



Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund

Major project guidelines and application form

2026 – 2027





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Overview

The Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund will support exclusively not-for-profit (including family day homes and Indigenous organizations) and First Nations government owned and operated early learning and child care providers. The fund aims to acknowledge the barriers they face to access essential funding to expand spaces and maintain inclusive spaces that support families in underserved communities.

Under Major Project stream, applicants are eligible for funding to help with the costs of planning, designing, building, and renovating to create spaces for early learning and child care in Yukon. This includes expenses for planning such as business plans and feasibility studies. Projects do not have a maximum funding amount, but there is a limit on how much funding is available each year.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applicants must fully demonstrate that their proposed project meets the following criteria:

Eligible applicants

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Yukon First Nations governments;
- Yukon not-for-profit societies in good standing and registered under the *Yukon Societies Act*, which includes Indigenous organizations; and
- Yukon-based not-for-profit corporations incorporated under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*.

All applicants must either:

- currently operate a licensed early learning and child care program; or
- be intending to apply for a license to operate a licensed early learning and child care program.

All applicants will have to demonstrate how they will meet regulatory requirements under the *Child Care Act* and regulations.



Project types

Projects eligible for funding under Major Project include those, even at the implementation stage, that aim to increase the number of childcare spaces in one or more underserved communities:

- Indigenous-led early learning and child care centre(s)
- Francophone early learning and child care centre(s)
- Underserved rural Yukon communities with a demonstrated need

Eligible project costs

Eligible project costs are reasonable direct costs which are necessary for the completion of the project, and which are incurred and paid by the applicant, including design fees, site surveys and assessments.

Eligible project costs include:

- construction costs related to the development, renovation or expansion of infrastructure to increase the number of child care spaces available;
- costs associated with securing an environmental assessment and permits;
- leasehold improvements where a minimum five-year lease agreement is in place and the lessor is arm's length from the applicant and/or the project;
- equipment purchases or lease;
- professional service fees including construction project management, design/engineering costs and site evaluations, project-related architectural, accounting, legal, business-case planning; and
- purchase and installation of a modular building for use as a child care facility.

Ineligible project costs include:

- expenditures for equipment that is readily movable and suitable for personal use such as computers, furniture, toys/equipment, musical instruments, etc. unless it is deemed integral to the success of the project;
- costs incurred before any project approval decisions, including volunteer time such as board time;
- costs incurred for cancelled projects;

- expenditures made prior to the project being approved for funding except for approved previous expenditures within the last three years that are related to the project;
- financing charges, legal fees, and loan interest payments, including those related to easements (e.g., surveys);
- purchase of land;
- leasing equipment other than equipment directly related to the project;
- lease payments or mortgages;
- operation and maintenance costs;
- any ongoing operating costs (staff salaries, software, consumables, content insurance, etc.);
- projects that fall under the normal responsibility of a Government of Yukon department, Municipal governments, or federal government;
- initiatives eligible under existing Yukon Early Learning and Child Care funding programs; and
- real estate fees and related costs.

Funding

Funding for this program is made possible through the Canada-Yukon Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. Funding is provided at the discretion of the Department of Education and is subject to budget availability.

The funding available may not be able to cover the entire costs of eligible projects. Applicants will have to demonstrate how they will secure the necessary project funding to bring the project to completion.

Total Estimated Funding Available 2026-27 (subject to appropriation): \$1,000,000

Funding may be distributed among three priority project types (Francophone, Indigenous-led, and rural) based on the applications received, but will not exceed the total amount available for that fiscal year.

Funding award commitment

Recipients for approved projects will be required to enter into a formal agreement with the Government of Yukon, committing to operate the facility as a child care centre for the minimum commitment period outlined in the table below:

Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Funding	Minimum commitment period
\$50,000 or more	1 year
\$250,000 or more	2 years
\$500,000 or more	5 years
\$1,000,000 or more	7 years
\$1,500,000 or more	10 years

Assessment considerations

We will consider and prioritize the following when assessing applications under the Major Project stream:


Long-term benefits and community impact:

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate the greatest impact on reducing child care shortages in underserved communities, such as rural Yukon communities, francophone and Indigenous-led programs.

