Shovels in the Ground Community Funding FAQ

Shovels in the Ground offers community members the tools, resources, and expertise necessary to implement Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) projects in their local neighbourhoods.

What is this funding for?

This funding supports community-led Nature-Based Solutions projects that strengthen neighbourhood climate resilience, improve local environments, and build community connection. Eligible projects may include pocket forests, rain gardens, pollinator corridors, shade gardens, native meadows, food forests/community gardens, and similar initiatives. Funding is not available for programs or wages. All projects must be publicly accessible.

Who can apply?

Community Associations, resident groups, grassroots organizations, and informal neighbourhood groups within Calgary are encouraged to apply. Priority will be given to equity deserving communities/communities most impacted by climate change, and those that demonstrate readiness to lead and steward a project.

How much funding is available?

This depends on the size and scale of the project. Selected projects will receive small grants (approximately $3,000–$5,000 per project) for purchasing plants/materials, and related implementation costs. Labour is volunteer/community-led, and can also be supported by the Calgary Climate Hub's (CCH) volunteers. All projects will have access to the Hub Community Toolshed.

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What is required to apply?

Applicants will complete a short application outlining:

- The proposed NBS project and location
- Community capacity and leadership (both for implementation and stewardship)
- Land access and permissions
- Anticipated benefits and long-term stewardship plans

Support and guidance are available throughout the application process.

Do we need to own the land?

No, but successful applicants must demonstrate **clear land access or permission** to implement and maintain the project. This may include written approval from a Community Association, landowner, school, faith organization, or the City of Calgary.

What kind of support is provided beyond funding?

In addition to funding, selected communities receive:

- Technical guidance on project design and plant selection
- Volunteer coordination and tools through the Community Toolshed
- Monthly online community of practice
- Support with stewardship planning and project monitoring

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How are projects selected?

Projects are assessed based on climate impact, community benefit, equity considerations, feasibility, capacity for stewardship, and alignment with nature-based solutions best practices.

When will projects take place?

Projects will be implemented during the 2026 growing season, typically between **spring and fall**, with planning and preparation support provided in advance.

How do we apply?

A simple online application form will be available on our website towards the spring. Communities are encouraged to attend a workshop or online community of practice session before applying. Sign up for our newsletter and get notified when the application is open.

For more information

Please email director@calgaryclimatehub.ca with any questions.

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