



Innovation, Science and  
Economic Development Canada

Innovation, Sciences et  
Développement économique Canada

# Digital Literacy Exchange Program

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Applicant Guide

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2022-2025

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## Foreword

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### How to apply

Please visit the [How to Apply](#) webpage to access all documentation to apply for funding.

We strongly encourage you to submit your application form via the submit button which can be found at the end of the application form.

The deadline to submit applications for the Digital Literacy Exchange Program is **September 7, 2022, 11:59:59 p.m. EDT**. Applications must be submitted electronically via the submit button, by email the [Digital Literacy Exchange Program](#) or by mail. An acknowledgement email confirming receipt of an application will be sent. If submitting by mail, **please identify an email address where the confirmation of receipt may be sent**. Applicants are encouraged to keep this confirmation for their records.

**Applications submitted by email** should include the following subject line:

APPLICATION 2022– Digital Literacy Exchange Program – Enter your organization name (Enter your project title)

*Organizations located and operating in the province of Québec*

If we accept your proposed project, you might need to get approval from the Government of Québec before you can accept our funding.

- [Consult the Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif](#)
- [Consult the approval and authorization process.](#)
- Consult : “[Which agencies are covered by Act M-30?](#)”

### What to submit?

When submitting your application, please include the following documents:

- DLEP Application Form
- DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook (this document includes the budget)
- Proof of your organization’s legal status (not-for-profit and incorporated in Canada)
- Letters of support from individuals, organizations and/or financial contributors (optional)
- Financial statements for the last two years (audited preferred)
- Signed Attestation and Signing Authority for the Application of Funding Form

### More questions?

This Applicant Guide was developed to assist in the completion of the Application Form and the DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook. If you have further questions, we invite you to check the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) webpage. For general questions and comments, please contact the [Digital Literacy Exchange Program](#) team.

Please note that the Department of Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada will not be assisting applicants in the development of their applications.

**Telephone (toll-free in Canada):** 1-800-328-6189  
**Telephone (Ottawa):** 613-954-5031  
**Fax:** 343-291-1913  
**TTY (for hearing-impaired):** 1-866-694-8389  
**By email:** [dlep-peln@ised-isde.gc.ca](mailto:dlep-peln@ised-isde.gc.ca)  
**Business hours:** 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time  
**By mail:** Digital Literacy Exchange Program  
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada  
C.D. Howe Building  
235 Queen Street, 1st floor, West Tower  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5  
Canada

# 1. Program Overview

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The Department of Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) has launched the second phase of the **Digital Literacy Exchange Program**. This contribution program will invest \$17.6 million – starting in 2022-2023 and ending in 2024-2025 – to support initiatives that teach basic digital literacy skills at pre-existing facilities to Canadians with a focus on underrepresented groups in the digital economy.

## 2. Program Definitions

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### Fundamental Digital Literacy Skills

Fundamental digital literacy skills are skills needed to engage with computers and the Internet. These skills include: the ability to use computer programs such as word processors, web browsers, email, videoconferencing and other communication tools; the ability to access and use knowledge resources such as search engines and online databases; and the ability to make secure transactions such as online purchases.

Analytical skills to comprehend, contextualize and critically evaluate digital media are also important to couple with these basic technical skills (e.g. analytical skills to help make informed decisions on sharing personal information).

### Pre-existing Facilities

Pre-existing facilities include public libraries, schools, refugee housing complexes, seniors' homes, community centres, schools friendship centres, meeting halls or other facilities or locations in the community where groups could gather.

### Underrepresented Groups in the Digital Economy

- Persons with disabilities
- Indigenous people
- Individuals who do not speak English or French at home
- Individuals aged 65 or older
- Individuals who have not completed high school
- Individuals who have low-income
- Residents of rural and remote areas \*
- Newcomers to Canada
- Individuals from Official Language Minority Communities

\*Rural and remote areas are non-metro localities (i.e., with a population density less than 100,000 inhabitants and with a distance that is outside the commuting zone of these metro centres).

### 3. Program Objectives

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The Digital Literacy Exchange Program's objectives are as follows:

- **Increase Internet usage and participation in the digital economy:** Increase the number of Canadians using the Internet in their day-to-day lives and increase overall participation by Canadians in the digital economy.
- **Reach underrepresented groups:** Ensure that all Canadians have the necessary skills to use the Internet safely and effectively.
- **Geographic coverage throughout Canada:** Provide digital literacy skills training across Canada.
- **Increase confidence and improve skills:** Improve the confidence and skills of underrepresented groups in using the Internet.

### 4. Project Duration

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The duration of projects can vary and must be completed no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

When completing the application form, the start date of your project cannot be earlier than December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Note that the eligibility date will be confirmed once projects receive Ministerial approval.

