



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Centre for Community Engaged Learning

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CCEL Grant Application Toolkit





About the Grants

Our grants program was purposefully created to help you learn throughout every step of the grants process. We want the skills and experiences you acquire to help you become a more dynamic, flexible, engaged and thoughtful leader – from the moment you begin your application until long after your project has ended. As such, our application, adjudication and reporting processes are designed to be as transparent and easy to understand as possible.

You are welcome to request support at all stages.

Successful proposals promote social justice and/or sustainability goals, and foster strong, long-term partnerships between UBC and the community.

Connect to Community Grant

The Connect to Community Grant (C2C) invites students into community work through collaboration with a BC-based community organization. Supported by this grant, students can explore a curiosity or idea that supports positive change in their local community. Applicants can request funds between \$200 - \$1,500.

Chapman and Innovation Grants

The Chapman and Innovation Grant (C&I) is designed to help students work with a BC-community partner to test a new idea and take initiative in tackling social and environmental issues affecting under-represented populations in their local communities. Applicants can request funds between \$1,500 - \$10,000.

Are You Eligible?

Please review our grant [Eligibility Guidelines](#) to ensure that you meet CCEL's criteria to be considered for a grant. Questions regarding your eligibility can be directed to: community.learning@ubc.ca.

Use of the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to give you a basic understanding of what is expected in each section of the application. We recommend that you read through the entire toolkit before getting started on your application, and refer to it often as you work through each of the sections.

You are not required to complete each section in order - begin where you feel most inspired. Ensure you proofread each section, and read it through to check for consistency and flow.

Links to reputable resources are provided, should you need them.

*Note: This toolkit is designed for the **Chapman and Innovation (C&I) Grant**. The **Connect to Community (C2C) Grant** application is not as comprehensive and does not include all the sections listed in this toolkit. Though, you may still find it to be a useful reference.*



Table of Contents

I. Project Summary.....	3
1. Executive Summary	3
2. The Problem	3
3. Target Population	4
4. Project Objectives and Goals	4
5. Project Activities and Timeline	5
6. Innovation	6
II. Partnership Summary	7
1. Collaboration	7
2. Impact	7
3. Assessment	8
4. Ethical Engagement	8
III. Learning Summary	9
1. Personal Learning	9
2. Assessment	10
3. Reflection	10
IV. Budget.....	10
V. Supporting Documents	11
Acknowledgements.....	12



I. Project Summary

1. Executive Summary

This is the most important section of a grant application for many funders because it provides a clear and detailed overview of the proposed project, activities, and brief description of the roles involved. Funders often determine whether or not a proposal is worth reading in its entirety based on this section alone. As such, a strong executive summary is essential, serving as a succinct yet thorough summary of your project and proposed outcomes/impacts.

Executive summaries should encapsulate:

- a. Who you are and who you are partnering with
- b. The problem
- c. Key project components/activities
- d. Your approach, why it matters
- e. How your partnership is well-suited to address this issue

This is a high-level overview of your project and should effectively introduce your work if used as an elevator pitch or conference introduction. The level of detail in this section does not need to get into the nitty gritty. Instead, focus on a birds-eye summary of your proposed work. For instance, “where” the project would take place should not focus on addresses, but instead can list neighborhoods within a city or the type of sites involved (e.g., community centers).

Avoid generalizations and “fluff”. Get to the point and be pragmatic and factual.

Consider writing the executive summary last, once you have a strong sense of your project goals, timeline, budget and partnership roles.

C&I Grant Application: [Q1] Provide an executive summary of your project. (Note: Word count is grant specific)

2. The Problem

Some grants refer to this section as an **opportunity statement**. Showcase the specific issue that you are looking to tackle. Why is it a priority for your community’s well-being? Make it clear that extensive research has been undertaken to understand the root of the problem, previous solutions that have been tried, and why the problem is ongoing.

Consider:

- In describing the problem, what information would you provide to someone who was unfamiliar with your field to understand the importance of your initiative?
- What facts or stories inform your sense of urgency?

