



Community Climate Capacity Program

Applicant guide

2025 Coastal Municipalities

Administered by



Funded by



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Background information

About Clean Foundation

Clean Foundation is a climate change, program delivery non-profit. Since we began in Nova Scotia in 1988, we've been bringing specialized teams together to work on complex problems, delivering clean projects and programming for communities.

We support the fair transition to a cleaner economy. To achieve this, we work collaboratively with our many partners to:

- reduce energy poverty;
- promote social equity and support historically marginalized communities;
- develop the clean economy workforce;
- protect the natural environment; and,
- educate and promote action on climate change.

Clean works in the ancestral and unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik.

Community Climate Capacity Program

The Community Climate Capacity Program (CCC) launched in May 2024 with a pilot group of 19 Nova Scotian communities. The program is expanding to include six to 10 coastal municipalities in Nova Scotia, supporting their climate and sustainability measures by helping to identify their climate challenges and implement adaptation and mitigation actions. The coastal municipalities will be supported until March 31, 2028.

Clean's CCC Program, funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change, provides successful applicant communities with access to a dedicated staff to support their local climate and sustainability initiatives. Through the CCC Program, Clean helps empower communities to increase their capacity and community resilience to take on climate challenges.

Program objectives

The CCC Program was established to provide staff resources, technical expertise and capacity to address climate change to communities across Nova Scotia. These resources will be provided for three years (until March 31, 2028) at no direct cost to communities.

The CCC Program is intended to support coastal municipalities at various stages of their climate change work, including those interested in developing an action plan and those seeking support to accelerate the implementation of an existing plan.

Community Navigators will be assigned to work directly with the selected participants over the duration of the program. They will support participants in submitting funding applications, developing specific climate change and coastal action plans, connecting with experts at Clean and in their communities and implementing climate action measures.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the program, organizations/communities must be operating and/or located in Nova Scotia. The following groups are eligible to apply for the program:

- Coastal municipalities* (Including municipal corporations or entities with a coastal focus for participation)

*Coastal municipalities include any Nova Scotian municipality whose boundaries intersect with projected worst-case flooding in the year 2100. See the [Coastal Hazard Map](#) to verify whether you meet this criteria, or reach out to ccc@cleanfoundation.ca.

Collaboration, partnerships and regional approaches between communities, organizations and sectors are encouraged. Collaboration with organizations of Mi'kmaq peoples, African Nova Scotians, racialized groups, immigrants, Acadians, individuals living on low incomes, individuals living with disabilities, older adults, youth, 2SLGBTQ+ and women are encouraged.

Participant expectations

- Assign a staff liaison to work with the Community Navigator. The staff liaison is the main contact point for the Community Navigator when working in your community. They will be responsible for facilitating the development of local relationships, providing data and connecting the Community Navigator to important community assets.
- The time commitment is approximately five to 10 hours a month depending on the community's program objectives. The work of the staff liaison may include regular check-ins with the Community Navigator, attending meetings or corresponding with colleagues to connect the Community Navigator to community resources. Involvement in committees and meetings alongside the Community Navigator can also be counted towards this total.
- Facilitate regular meetings with the Municipal Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and/or Council Members for the Community Navigator to ensure timely progress on objectives.
- A minimum of one staff person from the municipality is required to actively participate in monthly community of practice meetings, workshops and/or capacity building sessions.
- The municipality will support the submission of a minimum of three to five funding applications over the duration of the three-year program. Examples of funding opportunities could include the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund, Low Carbon Communities Program, the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund, etc.
- Staff, leadership and/or elected officials will participate in the annual Community Climate Capacity Partner Summit for knowledge sharing, collaboration and discussion with all participating communities.

Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to report annually on their program participation and provide quarterly updates to the CCC team.

Application process

General application information

All applications must be submitted online unless an accommodation is requested. If you have any questions about the application process or the program, or if you need to request an accommodation, contact the CCC team at ccc@cleanfoundation.ca. The CCC team may contact applicants to request additional information about an application to ensure applications are complete and/or to request further relevant detail and to connect well-aligned communities.

