

Background

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to increasing access to early learning and child care through the creation of additional spaces in the not-for-profit/public sector.

The Minor Infrastructure Program provides grant funding up to \$10,000 per-space (maximum of \$250,000) to eligible community projects for the development of new child care spaces by way of new centre development or expansion of existing child care centres.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is eligible under the Minor Infrastructure Program?

- Eligible entities include
 - Nova Scotia's 13 First Nations' Communities
 - Registered non-profit or charitable organizations
 - Municipalities or organizations wholly owned by a municipality
 - Universities, Nova Scotia Community College

Applications will be accepted from entities who intend to become not-for-profit and operate licensed child care. Projects may be approved on the condition that the entity becomes a not-for-profit organization and has been approved to operate licensed child care. Contact ECDServices@novascotia.ca for more information on the process to become a licensed child care provider.

2. What is eligible under the Minor Infrastructure Program?

- The Minor Infrastructure Program is available for small scale projects that support rapid creation of new child care spaces, including:
 - Minor renovations/retrofits (does not include significant renovations/new builds or purchase of buildings) such as:
 - Addition of bathrooms to meet regulatory requirements
 - Addition of windows to increase usable play space
 - Permanent outdoor equipment (fencing/ground coverings/play structures) that are required for additional space creation
 - Reconfigurations/conversions that increase play space
 - Attic conversion to create storage/renovation of space
 - Shed construction to create storage/renovation of space
 - Equipment costs (toys, fixtures, fittings, furniture)

3. What is not eligible under the Minor Infrastructure Project?

- Ineligible costs include:
 - Purchase of building, land or other property-based assets;
 - Design/legal/project management costs in excess of ten percent of the project value.
 - Project management (legal/accounting) costs that are part of broader operations and not directly resourced to the project.
 - Portable costs or other costs related to temporary locations that do not result in permanent child care spaces
 - Financing/interest costs
 - Staffing or other operational costs
- Proposed projects under the Minor Infrastructure Program must be completed within the funding guidelines of up to \$10,000 per space, up to a maximum of \$250,000 including the cost of classroom materials. Cost overruns will not be funded by the Department. On a case-by-case basis some projects may be approved in excess of the cap (but within the \$10,000 per space allocation). These projects must demonstrate the ability to rapidly create a significant number of spaces (more than 25) and are subject to all other program requirements. Proponents must ensure adequate scoping and costing are completed prior to submitting a proposal.

4. How does the department decide what projects are approved?

- Applications for the Minor Infrastructure Program are assessed based on the following criteria:
 - Financial and construction feasibility
 - Community Need
 - Readiness to Proceed - projects that are not expected to be completed within the allocated timeframe will not be approved
 - Operational Viability

5. What is the deadline for applications?

- There is no deadline for applications. The Department will accept applications for the Minor Infrastructure Program on an ongoing basis and approve projects within the budget available for the program.

6. What is required for the application, and how is the funding provided for the project?

- Application requirements are outlined in the Minor Infrastructure Program Proponent Guide.
- Funding is provided to a maximum of \$10,000 per space but will be based on the actual costs of the project. Funding will be advanced based on claims submitted for costs incurred.

A portion of the funds may be provided in advance of the project to facilitate cashflow, if required and on the request of the Proponent.

Operator FAQ

Minor Infrastructure Program for Community Based Early Learning and Child Care Projects

Date: February 2024

7. Why are private operators not eligible for the Minor Infrastructure Program?

- Under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, the Department has committed to increasing early learning and child care spaces in the not-for-profit sector.
- If a private provider is interested in transitioning to a not-for-profit model and exploring expansion opportunities, they are encouraged to contact the Department to discuss their options.

8. Is there funding available from the Department to support programming adjustments?

- Once licensed, any new spaces will be eligible for departmental funding under existing grant programs, as applicable, including the Quality Investment Grant, the Inclusion Support Grant, and the Infant Quality Care Grant.

Questions?

- For more information on the Minor Infrastructure Program, visit childcarenovascotia.ca/operators or email ECDSinfrastructure@novascotia.ca.
- For more information about becoming a licensed early learning and child care provider, visit [Licensing Services](#) or email ECDServices@novascotia.ca.