulation of non-profit corporations

### **The following types of requests will not be considered:**

- Projects or activities that do not directly benefit residents of Niagara region and occur within the boundaries of Niagara region
- Purchases of property
- Financing charges, interest payments on loans, real estate fees, legal fees and costs related to easements (e.g., land surveys)
- Requests that will be used to establish/contribute to a fund within an organization for the purpose of funding individuals and/or other organizations/projects
- Events where competition is the focus, including awards/prizes
- Debt retirement, depreciation or deficit funding
- Mandated government services
- Projects which are primarily or fully funded or delivered by municipalities including parks and recreation, transportation and economic development
- Existing projects that are not substantively modified to implement a change based on lessons learned that are designed to increase the impact of the project

### **Requests for funding will not be considered from:**

- For-profit organizations (eligible non-profits may apply in partnership with for-profit organizations if the non-profit is the demonstrated program lead).
- Governments, Ontario Health Teams, Public Health Units, hospitals, libraries, police services, post-secondary institutions, municipalities, local economic development agencies



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affiliated with a municipality and recreational/senior centres directly supported by a municipality. Note: Eligible non-profits may apply in partnership with these organizations if the non-profit is the demonstrated program lead.

- Organizations that exist primarily to raise funds or act primarily as a funder of other organizations (applications may be accepted if the organization has a clear programmatic focus and track record of program/project delivery).
- Organizations that have a purpose related to political activity as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency.
- Organizations that require participation in religious activities as condition of service.
- Organizations that have practices or activities that could be deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please speak with a member of the Poverty Reduction Strategy team or email [csgranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csgranting@niagararegion.ca) to determine if this applies to your organization's funding request.

## **Outreach and engagement**

To support the promotion of this grant application opportunity to a wide and diverse audience, information will be shared using several different tactics.

### **Traditional media**

A media release will be issued on behalf of Niagara Region on the intake launch date to so traditional media outlets can re-circulate the funding announcement.

### **Social media**

Niagara Region will use its social media accounts to prompt followers to access the grant information on the Niagara Prosperity Initiative web page.

### **Email distribution**

Staff will coordinate announcements through email, leveraging existing Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy mailing lists and email distribution lists from local planning tables and foundations across service sectors. All messaging will encourage individuals and organizations to use their email distribution networks to share the announcements to ensure the funding opportunity reaches a diverse audience.



## **Public information sessions**

As a part of the above communications, applicants will be encouraged to attend an information session to learn more about the program and the application process.

## **Application review**

Applications deemed eligible by Regional staff based on the application guidelines will be reviewed by the Niagara Prosperity Initiative Grant Review Panel.

The Grant Review Panel, consisting of staff, community members and subject matter experts, will make funding recommendations. Panel members will be selected on the basis of expertise, including lived expertise and confirmation that they do not have a conflict of interest to ensure the integrity of the process.

Grant review panelists will use a standardized scoring matrix based on the application guidelines to review applications (see Appendix B: Scoring matrix) and will consider the potential impact of the project and other factors determined appropriate by the Region. Applicants are encouraged to review the scoring matrix in completing their proposal to ensure that they have fully addressed the review criteria.

Niagara Region reserves the right for staff to consider information outside of the funding application and follow-up with applicants for additional information to inform the review process, including but not limited to eligibility requirements.

## **Awarding and post-award feedback**

Funding recommendations put forward by the Grant Review Panel, based on highest scoring applications, will be provided to the Commissioner of Community Services for consideration and approval.

All grant applicants will be notified if their application was approved or declined for funding. The Region shall determine the amount of funding to be distributed to applicants that are approved for funding, subject to Regional Council approval of the annual budget. The Region may award the entire amount of funding requested or only a portion of the amount requested, which in turn may necessitate modifications to the project, which the Region will negotiate with the applicant. Submission of an application does not constitute a guarantee of funding.

All applicants shall be informed that they can request a follow-up meeting with staff regarding the outcome of their grant application. Applicants will be provided with the ability to meet with staff involved in the review process to receive feedback on their application, including the decision rationale.