Applications will be open to communities of all sizes at different stages of climate work and co-applications are encouraged. Applicants will have to demonstrate how they will provide support to the Community Navigator to ensure the timely completion of program objectives as discussed with your assigned Community Navigator if successful in the application. Required supports include access to a generic organizational email (for example, climate@townofutopia.ca), access to Director's meeting or equivalent and ability to present at council meetings, as needed.

Other forms of support include:

- committee membership for the Community Navigator
- office space
- data, reports, and file access
- financial/capital contributions for funding applications
- introductions to other staff

Applicants will be asked to describe where they are in their climate plans and identify their priorities around climate change work. If a community does not have an up-to-date climate plan, the most recent climate plan should be provided as part of this application. The applicant is strongly encouraged to include plan development in their year-one objectives if there is no existing climate plan or if the plan is outdated with no implementation progress. If the community has other documents including asset management plans, municipal land use plans, policies, by-laws (for community organizations only, not municipal by-laws) or strategic plans that describe climate priorities, goals and project implementation, they can append those documents as part of this application.

The application is an opportunity for Clean to better understand your objectives for program participation. Please provide detailed information on your goals, barriers, current capabilities, community needs and commitment to active participation.

Expression of Interest and full application process

The application process is as follows:

1. Submit the Expression of Interest. This will require:
 - applicant information (municipality legal name and contact information)
 - capacity and needs information (e.g.: climate priorities, potential barriers and resources)
2. Overview of program goals and expectations of participation Expressions of Interest are screened by Clean staff to ensure that basic eligibility and application requirements are met.

After Clean's review of the Expression of Interest, the full application link will be sent to applicants by email.

3. At any point in your application process, we encourage you to arrange a meeting to speak with Clean staff to discuss your application. During our conversation with you, Clean will:
 - learn about your climate needs, goals, barriers and capacity; and,
 - respond to your questions and provide additional program context and information.

Please email ccc@cleanfoundation.ca to request a meeting with Clean.

The full application features four sections:

- A. Background
- B. Priorities, focus, objectives and commitment
- C. Skillsets, management and funding
- D. Reporting and knowledge sharing

The applicant guide provides additional information and context for each question. You are encouraged to use this as a guide to help formulate complete responses.

Suggested word count

Suggested word counts are provided in questions requiring short to medium length responses. These word counts are intended to be guidelines for how much information is required in the response. They also ensure that application review is manageable and reasonable. The word counts are not meant to be prohibitive. Applicants will not be scored down for exceeding the word count by a small margin.

Example program pathways for municipalities

The CCC Program is intended to support communities at various stages of climate change work. Below are two example communities and their possible pathways for program participation.

Pathway 1:

Community A, a small coastal community with fewer than 5,000 residents, lacks climate specific staff and a dedicated committee to address climate issues. Recent extreme weather events have damaged their infrastructure and homes, prompting ongoing repairs. Despite limited resources, the community is focused on adapting to reduce future weather impacts.

The community proposes that a Community Navigator with Clean's CCC Program would support them in developing a climate plan with reasonably actionable goals to a) minimize future storm damage; b) improve emergency preparedness; and c) ensure citizens are educated about the importance of environmental sustainability (reducing electrical use, using active transportation, carpooling etc.).

They propose adding to their environmental data and developing a climate plan in year one. Based on findings of this report, they plan to allocate municipal resources and apply for funding to address their highest climate risks in year two. This funding will be used to implement adaptive and mitigating measures. Projects will continue into year three with the support of the Community Navigator. Year three will see the community apply for funding to increase their climate capacity in the longer term by hiring at least one climate staff. The community will pass a Council resolution stating the importance of climate work, using their recent success as an example. A climate committee will be formed to support and direct the long-term Community Navigator. They can partner with several local citizens' groups and environmental charities to improve the reach and effectiveness of their ongoing work.

Pathway 2:

Community B, a larger coastal municipality, has had a climate team in place for several years. The team consists primarily of volunteers, and two Councillors. Despite the committee's work to integrate climate responsibility into the work of the municipality, movement on climate and sustainability issues is slow. Without a dedicated staff member to manage the climate initiatives and follow through on daily tasks, projects are often abandoned before completion. The Councillors on the climate committee would like to hire a full-time climate staff member but the budget does not allow for it this year.