C&I Grant Application: [Q2]: What is the problem you have identified? What opportunity have you identified to make a difference in this selected area? (Note: Word count is grant specific)



3. Target Population

Clearly describe the population affected by the issue and the value you would be providing by implementing your project. In other words, who is directly impacted by your work? Paint a picture for the funder regarding the need for this project as it is related to this population. Keep in mind that funders back projects that are aligned with their own mission and goals. CCEL grants are intended to:

- support students to take initiative in tackling social justice and environmental issues affecting under-represented populations in their local communities
- enable students to broaden their capacities to engage ethically with diverse communities.
- put theory into practice
- develop professional skills through implementing hands-on projects.

Consider:

- Why have you selected this group to work with?
- What is the value for both individuals and the broader community?
- What will you be able to learn through engaging ethically with this population?

C&I Grant Application: [Q3] In five sentences or less, describe your project's target population. Which underrepresented community would your project support, and why is this an important community to serve? What equity and ethical considerations exist? (Note: Word count is grant specific)

4. Project Objectives and Goals

Pertaining to grants, there is a difference between project objectives and project goals. Although similar, funders use these terms distinctly to specifically identify separate ideas.

This section can cause confusion for novice grant writers. However, a simple way to think about these terms is visualized below:

Activities → Objectives → Goals

Activities; tangible actions (e.g., host workshops/events, print flyers, send emails) to help you achieve your objectives.

Objectives; measurable initiatives which will help you achieve your broader goals. Refer to the *S.M.A.R.T* goal acronym: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, Time-Bound.

Goals; the overall ambitions of your project. They are macro, high-level statements about what you hope to accomplish. Goals are not as specific as objectives. They might be loftier in their working, but should remain within the scope of your project.



Here is an example of how the wording between a goal and an objective differs:

Goal	Objective
Decrease the degree of malnutrition among young children in the southwest region of Baltimore.	By the end of year one (Time-Bound), provide 125 mothers (Measurable) in the southwest area of Baltimore (Specific) with a 2-hour training program that will provide health and nutrition information (Actionable + Realistic).

Source: <https://www.thebalance.com/writing-goals-for-grant-proposal-2501951>

Be sure to clearly identify both your project objectives and project goals, but also to demonstrate how those objectives and goals align with the funder's mandate. In other words, how do your objectives and goals promote those of the granting organization? Use their language, and clearly show these connections.

C&I Grant Application: [Q4] Describe the objectives and goals of your project.

5. Project Activities and Timeline

This is where you get to share how your project will be implemented in detail. Elaborate on **Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How**. Provide key information, such as dates, personnel, and activities in a chronological way. Use spacing and bold font to emphasize key information and connect your project details with your project objectives and goals. And remember, make clear the connections between activities and goals.

The best grant applications are engaging to the reader. They demonstrate passion for the initiative and tell a story instead of simply listing details. What would render your project compelling to someone who has zero knowledge in your field? – What language, ideas, outcomes, etc. would pique someone's interest in what you're doing?

Write clearly, avoiding wordiness and specialist-jargon. Write for a broad audience and assume the funder knows nothing about you, your community partner or the problem you are working on. Though, instead of giving too much information, think about what is **fundamental**, **necessary** and **captivating**. Ensure you speak to all three components of this section: **(1) the project description (2) the timeline and (3) the major project milestones**. What will you actually do? When will it happen? Where will it take place? How will you do it? Why are you doing it? Give clear details, timelines and examples, and demonstrate how these actions align with your goals.



Task (what)	Deadline (when)	Lead (who)	Details (how, where)

C&I Grant Application: [Q5] Provide a project timeline that outlines key milestones, major activities (workshops, campaigning, volunteer recruitment) and the who, what, when, where, why and how of your project.

6. Innovation

When investing in new projects, funders want to know: “What makes this project different compared to the hundreds of other projects tackling the same issue?” and “Why is this innovation worthwhile - will our money actually make a difference in the community?”

Use this section to answer these questions specifically, for the funder.

