



Rural Advisory

Funding Program Application Guide

Together, we are working to build a sustainable and resilient coastal economy in reciprocal relationships with communities across the unceded territories of the Kwak'waka, Nuučaan̓, Éyá7juuthem, Ligwilda'xw, Pəntl'áč, She shashishalhem, Skwxwú7mesh, Hul'q'umi'num', diitiidʔaatx, SENĆOŦEN, Lekwungen, and T'Sou-ke speaking peoples.



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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Government of B.C. and First Nations across British Columbia are working in partnership to defer logging of old growth, while developing a new, long-term approach to sustainable forest management that prioritizes ecosystem health and community resiliency. As the forest sector faces a declining mid-term supply of timber, the focus is on shifting from high volume to high value production.

The **Rural Advisory Program** has been designed to support forestry-reliant communities as they adapt to changes resulting from the new forest management system. The Program will provide financial assistance for temporary employment opportunities to support communities impacted by these forest policy changes and other economic impacts to the forest sector. This also includes support for economic diversification and resilience in rural communities.

The Province of British Columbia, through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, has partnered with Island Coastal Economic Trust to deliver the Rural Advisory Program with \$1.35M in available funding.

Program Objectives

- To support rural businesses and communities impacted by forest policy changes and other impacts to the forest sector
- Increase community and regional adaptation, resilience, and sustainability
- Leverage existing local community/organization capacity to create incremental support and resources for impacted businesses, workers, and communities
- Provide substantive services to impacted businesses and/or communities

Available Funding

The Rural Advisory Program supports the creation of new, temporary advisor employment opportunities to help build capacity, resiliency and diversification in rural communities impacted by forest policy changes and other impacts to the forest sector. Impacts include forest sector mill curtailments, mill closures, declining fibre supply due to recent or planned old growth logging deferrals, and the effects of a significant wildfire season.

Projects must be fully completed by August 31st, 2024 and final claims and reporting submitted no later than September 30th, 2024.

Two Funding Streams

Community-based Advisors <i>15 available grants</i>	▪ Non-repayable contributions (grants) ▪ Up to 100% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$70,000 ▪ Enables creation of a one-year term position to provide community and/or business advisory services to support economic diversification, adaptation, or resilience to an eligible rural community.
Regional Business Advisors <i>3 available grants</i>	▪ Non-repayable contributions (grants) ▪ Up to 100% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$100,000 ▪ Enables creation of a one-year term position to provide specialized and/or sectoral business advisory services to support impacted businesses, workers and communities in a region or subregion by providing specialized services and resources.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible for Rural Advisory Program funding:

- Local governments (municipalities, regional districts, incorporated areas)
- First Nations governments (bands, corporations controlled by First Nations, not-for-profit organizations established by First Nations governments)
- Legally incorporated not-for-profit organizations, including:
 - Economic Development Organizations
 - Industry Associations
 - Business support organizations

Eligible Communities

Projects must be located in the Island Coastal Economic Trust [service region](#).

Priority will be given to communities impacted by changes to the forest management policy and other impacts to the forest sector.

Eligible Costs

- Full-time or part-time term staffing wages for new positions
- Statutory employment costs
- Travel expenses related to advisory activities

Ineligible Uses and Costs

- Service duplication
- Displacing funding already in place for existing employment positions
- Positions combined with chief administrative officer, executive director, general manager, or chief financial officer
- Non-statutory benefit costs including, bonuses, or allowance (such as vehicle, phone, or living expenses)
- Costs related to recruiting, hiring, relocating, or terminating
- Office equipment, overhead costs, and general administration costs
- GST, legal, and/or insurance costs

APPLICATION PROCESS

Intake Dates

The Rural Advisory Program will accept applications until March 17th, 2023.

Required Documents

To apply for Program funding, you must submit:

- Completed application form
- Job description for the community or regional advisor position
- Workplan for the community or regional advisory position (template provided)

Application Submission

We invite applicants to contact Hilary Muth, Special and Rural Projects Coordinator, at hilary@islandcoastaltrust.ca to ensure eligibility and to advise on applications as early as possible in the development of an application to the Program.

Completed application forms, including all supplementary materials, must be provided electronically to Island Coastal Economic Trust by email: info@islandcoastaltrust.ca

Intake Process



STEP 1: APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The application form and supplementary Information must be submitted within the required timelines. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. Applicants must also submit a project workplan that will identify objectives, activities, and timing of the works to be completed as well as a detailed job description.

STEP 2: ASSESSMENT

Program staff will conduct an initial review of all applications to ensure completeness of documentation and program eligibility. As part of the due diligence process, applicants may be asked to revisit steps to ensure the completeness and quality of your application. A Program Review Committee will then evaluate against assessment criteria (outlined below). Applications that best demonstrate that they meet the selection criteria will be prioritized for funding.

STEP 3: NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Final decisions will be provided within **10** business days of the intake period's close date.

STEP 4: CONDITIONAL FUNDING AGREEMENT

All approved applications are subject to the execution of a funding agreement, which will include the terms and conditions of the approved funding. Please note that successful applicants will have three months to complete their recruitment of candidates. If recruitment cannot be completed within this timeframe, the Trust reserves the right to cancel the project so that funds can be redistributed to another organization and project.

Assessment Criteria

All applicants must meet basic eligibility criteria. Eligible applications are assessed and scored based on the information provided in the submitted Funding Application:

Impact	Implementation	Anticipated Outcomes
Scoring weight: 40%	Scoring weight: 30%	Scoring weight: 30%
▪ Alignment with Rural Advisory Program objectives – community is rural or remote, dependence on the forest sector is demonstrated, anticipated impacts due to changes in the forest sector are clear. ▪ Clearly defined community need and strong presentation of how the new position will meet this need.	▪ Level of experience and resources to provide effective oversight to carry out the project ▪ Work plan demonstrates direct targeted support and services to business and communities impacted by forest sector changes and how support and services will be monitored/measured. ▪ Organization has staff, resources, planning is complete, hiring is in process and ready to start. ▪ Project activities and hiring practices demonstrate a strong commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenous reconciliation principles.	▪ Increase in business sector adaptation and/or community capacity ▪ Outcomes leading to increased business and community resiliency and economic diversity over the one-year term and building on initiatives currently underway.

FUNDING TERMS

Funding Award

Successful applicants will receive an initial payment (50% of the total grant amount) upon receipt of a signed employment agreement (between the funding recipient and the successful candidate). To request additional payments, approved applicants are required to submit progress reports which include a description of activities to date.

Reporting

Funding recipients are required to submit progress reports and a final report that outlines the project's performance and outcomes. Recipients are expected to track metrics throughout the duration of project relating to the objectives listed in the workplan. Metrics may include the number of businesses served, description of community or business advisory services provided, description of community or regional diversification initiatives and resources developed.

All approved projects are to be completed within the term specified in the funding agreement, and no later than August 31st, 2024.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Applications submitted under the Program are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The information being collected is for the purpose of program administration and the evaluation of eligibility.

All documents received by the Program are treated as confidential.

Once a project is approved, the name of the successful applicant, location, date of approval, funding amount, and the project descriptions may be proactively disclosed to the public.

Application Support and Program Enquiries

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