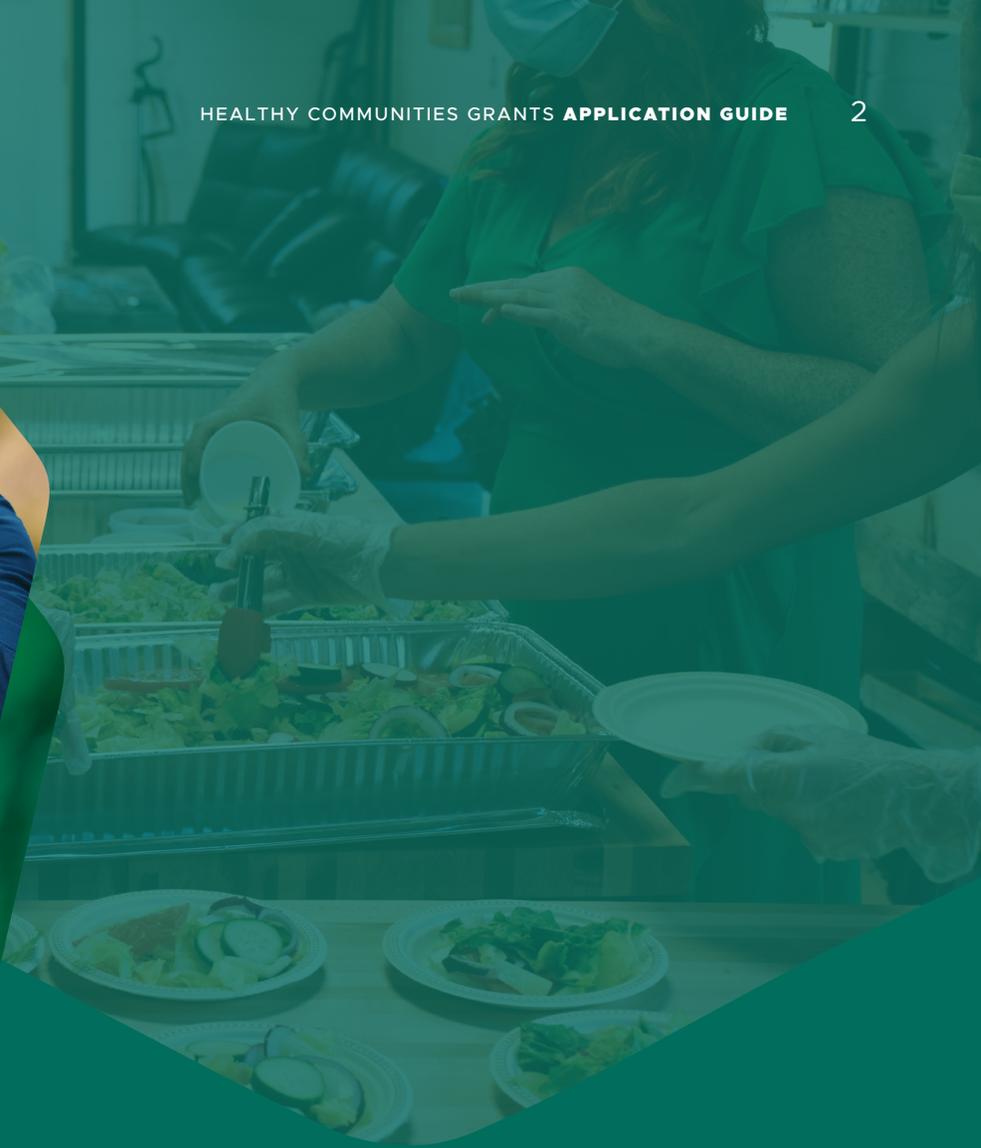




# Healthy Communities Grants

APPLICATION  
**Guide**  
2026





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This is a step-by-step guide to help you fill out your grant application for the PlanH Healthy Communities Grants. In 2026, there are two types of grants you can apply for: Community Connectedness and Healthy Public Policy.

Please read the application guidelines carefully before applying.