- Think about what skills, assets, programming, approaches or resources make your project different from other projects addressing the same issue. Be sure to include that information.
- Think about why this solution – in your unique format - has not been implemented before. Why is there an opportunity to implement it now? How will your programming help fill a gap? Answer those questions for the funder.
- Articulate why you believe your approach is unique compared to other projects and why you believe this unique approach will be successful. Be specific.

C&I Grant Application: [Q6] What makes your project unique or innovative? What other work is happening in this area and how is your project addressing it differently? Why do you think this approach is necessary? (Note: Word count is grant specific)



II. Community Partnership Summary

1. Collaboration

Here, you are asked to provide a brief but clear rationale for why your community partnership is well-suited to design and implement your proposed project. Describe the strength of your relationship with your community partner and identify key skills, expertise, specializations or opportunities that you or your partner(s) bring to the table. Strong partnership statements provide evidence of a healthy collaboration between the student and partner, as well as evidence of how important skills and assets will be leveraged to help your project succeed.

Begin by describing the relationship you have with the partner organization and staff lead. Consider:

- How long have you worked together?
- What prompted you to start this initiative together?
- Which components of the project are you collaborating on?
- What is your process to gather feedback from the partner?

Then, describe the skills, expertise and connections your project will utilize to showcase how you and your community partner are best matched to tackle this problem. Consider:

- What are you both bringing to the table?
- How do you complement each other and/or fill in each other's knowledge/skill gaps?
- How do you two provide a balanced and informed approach?

When describing this relationship, think carefully about the adjectives that describe the special aspects of your partnership. Is your relationship collaborative? Innovative? Synergistic? Cooperative? Reciprocal?

C&I Grant Application: [Q1] Describe how you and your community partner are collaborating to develop this project. How will you work together to design and implement the project? How are you and your partner best positioned to initiate this project? (Note: Word count is grant specific)

2. Impact

Funders want to invest in projects that can continue to positively impact the community long after the original funding runs out. Sustainable projects are better for the overall health of a community compared to projects where resources disappear once the project is over. With this in mind, think about how impacts/outcomes can be sustained once your project ends. Write clear statements that answer the following: **What skills, resources or materials can the community continue to leverage following the completion of your project? How will your project build community capacity or the community organization's capacity once your project**



is complete? How will your project benefit your community partner in the long-term? Be sure to highlight how specific project activities, resources, materials, skills or expertise enable your project to have a lasting impact.

Similarly, funders want to know how your project will positively affect the community. Be as clear as possible, using numbers, wherever possible.

Consider:

- How will your innovative approach and ideas produce positive change for the community you intend to serve?
- How many individuals do you intend to serve, and how?
- What skills, resources or materials will the community gain? Why is this important?

C&I Grant Application: [Q2] Describe how your proposed project will meaningfully impact the community. How does the project connect with your community partner's long-term goals? What are both the short-term and long-term benefits?

3. Assessment

It's important to understand the impact of your project work as seen from the lens of a community member, or individual from the group you have identified as wanting to better serve. Assessments can be done formally (e.g., surveys, focus groups, feedback forms) or informally (staff and community testimonials). Impact assessments can also be achieved by tracking behavior changes linked to project objectives and goals. For instance, a reduction in X behavior or increase in accessing Y service.

The process you outline should be implemented into your project planning and execution. Please note: if you are assessing a vulnerable community group, consult with your community partner regarding best practices.

C&I Grant Application: [Q3] What are two ways you will measure impact on the participants or community members?

4. Ethical Engagement

Funders want to know that efforts will be made to show-up and engage with the community in ways that value the members of that community – their individual lived experiences, and as a whole. Engaging ethically takes intentional thought, practice, humility and learning. Many projects work with vulnerable populations, which can involve tackling sensitive topics and inviting personal stories to be shared. These activities must be undertaken with thoughtfulness and care. Use this section as an opportunity to **highlight the experience you have, or the**



training, literature, or guidance you will seek to engage ethically with communities throughout the duration of your project. This is also a great opportunity to highlight the depth of your relationship with your community partner, who likely has a breadth of experience with the community.