In their application to Clean's CCC Program, the municipality proposes a three-year plan to develop public and Council support for paid climate staff moving forward. Year one will focus on creating a community climate plan and partnering with Clean and other environmental organizations to increase resident participation in energy efficiency programs. In year two, they propose implementing infrastructure improvements with funding obtained via the Community Navigator that could lower the costs for the municipality. In year three, they propose creating and releasing a report detailing the successes of their involvement in the CCC Program.

The report will be presented to Council and shared with residents, detailing a list of infrastructure improvements, successful funding applications, and highlighting opportunities for public climate education. External funding for a full-time climate staff member will be applied for in year three.

Applicant guide: Question by question

Applicant checklist

- ✓ **Application document**
Successful Expression of Interest applicants will receive the full application document by email. It should be filled out accurately and completely.
- ✓ **Confirmation of organizational commitment to program participation**
A letter is required from the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or Mayor of your municipality that states official commitment to Clean's CCC Program.
- ✓ **Official letter(s) of partnership**
If you are officially co-applying with another municipality/organization/community on this application, please provide a letter(s) of partnership signed by their board, Executive Director (ED), CAO, Mayor, Chief or another person in a position of leadership. A template is provided to support the drafting of official letter(s) of partnership.
- ✓ **Letter(s) of community support**
Please attach any additional letter(s) of community support from allied organizations and/or communities to the application. These letter(s) can help demonstrate community support and interest.
- ✓ **Letter(s) of First Nation support**
Please attach any additional letter(s) of community support from a First Nation signed by the board, ED, CAO, Chief or another person in a position of leadership. The letter should state the First Nation's support of the planned program work and specify any ways in which they have demonstrated their support, if applicable (e.g.: in kind contributions and financial contributions).
- ✓ **Strategic documents, plans or policies that speak to your commitment to community climate plan work and any other documents that support the adjudication of your application.**
Include any additional documents that you believe will strengthen your application or provide more context on your climate commitment. This might include climate plans, asset management reporting, Council resolutions and others.
- ✓ **File name**
Save your application file as a Microsoft Word document named
"CCC_App_YourOrganization'sName." For example, "CCC_App_TownOfUtopia."

Save your supplemental application files as PDFs named "OrganizationName_DocumentName."
For example, "TownOfUtopia_LetterOfCommunitySupport,"
"TownOfUtopia_LetterOfPartnership," and "TownOfUtopia_ClimatePlan."

Section A: Background

Section A1: Applicant information

A1a. Municipality contact information

- *Organization legal name* – Enter full legal name of your municipality as applicable.
- *Mailing address* – Enter the street name and number, including any apartment or unit number.
- *City* – Enter relevant city within the municipality.
- *Province/territory* – This program is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change and is only open to Nova Scotian municipalities at this time.
- *Postal code* – Enter your postal code. Do not include any spaces.
- *Phone number* – Enter the main phone number for the organization in the format (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

A1b. Primary/Lead applicant contact information

- *The primary/lead applicant* is a representative who is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the municipality related to their involvement in the CCC Program. They may or may not be directly involved with the implementation of the CCC Program in the event of a successful application. They will be responsible for ensuring that the community meets its obligations under the contract.
- *First name* – Enter the legal given name of the primary/lead applicant.
- *Last name* – Enter the legal surname of the primary/lead applicant.
- *Job title* – Enter the professional title of the primary/lead applicant. If no title exists, this space can be left blank.
- *Email* – Enter the primary email for use in contacting the primary/lead applicant.
- *Phone number* – Enter the primary phone number including extension (if applicable) for the primary/lead applicant. Use the format (xxx) xxx-xxxx ext. xxx.
- *Alternate phone number (optional)* – Enter an alternate number for the primary/lead applicant if applicable. Use the format (xxx) xxx-xxxx ext. xxx.