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After this preliminary meeting, grant applicants who wish additional clarification on the outcome of their application will be provided the opportunity to escalate their concerns to the Commissioner of Community Services, who is not a member of the initial Grant Review Panel, through a secondary meeting. Decisions made by the Commissioner are final and are not subject to further review.

## **Funding agreement**

Niagara Region will issue a funding agreement to applicants approved for funding. The agreement outlines the funding relationship, including the conditions of funding, the approved use of funds, targets/outcomes and reporting requirements. Reporting requirements include quarterly reports, an annual year-end report and any additional requirements determined by the Region (including to support a public report to Regional Council on the outcome of the Project). Niagara Region in partnership with Brock University plan to capture successes across all funded projects; successful applicants will be expected to participate in interviews and an annual event as part of this process. Funding will only be issued when an agreement is executed. The applicant will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred prior to the funding period identified in the Funding Agreement. The agreement will fully define the terms and conditions of funding.

Funding will be flowed to the applicant after receipt of quarterly and year-end reports. The payment schedule may be adjusted based on budget reports. Initial pay release will be made within 30 days of receiving a signed agreement. Other payment releases will be made within 30 days of receiving the required report and invoice.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Applicants are required to avoid placing themselves in situations where their personal interests actually or potentially conflict with the interests of the Region. In this regard, applicants are expected at minimum to:

- Not take part in, or in any way influence, any Regional decision that might result in a financial or other advantage, whether direct or indirect, related to this application process and any subsequent agreement
- Not attempt to gain an improper advantage or preferential treatment from the Grant Review Panel or Regional employees
- Not provide any personal benefit, gifts, or hospitality to employees of the Region or the Grant Review Panel

Applicants are required to disclose to the Region any situation that could result in an actual or perceived conflict of interest. Any questions or disclosures related to conflicts of interest should be directed to [csggranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csggranting@niagararegion.ca)



## **Notice of collection**

Information collected on grant applications will be used to determine eligibility for the Niagara Prosperity Initiative and to administer and report publicly (including to Regional Council) on the outcome of the project as stated in these guidelines. Information collected may also be used for statistical and data analytical purposes and may also be disclosed if requested in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For questions about the collection, use and disclosure of information, contact [csgranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csgranting@niagararegion.ca).

## **Accessibility assistance**

If you require this information in an alternate format or through a communication support, or if you require assistance to complete the application, please contact [csgranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csgranting@niagararegion.ca).

## **Regional discretion**

Niagara Region reserves the right to modify requirements/criteria within these guidelines at its sole discretion.

## **Questions and contact information**

Questions can be submitted to Community Services Department staff at [csgranting@niagararegion.ca](mailto:csgranting@niagararegion.ca). Frequently asked questions and answers will be posted at <https://niagararegion.grantplatform.com/>.



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## **Appendix A: Project descriptions**



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## **Project 1. Indigenous well-being. Develop a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives**

### **Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendation**

- Indigenous community to develop a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives

### **Issues Identified**

Prosperity for Indigenous peoples in the Niagara region will require a deep understanding of Indigenous history and culture to incorporate the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being of the individual, family and both human and non-human communities simultaneously. It is well established that existing systems perpetuate colonization and racism, and that many of them fail to support Indigenous peoples.

Most Indigenous people who responded to a survey that asked, “what do you believe is Indigenous Prosperity?” identified that community development, Indigenous identity, culture and self-determination were essential components of prosperity. Respondents talked about the need to improve on services that impact the education, health, housing, income and safety of Indigenous peoples. Not only are more services needed, but we also need to address how we deliver these services. Mainstream services need to be respectful of Indigenous cultural practices and social values of the Indigenous community.

### **Service Description**

This project will invest in the creation of a poverty reduction strategy where the Indigenous community comes up with solutions and determines its own future based on its specific needs and priorities. This includes the many aspects of Indigenous well-being such as income, culture, community belongingness, social ties, and participation in traditional land and use activities.

