

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE - Quality and Enhancement Grants (Centres)

Frequently Asked Questions

Circular # ELCC-2023-01 (r) Revised in green

1. What are the ELCC Quality Enhancement Grants?

The Quality Enhancement Grants are one-time grants made available through the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide ELCC Agreement and provincial investments to support the principles of quality, inclusivity, and sustainability.

The Quality Enhancement Grants provide Manitoba's early learning and child care providers with the flexibility to choose and apply funding to where it is needed most so that they are better positioned to build a stronger, more responsive early learning and child care system for the future.

2. What are the one-time grant funding streams under the Quality Enhancement Grants and their eligibility?

All licensed non-profit child care centres (including infant, pre-school, nursery and school-age programs) are eligible for the grant funding streams outlined in the chart below; the maximum grant amounts will be provided where indicated.

| Quality Early Learning and Environments Grant | Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant | Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant |
|---|---|---|
| Amount: \$875 per licensed space | Amount: \$500 per licensed space | Amount: \$200 per licensed space |
| Purpose: To make improvements to the child care facility infrastructure, equipment and materials that will provide: - healthy, safe learning environments - rich learning experiences for children - supportive work environments for staff - welcoming spaces for families. | Purpose: To improve children's experiences through enriched curriculum rooted in the principles of diversity and inclusion that will ensure: - children feel a sense of belonging and have the ability to meaningfully participate in the program - children and staff flourish in an environment designed with intention to meet their needs. | Purpose: To advance initiatives at the child care facility aimed at building and sustaining a high quality workforce including: -recruitment, retention and recognition of qualified ECEs and CCAs -on-going training and professional development of staff -promotion of a positive organizational culture and work environment. |
| Coverage Period for Eligible Expenses: April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2024 | | |

3. Is there an application form for the Quality Enhancement Grants?

No, there is no application form to apply however a facility must accept or decline each grant funding stream using the Manitoba Child Care Search facility update request process outlined in question 4.

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4. What is the process for accepting or declining the grant funding streams?

On February 27, 2023 the grant acceptance process will be available in the weekly Manitoba Child Care Search (MCCS) facility update request.

To confirm acceptance of the Quality Early Learning and Environment Grant, the Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant, and the Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant:

- Link to your facility update profile from the weekly Manitoba Child Care Search email sent to facilities each Monday, beginning February 27, 2023.
- Scroll to / click on section titled Quality Enhancement Grants
- Review the ‘Guidelines’ for each grant, and the terms and conditions of acceptance
- Upon reading all information provided, you will be ready to select the grant(s) you would like to accept and/or decline
- Upon saving your decision to accept and/or decline each individual grant funding stream, the grant section will no longer appear in your subsequent weekly update.
- The deadline to accept and/or decline each individual grant funding stream is March 13, 2023.

5. What happens if I miss the deadline?

To allow for efficient processing of payments, acceptance of each grant funding stream must be indicated in Manitoba Child Care Search (MCCS) by the deadline of March 13, 2023.

6. How will I know how much funding my facility will receive?

Unless declined, all eligible facilities can expect to receive the maximum amount for each of the grants in one lump sum payment. A funding letter and pay advice distributed to facilities will provide funding breakdown for the grant(s) that were accepted.

7. What are the Quality Enhancement Grant timelines for centres?

| Date | Activity |
|---------------------------|--|
| February 27, 2023 | Options to accept or decline each grant funding stream is available in the weekly Manitoba Child Care Search (MCCS) facility update request. |
| March 13, 2023 | Deadline to accept or decline each grant funding stream in the MCCS weekly facility update request |
| March 17 – April 14, 2023 | ELCC Finance will begin processing payments and issuing one-time grant funding. |
| October 31, 2023 | Interim report due to ELCC for all grant-related expenses during the period of April 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. |
| April 30, 2024 | Final report due to ELCC, for all grant-related expenses during the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024 |

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ELIGIBLE / INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

8. What types of expenses are eligible under the Quality Enhancement Grants?

The purpose of the Quality Enhancement Grants for licensed, non-profit child care centres is to invest in their programs with a goal of increasing quality child care. The criteria were developed to be flexible, allowing facilities to select purchases specific to their unique needs.

- A list of eligible expenses are included in the [guidelines](#) for each grant stream, however general expenses include professional development, equipment and materials, and small construction costs.
- Consideration may be given for facilities collaborate on initiatives such as professional development to help extend funding.

