

Child Care Sustainability Trust 2025/2026

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Child Care Sustainability Trust?

The Child Care Sustainability Trust is an endowment fund managed by The Winnipeg Foundation. The Trust supports one-time grant opportunities for licensed child care facilities to undertake infrastructure and innovative programming improvements.

On an annual basis, a portion of the interest earned is made available to eligible applicants from licensed, non-profit child care centres and nursery schools, as well as licensed family/group home providers. The annual available funds are dependent on market conditions and the spending policy determined by The Winnipeg Foundation.

2. Why was the Child Care Sustainability Trust established?

The Child Care Sustainability Trust was established to ensure the ongoing sustainability of licensed child care services through long-term sector investment.

The goal of the Trust is to increase the sustainability, flexibility, accessibility and quality of child care services to support Manitoba families into the future by having dedicated funds available for the long-term.

3. Who is eligible for grants under the Trust?

All licensed, non-profit child care/nursery school facilities and licensed family/group home providers are eligible to apply. Each centre with a unique facility identification number can apply separately. The maximum available per facility for grant funding is as follows:

- \$5,000 for family/group home
- \$20,000 for child care facilities with 50 spaces or less
- \$25,000 for child care facilities with 51 spaces or more

Facilities must submit a completed application form, provide a clear description of the project, provide a description of the facility, and include an itemized breakdown of costs and/or quotations (if applicable). Multiple quotations for the same item are not required.

NOTE: For home-based providers, only 50 per cent of individual project costs can be claimed for investments to the home that improve shared spaces (the space used by the home when the children are not present). This includes, but is not limited to, improvements to fencing, patios, sod, kitchens, bathrooms, heating and cooling systems, roofing, etc.

4. What are the three project types under the Trust?

Facilities may choose the project type(s) relevant to their project to request funds up to the maximum grant amount based on facility type. The three project types the Child Care Sustainability Trust is comprised of are:

- 1. Infrastructure Improvement:** to improve the facilities physical spaces including:
 - **Minor Repairs:** Fixing small issues that affect health and safety (e.g., broken steps, unsafe flooring).

- **Major Repairs or Maintenance:** Addressing bigger problems in older buildings (e.g., roof repairs, heating system upgrades).
- **Lead in Drinking Water Remediation:** Projects relating to taking steps to reduce lead in drinking water for child care centres and nursery schools that have confirmed elevated levels of lead in drinking water based on adequate testing will be prioritized for this intake.

2. Program Enhancement: To help facilities improve and expand their programs in inclusive and accessible ways. This can include:

- **Extra Services for Families:** Offer classes for parents such as behaviour support, or nutrition—while providing child care during those sessions in evenings or weekends.
- **Accessibility Improvements:** Making the facility more accessible for everyone such as: upgrading indoor/outdoor areas, improving the facilities website, translating policies into plain language or other languages, projects relating to The Accessibility for Manitobans Act.
- **Mental Health Supports:** Add tools or spaces that support the well-being of children and staff, such as materials or programming that build children's self-esteem or creating a quiet or calming space for children to relax.

3. Professional Development: To help staff grow their skills and improve the quality of programming and services in new and creative ways. This can include training and learning opportunities such for covering costs for conferences, workshops, short courses, or hiring trainers/consultants on topics like:

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Leadership and advanced management skills
- Mental health support for children, educators, and families
- Curriculum development, programming ideas, and nature-based education
- Other professional development that helps improve the program or services in innovative ways.

5. What are the prioritization criteria under the Trust?

Applications will be prioritized based on the following criteria:

- How well the project aligns with and addresses infrastructure improvement, program enhancement and/or professional development.
- Project impact (e.g. number of educators to receive training, number of children benefiting from the project, barriers being addressed, etc.)
- Facilities in or serving Manitoba communities that are Indigenous, low-income, newcomer, Francophone and/or rural/Northern.
- Projects relating to addressing lead in drinking water in child care centres and nursery schools.
- Projects that address health and safety concerns (e.g. fence for outdoor play space, countertop replacement to prevent bacteria growth).
- Facilities that have not received a Child Care Sustainability Trust Grant in the past three years.

This grant funding is merit and application-based and dependent on availability of funding. Project proposals must meet mandatory eligibility requirements and will be assessed based on the above prioritization criteria.

It is anticipated that more applications will be received than can be accommodated by available funds. All eligible projects will be reviewed and prioritized based on prioritization criteria listed above as based on the project outcomes. The project description in your application should clearly identify how the project meets one or more of the expected project outcomes.

6. What expenses are not eligible under the Child Care Sustainability Trust?

Expenses that are not eligible include:

- New capital development/expansion, purchasing of land/buildings
- Start-up equipment
- Recurring annual operating costs (salaries, benefits, administration, office/building, day-to-day program expenses, utilities such as phone bills, property maintenance)
- Travel/hotel expenses for out of province professional development
- Inclusion support program funding including existing services provided through the Inclusion Support Program, such as enhanced staffing
- Prohibited items, including trampolines, weighted vests/blankets/toys
- Electronic devices, including T.V.s, laptops and cellphones
- Expenses covered by other approved grant funding sources, including federal and any provincial departments
- Gift cards, gifts, prizes, professional memberships, incentives for participation
- Direct fundraising events or activities that generate revenue
- Alcohol or cannabis products
- Purchases that do not provide benefit to staff or children
- Luxury or high-end materials (e.g. granite counter tops for home based providers)

7. When can facilities expect notification regarding the outcome of their application?

The 2025/26 deadline to apply for the Child Care Sustainability Trust Application is October 17, 2025. Incomplete and late applications will not be considered. You will receive a confirmation email after you submit your application.

Expected processing time is 8-10 weeks from closing date. Facilities can expect to be informed of the outcome of their application in mid- to late-December.

8. What are the reporting requirements for approved projects?

Facilities approved for funding must fill in and submit a Child Care Sustainability Trust Reporting Form when the project is complete.

Copies of proof of payment must be included with the reporting form. This can include formal receipts, detailed invoices, detailed quotes for purchase, credit card statements or agreements for service with cost details.

Eligible costs must be incurred between the date of approval and March 31, 2027. All projects are expected to be completed by March 31, 2027. Purchases/expenses made prior to receiving confirmation of project approval from the Department will not be reimbursed.

9. What if the child care centre or home closes unexpectedly within two years of receiving funding under the Child Care Sustainability Trust?

The Child Care Sustainability Trust was created with the intent of ensuring ongoing operations of existing child care facilities. Should your child care facility close within a two year period, the Department must be notified and will inform you of the necessary steps to return the funds.

10. Where can I find more information on the Child Care Sustainability Trust?

For more information, visit:

www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/centres_homeproviders/providers_resources/grants.html.

For additional inquiries, contact the Early Learning and Child Care Division–Quality Enhancement and Program Design Unit by email ELCC-Quality@gov.mb.ca with the subject line “Child Care Sustainability Trust.”