



**Indigenous Learning Opportunities  
Funding Guidelines  
2022-2024**

**ECALA**

*Alberta*  Government

## What's New

ECALA applications are for a conditional two-year grant term.

During the funding year, agencies can now move funds from one category to another as long as the amount being moved is 15% or less of their total allocation.

### A. Funding Process

ECALA funds agencies to provide foundational learning opportunities to adults in Edmonton who face social or financial barriers to learning. Foundational learning focuses on basic literacy and the knowledge, skills, and abilities that help individuals take part as neighbours and citizens, pursue further learning, and have satisfying employment.

ECALA funding supports Indigenous literacy and learning opportunities that meet the unique needs of Indigenous learners.

In 2018-2019, ECALA adopted a best practice framework created by the ECALA Indigenous Advisory committee for evaluating future Indigenous program proposals. Through this collaboration, ECALA changed its funding guidelines to prioritize culturally relevant learning opportunities for Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous application funding recommendations of the Edmonton-based Indigenous Advisory committee include the following:

- Development of a review process incorporating Indigenous knowledge
- Obtaining community input to provide an opportunity for Indigenous communities to express their own literacy needs
- A Trauma-Informed approach to ensure the impact of Intergenerational trauma and later impacts on learning are addressed and supported in all learning opportunities
- Inclusion of cultural humility into the review process and funded learning opportunities
- Recognition of Indigenous oral tradition in applications for funding

For Indigenous Learning Opportunities, the funding process will use an Expression of Interest and Oral Presentation format.

### B. CALP Grant Mandate

The Government of Alberta, through the Ministry of Advanced Education, provides a Community Adult Learning Program (CALP) Grant to ECALA each year to support the delivery of part-time, non-formal literacy and foundational learning opportunities to adults with financial and social barriers in Edmonton.

## C. ECALA Mandate

ECALA is a granting council that distributes over 2 million dollars annually within the CALP Grant mandate to agencies through a competitive granting process. ECALA is limited to allocating a maximum of 15% of overall funds to any one agency. The funding year for the CALP Grant is **July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>**. The overall objective of the funding is to strengthen the ability of non-profit agencies to meet the needs of adult foundational learners in Edmonton. Foundational learning opportunities must focus on literacy and foundational learning, facilitate the development of foundational life and essential skills, and meet the needs of learners (learner-centred approach/practice).

Foundational literacy, numeracy, skills for learning, basic digital skills, Indigenous language and history and Indigenous culture often result in a change in participant life.

## D. Eligible Agencies

Agencies interested in applying for ECALA funding must use the ECALA Application Process and meet the following operational requirements:

- Be a legal entity incorporated for a minimum of two years under one of the following Alberta Statutes: Societies Act, part 9 of the Companies Act, the Libraries Act, the Métis Settlements Act, or the Post-secondary Learning Act. In cases where the Service Agency is not a legal entity, a Legal Host approved by ECALA may receive the grant on behalf of the service agency.
- Returns are filed yearly with Alberta Corporate Registry, and a current Proof of Filing with the Application can be provided.
- Operate as an effective service agency with sound practices in governance and in the planning and management of learning opportunities, finances, and personnel.
- Determine bylaws, structure, and decision-making processes, develop and adhere to operational policies and procedures, including conflict of interest guidelines, and examine and vote on matters in accordance with the written policies and procedures.
- Be able to provide current copies of the agency's bylaws, and financial and personnel policies and procedures when requested.
- Hold regular Board meetings and maintain a record of minutes and financial statements documenting key decisions on personnel, learning opportunities, and funding allocations.
- Have procedures in place to keep ECALA informed of changes to the current board membership and signing authorities.

## E. Eligible Learning Opportunities

Eligible learning opportunities must take place in Edmonton (with the exception of a land-based agency that may be in traditional territories), whether in-person or virtually. Agencies are encouraged to deliver the learning opportunities in collaboration or in partnership with other agencies to enhance access to

formal post-secondary learning or to support life-long learning goals. Agencies have the flexibility to choose modes of delivery that will best meet the needs of the learners, including less formal learning activities and tutoring. Grant recipients must provide learning opportunities in one of the categories listed in the Category Table.