A1c. Secondary applicant contact information

- *The secondary applicant* will be copied on any CCC related correspondence. This person does not require signing authority and may report to the primary/lead applicant or be involved in climate work in your community.
- *First name* – Enter the legal given name of the secondary applicant.
- *Last name* – Enter the legal surname of the secondary applicant.
- *Job title* – Enter the professional title of the secondary applicant. If no title exists, this space can be left blank.
- *Email* – Enter the primary email for use in contacting the secondary applicant.
- *Phone number* – Enter the primary phone number including extension (if applicable) for the secondary applicant. Use the format (xxx) xxx-xxxx ext. xxx.
- *Alternate phone number (optional)* – Enter an alternate number for the secondary applicant if applicable. Use the format (xxx) xxx-xxxx ext. xxx.

A1d. Staff liaison

- The *staff liaison* is the main contact point for the Community Navigator when working in your community.
- The *staff liaison* will be responsible for facilitating the development of local relationships, providing data and connecting the Community Navigator to important community assets. Use the drop-down menu to indicate which applicant will act as the staff liaison for the Community Navigator in the event of a successful application.

Section A2. Co-applicants

This section collects information about your co-applicants. Do not include allies who are not directly involved in the planned CCC Program work or who have not committed to working on the program work in the future.

Additional letter(s) of support from organizations/communities who are not co-applicants or directly involved with the work can also be submitted along with your application. These letter(s) do not have to adhere to the provided template.

A2a. Co-applicant(s) declaration

Do you have co-applicants who will support the program work? If you do not have confirmed program partners, select 'no' and then skip to question A2e.

Indicate 'yes,' if you have already established agreements with co-applicants to co-apply or to collaborate on work or goals under the CCC Program. Indicate 'no,' if you have not yet confirmed co-applicants or if you intend to continue with a solo application. If you have no confirmed partners to disclose, skip to section A2e.

A2b. Co-applicant(s) identification

List all official co-applicants. This includes organizations that are part of the application.

Use the chart provided to provide information about confirmed partner(s).

- *Name of co-applicant organization* – Indicate the official name of the organization you are partnering with.
- *Organization type* – Indicate whether the co-applicant organization is a Nova Scotia municipal entity, Indigenous community, municipally owned corporation, regional enterprise network, non-profit or 'other' organization/community type. If 'other,' please provide a label for the partnering organization (e.g.: school, neighborhood association, etc.).
- *Contact person (name and job title)* – Provide the legal first and last name of the contact person for your partnering organization as well as their official title, if applicable.
- *Email* – Provide an email via which the partnering contact can be contacted.

A2c. Co-applicant roles and responsibilities

Describe the role of each co-applicant and explain their participation in the program work.

Briefly describe the roles of co-applicant organizations in relation to your potential participation in the CCC Program. Include information about the support they will provide (expertise, capital, human resources, physical space, connection to community, etc.).

A2d. Official co-applicant(s)

If applicable, attach letter(s) of partnership from co-applicants listed in A2b with your email submission of the application.

Official letter(s) of partnership – co-applicant organizations/communities should use the template provided to describe and define their level of support for your application and the CCC work that will be done if you are successful in your application. Partners should use official letterhead if possible and letters should be signed by someone with organizational signing authority.

A2e. Collaboration

If there are no program co-applicants, please provide a response explaining why and whether there are plans to engage potential partners through your involvement in the CCC Program. Clean recognizes that collaboration may not be possible at the time of application submission or given your geographic location.

Use this space to discuss your decision to apply without established collaborators, providing reasoning to support your decision. If you intend to collaborate with other co-applicants but have not solidified inter-organizational relationships at the time of the application, please note that here.

Section B: Priorities, focus, objectives and commitment

Section B1. Applicant priorities and motivation

B1a. Summary

Provide a summary of your interest in and motivation to participate in the CCC Program. Share information on your current level of readiness, commitment to supporting a Community Navigator and the sustainability of your goals and objectives.

Summarize your interest in the program, the needs the program will address, information about your current level of readiness and climate action, your capacity to support a Community Navigator with navigating local issues and the sustainability of your goals and objectives. Include information about any climate action you have undertaken in the past and any actions you would like to prioritize in the future. This could include the development and/or implementation of a climate plan, climate and sustainability funding applications (whether successful or not), participation in other Clean programs, infrastructure upgrades and other initiatives.

Section B2. Program focus and objectives

B2a. Program focus

Describe the focus areas for your participation in the CCC Program.

