

Childcare BC New Spaces Fund

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated: December 21, 2018

General Questions

1. What is the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund?

The Childcare BC New Spaces Fund replaces the Major Capital Funding program, which funded capital costs for new or expanded child care facilities. The New Spaces Fund will support the creation of up to 22,000 new licensed child care spaces through an investment of \$221 million over three years – the single-largest investment to improve access to child care in B.C. history.

2. How is the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund different from the Major Capital Funding program, which funded capital costs?

There are some similarities as the New Spaces Fund will continue to fund the building of new child care facilities, along with renovations that add new child care spaces to existing facilities. Child care providers who had access to the previous program will remain eligible.

The available funding with the New Spaces Fund is significantly larger than Major Capital program grants, and includes \$221 million over three years.

Other standout differences with the New Spaces Fund include:

- An application process that is open year-round, based on funding availability within each fiscal year.
- A requirement for grant recipients to build child care spaces that are affordable.
- Higher maximum funding amounts — up to \$1 million for public sector organizations and non-profit organizations in partnership with public sector organizations.
- A greater amount of support from the Province for those wishing to apply.

3. Who is eligible to apply for the funding?

The funding is available for new and existing child care providers – both private, non-profit and public – to build licensed child care for families in their community, including Infant and Toddler, Group 3-5, Preschool and School Age. Public sector organizations are eligible to apply for the New Spaces Fund, and may choose to directly operate the program, or work with a third-party child care provider to deliver services.

4. What are the expectations on providers related to ensuring spaces are affordable?

Applicants' building spaces that are eligible to opt-in in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) are required to ensure those spaces are approved to enroll in the CCFRI in order to receive their final funding instalment.

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5. Why is the Province prioritizing partnerships public and non-profit sector child care spaces?

The public sector has the capacity to increase the number of spaces rapidly, leveraging other public assets/resources.

We also know that child care is not a one-size fits all model, and each family has unique needs. That's why our plan encourages partnerships, not just with school districts, but also with local governments, First Nations, and non-profit organizations.

6. Why is more funding available to public and non-profit child care providers than for private providers?

The level of funding available for private organizations remains the same as in previous Major Capital intakes. There is more funding available to public sector organizations and non-profit organizations working in partnership with public sector organizations, in recognition of the fact that this funding will be used to build sustainable public or community assets that will remain community-owned and operated.

We know that B.C.'s child care system is diverse, and all types of providers, regardless of whether they're non-profit, public or private, require support. That's why we've ensured public sector, non-profit and private organizations are eligible to apply for funding through this program.

7. Will the program fund multi-facility projects as well?

Currently, we are only accepting applications for single projects. As the New Spaces Fund program builds momentum, we will look at ways to use the fund for large scale, planned, multi-facility projects. The development of a multi-project funding stream is underway.

8. How will the available funding be distributed among the different eligible organizations each fiscal?

The applications process for the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund is open continuously, and as a result, we cannot anticipate how many applications will be coming in for each organization type, or the viability of each application. The Province will look for the most viable projects that support the needs of each community. Funding will be prioritized towards projects that expand the number of Infant/Toddler spaces, and those serving underserved communities, Indigenous communities, and those serving vulnerable families. As with any open application process, it is best to get a comprehensive application in as early as possible to have the best possible chance of being successful.

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9. What support is available to my organization as we plan to apply, but don't know where to start?

Partnership and Engagement Managers are available to potential applicants to provide guidance and recommendations, and support them with their applications. To reach them, please call 1-888-338-6622 – option 5.

10. Is funding available for all types of spaces even though the Province is putting a priority on Infant/Toddler spaces?

Yes, the funding is available for all types of licensed child care spaces, such as Infant/Toddler, Group 3-5, Preschool and School Age, Multi-Age and Family, as listed on the application. Applications will be scored based on the needs in a particular community. Generally speaking there is a critical need for Infant/Toddler spaces, so applications that include the creation of those kinds of spaces are likely to get higher marks. We recognize that each community is unique and the community-needs data may show that other types of child care spaces are needed in that area. In this circumstance applications would be evaluated according to the identified need.