**Please note:** Learning Opportunities should be structured to be in only one of the categories noted below. If you are applying for funding under more than one category you are required to submit one application for each category so the application can be given to the appropriate review committee.

**Category Table**

The [CALP Guidelines 2020](#) include additional information on each category.

<p><b>E.1 Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL)</b>                  Highest priority for funding</p>	
<p><b>Adult Literacy</b></p>	<p>Adult Literacy is defined as the ability of adults to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and use print and written materials associated within varying contexts. The primary intended learning objective of learning opportunities in this category should be the development of reading and writing skills up to and including a pre-GED level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reading includes understanding materials written in sentences or paragraphs, graphs, charts and/or tables.</li> <li>· Writing includes communicating by arranging words, numbers and symbols on paper or a computer screen.</li> </ul> <p>Please note this category should not include learning opportunities for English language learners; these should be offered in the English language learning category.</p>
<p><b>Numeracy</b></p>	<p>Numeracy is defined as the ability to use, apply, interpret, and communicate mathematical information and ideas. The primary intended learning objective of learning opportunities in this category should be using numbers and thinking in quantitative terms to complete tasks, up to and including a pre-GED level.</p>
<p><b>Skills for Learning (replaced Foundational Life Skills)</b></p>	<p>The Skills for Learning category is defined as learning opportunities that support the development of the fundamental skills and habits of learning that support adult foundational learners to build confidence, develop an identity as a learner, advocate for themselves, and engage in foundational and other learning. While it may involve practicing a range of foundational skills, the primary intended learning objective of learning opportunities in the skills for learning category is to help learners build skills and habits needed to</p>

	<p>set and achieve their learning goals, be successful in further learning, and increase confidence in their ability to be a more self-directed, independent learner.</p> <p>These skills and habits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing oneself as a learner,</li> <li>• Taking risks in learning,</li> <li>• Actively engaging in the act of learning,</li> <li>• Developing learning strategies,</li> <li>• Building collaboration skills in learning, and</li> <li>• Strengthening communication skills in learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Basic Digital Skills</b>	<p>Basic Digital Skills are defined as the ability of individuals to understand and use digital systems, tools, applications, and networks in order to access and manage information and thrive in learning, the workplace, and daily life. The primary intended learning objective of this category is the application and understanding of key concepts across a range of contexts, situations, and digital platforms including hardware, software, navigation, settings, safety, and connectivity.</p>
<b>English Language Learning</b>	<p>English language learning is defined as the study and practice of the English language by individuals whose first language is other than English and who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English. The primary intended learning objective in this category should be to help learners gain proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English.</p> <p>Please see the <a href="#">CALP Guidelines 2020</a>, p. 30, for descriptions of English Language Learners and English Language Literacy Learners.</p>
<p><b>E.2 Community Capacity Building (CCB)</b>  Supplemental Programming (Maximum 15% of ECALA Allocations)</p>	
<b>Community Capacity Building (CCB)</b>	<p>Community capacity building is offered primarily as an opportunity to bridge learners into literacy and foundational learning. Staff, contracted instructors/facilitators, and/or tutors should make a concerted effort to identify any foundational learning skill gaps of learners participating and encourage their transition to literacy and foundational learning. Individuals involved in the delivery of community capacity building should regularly inform learners, during each learning opportunity, of available literacy and foundational learning programming.</p> <p>Please see <a href="#">CALP Guidelines 2020</a>, p. 31, for examples of CCB programming.</p>

## F. Modes of Delivery (refer to [CALP Guidelines 2020](#), p. 33)

Modes of delivery are the ways in which learning opportunities may be delivered to achieve specific learning objectives. Agencies may deliver learning opportunities through one or more of the following modes of delivery:

**Tutoring** is generally a volunteer-based practice in which a tutor facilitates an adult’s learning through specialized, additional, or basic instruction, either individually or in a small group. The practice of tutoring is learner-centred and learner-driven and is a two-way learning experience based on mutual respect from which the tutor and the adult learner(s) benefit.

**Courses** are instructor-led educational experiences that focus on addressing participants’ learning goals through relevant, structured curriculum. The content of each individual session builds on the content of each previous session to ensure learners make steady progress towards the learning goals of the course. Therefore, it is important that learners attend each session. Course instructors measure learner skill development by assessing the extent to which learners meet the goals of the course.