If multiple proposals are submitted for the same community, the project that creates the greatest number of spaces relative to the current space shortage would be considered to have the greater impact.

Financial feasibility:

Applicants must demonstrate that their project will be completed within the proposed project budget. The proposed project budget must include a minimum 10% contingency amount to mitigate potential project risks. Applicants should seek quotes from reputable contractors and/or suppliers.



Applicants will be required to disclose all other sources of funding for the project at the time of application or received during the duration of the project, including all funding received from the Government of Yukon, other governments and organizations, and recipient's own contributions.

The *Conflict of Interest* clause of Yukon's transfer payment agreements and the Government of Yukon *Conflict of Interest Policy* will be considered during the assessment of applications and the administration of the funding process.

Operational viability:

All projects must demonstrate proof of operational viability by providing a proposed operational budget and staffing plan.

Project timeline:

Applicants must submit a detailed project plan. For projects awarded funding in the 2026 – 2027 fiscal year, **construction must be completed no later than March 31, 2028.**

Application and approval process

Applications will be reviewed by the Early Learning and Child Care Assessment Team and those that meet all eligibility criteria may be approved for all or partial funding.

Prior to applying, applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss the details of their project concept with the Early Learning and Child Care Branch to ensure that they meet eligibility requirements. To schedule a meeting (either in person or virtually), email us at earlylearning@yukon.ca.

For 2026-27, applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis up to September 30, 2026.

The following projects will be prioritized for 2026-27:

- renovation of existing commercial space in underserved rural areas or targeting populations with barriers to access; and
- feasibility, needs assessments, or designs in underserved rural areas or targeting populations with barriers to access.

1: Apply to the Major Project stream:

The following documents are required as part of the completed application package:

1. **Major Project Application Form**
2. **Appendix A:** Budget summary, revenue and expenses and staffing plan
3. **Supplementary documentation** as referenced in the application and appendices, including but not limited to:
 - ✓ Site layout, schematic design (project dependent) and/or floor plans
 - ✓ Development permit(s) (where applicable)
 - ✓ Quotes and estimates supporting project costs
 - ✓ Confirmation of ownership/leasehold or partnership agreement/commitment, and written approval from property owner, if in a leased building
 - ✓ Written confirmation of funding sources, including private donations or services in-kind
 - ✓ Minutes of the Society's Board of Directors authorizing the project application signed by the chair
 - ✓ Documents to support demonstrated need and stakeholder engagement

Applications must be completed and submitted to earlylearning@yukon.ca with all required supporting documentation.

Incomplete applications will be returned with instructions on what information is required to be provided. If the required information is not supplied within 30 days, the application will be considered withdrawn.

2: Review and decision

An assessment team will review applications as received. Projects that meet program eligibility criteria may be recommended for approval. If application for funding is successful, funding amounts will be based on total project costs and overall readiness to proceed.

Note: Design plans will be evaluated to ensure they meet the [Child Care Centre Program Regulation](#).

Applicants will be notified of a final decision within **30 days** from submission of the complete application package. Applicants who do not receive approval will be given a rationale and can resubmit their application should additional funding be available.



Reporting requirements and funding disbursements process

A signed transfer payment agreement will be required before any funding will be released or the project can begin. Further disbursements will be in accordance with the transfer payment agreement.

Note that only 2.5% of GST (if applicable) is eligible for funding.

The Project Manager must provide monthly progress updates to the Director of Early Learning and Child Care Branch.

Facility licensing process

Applicants will be provided with information on the licensing and program requirements. Once the project reaches substantial completion, one of our Early Learning and Child Care inspectors will complete the licensing process.

A license may be issued after the facility receives its final occupancy permit, has met Fire and Public Health inspections, and has met all regulated licensing requirements for early learning and child care.

Final reporting

Within 30 days of project completion, all outstanding claims and reports must be provided to the Department of Education, Early Learning and Child Care Branch. We will complete a reconciliation of all funding and invoices and advise in writing if any amounts are outstanding. As per the Major Infrastructure Project Agreement, the applicant is required to retain all records for future auditing purposes.