9. Can I submit previous expenses for reimbursement?

Yes, you can submit for

- all eligible expenses previously purchased between **April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023** and
- all eligible expenses purchased between **April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024**.

10. Can I combine funding from more than one grant?

To support larger purchases or fully fund a larger project, you may combine approved funding streams. For example, you may combine funding from the Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant and the Quality Early Learning Environments Grant to build a wheelchair accessible bathroom. Your financial report must clearly indicate the expenses that are attributed to each grant.

11. I am applying on behalf of a multi-site organization. May I pool funds from multiple sites to fund a more ambitious project at one site?

Yes. Each site (physical location) is eligible for the grant based on the number of licensed spaces at that site. To help improve quality for all children, families and staff, you are encouraged to use the grant to support site-specific quality enhancement initiatives. **Additionally, as a multi-site organization, you may pool the funds under the Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant to ensure approved long service recognition payments for all staff are equitable.**

12. Can I spend the grant on administrative costs?

Up to 10% of the total grant can be used towards administrative costs to implement the grant(s).

Administrative cost may include:

- wage for an administrative staff to develop and plan initiative, purchase items, complete reports
- audit fees incurred as a result of this funding

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13. Can I report a general amount of 10% administrative costs without identifying the specific expenditures?

Yes, 10% of the total grant amount can be claimed as administrative costs on your report without providing a detailed breakdown.

14. Our facility has a long term goal for which we are currently fundraising; can we reserve some of this grant towards the realization of our plan?

No, these are one-time grant(s) that must be expended prior to March 31, 2024.

15. Are second-hand purchases eligible under the Quality Enhancement Grants?

Yes, quality second hand purchases are eligible if the items are included within the eligibility criteria. An itemized receipt must be retained including the item description, cost, seller's name and address (company or individual) and contact information (email or phone number).

16. Are these grants considered as earned income at the end of the tax season?

Please consult with an accountant or an outside financial analyst to consider how receiving these grants may impact your business. In general, only the portion of a grant that has been utilized for qualifying expenditure may be considered as earned income, in which case the same expenditure will offset the earned income, resulting in net zero taxable income. At the end of the fiscal year, any balance of unearned income should be presented in the balance sheet as deferred income or a liability to Manitoba.

17. What expenses are not eligible under the Quality Enhancement Grants?

- Expenses incurred prior to April 1, 2022
- Expenses incurred after March 31, 2024
- Expenses covered by another grant funding source
- Gift cards, gifts, prizes, and/or incentives for participation
- Staff salaries, bonuses or compensation not specifically noted in the grant guidelines
- Individual or centre professional memberships
- Purchasing land and/or buildings
- Projects or activities that generate a profit
- Direct fundraising activities or events
- Alcohol or cannabis related products
- Regular program expenses such as the cost of food
- Purchases that do not provide benefit to staff or children
- Ongoing expenses such as subscription costs of software for accounting, child care management software, internet, etc.
- Anything not on the list of eligible items without prior written approval from the department.

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18. If the grant funding is not fully utilized, will it be recovered?

It is expected that all grant funding accepted and disbursed will be used toward eligible expenses by March 31, 2024. Based on interim grant reporting, the department will work with facilities who require additional support to expend funds by the deadline.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

19. What kind of reporting is required for the grant(s)?

All facilities will be required to submit a mid-term report and a final report to Early Learning and Child Care. The Quality Enhancement Grant Report consists of four parts - one of which requests general information and the other three are specific to each grant.

Facility and Grant Information

- Required for the mid-term and final reports
- Includes the following sections:
 - Facility Information
 - Grant Information
 - Please indicate the grants your facility received and the amounts of the grant
 - Reporting Period
 - Please indicate which report you are submitting (mid-term or final report)

Quality Early Learning and Environment Grant Financial Report

- Please fill out the three sections titled: Expenditures, Balance Remaining, and Data

Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant Financial Report

- Please fill out the three sections titled: Expenditures, Balance Remaining, and Data

Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant Financial Report (For Centres Only)

- Please fill out the three sections titled: Expenditures, Balance Remaining, and Data

The Financial Report for the Quality Early Learning and Environment Grant, Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant, and Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant each contain two sections:

Expenditures (mid-term and final report)

- Required for mid-term and final reports
- Using the drop down menu, select the Category of each expense. Under the Description section, indicate the specific item or category, and in the Amount section indicate the dollar value spent.
- Select the 'Add Item' button for each additional item, until all are entered. If you make an error, you may remove the most recent item entered.
- The 'Total' amount will be calculated automatically.

