2021 Niagara Prosperity Initiative
Application Questions & Instructions

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative (NPI) was established by Niagara Region in 2008, and provides an annual investment to support poverty reduction and prevention activities.

Proposals are invited from the community for projects that will provide an effective service to address poverty for residents of Niagara.

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative (NPI) is committed to providing supports to help our community rebuild and recover from the devastating impacts of COVID-19. We know the pandemic has exacerbated and amplified many of the issues caused by poverty. To address this, the 2021 NPI request for proposals (RFP) will target needs in the areas of **housing**, **health** and **domestic violence**. Projects can begin June 1, 2021 and can run up to 15 months ending August 30, 2022.

The application will be available online at www.niagaraprosperityinitiative.ca from March 1 – April 2, 2021.

1. **Provide a brief project summary.** This summary will be used publicly should the project be approved. *(500 characters)*

2. **The Niagara Prosperity Initiative is open to funding projects that focus on three streams in the specific areas identified below**:

Housing
- Improve housing stability through neighbourhood connectedness and integration through meaningful, social, recreational and community engagement activities for individuals exiting homelessness and who have recently been housed.
- Enhance Niagara's existing street outreach system through targeted services to high risk populations (e.g., urban Indigenous population, LGBTQ2S+) with a focus on moving individuals into housing.
- Improve the health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness through cross-system projects between housing and homelessness and other key sectors (e.g., health care, corrections, child welfare, mental health and addictions).
- Expand services to enable people to access shelter when they need it (i.e. provision of pet care), find a home (i.e. landlord engagement) and retain their home (i.e. services to address hoarding, infestation issues, additional landlord engagement and formal peer support).

Health
- Expand access to free, quality mental health and addictions services for low-income individuals and families.
- Increase access to virtual or in-person addictions treatment or harm reduction services.
- Reduce isolation for people experiencing poverty, including through increasing access to technology.
- Increase access to dental health care for people experiencing poverty.
- Address the impacts of trauma and promote healthy child development for children experiencing poverty and /or homelessness.
- Expand coordination across food bank programs to support the health of the community.

Domestic violence
- Expand crisis-based services that provide counselling and safety planning for women experiencing intimate partner violence.
- Increase access to early intervention and family violence programs (e.g. Mothers in Mind program), including those that are culturally appropriate.
- Increase access to virtual or in-person (as aligned with provincial guidance or restrictions placed on services) group and one-on-one counselling for those healing from the effects of violence and abuse.

a. **Describe the activities of this project and the outcomes you plan to achieve**. What are you ultimately trying to accomplish in our community? How will your project address the selected stream? How do you know the project is going to work? What difference will this project make and for whom? Include the project's goals, measurable objectives, target population and frequency of programming. How will the project address barriers to participating given the pandemic? Be specific. *(3000 characters)*

b. **What are your project's milestones?** With the understanding that projects require some flexibility, please include details about the project's milestones. Use specific, measurable, achievable and relevant milestones. This section should be used to explain different stages of the project, frequency and type of activities for participants, planned evaluations and check-ins to ensure project success. You do not need to fill in each month, only fill as required. These milestones will be used as part of monitoring your project's progress. *(250 characters per month)*

3. **Describe your experience and expertise in delivering a similar project.** Explain why your agency is suitable to deliver this particular project. List relevant partners and identify the additional expertise and resources each partnership will bring. *(1000 characters)*

4. **How will the project continue to make an impact for participants and / or the community after the funding has ended? Does the project leverage other funds?**
   Sustainability can be measured by:
   - the continuation of a project beyond NPI funding or,
   - the sustainable impact a project has on its participants / community

   Niagara Prosperity Initiative does not require a project to be financially sustainable after funding has ended. For long-term initiatives, however, there is an expectation that agencies are working towards finding sustainability. If this project has previously received funding from any source, identify the source and how this request will assist in moving the overall project forward. *(500 characters)*

5. **List the anticipated outputs of the project in the following categories.** Enter only numerical values and only where applicable. Number of unique people served must be completed but the remaining categories depend on what you plan to achieve during this project. Make sure your expected outputs are feasible and realistic. You will be required to report against these outputs should your application be successful.

Number of Unique people served Only count client once for the entirety of the project. Example: If John attends a session in July 2021 and again in August and September, he is only counted once in July, the first time he attends.
children
youth
adults
seniors
Projected total revenue generated by the project Only complete if applicable
$ projected revenue to be generated by the project
Client Income
# of clients assisted in obtaining financial supports / benefits. Does not include gift cards, bus pass or completing tax returns. Clients can be counted multiple times if, on separate occasions, they are assisted in obtaining different financial supports / benefits.
# of income tax returns filed for clients. Clients can be counted multiple times if they file multiple tax returns.
Employment Only count client once for every job secured. If a client was paid a wage by the NPI-funded project which increased their employability and resulted in securing paid employment outside of the organization, count them once in both categories. If a client secures temporary employment and returns to your organization for employment support again and secures a second paid employment position, count them twice.