The signing of the Contribution Agreements will follow after the Ministerial decisions.

### 5. Program Funding

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- The opportunity to apply for funding will be held through a national Call for Applications.
- The total funding for the program is \$17.6 million over 3 years, starting in 2022-2023.
- The requested funding is a minimum of \$50,000 and does not exceed \$2 million in overall ISED funding.
- The applicant must clearly demonstrate the need for the contribution and demonstrate that the requested amount is necessary to achieve the project objectives.
- The level of funding provided by the program will be contingent upon an assessment of the application and the availability of program funds.
- A recipient may distribute contributions to ultimate recipients who are also not-for-profit organizations that are incorporated in Canada to expand or improve coverage of training across Canada. The primary recipient will be responsible for all of the terms and conditions outlined in a contribution agreement.

#### **Maximum Contributions and Stacking Limits**

Digital Literacy Exchange applications may include funding from other levels of government, private sector or not-for-profit partners. However, the total funding from all federal, provincial/territorial and municipal sources cannot exceed 100% of eligible costs.

## 6. Eligibility Criteria

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To qualify for funding, your organization must be a not-for-profit organization\* that is incorporated in Canada. Proof of incorporation such as a business number, article of incorporation and/or charitable registration number is required.

*\*Not-for-profit organizations are legal entities that are incorporated under federal, provincial, or territorial legislation for purposes other than generating a profit for its shareholder. Post-secondary institutions, schools, school boards, and school districts are not eligible to apply for funding through the program. These organizations can however partner with eligible not-for-profit organizations.*

Your application must also clearly demonstrate that:

- Your organization has 3 years of experience in the delivery of digital literacy initiatives with a proven track record of success;
- Your proposed initiative will target underrepresented groups in the digital economy;
- The proposed initiative will be delivered at no cost to participants;
- With program funding, your organization will have the resource capacity and expertise, either internally or through partnerships, to successfully deliver the proposed initiative within the program timeframe and to measure and report on success;
- Your organization will provide a detailed project costs plan (Budget) for the proposed initiative.

**Note:** Where there is an application involving collaboration with other non-profits, one not-for-profit organization must take the lead on the application and submit the application on behalf of all partners. These partners will be considered part of the initiative and cannot submit a separate application for the same project.

Not-for-profit organizations that already deliver digital skills training could apply to expand their programming and broaden their geographic reach in terms of underrepresented groups.

An organization needs to meet the eligibility criteria to be considered for a full assessment, based on the merit criteria.

## 7. Merit Criteria

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Merit criteria will be used to establish a priority ranking of eligible applicants. The following criteria will be taken into consideration:

- Organizational governance: the organization's history and structure - directors, memberships and experience, financial statements and forecasted financials for the project period;
- The alignment of the organization's mission, mandate, and/or purpose with the program's objectives;
- The representation that the organization is in good standing with regard to all federal, provincial, territorial and municipal laws and regulations;
- The organization's plan and capacity to deliver to underrepresented groups \*;
- The organization's capacity to undertake and successfully complete the project, including the qualifications of key individuals carrying out the proposed activities;
- Project workplan: the description of the proposed project, including location(s), work plan, eligible activities, schedule, project outcomes/results;
- Training plan – the proposed training program(s), the mode of delivery of training and intensity (basic and/or intermediate) are suitable for the intended audience;
- The organization's project contributors and/or partners, including their roles and resources in support of the project;
- The amount of any federal, provincial, territorial or municipal assistance received or likely to be received for the project;
- The identification and understanding of project risks and proposed mitigation measures;
- In the event that contributions are to be distributed by an eligible recipient to one or more ultimate recipients, the initial eligible recipient shall demonstrate that they have the appropriate resources, network and processes in place to receive, evaluate, approve and monitor applications that meet program objectives.

\*Refer to question 11 and 12 of the *Application Form* to complete information about a past initiative and provide target data.

## 8. Eligible Activities

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The proposed Digital Literacy Exchange project's activities must include the development and delivery of digital literacy programs to underrepresented groups regarding safe, secure and effective Internet and computers and/or mobile devices.

Eligible activities could also include the development and delivery training for instructors needed to introduce technical skills (Internet on computers and/or mobile devices), and the development of educational resources to support learners' digital literacy skills and instructor development.

## 9. Training Accommodations

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**Official Languages:** The digital literacy training must be offered or available to participants in both or one of the two official languages (English and French). If an initiative intends to provide training to individuals who are not fluent in English or French, accommodations are required to ensure participants are able to benefit from the training (i.e., interpreter and translated materials). Official language requirements will be addressed within the clauses of the contribution agreements with successful applicants.