11. Who's going to work at these new child care facilities, with a shortage of qualified staff already?

The Province is aware of the crisis in child care in terms of its unaffordability, shortage of spaces, and shortage of qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to support the system. That is why the 10-year Childcare BC plan has initiatives for each of these areas, including plans to recruit and retain ECEs into the system, and address compensation in the sector.

Application

12. Can organizations submit more than one application?

At this point in time organizations can submit multiple (individual) applications as long as each application represents a separate physical address. In the near future, the ministry will have a guide and application process under a multi-project funding stream. This has been widely identified as critical to accelerating the creation of child care spaces. Information on this stream will be posted to www.gov.bc.ca/childcare/newspacesfund.

13. What will my application be scored on?

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- A completed application, including all mandatory supporting documentation;
- Proposed child care facility location/community;
- Type of licensed child care spaces to be created (e.g. Infant/Toddler);
- Community need, as demonstrated by the proponent's supporting documentation and as determined by the Province;

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- Community demographics;
- Organizational experience, including:
 - The number of retained spaces;
 - Involvement/connection to the local community;
 - Parental involvement in the organization.
- Consideration has been made to principles of universal and accessible design, and commitment to accessibility;
- Financial considerations, including eligibility and reasonability of project costs, and estimated provincial cost per space; and
- Community support.

14. The application asks: “How much experience in daycare do you have?” Why is that important? Would it be enough to hire people or a partner with experience in day care operations?

There are several criteria, including location, organizational experience and type of licensed child care spaces to be created, that will be considered. Hiring experienced staff is important; however it is the organization that needs to show experience operating a child care facility, and/or have capital building experience. While this will be scored, providers who have limited experience are eligible to apply, especially if their proposal would meet other priorities and criteria.

15. The application form requests an address of the proposed facility. Is it possible to submit an application if the address is unknown?

It is a requirement to provide the location of the proposed child care facility and the postal code of that proposed location, so that local needs can be considered.

16. Would funding from the federal government or a loan with the school board qualify as the organizational financial contribution towards a project? What is required to show the funding contribution on the application?

Yes, loans and other funding contributions would be considered as an organization’s financial contribution, excluding volunteer contributions. The applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have their contribution in place at the time of application. Please contact program staff at 1-888-338-6622 (option 5) to discuss what you need to provide with your submission.

17. If the applicant is not licensed yet, what should I include as the legal name on the application?

The application asks for the legal name of the organization or individual at the time of completing the application. For example, if the applicant is a corporation, the legal business name of the corporation should be noted. If the applicant is an individual, the legal first and last name of the individual should be noted. An applicant is still eligible to apply, even if they have not previously been licensed.

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General Eligibility and Eligible Costs

18. Are applicants required to have held a child care licence before submitting an application?

The Province is looking for organizational experience in child care and/or capital projects as one of the evaluation criteria. When building a child care facility or capital building, there is a multitude of regulations to navigate, including child care licensing, zoning and municipal requirements, which can be difficult and cause delays. Experience helps; however, individual and organizational experience is only one part of the evaluation criteria and the program is open for all eligible organization types.

19. If a daycare is having to relocate, would moving the child care to another location qualify for this funding if no new spaces are being created?

The intention of New Spaces Funding is to create new licensed child care spaces. If the project is relocating and not building new child care spaces, it would not qualify for the New Spaces Fund, but may be eligible for relocation funding through the [Childcare BC Maintenance Fund](#) program.

If however, the organization were moving to a new location, in order to increase the number of spaces, then yes the program may be eligible for the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund.

20. If a child care facility is only open for after-school care/out-of-school care, would extending operations to include before school care be eligible to apply?

No, extending the hours of school age spaces to before school care is not creating new spaces, as these would be considered existing spaces.

21. The guidelines say training activities are eligible for funding. What does this include?

Training activities would be eligible for funding as part of the overall costs to build and open the child care facility. Training activities are actions required to get the facility up and running. Examples may include: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training, and first aid and food safe courses.