# of clients volunteering and paid an honorarium by the NPI-funded project. The position ends once NPI funding ends.
# of clients employed and paid a wage by the NPI-funded project. The position ends once NPI funding ends.
# of clients who secured paid employment within your organization because NPI funding helped your organization to source sustainable funding to create a job. The position must continue after NPI funding ends.
# of clients who secured paid employment outside of your organization because of the support and / or training and / or removal of barriers this project provided. The position must continue after NPI funding ends.
Housing & Shelter Only count clients once per category. Example: a client stays in shelter for 2 weeks and then moves to transitional subsidized housing and receives support to remain housed. The client would only be counted once in each of the three relevant categories (shelter, transitional subsidized and remained housed). If the client lives in market rent housing and the project helped the client to transition to subsidized housing, you would only count once under the relevant subsidized housing.
# of clients who received emergency shelter (include family members)
# of clients who obtained transitional subsidized housing (include family members)
# of clients who obtained permanent subsidized housing (include family members)
# of clients who obtained market rent housing (include family members)
# of clients who remained housed with the help of this project (include family members)
Transportation Count every instance of transportation even if it is the same person.
# of transportation passes (bus ticket or taxi trip) given to clients. A two-way pass counts as 2.
# of clients who received or were able to purchase their own method of transportation (ex. scooter, bike, car)
# of clients transported by staff or volunteer to appointments, groceries etc... A two-way trip counts as 2.
Health
# of client hours of professional counselling provided to clients. If group counselling, add hours for each person attending. "Professional" is defined as having a professional designation or part of a professional association (ex. RSW, RP, CCC).
# of hours of primary care provided to clients
# of client hours of non-professional counselling / support / peer support / wellness programs provided to clients. If group counselling, add hours for each person attending.
clients accessing dental care
of healthy meals provided to clients. This can be provided in the format of prepared food, groceries or grocery store gift cards. If a grocery card or groceries are provided, divide by # of meals the card or groceries will provide. According to the local Nutritious Food Basket, an adult requires approximately $50/week for nutritious meals (21 meals / week). A meal is then considered to be <u>at least</u> $2.40. Your organization may decide a higher threshold.
# of instances when the project improved a client's access to healthy meals at home. This category should only be used for projects that involve community / home gardening, or when a client is given produce that is not already counted as a healthy meal Example: Count every time a client receives produce or takes home food prepared during a workshop that does not qualify as a meal.
lbs. of fresh produce provided to clients. You can include the lbs. of produce clients collect in their own garden as long as you do not also count the produce towards # of healthy meals provided to clients or # of instances when the project improved a client's access to healthy meals at home. Only count in one category or the other, whichever works best for your project.
of hours of physical activity
clients reporting decreased harmful health behaviours (reduced smoking, drug use, alcohol consumption)
clients reporting increased healthy psychosocial factors (increased self-esteem, mental state, sense of control)
Education Count each instance of meaningful education / interaction. Meaningful education / interaction is when the activity had an impact on the client. If, during a client meeting, three different categories are addressed in a meaningful way

(e.g. financial literacy, tenant education and learning to navigate the health system) each category can be counted. If education is provided in a group, count each person attending.
# of clients who were not in school and returned to formal education (elementary, secondary, college, university) Only count each client once.
# of financial literacy sessions / help with budget planning
# of health education activities. This includes hygiene, physical health, learning to navigate the health system, nutrition, gardening and food preparation.
# of tenant education activities to help clients find or stay housed
# of systemic advocacy activities. This can be teaching people with lived experience how to advocate for themselves or project staff advocating to the community on behalf of people with lived experience.
# of parenting education activities
# of employment training activities
# of literacy and / or numeracy activities
Other
clients assisted in obtaining ID

6. **Budget:** Applicants must show they have the capacity for responsible and effective financial management. Along with your application you are required to submit your most recent financial statements. Statements must be uploaded to your account by clicking on your username. If you have previously applied to NPI, you will need to upload your new, most recently updated statements. Financial statements that have been audited or reviewed by a third party are preferable. If you do not have audited statements, you will need to upload a statement of financial position and a statement of operations along with your application.

   Whenever possible, and if appropriate for your organization, we encourage you to use a living wage when requesting staff costs. A living wage is a voluntary commitment that can be made by employers to compensate directly-employed and contract employed workers. The living wage reflects what earners in a family need to be paid based on the actual costs of living and being included in a community. In 2019, the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network released the brief "Calculating the Living Wage for Niagara Region" which establishes the living wage for Niagara residents. Additional information can be found here: https://www.wipeoutpoverty.ca/livingwage or http://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/ .

   When developing your budget, be sure to consider barriers to participation including child care, transportation and issues related to the pandemic.

   Budget categories:
   - Project Delivery Personnel
   - Purchases given directly to clients such as gift cards, vouchers, transportation passes
   - Capital costs
   - Goods and services for project delivery
   - Professional fees
   - Administration costs – up to 10%

7. **In-kind contributions.** These are goods or services donated to an organization that can be extremely valuable to a project and reflect an organization's commitment and meaningful collaboration with partners. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the reported value for all items are reasonable.

