

SPOTLIGHT GRANT

2025 APPLICATION GUIDE



FEMMES ET SPORT AU CANADA
CANADIAN WOMEN & SPORT

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Canada 

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GRANT OVERVIEW



What is the Spotlight Grant?

Canadian Women & Sport's Spotlight Grant aims to shine a light on girls who typically don't get the access, support, or funding they need to fully participate in sport and physical activity.



How much funding is available?

There are two levels of funding available: \$5,000 and \$15,000. A total of \$425,000 will be given out.



When can I apply?

Spotlight Grant applications open Thursday, September 25, 2025 and close Sunday, October 26, 2025 at midnight Eastern Time.



SECTION 1: ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT GRANT

Why the Spotlight Grant?

Canadian Women & Sport's Spotlight Grant aims to shine a light on girls who typically don't get the access, support, or funding they need to fully participate in sport and physical activity.

The Spotlight Grant is part of the Community Sport for All Initiative which seeks to remove barriers and increase sport participation rates for underrepresented communities. This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.

Who is the Spotlight Grant for?

This grant is for community sport and physical activity organizations who are working to remove barriers and expand opportunities for girls from the following communities:

- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Black
- Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit/Inuk, Métis, Other
- Racialized
- Low-income
- Persons with a disability
- Newcomers (in Canada 5 years or less)

To be eligible for the Spotlight Grant, a minimum of **80% of participants** in the initiative must identify with or belong to the communities listed above.



SECTION 1: ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT GRANT

What type of initiatives can be funded?

The Spotlight Grant aims to fund initiatives that:

- Help keep girls participating in sport and physical activity.
- Increase the leadership capacity or representation of girls in sport and physical activity.
- Enhance an organization's capacity for gender equity and inclusion.

Canadian Women & Sport recognizes that the commonly used definition of sport doesn't give space to all forms of physical activity and recreational programming. Our definition of sport includes cultural programs, land-based programs, play and game-based programs, as well as programs that support reconnecting with one's identity. We welcome applications that support these types of programming.



SECTION 1: ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT GRANT

What funding is available?

Two funding tiers are available for the Spotlight Grant. Multiple grants will be awarded in each tier:



A total of \$425,000 will be distributed to community organizations.

Additional details regarding the requirements for each tier can be found in the eligibility section below.

When can I apply?

Applications open on Thursday, September 25th, 2025 and will close on Sunday, October 26th at midnight Eastern Time



SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

Important Considerations & Required Information

To be eligible for the Spotlight Grant, a minimum of 80% of participants in the initiative must identify with or belong to the following communities:

- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Black
- Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit/Inuk, Métis, Other
- Racialized
- Low-income
- Persons with a disability
- Newcomers (residing in Canada 5 years or less)

- ☐ All applicants must provide a business number issued by the CRA.
- ☐ Grant funding must be spent by March 2026.
- ☐ Organizations can submit multiple applications, including separate applications for each tier, however organizations will only be funded once by the Spotlight Grant.
- ☐ Eligibility requirements are the same for both funding tiers
- ☐ Canadian Women & Sport may reach out to verify any information provided.
- ☐ Applications received after October 26, 2025, will not be considered.



SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible?

Community-serving groups, non-profits and/or charity organizations who are led by, or directly serving girls and women from the priority communities listed above are encouraged to apply. Examples of eligible community organizations include:

- ✓ Community associations
- ✓ Non-profits
- ✓ Indigenous community organizations
- ✓ Community multi-sport organizations
- ✓ Community clubs or leagues

Organizations must have a business number issued by the CRA.

If you are a community group that does not have a business number, consider partnering with a local organization to be your fiscal sponsor (ex. Friendship Centres, Settlement Agencies, etc.). The fiscal sponsor would be accountable for all grant requirements (e.g., accepting funds, reporting, etc.).

Who is *not* eligible?

The following organizations are not eligible for the Spotlight Grant:

- x Schools
- x Individual applicants are not eligible for funding for personal use
- x Municipalities
- x Initiatives serving communities outside of Canada
- x PSOs and NSOs
- x International organizations



SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

What *can* you spend the grant funds on?

The Spotlight Grant can fund the following expenses directly related to your initiatives' activities including:

- ✓ Venue costs
- ✓ Marketing and communications
- ✓ Travel costs
- ✓ Compensation for human resources (i.e., salaries and benefits, facilitator honoraria, etc.)
- ✓ Equipment costs
- ✓ Participant and/or leader training
- ✓ Registration fees
- ✓ Data collection

Administrative costs (i.e., % of audit, % of bookkeeping, % of insurance) must be less than 20% of the overall project budget.

What *can't* you spend the grant funds on?

Eligible expenses are to be planned and expensed reasonably and fairly, using the most cost-effective approaches to ensure value for money. Frivolous or misuse of funds may result in ineligibility and/or requirement to return the funds.