**Family Literacy Programs** prioritize the delivery of intentional activities that build adults’ skills and promote the values and benefits of literacy for the entire family. Family literacy programs provide adult learners with opportunities to increase their own literacy and foundational skills that also strengthen daily literacy activities for all family members.

**Learning Activities** are instructor-led and scheduled with set times for learners to improve their skills or knowledge on a particular topic through a participatory or hands-on approach. Unlike courses, learning activities generally do not involve a highly structured curriculum. Therefore, the content of individual sessions may or may not build on the content of previous sessions, learner success does not require attending every session. Instead, each session is designed to respond to the specific needs of learners in the room, allowing learners to build on the skills they bring with them.

## G. Expression of Interest and Oral Presentations

Agencies must include sufficient information in their Expression of Interest and Oral Presentation so reviewers can determine a good understanding of the alignment of the request with the CALP Guidelines and a reasonable allocation. Agencies must also demonstrate that their learning opportunities:

- Involve co-creating the content with Elders and Indigenous Community Knowledge Keepers
- Include time with Elders in the classroom

- Implement culturally based learning methods (i.e., storytelling, art, music, and language)
- Recognize cultural diversity among Indigenous peoples,
- Creates an understanding of distinct Indigenous tribes, cultures, and dialects across turtle island, i.e., First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples
- Include the application of daily cultural practice (i.e., smudging, sharing circles, spirituality)
- Incorporate First People’s Principles of Learning by:
  - Exploring holistic learning opportunities connected to the wellbeing of self, family, community, the land, spirits, and the ancestors
  - Having reflexive, reflective, and experiential learning focusing on building one’s identity and sense of belonging
  - Recognizing knowledge is embedded in memory, history, story, and reciprocal relationships
  - Are Trauma-Informed and acknowledge impacts of Intergenerational trauma
  - Incorporate aspects of The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) Calls to Action in relation to Education and Adult Literacy

## H. Eligible Learners

CALP funding is for Foundational Learning. Foundational learning is learning opportunities that support the development of adult literacy, numeracy, skills for learning, basic digital skills, and/or proficiency in the English language. Foundational learning opportunities help individuals to pursue further learning, have satisfying and meaningful employment, and fully participate in society.

While the CALP Guidelines do not identify or mandate a specific “cut-off level” for foundational learning, in general terms, it can be thought of as up to and including approximately Grade 9 levels in the formal kindergarten to grade 12 system ([CALP Guidelines 2020](#), pg. 11-12).

Eligible learners include:

- Adults 18 years of age and older who reside in Edmonton. Youth may be served on an exception basis only, where community need is identified, a more appropriate youth-serving organization is not available, and the grant recipient has taken the necessary precautions (e.g., security clearances, consent from legal guardian).
- Priority will be given to Indigenous learners.

## I. Successful Applicants

### I.1 Grant Requirements

Grant Recipients (successful applicants) must:

- Develop and submit interim and annual reports, including financial statements and outcome and evaluation data using ECALA forms and adhere to the CALP Guidelines 2020.
- Submit audited financial statements approved by the decision-making body (including a statement listing the CALP Grant income and expenses) that reflects the fiscal year of the agency as stated in the agency's bylaws.
- Identify all other funding sources and dollar amounts, In-kind (non-cash) in the application, that contribute to the successful delivery of the learning opportunities.
- Keep an electronic copy of the submitted documents to use for review during the funding year. Relevant sections of the documents should be shared with staff responsible for the delivery of the learning opportunities and used to complete Interim and Annual Reports. Grant Recipients should refer to the documents monthly and complete sections of the Interim and Annual Reports during the year to ensure they collect all the mandatory information.
- Ensure funding allocated is accounted for separately from other funds received and track all income and expenses, including in-kind contributions. Use funding for expenses outlined in the Application Package or Interim Report and non-capital purchases only.
- Ensure the learning opportunities, supports and services are provided in a cost-effective manner to maximize the use of public funds and are provided in collaboration with other related service organizations in the community.
- Ensure criteria and processes are in place for reducing the social and economic barriers facing learners.
- Facilitate opportunities for ECALA staff to observe a class or tutor session and interview learners, facilitators, and agency staff.
- Keep ECALA informed of changes to the current board membership and current liability insurance, bylaws, procedures, or policy changes. ECALA may, at any time during the funding year, request copies of current documents.
- Contact ECALA to request approval for changes to the learning opportunities and discuss any challenges in delivering the learning opportunities as they arise.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with or may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable individuals have a valid police information check, criminal record check, vulnerable sector check, or other such security screening protocol on file.
- Comply with Alberta's Personal Information Protection Act, Digital Privacy Act and Workers' Compensation Act, if applicable.