C&I Grant Application: [Q4] Describe how you and your community partner will ensure to engage ethically throughout the duration of your project. (Note: Word count is grant specific)

III. Learning Summary

1. Personal Learning

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives is an internationally recognized tool used by educators to create and assess learning objectives and activities. It enables program planners to think about the skills their participants will acquire by participating in their programs.

Bloom's Taxonomy can be used in extensive ways, but for the purpose of our grant, we have two objectives: **1) introducing you to Bloom's Taxonomy** (because it is utilized in many educational, non-profit, grant and professional settings and is super useful) and **2) provide you with a tool that helps you craft thoughtful learning objectives for your proposed project.**

Review Bloom's Taxonomy of Verbs, and think about which word(s) best describe the skills you and your participants will acquire. Notice that the verbs presented are all observable and measurable; be sure that your learning objectives are the same.

Consider:

- What will you learn through the grant application process, as well as project planning and implementation stages?
- What will you learn through leading a project?
- What skills will you gain through implementing the specific activities undertaken?

Identify skills that are meaningful to your professional, personal or academic journey and be sure to select learning objectives that are realistic for the scope and scale of your project. It might not be realistic to "develop research and evaluation skills" throughout a project that does not include a distinct and robust research component. It also may not be realistic to "learn strategies that fix homelessness", though it can be possible to "learn effective ways to collaborate with a diversity of organizations to reduce hunger rates of homeless youth in Vancouver".

C&I Grant Application: [Q1] Set three (3) learning objectives for yourself as the project lead.



2. Assessment

Now that you have written learning intentions, think about the type of activities that will best enable you to accomplish those learning goals. How will you confirm your participants have learned something as a result of your initiative? How will you track your learning? Remember, activities don't need to be academic or formal, but they should guide you and your participants towards the initiative learning outcomes. Your learning/reflection opportunity should strategically match your learning objectives.

Some Learning Check-In Suggestions:

- An oral check-in
- A creation (poem, sign, writing, artwork, etc.)
- A survey
- A journal

C&I Grant Application: [Q2] Describe how you will demonstrate your learning. Which specific opportunity will you take to discuss and process the project experience?

3. Reflection

CCEL grants are learning grants aimed to support students in building personal and professional skills. Grant recipients are required to complete a learning reflection following the completion of their project. This question allows you to highlight the learning opportunity presented in the grant and discuss how the activities you will implement provide a variety of learning opportunities. Consider how your proposed project can be a tool for your own growth.

C&I Grant Application: [Q3] How do you anticipate taking on this project will impact or build upon your perspectives and skillsets? What personal, academic and professional impacts do you anticipate?

IV. Budget

The budget is critical to show funders that your requests are reasonable compared to your project aims. Thus, crafting a quality budget, that benefits both the project team and the funding organization, requires strong estimates, based on strong research. You don't want to shortchange your team, and you don't want to be extravagant in your request to the funder.

Key tips include:

- Dedicate time to identify the actual cost of items. Funders understand this is an estimate, but this should still be well-researched
- Use formulas to calculate line items and totals. This makes it easy to modify as you edit and helps the funder "see your work"
- Key project activities should have a line item associated with it, even if the cost is zero (\$0). This tells the funder that you have not overlooked the associated costs.



- In-kind costs such as donations, funding from other grants, and volunteer time are captured to assist the funder to know the full-scope of the project and to enable the replicability for future iterations of the project.
- All costs should be researched and not guessed (e.g. room booking costs are often available online and should be included with the level of accuracy available)
- Detailed descriptions allow the funder to understand how far each dollar is going. \$500 for a volunteer luncheon without a listed number of participants can place doubt into the use of funds. However, a description added that stated “Luncheon for 75 volunteers, includes pizza (\$10x40) and veggie trays (\$15x6)” paints a fuller picture.

