

# Thriving Indigenous Systems Fund Frequently Asked Questions

# Grant Program Details

## 1. WHO ARE THESE GRANTS FOR?

Grants for the Thriving Indigenous Systems Fund support land-based First Nations, including Hereditary Groups and Indigenous-led organizations serving land-based First Nations and/or Hereditary Groups operating on the lands now known as BC.

These grants were designed to support Indigenous-led initiatives focused on healing, land, rights & responsibilities, and culture. The TISF will support work that creates the conditions for systemic transformation by preserving, evolving, and transforming the social, political, economic and cultural systems of Indigenous communities in BC.

## 2. HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Approximately \$6 million in funding will be awarded. Each grant will provide up to \$100,000 per year over three years to support Indigenous-led initiatives focused on healing, land, rights and responsibilities, and culture.

## 3. WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

The online application portal will close on May 21, 2025, at 5pm PT.

## 4. WHEN CAN WE EXPECT FINAL DECISIONS FOR FUNDING?

In July 2025, all applicants will be notified via email whether they've been invited to submit a Stage 2 application. Final funding decisions will be communicated via email by the end of October 2025.

## 5. DO APPLICANT ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO BE REGISTERED CHARITIES?

No, along with **qualified donees** such as registered charities and Bands, registered non-profit societies and **community service co-operatives** are also eligible to apply. Our complete eligibility criteria is on page 4 of the application guide.

Not sure if your organization is a qualified donee? You can search **the CRA's list of charities and qualified donees to confirm.**



## 6. WHAT IF OUR ORGANIZATION IS NOT A REGISTERED NON-PROFIT?

To be considered **registered** and be eligible for funding from Vancouver Foundation, your organization must be searchable under the public online directory **OrgBook BC**.

If you're interested in becoming a registered non-profit society, visit the **Government of BC's website**. If becoming a registered non-profit society is a barrier for your organization, please contact us at **indigenous.priorities@vancouverfoundation.ca**.

## 7. WE'RE IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A REGISTERED NON-PROFIT SOCIETY OR COMMUNITY SERVICE CO-OPERATIVE, ARE WE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

If your organization will be registered by June 1, 2025, you are eligible to apply for a TISF Grant.

## 8. WHY DOES VANCOUVER FOUNDATION REQUIRE ORGANIZATIONS TO BE REGISTERED?

In 2023, the **Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) updated their guidelines** allowing charities like Vancouver Foundation to grant directly to non-qualified donees, including registered nonprofits and community service co-operatives, whose activities advance the charitable purposes of the foundation.

As we explore and apply the CRA's guidance, including the best ways to expand the eligibility of grant programs, we will continue to explore opportunities that will enable us to fund other non-qualified donees.

**Please note:** Hereditary Groups will not be required to register as a non-profit society in order to apply.

For questions regarding this, please email **indigenous.priorities@vancouverfoundation.ca**.

## 9. CAN MY ORGANIZATION BE BASED OUTSIDE OF BC?

If your organization is based outside of BC but has operations in BC that benefit local communities, you are eligible to apply. You can complete the **eligibility quiz** or email us if you're still unsure.

## 10. WHAT IF WE ARE REGISTERED IN ANOTHER PROVINCE OR FEDERALLY?

You can be registered anywhere in Canada or federally but must be operating in and/or benefitting communities in BC. Your organization will also need to be listed on **Orgbook BC** as an 'extraprovincial society' for us to confirm eligibility. If your organization isn't listed on Orgbook BC as an "extraprovincial society", please complete an **extraprovincial registration** and maintain registered status while operating in BC.

If becoming registered as an "extraprovincial society" is a barrier for your organization, please contact us at **indigenous.priorities@vancouverfoundation.ca** to discuss how we can support your organization.

## 11. WHAT CAN THE FUNDS BE USED FOR?

TISF grants are not project-based and can be used for purposes that align with the funding priorities. Eligible expenses include:

- Operating costs
- Capacity building
- Elder and knowledge keeper support
- Gender-specific support groups
- Advocacy
- Governance capacity through research
- Policy development
- Cultural mentorship / preservation / transmission of cultural knowledge
- Staff wellness, or other initiatives addressing burn out
- Intergenerational learning
- Cultural healing
- Ceremonial practices
- Community events

Other activities and capital requests like costs associated with equipment, technology or renovations will be considered if they are required to advance your work within the funding priorities.

## 12. DO I NEED TO USE THE FUNDS WITHIN A CERTAIN TIME FRAME?

We trust that you intend to use the funding within six months of being awarded a grant and will use each year's payment within 12 months of receiving it. However, we know things can change and we just ask that you stay connected with us if that happens.

# Application Process



## **13. CAN MY COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION APPLY IF WE'VE RECEIVED A VANCOUVER FOUNDATION GRANT IN THE PAST?**

Yes, you can still apply for the grant if you've received funding from Vancouver Foundation in the past.

If you received a TISF grant in 2024, you are still eligible to apply. However, due to high demand and limited resources, priority may be given to organizations that have not received TISF funding previously.

## **14. CAN AN APPLICANT SUBMIT MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS?**

Applicants can submit multiple applications for different initiatives. However, we intend to increase our reach and impact throughout the lands now known as BC, knowing there will be a high demand for this funding. To ensure an equitable distribution of funding across the province, it is likely that only one proposal per applicant will be selected for funding.

We encourage applicants to work collaboratively across departments, groups, and entities to determine your community's priorities.

## **15. WHO DECIDES WHICH ORGANIZATIONS TO FUND?**

Funding decisions are made by Vancouver Foundation staff following recommendations from the Indigenous Priorities Advisory Council (IPAC).

IPAC brings together community members and thought leaders who are passionate about listening and responding to the experiences and priorities of Indigenous communities in building more collaborative working and funding relationships. Deeply rooted in their communities, the Council draws from their lived experiences and diverse cultural, professional, and academic learnings to review applications and make final funding recommendations.

## 16. WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IF I RECEIVE A TISF GRANT?

In accordance with the Canada Revenue Agency's reporting requirements, reporting is required for all grants made to:

- **Non-qualified donees/organizations** (including some land-based First Nations and Hereditary Groups),
- **Registered non-profit societies** and,
- **Community service cooperatives**

Grants to **qualified donees** do not require formal reporting. Instead, we've created an optional opportunity for organizations to connect with us to share their experience and discuss their organizational priorities and challenges.

More information will be provided to awarded recipients when final decisions are communicated at the end of October 2025.

## Contact

For general TISF questions and tech support for navigating the online grant management system, please email us at **[indigenous.priorities@vancouverfoundation.ca](mailto:indigenous.priorities@vancouverfoundation.ca)**.

Please allow at least 2-5 business days for one of our staff to get back to you.