### **Agency’s Key Activities**

- Coordinate and facilitate creation of a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives (Year one could include proof of concept and Year 2-3 could include implementation)
- Use a community driven process to engage First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Niagara



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- Implement programs that use a holistic model of well-being that envisions balance among spiritual, physical, emotional and cognitive dimensions of experience at the individual, community and natural world levels across time
- Be within an Indigenous agency and work in partnership with Indigenous community and leaders

### **Intended Outcomes**

- Strategy created with extensive community engagement
- Strategy funded with intent to decrease the number and percentage of Indigenous peoples who live in poverty. Specific measures of success to be determined by/with Indigenous leaders.

### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 7, 11, 14, 30 and 35





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**Project 2. Mental health and addiction (social assistance). Provide mental health and addiction supports for individuals on social assistance or those experiencing homelessness**

**Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendation**

- Enhance core service capacity and offer a choice of timely, early recovery interventions and treatments for people who are living in poverty

**Issues Identified**

The stress of not having enough money, being in a constant state of survival and hopelessness about living in poverty, can lead to anxiety, depression and thoughts of suicide. To address the effects of poverty, residents and service providers emphasized the need for mental health and addiction treatment supports within a better coordinated system of care. These supports need to address social determinants of health that are the root causes and stressors for people living in poverty or at risk of poverty such as housing, transportation and income.

**Service Description**

This project will provide mental health and addiction supports for individuals on social assistance or those experiencing homelessness. This project will help people complete documentation required for application to the Ontario Disability Support Program.

**Agency's Key Activities**

- Address barriers of Ontario Works and homeless clients experiencing mental health and addiction issues in accessing screening, assessment and referrals to access appropriate support and treatment services
- Provide Ontario Works clients access to a health care provider who can complete necessary forms for application to the Ontario Disability Support Program when needed
- Provide individuals access to legal representation to appeal decisions of ineligibility for the Ontario Disability Support Program
- Be connected and part of a coordinated access system where multiple staff can ensure coordinated service
- Be part of the Niagara Ontario Health Team's Mental Health and Addiction Working Group – Case Management Sub Committee working on Collaborative Intake Pilot



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### **Intended Outcomes**

- Improve access to a full range of appropriate treatment options within the mental health and addiction system
- Work within the mental health and addiction system to eliminate the potential for “single point failures”, such as instances where if an employee leaves, a client receives no service
- Track the overall needs of clients as part of the system transformation work being done by the Mental Health and Addiction Working Group of the Niagara Ontario Health Team
- Reduce barriers to access Ontario Disability Support Program

### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 21 and 23
- [Home - Niagara Ontario Health Team - Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara \(noht-eson.ca\)](http://noht-eson.ca)



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### **Project 3. Mental health and addiction (situation tables). Provide supports for individuals referred to Niagara Situation Tables who need mental health or addiction support**

#### **Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendation**

- Enhance core service capacity and offer a choice of timely, early recovery interventions and treatments for people who are living in poverty or at risk of poverty

#### **Issues Identified**

Niagara's Situation Table brings together service providers from a variety of sectors to mitigate risk before an incident of harm or victimization occurs. Situation Table members have identified an increase in acutely elevated risk situations and a lack of appropriate supports and services to address acute needs and provide appropriate treatment for mental health and addiction issues. Examples of other risk factors identified during Situation Table Case presentations include basic needs and poverty; this further highlights the intersectionality between poverty and mental health and addiction.

#### **Service Description**

This project will help de-escalate situations to prevent crisis related to mental health and addiction issues. It will improve client outcomes by providing immediate outreach, stabilization and connection to treatment.