*Please note: This isn't the actual application form. This guide gives you important details, like background info, grant guidelines and steps on how to apply.*

#### **Online application**

# Overview

## 1.1 Program Goal

Since 2012, PlanH has given out over 305 grants to Indigenous and local governments in British Columbia. **The goal of the PlanH Program is to support Indigenous and local governments, including health authorities, to advance policies, programs and strategies aimed at improving health equity, and well-being.**

In 2026, PlanH is funding projects in two areas:

- Community Connectedness
- Healthy Public Policy

Projects applying for the Healthy Public Policy grant should align with at least one of the six population and public health priorities from B.C.'s [Population and Public Health Framework: Strengthening Public Health](#).

1. Best Start in Life,
2. Health Impacts of Climate Change,
3. Communicable Disease Prevention & Response,
4. Non-communicable Disease & Injury Prevention,
5. Prevention & Reduction of Substance-related Harms
6. Population Mental Health & Wellness.

Check the [FAQ on the website](#) for more details.

The BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC) runs the Healthy Communities Grants as part of the PlanH program. PlanH works with health authorities, local and Indigenous governments and the Ministry of Health to create healthier communities that focus on people, society and the environment.

## 1.2 Applicant Eligibility

The following groups can apply for the grant:

- First Nations Bands
- First Nations Tribal Councils
- Métis Chartered Communities
- Municipalities
- Regional Districts
- Self-Governing First Nations

The following groups cannot apply:

- Community Groups
- For-profit Groups
- Health Authorities
- Hospital Foundations
- Individuals
- Non-profit Organizations
- School Districts

Applications need to be fully filled out and should include a budget and a basic work plan. Keep in mind that projects focusing on at least one of the six priorities, as well as promoting Truth, Rights & Reconciliation, health equity and anti-racism, are more likely to be funded.

A letter of support from your regional health authority the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) or other partners is recommended but not required. If you have questions or want to set up a call, email [grants@bchealthycommunities.ca](mailto:grants@bchealthycommunities.ca).

**Before you apply, make sure you are part of an eligible Indigenous or local government, that you have read this guide, and that your project qualifies for support.**



### 1.3 Grant Streams Summary

	COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS	HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	To help people feel more connected and included in their community.	To support the creation of policies that help make communities healthier.
<b>MAXIMUM AMOUNT PER GRANT</b>	\$5,000	\$15,000
<b>APPLICATION DUE DATE</b>	June 2, 2026	
<b>ADJUDICATION PERIOD</b>	Successful applicants notified in August.	
<b>PROJECTS START</b>	September 1, 2026	
<b>FINAL REPORTS DUE</b>	October 1, 2027	
<b>LATEST PROJECT END</b>	September 30, 2027	

\* Healthy Public Policy Initiatives must align with one or more of the following six population and public health priorities: Best Start in Life, Health Impacts of Climate Change, Communicable Disease Prevention & Response, Non-communicable Disease & Injury Prevention, Reduction of Substance-related Harms or Population Mental Health and Wellness – see the FAQ on the [Application Guide website](#) for more information.

The PlanH Healthy Communities Grants support projects that focus on prevention. This means working to identify health issues before symptoms develop instead of dealing with them after they arise. This approach looks at the bigger picture, like social and environmental factors that affect health.

These actions take place where we live, work and learn. They focus on solving problems like unfair treatment, racism, and wealth inequality that can harm people's health.<sup>1</sup>

#### Application Tip

##### Upstream projects have more impact.

Projects that focus on preventing problems before they start have a bigger impact. These projects use strategies to improve basic social, physical, and economic conditions. They help remove obstacles and provide support so people can be as healthy as possible.

These strategies make sure everyone has access to healthcare and services to help reduce the negative effects of unfair disadvantages on their health.

<sup>1</sup> National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. [http://nccdh.ca/images/uploads/Moving\\_Upstream\\_Final\\_En.pdf](http://nccdh.ca/images/uploads/Moving_Upstream_Final_En.pdf)



# Background & Context

## What is a Healthy Community?

Where we live, work and learn affects our health and well-being. Things like our surroundings, social connections, and money situation all play a big role. These are called the determinants of health, and they have a bigger impact than personal choices.

Healthy communities help people live better by planning spaces, services, and programs that make it easier to stay healthy.

### 2.1 Community Health & Well-being

Overall, people in British Columbia are some of the healthiest in the world, but not everyone has the same access to health. Telling people to make healthy choices isn't enough if their surroundings—like their jobs, neighborhoods, and schools—don't support good health.