- x Costs incurred before September 2025 or after March 31, 2026
- x Entertainment costs (i.e., gifts, celebrations, thank yous)
- x Prize monies/awards
- x Insurance claims, legal fees or claims, tickets or fines
- x Capital assets or capital investments
- x Severance costs, bonuses, commission, recruitment fees
- x Legal or illegal substances (i.e., liquor and alcohol costs, cannabis, drugs)
- x Investments or fund developments



SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY



Applicants must meet all the above requirements to be eligible.



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

How will applications be reviewed and selected?

Canadian Women & Sport established the Spotlight Selection Committee to help ensure a variety of perspectives inform the review process and the final decision-making. The Committee is made up of individuals with diverse lived and professional experience and intersecting identities. Committee members work in various capacities across the country both within and outside of sport.

The Spotlight Selection Committee is represented by the following people:

- Poonam Sandhu-Mooker (she/her), Mental Performance Consultant, BC
- Manon Landry Ouellette (she/her/elle), Director of Leadership Coaching and Culture - Sport New Brunswick, NB
- Melanie Gerin-Lajoie (she/her/elle), Athletics and Recreation Manager - George Brown College, ON
- Tolu Ilelaboye (she/they), Consultant, MB
- Aprille Deus (she/her), Lead Performance Analyst and Video Coordinator, 3x3 Basketball Senior Women's National Team - Canada Basketball, ON



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

How will applications be reviewed and selected?

All incoming applications will be reviewed by at least two trained reviewers from the Spotlight Selection Committee. The Committee will then develop shortlists for each tier. Shortlisted applications will be reviewed again by the Canadian Women & Sport Selection team.

Unfortunately, not all organizations can be funded, and some may not be funded at the funding tier requested. Informed by the evaluation scores, Canadian Women & Sport will proportionally distribute funds with consideration for communities served and geography. Example: if 15% of the total applications received are from Saskatchewan, then roughly 15% of the grant funding will be distributed to applicants from Saskatchewan who meet the granting criteria.

Due to our team's capacity and the volume of applications, we will not be available to provide feedback on individual applications.



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

How will applications be evaluated?

While we have done our best to design an impartial and equitable review and selection process, our experience is that we will receive far more deserving applications than we can fund. We hope that by being transparent with our process you gain a deeper understanding of how decisions are made and join us in celebrating those who are selected.

Funding Tier - All	Application Question	Evaluation Focus
	Describe the participants from the communities you are seeking grant funding for. What are their barriers or enablers to sport and physical activity participation?	Demonstrates an understanding of who the participants are, what keeps them from participating, and what helps them to participate in sport/physical activity.
	Describe your organization's relationship to, and/or with the community(ies) that you will be serving through your program.	Details how the organization is representative of the community(ies) being served. OR Demonstrates a successful history of building relationships and working collaboratively and positively with the community(ies) who will be served through this initiative.
	Describe the background and/or qualifications of those who will be delivering the program.	Demonstrates a consideration for what is beneficial and/or necessary from program leaders (ex., safety practices, training, relationships, representation, etc.).



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

How will applications be evaluated?

Funding Tier: All	Application Question	Evaluation Focus
	Describe the physical space where this program will take place and the steps you will take to ensure that the space is physically accessible, inclusive, and safe.	Demonstrates consideration and planning for the accessibility, inclusivity, and safety of the physical space
	Describe the protection and practices that are in place to ensure the environment is accessible, inclusive, and safe.	Demonstrates consideration and planning for making the social and emotional environment accessible, inclusive, and safe (e.g., Rule of 2, Sharing Circle, etc.)
	Describe the program and/or related activities you are seeking to fund with this grant.	Activities demonstrate a clear connection to the impact goals selected in the above question. <i>*We welcome all forms of sport, physical activity and recreation programs including wellness programs, land-based programs and those that focus on reconnecting with community and personal identity.</i>
	Describe how the program and/or related activities meet the needs of participants, are developmentally appropriate, fun, or challenging.	Demonstrates an understanding of how to intentionally create a program/ environment that considers the needs of participants, (e.g., creating a sense of belonging, developmentally appropriate, fun, challenging, etc.) and/or addresses the barriers that were outlined in the question above.
	Please provide a program budget.	How effectively does the budget demonstrate reasonable and appropriate allocation of funds?



SECTION 3:
APPLICATION
REVIEW &
SELECTION
PROCESS

How will applications be evaluated?

Funding Tier: \$15K	Application Question	Evaluation Focus
	What kinds of challenges do you anticipate to building and/or executing your program? What is your plan B, etc. for the challenges?	Demonstrates an understanding of the risks associated with the initiative and how to effectively plan for those so the program doesn't stop because of the challenge.
	What do you hope will be the lasting impact of your program?	Demonstrates an understanding of some of the key ways in which the organization wants to help/inspire/better the community in the future through the proposed program.
	Thinking about your impact goals (from the question above), tell us how you will monitor the program and know if it is successful?	Demonstrates an understanding of how to measure the success of the initiative in a way that is culturally appropriate.



