



Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage

ACCESS-Ability

Programs Overview and Quick Guide



Business ACCESS-Ability

This program furthers the Province of Nova Scotia's commitment to creating equal opportunity, inclusive communities and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities. Through this program, grants are intended to improve overall accessibility and create welcoming commercial environments that persons with disabilities can access for business and employment opportunities. Funds are available for cost shared grants to business for accessibility-related improvements.

Community ACCESS-Ability

This program assists non-profit community organizations and municipalities with the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities in public buildings and spaces. Proposals are welcome from non-profit organizations, Nova Scotian Mi'kmaw Bands, and municipalities. Under this program, priority will be given to applications which demonstrate that the improvement proposed is part of an overall plan and commitment to the inclusiveness of persons with disabilities. Funds are available for cost shared grants to business for accessibility-related improvements.



Step 1 - What program should I apply to?

All applicants must be registered with the **Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks** as either a “For-Profit” entity for Business Accessibility or a “Non-Profit” entity for Community Accessibility. Under the Community Accessibility program, exceptions to this criteria apply for Royal Canadian Legions, Municipalities and Nova Scotia based groups registered as a federal charity with the Canadian Revenue Agency.

Link to the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks:

<https://rjsc.gov.ns.ca/rjsc>

Link to become a Federal Registered Charity:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/registering-charitable-qualified-donee-status/apply-become-registered-charity.html>

Applications cannot be processed unless the group has satisfied the above criteria

Once you’ve determined your group’s status, download the appropriate program guidelines

Business ACCESS-Ability:

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/access/small-business-access-ability-grant-guidelines.pdf>

Community ACCESS-Ability:

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/investing-our-future/community-funding-and-awards/community-access-ability-program>

Step 2 – Determine the scope of your project

Depending on the breadth and complexity of your project, you may feel the need to consult with an Accessibility Consultant on the current status of your site, planning for your project and/or implementation & execution of your project.

We are regularly updating our **CCH Accessibility Vendor Directory** and have listings for consultants, project management firms, contractors & tradespersons across the province and can send you this list by requesting it via both of our programs intake e-mails:

Business Accessibility – sbaccess@novascotia.ca

Community Accessibility - AccessAbilityGrants@novascotia.ca

This list can also help you source bids once you determined the scope of your project.

You may want to manage the program internally and develop your own scope of work, schedule and costs. The next page will explain what regulations and guidelines should be followed to ensure your site meets current accessibility standards.

Step 3 – What defines an accessible project? What guidelines should I follow?

With the majority of our projects related to the built environment and modifications to existing buildings, we will focus on the regulations and standards involved with such changes.

Our programs strive to create a barrier free path of travel from the public curb to a facilities' washrooms and will only fund projects that ensure this barrier free path of travel is ensured.

Our programs adhere to the Nova Scotia Building Code as our standard regulatory body and apply the guidelines as outlined in Schedule C – Accessibility. A link to these guidelines is listed here: https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/bcregs.htm#TOC2_11

This code will cover the majority of the items entailed within new and renovated construction projects but can be augmented with reference to many other standards and guidelines covering a multitude of areas. Examples of some of these standards can be found on Page 3 of the Business ACCESS-Ability Grant Program Guideline:

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/access/small-business-access-ability-grant-guidelines.pdf>

Ensure your contractor, vendor or yourself are familiar with what constitutes an accessible project as funding will only be distributed to projects meeting the Building Code or going above and beyond it

Step 4 – Pulling it all together

You've defined the scope and created a basic plan and now need to decide how to move forward.

You will have to do the following:

- 1) Determine project costs by soliciting bids/quotes for scope of work, materials, labour equipment, etc...most contractors will be able to provide a comprehensive bid/quote detailing costs for the entire project. Having multiple quotes is a very good exercise and allows you to ensure good value and fair pricing for your expenditures.
- 2) Determine what vendors/suppliers/contractors will be utilized
- 3) Fill out the application for the appropriate program:

Business ACCESS-Ability Program application

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/access/small-business-access-ability-grant-application.pdf>

Community ACCESS-Ability Program application

<https://cch.novascotia.ca/investing-our-future/community-funding-and-awards/community-access-ability-program>

Ensure you have satisfied all criteria as listed in the checklists shown in each application and provided documented proof of all requested documents

Step 5 – What happens after I send in my completed application?

Depending on the program applied to, the process is as follows:

Community Accessibility – program has defined intake rounds and all full and complete applications will begin to be evaluated after the closing of intake date. Successful applicants will be notified via a Ministers Letter stating program approval and amount rewarded. This letter will be accompanied by a Terms & Conditions document that will require signature and return to our department to activate a payment schedule for your project, as outlined in your Terms & Conditions document. A final report is required to ensure project completion and sometimes final payments.

Business Accessibility – program has a continuous intake process until fully subscribed but may move to intake rounds in the future. Successful applicants will be notified via a Ministers Letter stating program approval and amount rewarded. This letter will be accompanied by a Terms & Conditions document that will require signature and return to our department to activate a payment schedule for your project, as outlined in your Terms & Conditions document. A final report is required to ensure project completion and finals payments.

There are a variety of processes required to finalize payments and delays may occur for a variety of reasons such as incorrect mailing addresses, new vendor creations, delay in return of Terms & Conditions document, failure to provide requested documentation



**Please contact me if you have any questions
or require further assistance**

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