22. In the guidelines it also states that software and technology are eligible for funding. What does this include?

If the facility requires an update to the existing software/technology or requires new software/technology in order to operate the child care facility, this would be considered an eligible cost.

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23. If renovations were complete and an organization needed funding to purchase equipment, furniture and a playground, would the organization be eligible to apply?

Yes. This program is intended to provide financial assistance to support the opening of child care spaces and can be accessed if your project is at such a stage but needs a final bit of help to become operational.

24. Would placing a portable on school grounds to both relocate current child care spaces within the school, and add new licensed child care spaces, be eligible to apply for Childcare BC New Spaces Funding?

Yes, this could be eligible, as the project is creating new licensed child care spaces.

25. Would the funding cover only the purchase of a portable/modular building, or would it be able to cover everything associated with it, such as setting up the plumbing and the electrical?

Eligible funding includes site development costs, building or renovations costs, equipment and furnishing. Please see the program guide for a list of eligible items.

26. Is there a definition for “professional fees”?

Appendix B of the program guide has definitions of all terms used in the guide and application. In it, “professional fees” mean fees charged by individuals trained in specific fields, such as architects.

Evaluation criteria and selection

27. Who will review these applications?

Applications will be reviewed by a dedicated team of ministry staff. In unique circumstances, experts in the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Education and other ministries will be asked for input to ensure the review process takes into account the unique needs of each community and project.

28. What is the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and EDI score?

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a questionnaire that measures the developmental change or trends in children during their kindergarten year. The results of the questionnaire, known as “EDI scores”, are used to highlight differences across neighborhoods and report on how well communities support young children and families across five areas (physical health and wellbeing, language and cognitive development, social competence, emotional maturity, and communication skills and general knowledge). Each community has its own “EDI score” used to rate child vulnerability. This is one of the criteria used when determining community need for the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund. For information on the EDI: <http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/edi/>.

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29. Are there areas identified by the province as underserved communities? Does it make a difference if the child care is in a large community or small, or is it based on impact to the community?

The Province uses several ways to measure how well served a community is. We compare child population in each community to the number of spaces currently funded under the Child Care Operating Funding program, and assess these against the utilization of those spaces

Additionally, applications are scored on their impact to targeted groups within communities, such as Indigenous families, immigrant and new Canadian families, young parents, and parents with children with special needs.

30. If you are leasing a space, are you able to apply for funding? Does a signed lease have to be in place prior to applying for funding?

Yes, projects leasing space are eligible to apply and proof of the lease, or proof of a draft agreement, is required.

31. Would renovations to a residential building be eligible for funding?

Renovations in residential buildings that create new licensed child care spaces may be eligible. For example, an existing residence being renovated to create a Licensed Family Child Care would be eligible. However, home renovations that are unrelated to the child care facility would not be eligible.

32. What kind of information is required under section 6.1 Priority Areas on the application?

The Province is looking for detailed information regarding what policies and programming are in place to support each demographic under this portion of the application, if applicable. For example, if you have policies and programming to care for children with extra support needs; provide your inclusion policy to support the evaluation of your application. Another example, if you state that you offer programming for indigenous children, you should provide details on the specific programming. If a question is simply checked “yes” in this section with no additional information or supporting documentation, the response will be insufficient to fully complete the evaluation process.

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Project Timelines

33. If a project was started by the time the grant was issued, could the grant funding be used for other project costs going forward?

Any costs incurred prior to signing the funding agreement will not be eligible. For more details on eligible costs please see the program guide posted at www.gov.bc.ca/childcare/newspacesfund

34. It states in the program guide that submissions must have a completed rezoning application or bylaw component. Do these rezoning applications have to be completed before applying?

It is not required to have rezoning applications complete. Organizations/individuals should have started the consultation process or at the very least be aware of the re-zoning processes/rules and have an understanding of local bylaws in their municipality.

35. Is there a time limit for when the project needs to be completed and the funding spent?

The Province is interested in having spaces open as soon as possible. However, there is an understanding that larger projects may take more time to complete. The Province's preference is that projects start within four months of the signing the funding agreement.