Studies show that 60 to 75 percent of what affects our health happens outside the healthcare system.<sup>2</sup> Things like transportation, parks, friends and family support, how neighborhoods are built, and access to healthy food all play a big role in keeping us healthy.



### Application Tip

#### Connect with us to talk about your project.

We strongly encourage you to contact us with any questions about the application process or your proposed project before the June 2, 2026 deadline.

Reach us at [grants@bchealthycommunities.ca](mailto:grants@bchealthycommunities.ca) to chat via email or schedule a call with us.

### 2.2 How Can Local and Indigenous Governments Create Healthier Communities?

Building healthy communities helps not just individuals but the whole community. It can lead to more physical activity, better mental health, healthier eating, more community connection, and other positive changes.

Local and Indigenous governments can make a difference by:

#### Planning

Using smart planning and land use strategies to create healthier places, encourage community involvement, and make better decisions for public health.

#### Policy

Making sure health and community well-being are part of the goals in Official Community Plans, Regional Health and Wellness plans, regional growth strategies, municipal plans, Comprehensive Community Plans, and zoning by-laws.

#### Programs

Helping and promoting neighbourhood-level projects that fit into a bigger strategy to improve community health and well-being.

#### Partnerships

Working together with health authorities, schools, academic institutions, and community groups to create plans that make communities healthier.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Medical Association. Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health: A Role for the Medical Profession. 2012. <https://policybase.cma.ca/link/policy10672>

# Program Streams

## 3.1 Community Connectedness Stream

Feeling connected to others and being part of a community is important for everyone. It helps people feel like they belong.

People who feel a strong connection to their community are more than twice as likely to say they have good health compared to those who feel less connected.<sup>4</sup>

A connected community is a place where people know their neighbours, make friends, and build lasting relationships. It gives people chances to meet up in person or online, connect with others, and take part in activities. These communities help people feel involved and engaged.

Local and Indigenous governments help people feel connected by creating welcoming and supportive communities where everyone can thrive. A big part of this is making sure that people who don't always get heard have a say in projects and decisions. Check out the resources in the Application Tip box on Page 7 for ways to make sure everyone is included in community-building efforts.

Here are some examples of community connectedness projects that could get PlanH funding:

- Creating plans to make community spaces safer and improve access to healthy food.
- Bringing in a facilitator to guide a community planning forum for a community program or Official Community Plan.
- Bringing together recreation and transportation providers to help set up a dementia-friendly community program.
- Creating events to support connections to community and culture for Indigenous youth or elders.



### Application Tip

#### Let's partner-up

Applicants are encouraged to show they are working with different community groups and health authorities by providing letters of support or partnership agreements.

<sup>4</sup> "Community belonging and health." Nancy Ross. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2001003/article/6105-eng.pdf>

### 3.2 Healthy Public Policy Stream

Public policies are government-led plans to improve things like health and well-being in a community.

Healthy public policies can shape a community in many ways. They help improve people's lives by focusing on important areas like housing, education, access to healthy food, childcare, and transportation. When Indigenous and local governments create and review these policies with fairness and health in mind, they can make a lasting difference for everyone.

In 2026, projects in the Healthy Public Policy Stream should focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Best Start in Life
- Health Impacts of Climate Change
- Communicable Disease Prevention & Response
- Non-communicable Disease & Injury Prevention
- Prevention & Reduction of Substance-related Harms
- Population Mental Health & Wellness

Making sure everyone has fair opportunities is a key part of building healthy communities (see below).



<sup>5</sup> "A Framework for Analyzing Public Policies: Practical Guide"  
National Collaborating Healthy Public Policy, 2012.  
[http://ncchpp.ca/docs/Guide\\_framework\\_analyzing\\_policies\\_En.pdf](http://ncchpp.ca/docs/Guide_framework_analyzing_policies_En.pdf)

Projects need to focus on fixing unfair differences in society to qualify for funding.

Here are some examples of healthy public policy projects that could get PlanH funding:

- Creating an equity-informed policy framework or adding fairness considerations to an existing policy
- Creating a culturally grounded policy for supporting community mental health and wellness
- Reviewing a policy to make sure it's fair for everyone and updating it, like a transportation plan, housing strategy, poverty reduction plan, or election rules
- Starting a study or report on a possible health-focused policy in your community, like looking into the idea of an agricultural land trust or how participatory budgeting could make a difference.