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Balance Remaining (mid-term report only)

- This section will display an amount remaining as of September 30, 2023. This amount is automatically calculated, based on the amount of grant provided and the total amount spent.
- Please indicate how you plan to use the remainder of the grant. Using the drop down menu, select the Category for each potential expense. Under the Description section, indicate the specific item/service you plan to purchase.
- Please note, facilities with a high balance remaining may be contacted by ELCC to determine if support is needed to finalize investments.

Data (final report only)

- This includes two sections – a quantitative data section and a qualitative data section:
- The **quantitative data** portion includes questions such as:
 - Number of children in facility who benefitted from each grant, separated by infants, preschool, school age
 - Number of staff who benefitted from space modifications or professional development
 - Recruitment strategies
 - Number of staff who received long term bonus
- The **qualitative data** portion invites the facility to explain the impact the funding has made, in their own words.

20. When are the mid-term and final reports due?

- The mid-term and final reporting dates have been revised to both align with the end of the second and fourth quarters, and also to ensure facilities have ample time (six months per reporting period) to complete purchases and prepare reports. The reports are now due one month after the end of the reporting period, as indicated below.
- The mid-term report is due October 31, 2023. This includes:
 - 1) The Expenditures section for the period of April 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023
 - 2) The Balance Remaining report outlining plans to fully expend the grant funds by March 31, 2024, for each grant your facility received.
- A final report by April 30, 2024. This includes:
 - 1) The completed Expenditures section for the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024. These expenses should also include those listed in the mid-term report.
 - 2) The completed Data section for the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024. This includes quantitative and qualitative data, highlighting the impact the funding has had on the quality of your program.
- Information collected in the final report is cumulative, and therefore shall reflect the period of **April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024.**

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21. How can I access the mid-term and final report?

Access, complete and submit the Quality Enhancement Grant Report (mid-term and final report) online at: <https://forms.gov.mb.ca/quality-enhancement-grants-report/>

If you have difficulty accessing or submitting the online reporting form, please contact cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca with the **subject line “Quality Enhancement Grants”** or call Child Care Information Services at 204-945-0776 or toll-free: 1-888-213-4754.

22. Do I need to submit my receipts with the final report?

Receipts for purchases made with the grant(s) do not need to be submitted with the final report, however they should be retained for review by Canada Revenue Agency, facility auditor/book keeper and/or Early Learning and Child Care.

Reporting guidelines will be distributed early spring 2023 to provide information about how to submit your Quality Enhancement Grants report.

23. Are there any resources that can guide me through the decision making process?

The following resources may be helpful:

- **Early Learning and Child Care Publications -**
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/education/childcare/resources/publications.html>
 - Materials/Equipment List for Family and Group Child Care Homes
 - Materials/Equipment List for Infant and Toddler Child Care Centres
 - Materials/Equipment List for Preschool Child Care Centres
 - Materials/Equipment List for School Age Child Care Centres
 - Early Returns: Manitoba’s Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Preschool Centres and Nursery Schools
 - Early Returns: Manitoba’s Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Infant Programs
- **Resources from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning**
 - Diversity Education - <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/diversity/educators/index.html>
 - Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With - https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iid/docs/mam%C3%A0htawisiwin_en.pdf
 - Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With – Tools for Reflection, Planning, and Reporting https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iid/docs/mamahtawisiwin_tools_eng.pdf

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- **Indigenous Early Care and Education Understandings and Perspectives**
 - <https://worldforumfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-03-12-FS-WFF-IPAG-Indigenous-Early-Care-Resources-FINAL-Web.pdf>
- **Additional**
 - Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) www.AccessibilityMB.ca
 - Manitoba Child Care Association Professional Development and Resources <https://mccahouse.org/>

24. I have read the FAQ's but I have a specific question. Who may I contact?

More information about the Quality Enhancement Grants, including funding streams and guidelines can be found at on the ELCC website at:

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

For additional inquiries, email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca with the **subject line “Quality Enhancement Grants”** or call Child Care Information Services at 204-945-0776 or toll-free: 1-888-213-4754.