#### **Agency's Key Activities**

- Establish a staffing competency to participate as a table representative to attend table meetings and provide assertive outreach to onboard clients to their respective agency
- Provide access to stabilization services, case-management and implementation of appropriate treatment for individuals identified through Situation Tables experiencing mental health and addiction challenges
- Provide community assessment to determine links to appropriate community services and prepare individuals for appropriate long-term treatment services
- Be within an agency who has or plans to onboard to Niagara Situation Tables

#### **Intended Outcomes**

- Improve access to treatment for mental health and addiction issues
- Improve connections to community-based services and supports



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### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 21 and 23
- [Niagara Situation Table \(www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/situation-table.aspx\)](http://www.niagararegion.ca/community-safety/situation-table.aspx)



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#### **Project 4. Income and employment. Increase opportunities for decent work, living wage employment and financial empowerment initiatives**

##### **Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendations**

- Increase opportunities for living wage employment in Niagara and advocate for adequate, livable rates from government income assistance programs
- Promote and develop decent work opportunities that provide fair wages and benefits and foster stable, consistent and safe employment

##### **Issues Identified**

Residents pointed to income as the primary determinant of poverty. More and more people are working for low wages in precarious and unsafe jobs. They face impossible choices — buy food or heat the house, feed their children or pay the rent. The result can be spiraling debt, constant anxiety and long-term health problems.

##### **Service Description**

This project will provide financial empowerment services to build the financial stability and health of people living in poverty and connect them to income benefits they are eligible for, but not receiving. In addition, this project will support full coordination of the living wage program and efforts to increase the number of employers providing decent work opportunities.

##### **Agency's Key Activities**

- Establish staffing competency for program coordination and facilitation (staff require experience in social marketing and community engagement)
- Build relationships with private sector, non-profit and public sector businesses, including facilitation of business engagement tables
- Expand the living wage program
- Work with Prosper Canada and local services providers on a local plan to scale up and sustain financial empowerment initiatives which may include identification clinics, one-on-one financial coaching and problem-solving to help with budgeting, basic banking, debt management, credit repair, RESP and Canada Learning Bond enrolment, and saving and year-round tax filing support and benefit screening and assistance



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- Build partnerships and capacity in rural and Indigenous communities and generate insights and advice that financial institutions and service providers can use to remove barriers and build financial inclusion

### **Intended Outcomes**

- Decrease the number and percentage of people who work but still live in poverty
- Increase access to financial empowerment services
- Increase money recovered from tax filling
- Increase the number of workplaces offering living wage and decent work

### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 15, 16, 17, 23, 25, 29 and 35
- [Prosper Canada](https://prospercanada.org) (<https://prospercanada.org>)
- [Financial Empowerment Champions Project Evaluation \(Prosper Canada\)](https://learninghub.prospercanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/FECs-Final-Eval-Report-2021.pdf)  
(<https://learninghub.prospercanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/FECs-Final-Eval-Report-2021.pdf>)



## **Project 5. Housing and early child development. Provide housing stability services for survivors of domestic violence and their children**

### **Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendations**

- Provide housing stability services for people living in poverty to maintain their current housing, prevent eviction, improve social inclusion, and access income through periods of financial instability
- Improve access to affordable, high-quality childcare for families living in poverty or at risk of poverty

### **Issues Identified**

Emergency shelters and transitional housing provide a necessary place for survivors and their children escaping gender-based violence. In Niagara, there is a service gap in after-care for survivors who transition out of shelter. Statistics Canada determines that about 1 in 5 individuals who transition out of service will return to live with their abuser. Community-based interventions and supports have been found to be successful in reducing intimate partner violence and helping children cope adequately with the negative effects of witnessing intimate personal violence.

### **Service Description**

This project will provide ongoing community-based support for survivors of domestic violence and their children who have transitioned out of shelter. It will provide support to newly housed individuals by assisting survivors and their children maintain their housing and integrate into their community.

### **Agency's Key Activities**

- Establish a complement of After-Care Advocates for survivors of domestic violence and their children leaving shelter
- Establish relationships and referral pathways with agencies that work with survivors and their children who are no longer in a shelter
- Facilitate supports including a range of evidence-based therapeutic interventions conducted by licensed mental health provider. For example, trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy, interventions that address struggles related to the relationship between the child and their non-abusive parent or caregiver and interventions for children of survivors that ensure their needs around recreation, social supports and material goods are met.



