

# 2020 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 innovative and effective solutions to addressing poverty in Niagara. NPI seeks to build strong neighbourhoods to ease the enduring impacts, stigma and stress associated with living in poverty. Stronger and healthier communities will provide individuals with social supports and access to the broader factors that affect health.

**The application will be available online at [www.niagaraprospertyinitiative.ca](http://www.niagaraprospertyinitiative.ca) from February 3 –28, 2020.**

1. **Provide a brief project summary.** This summary will be used publicly should the project be approved. (500 characters)
2. In 2007 the report “[A Legacy of Poverty; Addressing Cycles of Poverty & the Impact on Child Health in Niagara Region](#)” was released and has provided the framework for NPI investment. In October 2011, an updated report was released: “[Building a New Legacy: Increasing Prosperity for Niagara Residents by Improving the Quality of Neighbourhood Life](#)”. Using recommendations from the two reports and input from the community, funding streams were identified for 2020. **The Niagara Prosperity Initiative is open to funding projects that focus on these three streams in the specific areas identified below:**

### **Housing** proposals in these specific areas:

- street outreach services, especially for people who need mental health supports and homeless youth populations
- encouraging self-reliance and improving housing stability
- preventing homelessness
- enhancing housing accessibility for people living with disabilities

### **Health** proposals in these specific areas:

- improving accessibility to mental health services through community hubs and outreach programs
- improving collaboration between organizations that provide mental health services to best serve people experiencing poverty
- developing innovative solutions to address addiction
- increasing emotional health and well-being for children experiencing poverty
- improving sustainable access to healthy food
- increasing access to dental health care for people experiencing poverty

### **Employment** proposals in these specific areas:

- social enterprise projects, especially those that create non-precarious employment opportunities and increase employability for people experiencing poverty
- working with Niagara’s businesses to create secure jobs that pay a living wage

**Describe the outcomes and activities of your project:**

- a. **Describe the primary outcomes you want to achieve.** An outcome is the effect your project produces on people you serve. It is a change that occurred **because** of the project. It is different than an output which will detail the work of the project but does not address the **value or impact** to participants. Outcomes define changes that have taken place **because** of the project, they are specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-bound. For this question, describe the primary outcomes you expect because of this project. *(250 characters)*
- b. **Describe the activities of your project.** Include how the project will address the selected stream as well as the specific areas listed under that stream. Include details such as the project's goals, measurable objectives, target population and frequency of programming. Be specific. If your project is a social enterprise, include your value proposition. *(1500 characters)*
3. **How did you determine there was a need for this particular project?** Provide evidence of the need and how it was identified. Where possible, cite data sources and specify how the data relates to the proposal. *(500 characters)*
4. **What evidence are you using to develop and implement the project?** Evidence-informed practice involves using various types of research when making decisions about policy and practice. Cite sources and specify how it relates to the proposal. *(500 characters)*
5. **Explain how the program was designed to include input from people who would benefit from this project.** How will this project increase opportunities for individuals to fully participate in the community? How will participants be declared eligible to participate? *(500 characters)*
6. **Describe your experience in delivering a similar project and explain why your agency is suitable to deliver this particular project.** *(500 characters)*
7. **How will the project continue to make an impact for participants / community after the funding has ended? Does the project leverage other funds?** 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.

Sustainability can be measured by:

- the continuation of a project beyond NPI funding or,
- the sustainable impact a project has on its participants / community

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)*

8. **Which neighbourhood(s) and indicator(s) will the project target?**

Available resources are limited and must be used strategically. By focusing on neighbourhoods that require attention and addressing evidence-based needs, NPI can ensure that available resources are making the greatest impact. To assist in developing plans for action, the [Niagara Story Map](#) was created using municipal and neighbourhood information and nine indicators to identify areas that require attention.

You must use the [Niagara Story Map](#) to identify the neighbourhood(s) and indicator(s) in need of attention that the project will target. Project focus should be at a neighbourhood level and any exceptions must be discussed prior to submission.

- a. Using the [Story Map](#), identify the municipality and the neighbourhood(s) the project will target.
- b. Using the [Story Map](#), select which indicator(s) in need of attention the project will address. Explain how your project will address the selected indicator. *(250 characters)*

## Indicators

- Low Income Measure (LIM)
- Household Income Under \$20,000 After Tax
- Working Poverty
- Income Inequality
- Unemployment
- Tenants Paying 30% or more Income on Rent
- No High school Diploma (Age 25 - 64)
- Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- Child Care Subsidy Age 0-12

9. **Complete the following milestones timeline.** Proposals may be approved for up to two years (May 2020 – April 2022). Two-year proposals must demonstrate how the project will evolve into the second year and not simply duplicate the first year. Projects that are currently being funded can reapply for funding to continue their project. Reviewers will look at how the current initiative is working and how the new request will assist in moving the project forward.

With the understanding that projects require some flexibility in their timeline, please include details about the proposal's milestones. Use specific, measurable, achievable and relevant milestones. This section can be used to explain different stages of the project, number and type of activities for participants, planned evaluations and check-ins to ensure project success. Proposals must also demonstrate how they will evaluate a project's effectiveness, mitigate risk, and adjust, when needed, to ensure optimal performance.