**Thanks to a partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH), we are offering extra grants in the Healthy Public Policy Stream for projects in the VCH region.** You don't need to fill out a separate application—just make sure to mention in your application that your project is in the VCH health region.



#### Application Tip

##### **Incorporate equity into your project.**

Equity means making sure everyone has a fair chance to succeed by giving people the support, resources, and opportunities they need<sup>i</sup>. Looking at equity in a project means asking who will benefit and who might be left out, then finding ways to include everyone<sup>ii</sup>.

<sup>i</sup> City for All Women, '[Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities](#)'.

<sup>ii</sup> PlanH, '[Supporting Equity in Planning and Policy Action Guide](#)'.

# Application Details

Application Deadline	Funding Decision Notification
<p>Applications will be accepted until 11:59 pm Pacific Time on June 2, 2026. Applicants will automatically receive an email confirming the receipt of their application.</p> <p><b>June 2, 2026</b></p>	<p>Successful applicants will receive notification in August 2026. Projects will start and finish between September 2026 and September 2027.</p> <p><b>August 2026</b></p>

## 4.1 How to Apply

Please note: this is not the application form. The online application and workplan/budget template can be found [here](#).

## 4.2 Application Review

Projects will be reviewed based on eligibility, how the money will be used, and how well the project matches the goals in this guide. For the Healthy Public Policy stream, applications must also align with the six population and public health priorities. Please ensure the application is clear, complete and doable, and that it is intended to be implemented within the one-year timeframe. PlanH grants will not fund projects that take advantage of or harm any person or group.

Communities can email [grants@bchealthycommunities.ca](mailto:grants@bchealthycommunities.ca) to find out how grants work, what is needed to apply, or to set up a call.

## 4.3 Project Learning & Reflection Process

### Onboarding

Our team will set up a welcome call with Healthy Public Policy and Community Connectedness grant recipients to introduce ourselves and find out how we can best support you.

### Final reports

All grant recipients must complete a final report when their project is finished. The questions in the report will be similar to the ones in the application. Templates for the final report will be emailed to successful grant recipients before September 2027. You can check out past final reports on the [PlanH Grants FAQ](#) for examples.

Our team is dedicated to using culturally safe practices when evaluating projects. We will work with communities to create useful learning and reflection tools whenever we can.



## 4.4 Budget & Workplan

A budget and workplan template is available with the application. Please save the file as “**COMMUNITY NAME\_ PlanH\_WorkplanBudget\_2026**”. See Section 5 for examples of how to complete these documents.

The project workplan is a simple outline of important project steps, who is responsible for them, and what support BCHC might provide (see Section 4.5 for a list of BCHC staff supports). We know things might not always go in order, but this helps us understand your project plan better.

### **You can use grant money for these costs and expenses:**    **You cannot use grant money for these costs and expenses:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Project staff (for tasks like organizing, leading discussions, building partnerships, and student research);</li> <li>→ Communication costs (such as flyers, posters, printing, and design work);</li> <li>→ Costs for Indigenous and local governments, as well as community partners, to attend partnership meetings and events (e.g., venue, travel, food, lodging, and childcare);</li> <li>→ Data collection (e.g. asset mapping and environmental audits);</li> <li>→ Honoraria to reduce barriers to volunteer participation;</li> <li>→ Capital costs (e.g. furniture/equipment) no more than 40% of the PlanH funded amount; and</li> <li>→ Contingency spending no more than 10% of the PlanH funded amount.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Expenses for activities that have already happened;</li> <li>→ Current community programs, unless you are expanding them to reach more people or increase their impact;</li> <li>→ Costs related to improving or using direct health services, like hospital care or medical treatments (see Page 4 for an explanation of ‘upstream’ and ‘downstream’);</li> <li>→ Entertainment or personal expenses;</li> <li>→ One-time events that are not connected to a bigger plan for a healthier community;</li> <li>→ Spending on big items like furniture or equipment if it’s more than 40% of the PlanH grant money; and,</li> <li>→ Contingency spending allocated for more than 10% of the PlanH funded amount.</li> </ul> <p>Past PlanH grant recipients must have completed all required reports for any grants previously received.</p> |
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## 4.5 BCHC Staff Supports

Healthy Communities Grants provide both money and extra help from BCHC staff. This support can include phone, email, or video calls, and sometimes in-person help. BCHC helps communities grow by offering support in different ways, such as:

