

# Applicant Guide

Community-University Engagement Support (CUES) Fund

2023/2024 Program Intake

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

# Program Overview

Community-University Engagement Support (CUES) provides funding for eligible community organizations in British Columbia to build partnerships and pursue shared projects with faculty, staff and students at the University of British Columbia (UBC). We support the partners behind collaborative research, knowledge exchange, and teaching and learning projects that benefit communities across the province.

A total of \$675,000 is available for the 2023/24 cohort, paid directly to community partners, if applicable.

Community-university partnerships enrich UBC research and education, support the non-profit sector, and help communities thrive. CUES seeks to remove financial barriers and prioritizes reciprocal, inclusive engagement so all communities — especially equity-deserving groups and communities that have been and continue to be underserved, marginalized, or excluded — can benefit.

Jointly administered by UBC Community Engagement and the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation, CUES supports UBC’s commitment to “engage ethically through the exchange of knowledge and resources for everyone’s benefit” as stated in the UBC’s [Strategic Plan](#). CUES-funded projects embody the following principles of engagement:

<b>Principles of Engagement</b>	
<i>Reciprocity</i>	Exchanging resources and knowledge in a manner that benefits everyone involved.
<i>Flexibility and Openness to Learn</i>	Listening to and learning from each other, admitting to and addressing mistakes, and adapting approaches to changing contexts, needs, or priorities.
<i>Transparency</i>	Having clear, honest, and ongoing dialogue about process, ownership, access and motivation.
<i>Diversity and Inclusion</i>	Listening to and learning from communities that have been disadvantaged, marginalized, and/or excluded. Recognizing, respecting, and valuing diverse knowledge, experiences, and contexts.

## CUES AT A GLANCE

<b>Purpose</b>	To explore and build foundations for new community-university relationships; to grow and strengthen existing community-university relationships through shared action.
<b>Type of partnerships</b>	<p>CUES funding supports both emerging and established partnerships.</p> <p>For new partnerships, CUES funding is there to help get ideas and projects off the ground, and enable the time needed to build trust, identify knowledge gaps, and design collaborative projects that will benefit a community-identified need or priority.</p> <p>For established partnerships that have already been working together and want to do more, CUES can help you scale or implement the findings of a previous or ongoing collaboration that will benefit a community identified need or priority.</p>
<b>Funding amount</b>	Up to \$25,000 per project
<b>Project length</b>	Up to 18 months
<b>Example activities</b>  <i>(This is not an exhaustive list)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning meetings</li> <li>• Relationship-building activities or events</li> <li>• Networking events</li> <li>• Needs assessments</li> <li>• Consultations</li> <li>• Co-development of partnership agreements</li> <li>• Piloting community-level programs or services</li> <li>• Developing or delivering community-level training</li> <li>• Co-producing guides or decision-making tools</li> <li>• Evaluating impact from previous collaborative projects</li> </ul>

# How CUES Funding Works

## Who can apply?

CUES funding supports relationship building and shared projects that are co-led by at least one eligible community partner, and one eligible UBC partner. Before you start planning your CUES application, please check to ensure all partners meet these minimum eligibility criteria:

The community partner organization...

- Is a registered charity or qualified donee listed by the Canadian Revenue Agency ([click here to search your organization's charitable status](#)); a non-profit or community organization.\*
- First Nation band councils without registered charity status are welcome to contact us at [cues.fund@ubc.ca](mailto:cues.fund@ubc.ca) to explore eligibility options.
- If you are unsure of your eligibility, please email [cues.fund@ubc.ca](mailto:cues.fund@ubc.ca) with the full name of your organization, along with its GST, BN or Tax Exemption Number.

\*In cases where a community partner is unable to accept a grant, funds may be dispersed to the partnering UBC department or unit.

The UBC partner...

- Is a current faculty member, staff member, post-doctoral fellow, or student. Please note that post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduate students must have a faculty sponsor who is willing to co-sign their application.
- Is associated with a UBC campus (Vancouver or Okanagan) or site, such as a UBC-affiliated hospital.
- Ensures the proposal complies with ethics review board requirements, if it is research-based and involves human participants. Please use the following links to find out more information from the Office of Research Ethics at [UBC Vancouver](#) and [UBC Okanagan](#).

Both partners...

- Must have the majority of their project activities based in British Columbia. Activities outside of Canada are not eligible.
- Are able to commence CUES-funded work together in Spring 2024 (within 60 days of receiving funds) and co-lead the proposed activities throughout the entire funding period (up to 18 months).
- Are not applying together for CUES funding for a different project.