8. **Additional Information.** Include additional, relevant information or documentation to support your application. Up to 3 PDF documents can be uploaded. If you have a different file type you want to upload, you will need to convert it to a PDF first. Links to online videos can also be placed in a document and uploaded as a PDF. If acronyms are used in the application, include the definitions in this section.

PROPOSAL PROCESS

1. **Applications are due 5pm on Friday, April 2, 2021.** Once you have submitted your application, an email to confirm that your application has been received will be sent to the signing authority and project contact(s). If the confirmation is not received, please contact the NPI Program Manager.

2. To be eligible for funding, an agency or organization must:
   a. Be a non-profit organization under the Income Tax Act with documented financial activity that can be audited if needed. Under the Income Tax Act, a non-profit organization is an association organized and operated exclusively for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure, recreation, or any other purpose except profit (e.g., a club, society, or association). The organization will generally be exempt from tax if no part of its income is payable to, or available for, the personal benefit of a proprietor, member, or shareholder.
   b. Be open to all people regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity except where authorized under Ontario Human Rights legislation. NPI will not fund organizations that engage in discrimination against persons contrary to the Ontario Human Rights Code, including in staffing, participant eligibility or program content.
   c. Request funding that will not be used to repay a pre-existing debt.
   d. Not be a municipality.

3. Organizations must register to access the application by contacting the NPI Program Manager. You will be required to complete your organization's profile by clicking on the username in the top right corner. Organizations may only have one account.

4. Each project requires a separate application submission. An organization may have more than one submission as well as active projects.

5. It is important to save your application regularly using the save button at the bottom of each page. Do not exit the application or the internet browser before saving the page or all changes will be lost.

6. Several questions are marked with an asterisk (*) because they are required. If "See Omissions" appears in the Application Dashboard next to your application, it means there are required questions unanswered. Clicking "See Omissions" will tell you which required questions have not been answered. "Submit" will not appear until all required questions have been answered.

7. **Applicants are required to speak with the NPI Program Manager by Friday, March 26, 2021 to discuss the project prior to submitting an application**. The date of the discussion must be recorded in the application.

8. In order to expedite the application review process and ensure only the most relevant information is submitted. Character limits have been placed on many questions and text cannot be entered beyond these limits. If you use acronyms throughout your application, make sure to enter the acronym and its definition in the acronym section in the "Additional" tab.

9. The Application Review Committee will receive an Agency Compliance Checklist for applicants who have previously received NPI funding. The Agency Compliance Checklist provides the Review Committee with information about the applicant's previous performance related to outputs, outcomes, budgeting and meeting reporting requirements.

10. Additional information may be required by the Review Committee during the assessment period. This information may be gathered by email and / or organization representatives may be required to meet with the Review Committee to discuss the proposal. If required to meet, questions will be submitted to your organization in advance. It is in the applicant's best interest to respond to the Review Committee's questions as quickly as possible. **When applicable, we anticipate sending questions by email to applicants the week of May 3rd with a short turnaround time to respond**.

11. United Way Niagara will not be liable nor reimburse any applicant for costs incurred in the preparation of proposals, attendance at meetings / related travel costs, or any other services that may be requested as part of the proposal evaluation process.

12. The applicant must disclose any conflicts of interest to United Way Niagara.

13. The United Way Niagara will comply with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Proposal details will be viewed by the NPI Review Committee, Niagara Region Community Services NPI management staff, and NPI Evaluators. Applicants will be advised of any requests from outside parties to view applications. This includes other funders such as Ontario Trillium Foundation and Niagara Community Foundation.

14. After the approved applicants are announced, any unsuccessful applicant may request a debriefing session to discuss their proposal, explain the evaluation process and why the proposal was not selected. Only the submissions of unsuccessful applicants will be reviewed.

15. All proposals/applications become the property of United Way Niagara.

16. Names of successful applicants and summary information of the project will be made public.

17. Reports will be required quarterly and will include: an activity report and financial report. Supporting documentation may be required. Final reports are to be submitted 30 days after project end and include a quarterly report as well as a qualitative report and two testimonials using the Most Significant Change form.

If you have any questions please contact:

Natalie Chaumont

Program Manager, Niagara Prosperity Initiative, United Way Niagara

email: Natalie@unitedwayniagara.org **or phone: 905-688-5050 ext. 2124**

✓	**PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**
☐	We talked to Natalie (905-688-5050 ext.2124) prior to writing the application.
☐	We answered all applicable questions in the application and followed the directions provided by the funder.
☐	My application is concise, uses clear language that can be understood by someone outside of the non-profit sector.
☐	The spelling and grammar are correct and we had someone proofread the application.
☐	The budget is reasonable given the scope of the project and does not include any miscellaneous expenses.
☐	Administrative expenses such as bookkeeping, utilities and rent are not included in the budget except for the allowable amount up to 10% of your budget.
☐	I have researched and received quotes for costs where appropriate.
☐	We provided enough relevant information about the project within the application.
☐	We included all acronyms in the acronym section.
☐	We provided the name of someone who will be available during the application review to answer questions.