Important Guidelines (relevant to C&I Grant applicants):

- C&I Grant applicants can allocate up to 30% of the total funds requested from CCEL towards a personal stipend for implementing the project. This is intended to reduce financial barriers towards participation. Applicants are encouraged to use this allocation without concern.
- Community Partners can allocate up to 12% of the total funds requested from CCEL towards organization staff time.
- Monetary tokens of appreciation cannot exceed \$100 per person.

Use [this template](#) as a guide. It is provided with sample expense categories to consider – not all categories will be applicable to your project. Adjust the categories according to the needs of your project. You may also refer to the [UBC Expenditure Guidelines](#) document which outlines permitted spending activities.

Double check that your budget explicitly includes everything you need to complete your project.

V. Supporting Documents

Have the following documents ready before you begin filling out the online application form.

- ❖ **Partnership Expectations Agreement.** [Linked here](#). You and your community partner representative (main contact) listed must review and provide signatures.
- ❖ **Two (2) letters of support.** Letter quality is assessed based on the criteria listed below. Inappropriate or incomplete letters can result in the disqualification of an application.
 - **Community Partner Letter:** The letter should endorse your project idea, your project proposal and your ability to execute the project. The letter should also describe your relationship with the community partner, how the community partner co-developed the project idea and demonstrate an understanding of project timelines and activities. This letter must come from the partner organization listed.



- **Professional Reference:** The letter should endorse your ability to execute the project. The letter should speak to your readiness, experiences, abilities, leadership, commitment and/or your experience in community-based learning. The referee should speak directly to how your skills link to your project proposal. The referee can be a current or previous professor or supervisor.

- ❖ **Unofficial Transcript.** Students must demonstrate that they are in good academic standing at the time of submission of this application, by uploading an unofficial transcript. The unofficial transcript can be obtained free of cost in pdf format, from the Student Service Centre at:
ssc.adm.ubc.ca/sscportal/servlets/SSCMain.jsp?function=SessGradeRpt

- ❖ **Proof of Enrollment.** Students must demonstrate that they are an active student at UBC by submitting a proof of enrolment letter. This letter can be downloaded free of cost from the UBC Student Centre at:
ssc.adm.ubc.ca/sscportal/servlets/SSCMain.jsp?function=StudentLetters

- ❖ **Resume/CV.** This should be up-to-date with your current activities, experiences and academic status. When choosing from the full breadth of your past work, volunteer and academic experiences, please highlight those which demonstrate your readiness to undertake your proposed project. Be sure to include relevant information about yourself that relates to the activities you are proposing to undertake.

General Grant Writing Tips

Adapted from a presentation by Sarah Dobson:

- *Ensure that your grant proposal is easy to read and simple to understand. Those reading your application likely have many other proposals to read. **Consider: would someone outside of my field (who is tired) be able to understand my proposal?** Have a friend or family member proof read it for you.*

- *Strong applications should pass the “skim test”, where someone skimming your application could quickly get a general idea of your project idea, proposed activities and expected outcomes by simply skimming through the text. **Consider: is my proposal clear enough to be understood quickly by someone skimming the text, who knows nothing about me, the community partner, or my project?***

- *Anticipate questions and make connections for the reader. Think ahead to where they might get confused and answer those questions for them with clear, simple language. **Consider: if I didn’t know anything about this project, what concerns or questions would I have?***



- *Use active voice and plain language. Be consistent in your word choice and definitions. Be descriptive. Eliminate redundant sentences and words. Consider: **could someone unaffiliated with my project explain what we're doing after reading my proposal?***
- *Tell a story, be compelling, and persuade the reader. What is at stake if you your project doesn't get implemented? What would happen if life continued the way it is, versus could happen if your project intervenes positively? Provide evidence for your thinking.*
- *Recall: the funder is looking to fund projects that are in alignment with their objectives. **Use the funder's language and ensure that your project is connected to your funder's mandate.***
- *Make sure your **proposal is internally consistent**. Do the objectives match the community need you've described? Does the budget match the proposal? Does the timeline match the budget? Does the team match the project?*

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