Have questions about eligibility? Send us an email at [cues.fund@ubc.ca](mailto:cues.fund@ubc.ca).

# Expense Guidelines & Budget Reciprocity

CUES funding is intentionally flexible to support the different costs associated with community engagement activities. Below are expense guidelines, and examples of eligible and ineligible expenses.

## Eligible Expenses

Expenses must be directly related to the proposed relationship and/or partnership-building activities and outcomes, or activities that help support community-based research, knowledge exchange, and/or engaged teaching and learning projects. Examples of eligible expenses include:

- Salary/stipends for project team members supporting relationship and/or partnership-building activities.
  - **Important note:** CUES funds may be used for a community partner to hire a UBC student only if the community partner determines the student to be the most eligible candidate for the position. CUES is not designed to support student placements that are part of a mandatory or elective degree program (i.e., where a student is hired in support of program completion) and is not a reliable resource to fill structural or ongoing needs for student placements.
- Honoraria and/or equitable compensation for community members, elders, leaders, and knowledge keepers or brokers.
- Training or education fees necessary for project team members to fully participate or contribute.
- Program or organizational evaluations or assessments.
- Engagement, hospitality, and catering costs for events and meetings, including travel, accommodation, and facilities/space rental fees.
- Equipment and supplies that directly support relationship and/or partnership-building activities.
- Administrative costs related to running the project or working with a financial intermediary (if necessary); please consult with CUES program staff before including this line item in your budget.

## Ineligible Expenses

CUES funds should not be intended as a replacement for other sources of direct research funding, daily operational costs, or as an alternative source of funding for expenses not typically eligible for other research grants. Examples of ineligible expenses include:

- Direct costs of research, such as those associated with data collection, data analysis, or academic conference presentations.
- Administrative or core costs/expenses for community partner organizations, such as salaries associated with the organization's daily operations, programming, or office equipment.
- Costs of alcohol/liquor license

## Reciprocity in the Budget

Strong applications will apply the principle of reciprocity in their budget and show alignment with community practices on salaries, stipends, and honoraria. As you prepare your budget, consider if your proposed salaries, stipends, and honoraria are appropriate and fair. Consult or confirm what the community best practice is and what wage expectations are for the type of work being undertaken. You may also refer to UBC's [Indigenous Financial Guidelines](#) for payments to Indigenous partners and community members.

# How to Apply

Applying for CUES is a two-step process:

## Step 1: Develop and submit your Notice of Intent (NOI)

**Deadline: September 22, 2023**

All co-applicants are required to complete and submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to verify their eligibility and provide a brief overview of their collaborative project. The NOI is a brief form that is used to collect basic contact information from co-applicants, a short project description, and for co-applicants to specify the primary subject area and the target population or community that their project aims to address. The NOI is for administrative purposes only. It is non-competitive and will not be evaluated. Everyone who meets the eligibility requirements and submits an NOI will also be invited to submit a full application.

Before drafting the NOI, co-applicants are encouraged to review competition information on the CUES website and this applicant guide, work together to confirm their eligibility, and discuss and refine the shared project. **Please do not submit an NOI without first consulting with and gaining approval from your co-applicant!** Responses to questions in the NOI can be prepared in advance ([questions are available here](#)), then copied and pasted into the web form before the submission deadline.

After submitting an NOI, both co-applicants will receive a confirmation email with the information provided. If there are issues with eligibility, CUES program staff will reach out within 5 business days.

## Step 2: Develop and submit your full application

**Deadline: December 15, 2023**

The online submission for full applications will open on September 25, 2023. All eligible applicants who submitted an NOI will receive an email by September 25, 2023 with the link to the webform and instructions on how to complete their application.

Applicants are encouraged to download and review the full application form early to familiarize themselves with the questions, prepare their responses, and gather any additional information or materials.

The completed application must be reviewed by both the community co-applicant and UBC co-applicant (and Faculty supervisor, if applicable), and submitted via the web form by December 15, 2023.

# Tips for a Strong CUES Application

## #1. Review the CUES website and applicant guide thoroughly before you begin.

Familiarize yourself with the purpose of the fund, the [principles of engagement](#), and the evaluation criteria. Double-check both partners' eligibility and ensure the community partner has a charitable or qualified donee status. Contact us if you have any questions before submitting your NOI.

## #2. Work collaboratively with your partner.

Start the discussion early and check in often to ensure that you remain in agreement on your goals and roles in both the proposal development process and subsequent project activities. The strongest CUES applications clearly and honestly reflect the voices and interests of both UBC and community-based partners. They also clearly state anticipated benefits for everyone involved: the UBC partner, the community partner, and the communities they are intending to engage.