Briefly summarize your aspirations for participation in the CCC Program. Include information about your intended work over the next three years and your goal for program outcomes, should you be successful in your application.

B2b. Program objectives

Describe high-level objectives for the project, year by year.

This section aims to give Clean an understanding of the general scope and projected path for the project. These objectives provide a useful benchmark through the project; however, Clean understands that climate change work can evolve over the course of a project. The priority is gaining an understanding of the kind of work you would like to undertake with the help of a Community Navigator. Upon acceptance into the program, Clean and the successful applicant organization will work together to build more detailed objectives.

Section B3. Commitment to local climate action

Please describe your community's needs relating to climate change, and the barriers that exist to you addressing these needs. Needs might include access to climate expertise, grant writing, policy development or community expertise. Barriers might include, but are not limited to, limited financial, technical, and human resources, limited local information (mapping and modelling, climate impact studies, etc.) and lack of jurisdictional clarity or communication. Please note, these lists are not exhaustive and you may have other needs or barriers.

B3a. Climate-related needs

Describe the community's climate-related needs.

B3b. Barriers to climate action

Describe the barriers that hinder your community's efforts to address climate-related needs.

B3c. Climate plan

Have you prepared a climate plan? If so, provide a link to the document here or upload a copy to the application.

If you have a current climate plan or have published a climate plan in the past, please provide a copy along with your application. Applicants can provide their climate plan via an online link pasted into the textbox of this question, or via an attachment sent to ccc@cleanfoundation.ca along with their completed application.

If you do not have a formal climate plan, please attach any climate policies or elements of climate action that are integrated into your strategic plan to your application.

B3d. Community engagement

Have you conducted community engagement around local climate change?

If you have done any engagement with the public to learn more about their priorities, perceived risks, and concerns around climate or climate work indicate 'yes.' Otherwise indicate 'no.'

B3e. Level of engagement

If 'yes,' describe what you've learned from your engagement activity(ies) and how your community participated in the engagement.

If you answered 'yes' in B3d., provide additional information about the type of public engagement you have undertaken. Include information on whether the engagement was in-person or online, when it took place, who attended and what you learned from the outreach. Please include relevant attachments in your email submission or links to reports, as applicable.

Section C: Skillsets, management and funding

Section C1. Existing skills, capacity and barriers

The existing skills, resources and expertise within your organization or across your partner organizations to support program implementation and the Community Navigator.

C1a. Skillset, resources and expertise

What organizational skills and resources would be available to support the Community Navigator and the successful planning and implementation of program work?

Strengths and skills might include experience in successful applications for funding (especially climate and sustainability-related funds), participation in and familiarity with Clean programs, skilled infrastructure management, knowledgeable public works and maintenance staff, well-developed teamwork skills, positive relationships with surrounding communities or climate-related NGOs. This list is not exhaustive.

C1b. Gaps or barriers

Describe gaps/barriers in your organization's competencies and capacity to lead climate action work.

Describe capacity gaps that could be addressed to advance your climate work during and after participation in the CCC Program. Applicant capacity limitations will not be scored negatively. Identified gaps addressed via a Community Navigator will be scored favourably.

Section C2. Management

C2a. CCC implementation

How will you ensure the work is supported? Describe your commitment to implementation and the timely completion of work during the program term.

For Community Navigators to be able to effectively support communities, they must be integrated into the organization. Required supports include access to a generic organizational email (for example, climate@townofutopia.ca), access to Director's meeting or equivalent, and access to a Councillor or presentation at a council meeting. Supports that may be relevant but are not required include office space available to the Community Navigator for on-site visits, climate committees, financial/capital contributions for funding applications and/or access to supportive leadership. This list is not exhaustive.

C2b. Current role of staff liaison

Describe the current work of the staff liaison and why they have been selected to support the Community Navigator. Identify which department the Community Navigator's work will be affiliated with, if applicable.

If you have identified a potential staff liaison, provide some information about why that person was chosen for the role and what skills they can employ to support the Community Navigator's work.

If your municipality has departments or teams, indicate which department or team the Community Navigator will work closely with. Clean recognizes that the staff liaison role may not be assigned yet and may be subject to change. If you have not yet identified a potential staff liaison, please indicate why not and what skills you believe will be most useful in the role.