Final reports are due at the end of each year. The second year of a project is contingent on the satisfactory review of a first year-end report. Projects must begin during 2020.

You do not need to fill in each month, only fill as required. These milestones will be used in activity reporting. (250 characters per month)

10. **List the anticipated outputs of the project in the following categories.** Enter only numerical values except where a description is required.

- Number of unique people served by category (children, youth, adults, seniors)– count each individual only once
- Number of jobs where:
  - NPI funds the position filled by people experiencing poverty. The position will end once funding ends
  - NPI funds helped the agency to source sustainable funding to create a job filled by people experiencing poverty. The position will continue once NPI funding ends
  - Participants in the NPI funded program overcame barriers and secured employment. This position will continue once NPI funding ends and does not have to be within your organization
- Projected total revenue generated by project. Revenue must be generated for social enterprise projects.
- Number and description of units of service by category (Transportation, Income / Employment, Health, Shelter, Education, Other)

11. **Name and describe how you will form relevant partnerships with organizations to foster sustainable and collaborative approaches to increasing prosperity.**

It is expected that those submitting proposals will work collaboratively with other agencies and groups to achieve mutual outcomes and reduce duplication. Do not include partnerships that are not relevant to this project.

Each partner listed below must complete and sign a [Partnership Agreement Form](#). Each agreement form must provide a brief summary of the project and identify the role the partner will play. If the partnership includes fee for service, it is important to explain below how the relationship is collaborative and not simply a transfer of payment.

Once the partner has completed and signed the [Partnership Agreement Form](#), you will need to upload it to the online application.

12. **Budget:** Applicants must show they have the capacity for responsible and effective financial management. Along with your application you will be required to submit your most recent financial statements. Statements must be uploaded to your account by clicking on your username. Financial statements that have been audited or reviewed by a third party are preferable. When these are not available, you will need to submit 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 by visiting: <https://www.wipeoutpoverty.ca/livingwage> or <http://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/>.

**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%

13. **In-kind contributions are goods or services donated to an organization.** They 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.

14. **Additional**

- Links to sources as part of evidence to support the proposal (500 characters)
- Additional Information (500 characters)
- List of acronyms and definitions

Evaluation Criteria	
3%	Q1. Project Summary
10%	Q2. Project stream, activities and outcomes (3% + 7%)
10%	Q3. How did you determine there was a need for this particular project?
10%	Q4. What evidence are you using to develop and implement the project?
7%	Q5. Explain how the program was designed to include input from people who would benefit from this project?
5%	Q6. Describe your experience in delivering a similar project and explain why your agency is suitable to deliver this particular project.
5%	Q7. How will the project continue to make an impact for participants / community after the funding has ended? Does the project leverage other funds?
10%	Q8. Which Neighbourhood(s) and indicator(s) will the project target? (5% + 5%)
10%	Q9. Complete the following milestones timeline.
5%	Q10. List the anticipated outputs of the project in the following categories.
10%	Q11. Name and describe how you will form relevant partnerships with organizations in the neighbourhood to foster sustainable and collaborative approaches to increasing prosperity.
10%	Q12. Budget
5%	Q13. In-Kind
<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

## PROPOSAL PROCESS

1. **Applications are due 5pm on Friday, February 28, 2020.** 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.
  - 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 and can have active projects.
5. Attachments other than the [Partnership Agreement Form](#) and financial statements will not be accepted with the exception of Employment – Social Enterprise projects. Social Enterprise projects are encouraged to email a [Social Enterprise Business Model Canvas](#) prior to submitting their application to the [NPI Program Manager](#). To learn more about using the business model canvas, visit: [Using the Business Model Canvas for Social Enterprise Design](#).
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. **Applicants must speak with the [NPI Program Manager](#) by Friday, February 21st, 2020 to discuss their project prior to submitting an application.** The date of the discussion must be recorded in the application.
9. 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. You cannot enter text beyond the 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

12. 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.
13. The applicant must disclose any conflicts of interest to United Way Niagara.
14. 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, Niagara Community Foundation and United Way.
15. 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.
16. All proposals/applications become the property of United Way Niagara.
17. Names of successful applicants and summary information of the project will be made public.
18. Reports will be required quarterly and will include: activity report, financial report with supporting documentation and testimonials (Most Significant Change stories). For one-year projects, final reports are to be submitted 30 days after project end. For two-year projects, the second year of funding is contingent on the successful review of a first year-end report to be submitted at 10 months. A final report will then be required 30 days after project end. The final report includes the quarterly report as well as a qualitative report.
19. Through the [Local Poverty Reduction Fund](#), NPI is being evaluated by a [transdisciplinary team at Brock University](#) to generate data on poverty in Niagara. Successful NPI applicants may be offered incentives to participate in the evaluation project.

**If you have any questions please contact:**

**Natalie Chaumont**

**Program Manager, Niagara Prosperity Initiative, United Way Niagara**  
email: [Natalie@unitedwayniagara.org](mailto:Natalie@unitedwayniagara.org) or phone: 905-688-5050 ext. 2124

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✓ **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.
  - My application provides evidence that supports a need for this project.
  - We provided enough relevant information about the project within the application.
  - We uploaded Partnership Agreement Forms to confirm the partnership listed in 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.
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