



HABITAT
CONSERVATION TRUST
FOUNDATION

HCTF Capacity Grant Application FAQ

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Capacity Grants

1. Can you please give a couple of examples of activities that the Capacity Grant has funded?

- Community meetings and engagement
- Hiring a professional to provide expertise for permits and prescriptions
- Consultants to train community members on field sampling techniques
- Conducting an in-person workshop for community members to support inventory and monitoring for a conservation project

2. Capacity Grants encourage the involvement of First Nations, caribou, and climate change? I missed the other suggested area.

Focus areas of the Capacity Grant are:

- Indigenous community-led fish, wildlife, and habitat restoration and conservation.
- Climate change adaptation, mitigation, and cumulative effects on fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- Caribou habitat restoration or conservation projects taking place in current caribou herd ranges.
- Broad and diverse participation in HCTF programs and projects.

3. The Capacity Grant seems like the best choice for the project my organization wants to run, however, this project is not specifically about caribou, First Nations communities, or climate change. Is it still worth applying?

Please note that while this grant emphasizes 4 areas for funding, projects outside of the identified areas of emphasis are still eligible.

4. If you apply for a Capacity or Action Grant in 2025 for a multi-year project, do you apply for the 2025 budget and then in 2026 apply for the 2026 budget? Or do you apply for the 2025 and 2026 budgets for the project in 2025 since it is a 2-year grant period?

You apply for your 2025 and 2026 budget for the project in 2025. The duration for the whole grant for Capacity and Action Grants is two years so you do not need to submit additional application or budget information in year 2. If applying in 2025, the budget you provide will cover the costs for the 2-year duration of the project, up to project completion in June 2027.

5. Would the development of a conservation plan count for capacity-building?

The development of a conservation plan could be a component of a project idea; however, the development of a plan alone would not necessarily lead to building long-term capacity to carry out conservation work, so other components should be integrated.

6. What does 'short-term salary' mean? Can we use grant funds to pay for existing staff salaries to deliver the capacity-building grant? Hiring consultants so they can disappear when the project ends does not build capacity.

Short-term salary means the temporary hiring of people to resource the delivery of the capacity grant.

- Using funds to pay for existing staff salaries to deliver the capacity-building grant is not eligible.
- Existing staff implies staff already have their wages funded. So, while existing staff may be involved in delivering the Capacity Grant, their wages would continue to be paid through their regular existing wage.
- However, if you need to hire additional resources - someone to do specific work to build pieces towards delivering a future conservation project e.g. organizing workshops, putting together the planning documents, providing specific training, etc. - you can hire through a “short-term salary.”

7. Can we use the funds to pay for staff training time?

Clarification from the Webinar response:

- Using funds to pay for training of staff specific to capacity-building is eligible. For example, a specific training course, such as paying for staff to take a training course in GIS to develop the capacity to implement a future inventory and monitoring plan conservation work would be eligible.
- Paying for staff to take general organizational training, e.g. a general computer course not directly linked to building capacity to do future conservation work would not be eligible.

8. Capacity Grants don't seem to build capacity.

How do we build long-term lasting organizational capacity if staff salary is not an eligible expense? Are staff expected to work for free?

We need capable staff and this grant does not help with this.

HCTF recognizes that organizational capacity is an ongoing challenge and issue for many groups and organizations.

- HCTF's Capacity Grants are one piece in supporting groups, organizations, and networks to get conservation work off the ground.
- Capacity Grants are not meant to just build organizational capacity, but rather collective capacity to help prepare for future work.
- This grant is about supporting a network of people not just hiring or covering staff wages for general operations.
- Capacity Grants are meant for a larger or group approach to undertake a future project not solely to benefit an organization without engaging others in the community.

General Stewardship Grants (Action, Capacity, Community)

1. What will be the % allowed for admin?

Admin fees are currently only eligible within the Action Grant. HCTF is considering an admin fee for Capacity Grants. (Admin fees are not eligible for Community Grants.) Please check the website for admin fee eligibility before applying.

2. Do you have to be a registered society to apply for a grant?

No, you don't.

3. Please define what you mean by honorariums etc.

Honorariums are a symbolic gift (or voluntary payment) in recognition for volunteer services such as attending a meeting, typically for a singular event. Honoraria are used as a gesture of appreciation for what has been received, taught, and shared. It is not a payment to compensate an individual for their time or expense.

4. Can one applicant apply for more than one grant for different projects?

Yes. An applicant can in theory apply for more than one grant for different projects. Applicants should keep in mind that the stewardship grants are designed to create opportunities for differing applicants, meaning if there are more strong applications than available funding, the Board committee may choose to distribute funding to different applicants rather than funding multiple projects by one applicant.

5. Are costs covered for: marketing and publicity to attract volunteers and public awareness, recruiting volunteers, and training or managing volunteers and their work?

No, marketing, publicity, general public awareness, and recruiting are not generally eligible. Some training and management of work and volunteers may be eligible. Please see the eligibility lists for associated grants.

6. You mentioned matched funding not helping eligibility for Community Grants, but how do additional grants affect Capacity or Action Grant applications?

Community Grants do require a 1:1 match contribution of which 50% must be volunteer labour. Match funding from other sources is not considered part of the match contribution for Community Grants. Please see the Community Grant

guidelines for specific information on what is eligible as match funding. Action and Capacity Grants do not require any matching funding. However, additional support via other funding or in-kind support may lead to overall stronger applications.