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

Which funding tier is right for our organization?

The short answer is that it depends on what you are looking to fund – not the size of your organization. If you have a reasonable plan for the grant funds you are applying for and can meet the expectations of grant recipients (see “[Funded Applicant Checklist](#)” on pg. 19), you are welcome to apply for any funding tier that makes the most sense for your organization’s initiative.

Example A: You could be a smaller organization that requires more funding for a full season program (e.g., leader training, leader compensation, subsidizing registrations costs for participants, venue costs, etc.).

Example B: You could be a larger organization that needs \$5,000 to support one piece of a larger program that has other sources of funding (e.g., purchasing gender-specific equipment for your program).



SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

Application Resources

- [Link to downloadable app questions](#)
- [Budget template](#)

Helpful Resources

- [Same Game: A Step-By-Step Toolkit to Bring Your Gender Equity Vision to Life](#)
- [She Belongs](#)
- [Gender Equity LENS e-module](#)
- [Indigenous Communities: Active for Life](#)
- [Quality Sport for Communities and Clubs](#)
- [NCCP Coaching Athletes with a Disability](#)

Helpful Organizations

- [Respect Group Inc.](#)
- [Sport for Life](#)
- [Women's Sports Foundation](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport](#)



SECTION 4: ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION & PRIVACY

Accessibility & Inclusion

Canadian Women & Sport is committed to providing equitable access to our programs and services. To learn more, please read our policies.

- [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Accessibility Policy](#)
- [Official Languages Policy](#)

Should you require accommodation to support completing your application, please email us at spotlight@womenandsport.ca.

Privacy Policy

All personal and contact information shared with Canadian Women & Sport through the Submittable application platform will be kept private and confidential. Any data collected will only be shared in summary form and not used to identify any individual or organization.

Details on your proposed initiative will be shared with our Spotlight Selection Committee for the purposes of decision-making.

For more information, please review our Privacy Policy.



SECTION 5: ACCEPTED APPLICANTS

What can I expect if my application is accepted?

Recipients will be required to confirm their acceptance of funding in November, 2025.

Once confirmed, the list below outlines the requirements of, and opportunities for, Spotlight Grant funded organizations.

Funded Applications Checklist - all Spotlight Grant recipients will be required to:

- ☐ Sign a funding agreement and provide financial information to Canadian Women & Sport.
- ☐ Spend grant funding by March 15, 2026.
- ☐ Publicly acknowledge in all communication and promotional activities:
 - Canadian Women & Sport for the financial support received, and;
 - The Government of Canada for the financial support received in both French and English
 - Please note, recipients must notify the Government of Canada three days before any public announcements are made about being awarded the Spotlight Grant (this includes on social media).
 - More information will be provided in the Recipient Package, including templates in both French and English of recognition requirements, and access to the Government of Canada & Canadian Women & Sport logos.



SECTION 5: ACCEPTED APPLICANTS

Requirements of Accepted Applicants

- ☐ Attend a virtual Retaining Girls in Sport Workshop, delivered by Canadian Women & Sport, with fellow grant recipients in Nov/Dec 2025.
- ☐ Notify Canadian Women & Sport if there are any significant changes to your proposed initiative and budget.
- ☐ Complete a final Spotlight Grant Impact Report.
- ☐ Manage all finances and partnerships associated with the Spotlight Grant.



SECTION 6: HOW TO APPLY

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO APPLY

STEP 1

Read the application guide and ensure your initiative meets the grant eligibility.

STEP 2

Ensure you have all required information and documents prepared for your application:

- Two representatives in your organization ready to include as contacts for the application.
- Access to financial and budget information.
- Business number.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)

STEP 3

Start your application! Once you have created an account through our application portal, you can save your work and return to complete your application anytime before October 26, 2025 at midnight ET. You will also be able to login at any time to check the status of your application.