## #3. Clearly define the community your project will impact, and how you are connected.

Successful CUES projects work in service of a particular community or communities. Strong proposals clearly identify all communities that are engaged and impacted by the project, and state clear plans for their involvement.

## #4. Paint a clear picture.

You may have a clear picture in your head of the proposed work you will do together, but your project and its community context could be brand new for the application reviewers. Please explain your project in the clearest terms possible using basic language. Remember to describe the activities you will undertake together in detail. Be as concrete as possible, with a detailed project timeline and activities. **Since CUES is a community-based fund, the tone of your application should be less academic than if you were applying to a purely academic research fund.**

## #5. Keep the evaluation criteria and principles of engagement at the top of mind.

The evaluation criteria for CUES applications are explained in the following section of this document. Each set of questions in the full application addresses an evaluation criterion. As you develop your answers, ensure that you are addressing the relevant key criteria and the associated principles of engagement. It might help to re-read your proposal from the perspective of a reviewer. On which criteria does your proposal score highest? Which areas may need more clarification or development? Do this exercise early so you have time to make any necessary changes.

# How Proposals Are Evaluated

CUES proposals are adjudicated by a multidisciplinary review panel composed of UBC faculty members, staff members, and local community representatives. All proposals are initially reviewed in-depth and scored by three assigned reviewers using the evaluation criteria listed below. A review panel then convenes to finalize rankings of applications and make recommendations for funding.

## Evaluation Criteria

CUES applications will be evaluated according to the criteria below (see Table 1), to come to a funding decision:

**Table 1: Evaluation Rubric**

Evaluation Criteria	Key Criteria
<b>Community Opportunity</b>	<p>Directly addresses a well-defined, community-identified opportunity, priority area, or need.</p> <p>Demonstrates a commitment to engage with equity-deserving groups and communities, especially those that have been and continue to be underserved, marginalized, or excluded.</p>
<b>Partnership Opportunity</b>	<p>Articulates a clear commitment and desire to work with one another and outlines the shared goals of the project.</p> <p><b>(If an existing partnership)</b> Explains how the proposed work will grow or strengthen an existing relationship and advance previous work undertaken together.</p>
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<p>Clearly articulates how the project will benefit the community partner(s) and affected communities.</p> <p>Presents a community-driven approach for evaluating proposed activities and outcomes for affected communities.</p> <p>Includes a plan and well thought out approach to engagement with community partner(s) and any affected communities.</p>



<b>Academic Benefit</b>	Articulates how the project will advance an area of academic study, teaching and learning delivery or knowledge exchange practices at UBC.
<b>Reciprocity &amp; Resource Sharing</b>	<p>Clearly identifies each co-applicant's respective roles, and how they will work together towards mutual benefit.</p> <p>Demonstrates equitable sharing of resources (e.g., funding, expertise, space) between and among partners.</p>
<b>Project Feasibility</b>	<p>Includes a detailed timeline of all relevant activities and shows their connection to reasonable and achievable outcomes.</p> <p>Provides a reasonable and appropriate budget that reflects community priorities and is clearly linked to proposed activities.</p>

## What to Expect if You're Approved

Previous years have shown that CUES is highly a competitive fund, with an average success rate of approximately 30%.

If your project is approved:

- Successful applicants will receive a notice of approval by email. The authorized co-signing community partner will be sent a **Letter of Agreement (LoA)** that they will be asked to sign and return along with an invoice in the amount of the grant. Upon receiving the invoice and the signed LoA, CUES staff will process the grant. Turnaround time for this process can range from four to six weeks.
- CUES projects are expected to begin no more than 60 days after funding approval is granted. Projects may run up to 18 months from the funding receipt date. Extensions of up to 6 months may be considered on a case-by-case basis (requests for extensions must be received before the project passes its 12-month mark).
- After completing a CUES project, recipients will be asked to submit a narrative and financial report (a template will be provided) no later than three months after the project end date. Alternative forms of reporting such as interviews or site visits will also be considered. Please reach out to CUES staff to discuss options.
- All recipients will be asked to complete a CUES evaluation survey to help UBC staff improve program delivery.

## Contact Us

We are always happy to hear from potential applicants and discuss the details of your partnership or proposal or help you interpret the application guidelines. Please feel free to reach out to CUES program staff at [cues.fund@ubc.ca](mailto:cues.fund@ubc.ca).