**Accessibility:** It will be expected that accessibility needs are taken into account when providing digital literacy training by ensuring that the required assistive technologies are available to participants. Specific requirements will be addressed within the clauses of the contribution agreements with successful applicants.

## 10. Eligible and Ineligible Costs

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### Eligible Costs

**Eligible costs** are costs that are directly related to the approved project and which respect all conditions and limitations of the program. These costs will be outlined in the contribution agreement and include:

- costs associated with the delivery of digital literacy skills learning opportunities (e.g., program design, communication and outreach, rental of space, administration/overhead costs, domestic travel in accordance to the [National Joint Council Directive](#), fees for instructors, etc.);
- administrative/overhead costs (up to 10% of eligible costs funded by ISED\*);
- instructors training and professional development expenses (up to 15% of eligible costs funded by ISED)
- costs associated with the purchase, rental or repair of technological equipment/materials (i.e. computers and tablets) required for the delivery of the learning opportunities (up to 20% of eligible costs funded by ISED\*\*); and
- incremental administration and accounting expenses.

\* Exceptions may be made for recipients delivering initiatives in Canada's North (Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut) where circumstances such as inclement weather can increase travel and accommodation costs. In these cases, consideration will be given to cover administrative/overhead costs to a maximum of 30%.

\*\* Eligible costs associated with technological equipment and materials will be considered only in cases where an organization demonstrates the need for such equipment to expand or scale-up an existing program.

## **Ineligible Costs**

**Ineligible costs** are those costs that are not covered under the Digital Literacy Exchange program. Some examples include:

- expenditures that are not related to the DLEP project;
- expenditures incurred before the eligibility date or after the project completion date;
- accounting and administrative expenses related to existing organizational activities;
- costs associated with the construction of or major renovation to buildings and structures;
- the purchase or lease of land;
- hospitality where the primary benefactor is the organization and/or an ineligible participant group;
- property and general liability insurance costs;
- general office space and equipment (i.e. photocopiers, furniture and printers), and;
- all costs associated with travel outside Canada.

## **11. Assessment Process**

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All applications will be reviewed through a competitive process based on the program's eligibility and merit criteria. ISED will select proposals that best address program objectives.

When completing the application, applicants must clearly demonstrate the extent to which the proposed project meets all criteria. It is not sufficient to state that the project will meet the criteria; the applicant should provide details as to how the project will specifically meet the criteria. Applications found incomplete may be removed from consideration. ISED may request additional documentation for assessment purposes.

Previous DLEP recipients will also be assessed based on performance history with the program.

## **12. Project Reporting**

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Recipients of program funding will be required to submit data, schedules, updates and reports with specific requirements outlined in a contribution agreement with ISED.

Recipient reporting will enable the Minister to:

- a) assess the progress of the project and the results achieved;
- b) carry out the post-completion monitoring called for in the contribution agreement; and
- c) support evaluation of the Program in accordance with the evaluation plan of the Department.

## 13. Timing and Method of Payments

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With the exception of conditional approvals\*, expenditures will be eligible for federal reimbursement subject to the last signature fully executing a contribution agreement. Expenditures incurred prior to the eligibility date are ineligible for reimbursement.

Payments to recipients will be made in one of the following forms:

- Payments will be made on the basis of documented claims for reasonable eligible costs incurred and will be submitted by the recipient not more frequently than quarterly; or
- Payments may be made in the form of advance payments according to recipients' cashflow requirements to be provided to the Minister by the recipient as part of its Annual Corporate Plan, based on the broader reporting requirements. For each fiscal year, recipients will provide evidence satisfactory to the Minister that all eligible expenditures have been incurred and paid, as requested by the Department.

Each claim is to be accompanied by a report of the work completed, as well as details and documentation of all costs being claimed, in a form satisfactory to the Minister. The report will cover the progress made on the relevant project assessment criteria. All claims shall be certified by an authorized officer of the recipient. The Minister may request at any time that recipients provide satisfactory evidence to demonstrate that all eligible costs claimed have been paid.

Prior to the reimbursement of final payments of an agreement, the Minister may, at his/her discretion, withhold up to ten percent (10%) of the contribution toward a project until all requirements of the agreement have been completed to the satisfaction of the Minister. The Minister shall have no obligation to pay more than ninety percent (90%) of any contribution prior to completion of the project and of any audits that may be required.

\* Where an application is selected for conditional approval to receive funding, expenditures from the date of the conditional approval will be deemed eligible for reimbursement, subject to fully executing a contribution agreement. If a contribution agreement is not signed, ISED will not reimburse any costs incurred.