- Acknowledge that learning opportunities were made possible by funding from the Government of Alberta and ECALA on all materials that are printed, produced, or created, such as reports, advertising, signage, brochures, websites, and videos. Download the ECALA logo from our website.
- Make available when requested annual records pertaining to the learning opportunities, including staff qualifications, promotional and instructional materials, registration, attendance, evaluation, and financial tracking.
- Keep annual records for an additional five years in the event of a records audit.

## I.2 Reporting Requirements

All grant recipients **must** notify ECALA of any changes to the proposed learning opportunities. In addition, Grant Recipients agree to submit the following reports using ECALA forms or format on or before their deadlines:

- Documents listed in conditions outlined in the agency allocation letter. (i.e., Calendar of learning opportunities, revised financial templates, etc.)
- Complete Interim Report (After Year 1)
- Complete Annual Report
- Complete Outcomes, Measurement and Evaluation Table

## I.3 Evaluation Requirements

The [CALP Granting Council OME Data Collection Guide](#) is also available for your reference when completing your grant Application Package and Annual Report. Workshops and small group coaching and mentoring are also available to support the collection of OME (Outcomes, Measurement and Evaluation) data.

Several data collection videos and resources are available on the [ECALA Resources website](#) to provide additional guidance on learning opportunity evaluation expectations. **Agencies who are not able to provide evaluation data on all learning opportunities may not receive their annual report funding allocation.**

Agencies must allow ECALA to observe a class and interview learners and instructors during learning opportunity visits. The information from the visit is used to provide any coaching and mentoring support required, professional development opportunities, clarification of funding expectations, ECALA Impact Reports, Strategic Directions and Advanced Education reports. Observing a class also provides an opportunity for adult foundational learners to share information directly with ECALA on their further learning needs or positive outcomes due to their participation in the learning opportunity.

#### I.4 Professional Development Requirements

Grant recipients are expected to support staff, volunteers (those who work with learners as well as board members) and contracted instructors/facilitators/tutors to access professional development.

All staff involved in the oversight and delivery of literacy and foundational learning programming must complete the Introduction to Adult Foundational Learning (IAFL) training within the grant term. New staff are encouraged to take the training in their first year of employment.

Additional professional development requirements exist for individuals involved in the delivery of family literacy programs (see section 5.3 of [CALP Guidelines 2020](#), p. 38).

Grant recipients are expected to respond to surveys from Advanced Education and ECALA PD surveys. Government uses survey data to evaluate the impact of professional development investments and make improvements to enhance quality and effectiveness.

#### J. Grant Timeline and Payment Schedule

- **January 28, 2022:** Deadline for Expression of Interest
- **February 15 and 16, 2022:** Oral Presentations
- Mid to late June 2022: Notification of funding decisions
- Mid-Late July 2022: Allocation of 60% advance available by request
- January 27, 2023: 2023-2024 Deadline for Expression of Interest
- Mid-January 2023: Allocation of 30% interim payment available by request
- Friday, July 7, 2023: Annual Report Due and remaining 10% allocation available if all reporting requirements are met

## K. Indigenous Funding Request Checklist

A complete funding request must include:

- Written or Oral Expression of Interest Questions answered and submitted to ed@ecala.org
- Expression of Interest submission deadline **January 28th, 2022**
- Staff Table
- Outcome Measurement and Evaluation Table
- Financial template with total agency and category expenses
- Proof of Insurance (Insurance certificate)
- Audited financial statements
- Proposed learning opportunity meets all CALP requirements:
  - Takes place between July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, and June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022
  - Part-time, non-credit program
  - Take place in Edmonton (with exception to land-based agency that may be in traditional territories)
  - Method in place to collect outcome, measurement, and evaluation data
  - Process for establishing whether learners have financial barriers
  - Learners are over 18 years of age and are at the foundational learning level