C2c. Climate support

Describe existing climate supports in the organization.

List any relevant committees, working groups or organizational teams that will support the Community Navigator. If there is no existing committee or staff level climate champion, describe what structures you plan to put in place prior to the start of this program.

C2d. Climate integration

How do you see the Community Navigator’s work being integrated into the broader organization?

Clean aims to ensure that climate work is not siloed, and the work of the Community Navigator is interdepartmental, integrating climate and sustainability into daily operations, planning and budgeting, etc. Examples of structures that may support the Community Navigator’s work include check-ins or reports to senior management, integration with staff teams, council reporting, climate and asset management or sustainability committees. This list is not exhaustive.

C2e. Support for climate action post-program

How do you intend to support program work following the completion of the CCC Program?

Over a three-year period, a Community Navigator will work with successful applicants to plan and implement climate initiatives to benefit the municipality. One of the goals of the Community Climate Capacity Program is to develop local capacity to carry out climate work. Given your current capacity, please indicate how your municipality intends to continue climate work at the conclusion of the program. Describe how will you use the program to build capacity for local climate work.

Section C3. Funding

C3a. Operational or capital funds

The Community Navigator will work to complete funding applications to support local climate work. Is your organization willing and able to commit operating or capital funding to support project implementation, including matching contributions on funding applications?

Many funding bodies require that applicants contribute operating or capital funds to funded projects. Please indicate whether you can contribute additional funding during the program.

C3b. Estimation of contributions

If you intend on allocating operating or capital funds during the program, indicate an estimated annual amount.

Please estimate the funding your municipality could contribute to the CCC Program—this is for planning purposes only and not a financial commitment.

Section D: Reporting and knowledge sharing

Section D1. Reporting

D1a. Confirmation of participation in quarterly reports

Do you acknowledge the Community Navigator will be required to report quarterly to Clean on the progress of work, and do you agree to support the Community Navigator in this task for the duration of their time with your organization?

The Community Navigator will be responsible for filing quarterly and annual reports to Clean for inclusion in provincial reporting documents. Using the drop-down menu, indicate whether your municipality is willing and able to support the completion of those reports via information sharing, drafting updates from your leadership or the staff liaison, and ensuring that those reports are seen by senior leadership, elected officials or board representatives.

Section D2. Knowledge sharing

D2a. Annual partner summit

Is your organization committed to participating in the annual CCC partner summit?

To build capacity for climate work across the province, Clean will host a partner summit annually. The goal of the summit is to share learnings and foster relationships between program participants and communities across Nova Scotia. The summit will be open to all organizations and communities who submit an Expression of Interest.

D2b. Communication of program work

How will the work of the CCC Program be communicated across your municipality and with interested parties (both internal and external)?

The CCC work should be shared with the Council, Board and leadership and be disseminated throughout staff and client populations. Describe communication strategies or measures your organization will employ to build understanding and awareness of the Community Navigator's work both internally to staff within your organization and externally to interested parties. This can include social media posts, community events, lunch and learns, Council presentations, etc.

D2c. Community of practice

Who from your organization will participate in the community of practice (CoP)? What do you hope to learn through CoP participation?

A CoP exists to support shared learning for all CCC participant communities. Indicate who from your organization will participate in this group. Provide background on your learning objectives for CoP participation. Demonstrate a willingness to contribute and share information with the CoP.

D2d. Capacity improvement

How will your organization's capacity improve through CCC participation? How will you support shared learning within your community and with the other CCC communities?

This is a final opportunity to share how your organization/community's capacity will improve through CCC participation. Describe how your internal capacity to action this work will be beneficial to your organization/community. Demonstrate your commitment to the sustainability of this work and the objectives of your organization/community's participation.

Signing authority declaration

Under this section, applicants are asked to print the name of the signing authority to acknowledge the application has the approval for submission. This is in lieu of a formal signature but carries the same acceptance of application approval. The name and contact details of the signing authority will be used for the program participation contract, should your community's application be successful.

Confirmation of organizational commitment to program participation is required. A template has been provided for this letter and should be signed by the signing authority. The letter can include a signature from the Board of Directors or elected officials, if applicable.