## 14. DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook

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The DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook is an application document that details the proposed project's budget breakdown, contributing partners, training activity details, and participant and trainer target details sections. The DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook should include sufficient information to determine if project costs meet the following requirements:

- All requested funding is for [eligible costs](#) of the Digital Literacy Exchange Program;
- All requested funding is reasonable and necessary to ensure that the proposed project is successfully completed and the objectives of the project are achieved;
- The requested funding is a minimum of \$50,000 and does not exceed \$2 million in overall ISED funding);
- Each fiscal year of requested funding is detailed separately;
- The proposed budget includes identification of in-kind contributions, other government funding, and all other sources of funding including partners and other contributors to the project.
- Eligible in-kind contributions are included in the calculation of the total project cost. To be eligible, the in-kind contributions must be for goods or services that are eligible under the program and necessary to deliver the project. In-kind contributions must be detailed in the application, however will not be reimbursed.

## 15. Program Definitions

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<b>Applicant</b>	Individual or entity that has applied for a transfer payment.
<b>Contribution</b>	Transfer payment subject to performance conditions specified in a contribution agreement. A contribution is to be accounted for and is subject to audit.
<b>Contributor</b>	Partner that provides cash or in-kind contributions to the applicant/recipient's project.
<b>Eligibility Date</b>	Is the Ministerial conditional approval date, the earliest date on which eligible costs may be reimbursed.
<b>Eligible Costs</b>	Project costs that are incurred by the recipient and which, in the opinion of the Minister, are reasonable and required to carry out the eligible activities to which they relate. Eligible costs are those costs on which the contribution will be paid.
<b>Ineligible Costs</b>	Project costs that are not eligible under the program.
<b>In-kind Contributions</b>	Nonmonetary resources and cash-equivalent goods or services provided to the applicant/recipient in support of the project. The in-kind contributions must be for goods or services that are eligible under the program and necessary to deliver the project.
<b>Participant (Unique participant)</b>	<p>The program defines a participant as a learner who participates in a training program funded by DLEP.</p> <p><b>A Training Program</b> consists of a series of individual training sessions related to a topic. Examples of training programs could be "Safe use of the Internet" or "Microsoft Suite," among others. These examples refer to projects that offer a variety of training programs covering different topics. <b>If a participant attends all of the individual training sessions that are included in the two training programs, your organization can count that participant twice as a unique participant.</b></p> <p><b>A Training Session</b> consists of the individual training sessions that comprise a series that covers the same topic. For example, the "Safe use of Internet" training program could have a series of four individual training sessions related to this topic: Session 1 - Password, Session 2 - Security software, Session 3 - Spam email, and Session 4 - How to detect a high-risk website. <b>If a participant attends all four training sessions related to "Safe use of the Internet", your organization can count that participant as a unique participant only once.</b></p>
<b>Partner</b>	An entity that may receive funding from the applicant/recipient in support of direct delivery of the project activities.
<b>Recipient</b>	Individual or entity that either has been authorized to receive a transfer payment or that has received a transfer payment.
<b>Primary Recipient</b>	The lead individual or entity on a multi-applicant application that either has been authorized to receive a transfer payment or that has received a transfer payment.

<b>Terms and Conditions</b>	Document, approved by Treasury Board or a minister, which sets out the parameters under which transfer payments may be made for a given program.
<b>Total Government Funding</b>	Total funding provided by the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments for the project.
<b>Total Eligible Costs</b>	Total amount of project costs that are considered eligible under the program and for which the contribution will be paid. Total eligible costs exclude those costs which are deemed ineligible under the program.
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	The total cost of the project including: total government funding (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal), and all other sources of funding including amounts from partners and other contributors to the project, and the total value of all in-kind contributions for the project.
<b>Trainers</b>	The program defines a trainer as someone who <b>participates</b> in a training program undertaken by host organization and financed by DLEP. This learning opportunity contributes to training development and delivery. Trainers thereby develop the expertise needed to deliver technical skills training (e.g. including, but not limited to, classrooms, seminars, conferences, etc.).
<b>Transfer Payment</b>	Monetary payment, or transfer of goods, services or assets made, on the basis of an appropriation, to a third party, including a Crown corporation, that does not result in the acquisition by the Government of Canada of any goods, services or assets. Transfer payments are categorized as grants, contributions or other transfer payments. Transfer payments do not include investments, loans or loan guarantees.

## 16. Confidentiality

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Personal information provided in the DLEP Application Form and DLEP Quantitative Data Workbook is protected under the [Privacy Act](#); however, other information provided by organizations signing a contribution agreement with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada is not protected under this legislation. This information could be provided to any entity requesting it under the [Access to Information and Privacy Act](#).