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- Provide supports such as regular visits, rent subsidies, transit support, furniture supports, accessing income assistance and medical services, parenting support, returning to school or work, accessing legal advice if required for custody and accessing high-quality childcare

### **Intended Outcomes**

- Improve connections to community-based services and supports
- Increase access to housing and retention of housing
- Reduce returns to abusive relationships
- Reduce negative impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences

### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 15, 23, 29, 31, 32 and 35
- [London Family Court Practice Guideline](https://www.lfcc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Helping-Children-Exposed-to-Violence-at-Home.pdf) (https://www.lfcc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Helping-Children-Exposed-to-Violence-at-Home.pdf)
- [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network | \(nctsn.org\)](https://nctsn.org)





Working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara

## **Project 6. Food security. Improve access to fresh, culturally appropriate, affordable, and nutritious foods**

### **Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy recommendation**

- Improve access to fresh, culturally appropriate, affordable, and nutritious foods through income-based solutions to food insecurity

### **Issues Identified**

Household food insecurity can take a toll on health and well-being. With the cost of living exponentially increasing and incomes largely staying the same, an increasing number of residents are having to choose between paying their bills or purchasing groceries.

### **Service Description**

This project will increase access to culturally appropriate, affordable, and nutritious foods for individuals living in poverty while supporting local farmers and businesses and the sustainability of local food supplies.

### **Agency's Key Activities:**

- Provide food for individuals and families who are living in poverty in geographic areas within the region of Niagara that have limited access to nutritious foods and have transportation barriers
- Purchase materials or capital required to enhance capacity and infrastructure for perishable food recovery and access to food year-round
- Create opportunities for coordination and collaboration on advocacy and service provision that strive to improve food access for individuals and families in Niagara.
- Include opportunities for participants to increase social connectivity and inclusion and build social capital
- Collaborate with community partners from various sectors, in particular racialized and Indigenous communities, to determine local priorities co-design solutions and co-implement action to address food insecurity
- Be an active and constructive contributor to Niagara's network of agencies working to reduce the harms of food insecurity



### **Intended Outcomes**

- Reduce the long-term harm of food insecurity
- Decrease the number and percentage of people who live in food insecure households
- Increase access to affordable, sufficient, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food in prioritized neighbourhoods
- Increase capacity and infrastructure for perishable food recovery and access to food year-round

### **Additional Resources**

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy pages 18 and 32
- [Food affordability in Niagara](http://www.niagararegion.ca/living/healthy-eating/food-affordability.aspx) (www.niagararegion.ca/living/healthy-eating/food-affordability.aspx)
- [Archived - Building Ontario's First Food Security Strategy | ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca/page/building-ontarios-first-food-security-strategy) (www.ontario.ca/page/building-ontarios-first-food-security-strategy)



## Appendix B: Scoring matrix

Table 1: Scoring matrix including review criteria, score of high, medium or low and weighting of score.

Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
Target Population Section 2, Q5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target population(s) are appropriate for the proposed project</li> <li>Clearly identifies intent to serve Indigenous peoples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target population (s) are somewhat appropriate for the proposed project</li> <li>Somewhat identifies intent to serve Indigenous peoples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target population (s) are not sufficient for the proposed project</li> <li>Does not identify intent to serve Indigenous peoples</li> </ul>	5
Project summary Section 3, Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly describes what the project will do and how it aligns with the corresponding Areas of Focus outlined in the strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat describes what the project will do and how it aligns with the corresponding Areas of Focus outlined in the strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not describe what the project will do or how it aligns with the corresponding Areas of Focus outlined in the strategy</li> </ul>	5
Service Access, Coordination and Capacity Section 3, Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to increase <b>service access</b> are identified (e.g., access to services through community hubs or mobile clinics and relationships with staff at existing hubs)</li> <li>Ways to increase <b>service coordination</b> are identified (e.g.,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to increase <b>service access</b> are somewhat identified</li> <li>Ways to increase <b>service coordination</b> are somewhat identified</li> <li>Ways to increase <b>capacity</b> are somewhat identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to increase <b>service access</b> are not identified</li> <li>Ways to increase <b>service coordination</b> are not identified</li> <li>Ways to increase <b>capacity</b> are not identified</li> </ul>	10



Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	<p>opportunities to coordinate services to address other areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ways to <b>increase capacity</b> are identified e.g., services that provide peer support, social prescriptions, ways to increase social connectivity or referral pathways established with other service agencies</li> </ul>			
<p>Leveraging the voices of lived expertise</p> <p>Section 3, Q5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly identifies how community members with lived expertise helped shape the proposal</li> <li>• Clearly identifies how people with lived expertise will help co-create the project</li> <li>• Clearly identifies opportunities to integrate peer support models into existing community work</li> <li>• Clearly describes how</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat identifies how community members with lived expertise helped shape the proposal</li> <li>• Somewhat identifies how people with lived expertise will help co-create the project</li> <li>• Somewhat identifies how opportunities to integrate peer support models into existing community work</li> <li>• Somewhat describes how</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little to no identification of how community members with lived expertise helped shape the proposal</li> <li>• Little to no identification of how people with lived expertise will help co-create the project</li> <li>• Little to no identification of opportunities to integrate peer support models into existing community work</li> <li>• Little to no identification of how the organization will develop respectful</li> </ul>	<p>10</p>



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Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	<p>the organization will develop respectful and meaningful relationships with the Indigenous community and ensure representation in projects, services and committees that is reflective of the local Indigenous community</p>	<p>the organization will develop respectful and meaningful relationships with the Indigenous community and ensure representation in projects, services and committees that is reflective of the local Indigenous community</p>	<p>and meaningful relationships with the Indigenous community and ensure representation in projects, services and committees that is reflective of the local Indigenous community</p>	
<p>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Section 3, Q6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly identifies how Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be integrated into project design to ensure services meet the needs of specific populations and into hiring and training practices to make services inclusive, culturally safe and equitable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat identifies how Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be integrated into project design to ensure services meet the needs of specific populations and into hiring and training practices to make services inclusive, culturally safe and equitable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no identification of how Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be integrated into project design to ensure services meet the needs of specific populations and into hiring and training practices to make services inclusive, culturally safe and equitable</li> </ul>	<p>5</p>
<p>Changing mindsets Section 3, Q7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly identifies ways to help people better understand the experience of poverty and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat identifies ways to help people better understand the experience of poverty and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no identification of ways to help people better understand the experience of poverty and the role they can play</li> </ul>	<p>5</p>



Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	role they can play	role they can play		
Championing income solutions to poverty  Section 3, Q8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly identifies ways to support key messaging around the need for income solutions to end poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat identifies ways to support key messaging around the need for income solutions to end poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little or no identification of ways to support key messaging around the need for income solutions to end poverty</li> </ul>	5
Leveraging local assets  Section 3, Q9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly describes how existing working groups or networks informed the proposal and how the proposed project aligns with their priorities and complements their services</li> <li>Clearly identifies local service clubs and associations the applicant will engage with to help implement and sustain the proposed project</li> <li>Clearly demonstrates why the applicant is best positioned to deliver the proposed project (e.g., track record of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat describes how existing working groups or networks informed the proposal and how the proposed project aligns with their priorities and complements their services</li> <li>Somewhat identifies local service clubs and associations the applicant will engage with to help implement and sustain the proposed project</li> <li>Somewhat demonstrates why the applicant is best positioned to deliver the proposed project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little to no description of how existing working groups or networks informed the proposal and how the proposed project aligns with their priorities and complements their services</li> <li>Little to no identification of local service clubs and associations the applicant will engage with to help implement and sustain the proposed project</li> <li>Little to no demonstration of why the applicant is best positioned to deliver the proposed project</li> <li>Little to know identification of how alternate forms of funding will be pursued to sustain the project</li> </ul>	10



Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	<p>success, capacity or unique position to serve target population, long-standing partnerships which provide additional benefits to service delivery)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly identifies how alternate forms of funding will be pursued to sustain the project (e.g., develop business case or submit other funding applications)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat identifies how alternate forms of funding will be pursued to sustain the project</li> </ul>		
<p>Project Collaborations Section 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships include all those referenced in the project description under “Agency key activities”</li> <li>Significant in-kind contributions are identified across the project lifecycle (e.g., project co-design, co-delivery of services and co-evaluation) and values are reasonable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships include at least one referenced in the project description under “Agency key activities”</li> <li>Some in-kind contributions are identified at one or more stages of the project lifecycle and values are somewhat reasonable</li> <li>Partnerships identified are a mix of established vs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships do not include any referenced in the project description under “Agency key activities”</li> <li>No in-kind contributions are identified</li> <li>All partnerships identified are under development.</li> <li>No letters of support are provided</li> </ul>	<p>10</p>



Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All partnerships identified are established</li> <li>• Letters of support are provided from all identified partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• under development</li> <li>• Letters of support are provided from at least one identified partner</li> </ul>		
<p>Budget Section 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget is specific and realistic (e.g., salaries are justified based on qualifications)</li> <li>• Admin cost does not exceed 10 per cent of total budget</li> <li>• Budget is clearly aligned with project activities required to deliver the project and achieve and outcomes (e.g., staff training, space, equipment, honorariums, transportation or food costs to support participation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget is somewhat specific and realistic, but requires further clarity</li> <li>• Budget is somewhat aligned with project activities required to deliver the project and achieve and outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget is incomplete, lacks clarity or is unrealistic</li> <li>• Admin cost is over 10 per cent of total budget</li> <li>• Budget lacks alignment with project activities required to deliver the project and achieve and outcomes</li> </ul>	15
<p>Work Plan Section 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities include all “Agency Key Activities” listed in the project descriptions</li> <li>• Tasks are realistic and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities include some of the “Agency Key Activities” listed in the project descriptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities do not include any of the “Agency Key Activities” listed in the project descriptions</li> </ul>	20





Review Criteria	High (4-5)	Medium (2-3)	Low (0-1)	Weighting of score
	<p>clearly linked to activities (e.g., recruit participants, conduct assessments, deliver intervention, measure results)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets include all requested outputs e.g., # of participants and outcomes identified in project descriptions</li> <li>• Targets are achievable, specific and measurable</li> <li>• Evaluation methods are aligned with the targets they are intended to measure</li> <li>• There is a clear link between the work plan and other components of the application</li> <li>• Overall, the work plan demonstrates a clear approach to implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks are somewhat realistic and linked to activities</li> <li>• Targets include most of the requested outputs and outcomes identified in project descriptions</li> <li>• Some targets are achievable, specific and measurable</li> <li>• Evaluation methods are somewhat aligned with the targets they are intended to measure</li> <li>• There is a clear link between most elements of the work plan and other components of the application</li> <li>• Overall, the work plan demonstrates a somewhat clear approach to implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks are not realistic or are not linked to activities</li> <li>• Targets include few or no outputs and outcomes identified in project descriptions</li> <li>• Targets are not achievable, specific and measurable</li> <li>• Evaluation methods are limited or absent from the workplan</li> <li>• There are missing links between the work plan and other components of the application</li> <li>• Overall, the work plan does not demonstrate a clear approach to implementation</li> </ul>	



## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> The Region reserves the right to direct successful grant recipients to sell, transfer or request recipients to redirect or otherwise justify the use of capital assets following the end of the project.

<sup>ii</sup> If these are not available, alternative financial documents may be considered at the sole discretion of Niagara Region.

<sup>iii</sup> Additional insurance requirements may be required at the sole discretion of the Region. A funding agreement will not be issued until all insurance requirements are met.