7. Do all three grants require a 1:1 match?

No. Only Community Grants require a 1:1 match and 50% must be volunteer labour. The Community Grants guidance document provides detailed information on this; please reach out to grants@hctf.ca with more questions.

8. Is there a resource HCTF could recommend around grant project development? I have a general idea for an initiative, but am unsure of the best way to get it funded, or how to tweak it to make it more fundable.

Would one of your staff members be available to discuss our project and point us towards the most applicable grant?

Do we email grants@hctf.ca to discuss our project and additional questions regarding the best grant category to apply for as our project hits on all categories or is there a specific person to email?

Please email grants@hctf.ca to get in contact with the appropriate staff to discuss your project ideas and any additional questions regarding the best grant category to apply for.

9. Are you able to fill out the grant application prior to entering it all into Survey Apply? For example, as a draft document.

Yes. A Word worksheet of the application form has been created for Community Grants. While we have not yet created similar worksheets for Capacity and Action Grants the full list of application questions is available on the website. Please continue to check our website hctf.ca and email any questions you have to grants@hctf.ca.

10. Our project runs from May to August - how does that fit with your process?

If for example you applied for a 2025 grant with a Feb 28 application deadline and were successful, your funding would be approved in June 2025. You would have 2 years to complete your project: June 2025-June 2026 = year 1 and June 2026-June 2027 = year 2. The grant would not cover expenditures for activities done before grant approval e.g. May 2025. This gives you 2 options: Option 1, try to ensure that you have other funding in place to cover costs of activities worked on before grant approval in June 2025. Option 2, plan your project and develop your application with the intention that project work will occur in May-August 2026.

11. Does location hold a lot of weight when reviewing applicants?

Not generally. HCTF will sometimes have priority or preference statements to reflect a need for certain project types and/or because additional funding has been received to support these types of projects. For example, the Capacity Grant as noted on the website emphasizes projects related to caribou habitat restoration in current ranges. Community and Action Grants do not have priority areas, or assessment criteria based on location. Any stewardship grant application that demonstrates a priority conservation issue whether local, regional, or provincial, and clearly demonstrates how it will meet the goals, objectives, and deliverables of the grant will be highly ranked. Applicants should be aware that the final review and approval stage considers available funding and best fit with HCTF's Trust Purposes and [strategic plan](#).

12. How are you ranking grants? Do grants that relate specifically to species-at-risk get ranked higher?

All applications are reviewed by multiple reviewers to rank applications based on how well they have met the grant criteria with responses to the application questions. The final review stage for all the applications considers available funding and best fit with HCTF's Trust Purposes and [strategic plan](#).

13. Is there a list on the website of what criteria proposals are ranked by?

Not currently. However, all applications are reviewed and ranked based on how well they have responded to the application questions (grant criteria).

14. Would any of the grants help to fund the development, production, and installation of interpretive signage that is done in partnership between an Indigenous community and a community conservation group where it is part of a larger project that we already have funding for?

Stewardship grants do not fund standalone communications or signage, however, the "development, production, and installation of interpretive signage" as a component of a larger project may be eligible. Please see the eligible and ineligible activities lists for each grant and/or contact grants@hctf.ca to discuss your application further.

15. Do species that are/have been traditionally hunted or trapped take priority over non-hunted species? We have been unsuccessful with a species-at-risk of priority to us, but it's not trapped or hunted.

HCTF stewardship grants do not evaluate applications with the lens of "species that are/have been traditionally hunted or trapped take priority over non-hunted species." Please see HCTF's approved project list for [Fish & Wildlife](#) and

[Stewardship](#) for the variety of species projects that have been funded in the past. The Capacity Grant as noted on the website emphasizes projects related to caribou habitat restoration in current ranges but no other species. Action and Community Grants do not have any priority or emphasis statements based on particular species. Projects are assessed on how well they meet the grant goals, e.g. Action: changing behaviors, Capacity: building abilities, and Community: working with volunteers in local communities. Applications that clearly meet the project goals along with demonstrating a strong conservation need and conservation outcome will be highly ranked and may be funded based on the availability of funds for the grant.

16. What level of reporting is required for the grants? Do we keep and submit all receipts etc.?

In reporting you will be required to report on activities, outcomes, and categories of expenditures as applicable to your grant. Budget categories such as labour, honorariums, supplies, equipment, travel, meals, and admin fees may apply depending on the grant. For Capacity and Action Grants, you will submit an invoice along with your report that reflects your expenditures. For Community Grants, no invoice will be required with reporting as all funds are paid at the project approval stage. HCTF does not require you to submit receipts, but as per all the grant agreements, record keeping and audit requirements are to be able to provide records for 5 years.

17. Are there any different considerations for invasive species?

The scope of invasive species support is determined by the grant. HCTF recognizes the need for invasive species funding and the good work that many organizations are doing toward invasive species management. Stewardship grants may fund aspects of Invasive species work, but they are not designed to fund Invasive Species Programs, a.k.a. ongoing maintenance. Community Grants can be directed at invasive species projects that work with volunteers in local communities. Action Grants may consider projects focused on response involving initial species control of emergent species and that target a specific audience, in a specific location and demonstrate how work will continue beyond the scope of 2-year Action Grant funding. Capacity Grants may consider invasive species control as part of an overall grant e.g. training or planning.

18. How much funding is available?

Funding is confirmed annually during HCTF's March Board meeting. For the upcoming 2025 grant cycle we anticipate similar funds to last year, where \$650,000 was available across the suite of stewardship grants.