- Giving advice on setting goals and improving policies;
- Providing advice on thoughtful planning and decision-making;
- Helping track progress and improve evaluation methods, including setting goals, collecting data, and creating review plans.
- Looking into different topics, including how to build partnerships, gather data, and improve things like housing, food systems, transportation planning, and updates to community and health plans.
- Creating ways for people to get involved in their community both in person and online, including planning, designing, and leading discussions.
- Helping local and Indigenous governments connect with community groups, other governments, and regional health authorities by making introductions, organizing meetings, and building relationships.
- Reviewing documents and advising on guiding principles.
- Taking part in advisory groups to share ideas and give advice;
- Providing helpful materials and guides created by BC Healthy Communities and other groups;
- Creating and hosting online training sessions and webinars tailored to your needs; and
- Organizing and helping lead big events, like regional forums.

# Sample Workplan & Budget

A sample workplan and budget are shown on the next pages. If you have any questions about creating your budget or workplan, email us at [grants@bchealthycommunities.ca](mailto:grants@bchealthycommunities.ca) to learn more or set up a call.

## Sample Workplan

PROJECT MILESTONE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE OF COMPLETION	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	BCHC SUPPORT ANTICIPATED
<b>Project Initiation and Relationship Building</b>	Reach out to and coordinate with project partners to confirm project plan and outline how we will work together	November	Stephen Wong	Connecting with Regional Health Authority
<b>Engagement and Communications Planning</b>	Develop engagement objectives, strategies and communications plans	January	Taylor Brown	Review of engagement plan and comms materials
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Host four virtual and two in-person engagement sessions with partners and stakeholders	May	Angela Lee	Facilitation / technical support
<b>Share-back and Best Practice Research</b>	Summarize and report back on engagement session info. Research best/wise practice policy options.	July	Sam Gill	None
<b>Action Planning</b>	Co-develop proposed action plan with key partners, prepare final report/action plan.	September	Jo Martin	Participate as member of review committee

## Sample Community Connectedness Stream Budget

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	PLANH CONTRIBUTION	OTHER SOURCES (CASH, IN-KIND)
<b>PROJECT COORDINATION (PART-TIME)</b>	Part-time role for a community member, reporting to steering committee	\$15,000	\$2,000	\$13,000
<b>MULTI-SECTORAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>	Quarterly meeting (venue, refreshments)	\$800	\$0	\$800
<b>HONORARIA FOR PARTICIPANTS</b>	To support travel, internet, or other costs (\$50 x 50 participants)	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0
<b>COMMUNICATIONS &amp; OUTREACH</b>	Online and radio ads, etc.	\$700	\$200	\$500
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	Design, printing, distribution, analysis (two surveys)	\$1,000	\$300	\$700
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>EXPECTED SUPPORT FROM OTHER SOURCES</b>	CASH OR IN-KIND?	PROJECTED AMOUNT		
<b>REGIONAL DISTRICT</b>	IN-KIND	\$14,500		
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE</b>	IN-KIND	\$500		



## Sample Healthy Public Policy Stream Budget

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	PLANH CONTRIBUTION	OTHER SOURCES (CASH, IN-KIND)
<b>COORDINATION OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING ANALYSIS PROCESS</b>	Engagement with impacted community members to inform process design and recommendations	\$15,000	\$7,000	\$8,000
<b>FACILITATION FOR TWO INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS</b>	Two half-day strategic workshops (inter-department)	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
	Honoraria to support travel, internet costs (\$50 x 20 participants)	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	(Masks, hand sanitizer, refreshments)	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
<b>ANALYSIS REPORTING</b>	Staff time to analyze existing transportation/mobility strategy (45 hours) and write recommendations report (45 hours)	\$6,500	\$2,500	\$4,000
<b>DESIGN, TRANSLATION AND SHARING OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT</b>	Staff time and communications support	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$32,500</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$17,500</b>





Our team is available to support you during the application process.  
Please contact our team at [grants@bchealthycommunities.ca](mailto:grants@bchealthycommunities.ca)

**Questions?** Please refer to the FAQs on the PlanH [website](#).

The PlanH Healthy Communities Grants are managed by BC Healthy Communities Society as part of the PlanH program. PlanH helps local governments learn, build partnerships and plan ways to make communities healthier. With support from the B.C. Ministry of Health, PlanH focuses on improving public health across the province.