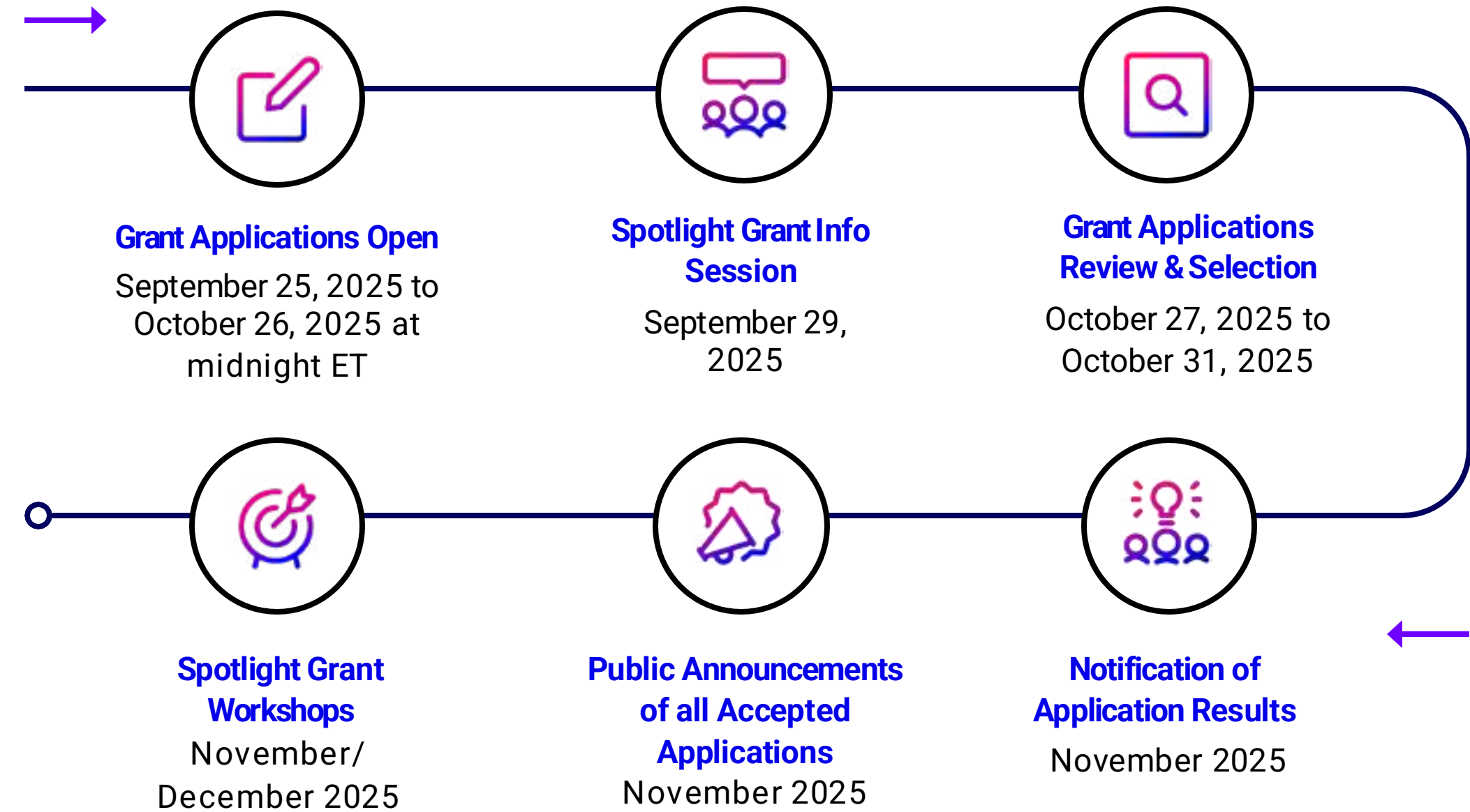
STEP 4

Ensure your application is complete and press submit.

SECTION 6: HOW TO APPLY



Grant Timeline





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When does the grant open for applicants?

The Spotlight Grant will be open for applications from September 25, 2025 until October 26, 2025 at midnight ET.

Who can apply for the Spotlight Grant?

The Spotlight Grant is available for community organizations who are intending to serve a minimum of 80% of participants from the following communities:

- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Black
- Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit/Inuk, Métis, Other
- Racialized
- Low-income
- Persons with a disability
- Newcomers (in Canada 5 years or less)

When will organizations hear back on the status of their applications?

All applicants will be notified of the status of their application by mid-November, 2025

Can I apply to both tiers of the Spotlight Grant or submit multiple applications for different projects or activities?

Yes, however, your organization is only eligible to receive one grant

Can I submit my application or other supporting documents to Canadian Women & Sport by email?

Applications will only be accepted via our Submittable grant platform. Should you require accommodation to use this platform, please email us at spotlight@womenandsport.ca.

Are written applications the only way to submit?

Yes, however, if you require accommodation to complete the application through the platform, please email us at spotlight@womenandsport.ca.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does the organization need to only serve girls/women to be eligible?

No. While we welcome and support organizations that have a mandate to serve girls, we also will fund programs within other organizations that serve a minimum of 80% of girls and women from the Spotlight Grant's priority communities.

If there is a project that was funded already and is now complete and an organization wants to continue it further by changing/modifying it, are they eligible?

Yes! As long as you meet the other above criteria.

For More Information & Contact Information

If you have read through this application guide and have further questions, please contact us at spotlight@womenandsport.ca. Our team will do our best to respond to all questions within two business days.

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