Centre for Community Engagement and Social Change (CCESC) Community Engagement Development Grant: Open Call for Applications

Value: Up to $25,000

Duration: 18 months

Application Deadline: April 7th, 2026

Application Link: CCESC Development Grant Application

In collaboration with our Community Advisory Committee, the Centre for Community Engagement and Social Change at the Faculty of Education, Queen's University, invites interested research teams to submit project proposals that explore one of the following themed areas on education, where education is broadly conceived to include both formal schooling and informal community settings.

1. **Advancing Indigenous Partnerships in Education Research:** This theme supports education-focused research developed in genuine partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations, where the research process is guided by Indigenous knowledges, priorities, and leadership. Projects should be community-based, responsive, and reciprocal, ensuring that Indigenous partners have meaningful leadership and decision-making roles in shaping the research direction, methods, and outcomes. While the specific focus of inquiry may vary, all projects must uphold decolonial approaches, meaningful IEDIAA practices, and produce work that is relevant and beneficial to the communities and partners involved.

2. **Exploring Education Under Economic Adversity:** This theme invites research that examines how economic adversity shapes students' educational experiences in Kingston and across Ontario. Projects should approach economic adversity without a deficit lens, exploring the social conditions, relationships, and resources that shape learning and the potential for community resilience, and aim to produce findings that are relevant and beneficial to educational communities.

3. **Transitions for Neurodivergent Youth:** This theme area supports research that explores how neurodivergent students experience and shape their transitions beyond the school system. Projects should be community-engaged, center youths'

own perspectives, and examine the environments, relationships, and opportunities that shape their self-defined pathways into post-school life.

4. **Open Call:** We are always interested in research projects that address pressing or underexplored issues on education and community engagement. If you have a project that focuses on new challenges, novel approaches, or interdisciplinary perspectives that do not neatly fall within the other defined theme areas, we are still interested in your application. Please contact us if you have any questions about the eligibility of your research.

About CCESC

CCESC, launched in 2024, brings together dedicated researchers and community partners to support positive transformation in teaching, research, and everyday lives.

Our mission is to apply the principles and practices of participatory and transformative community engaged research in formal and informal educational contexts, in partnership with community organizations at local, national, and international levels. Through these partnerships we develop research approaches, policies and practices that support community flourishing. We build innovative research-driven, collaborative solutions, training, and resources for the most pressing challenges in education. Education is broadly conceived to include both formal schooling and informal community settings.

For more information about CCESC, please visit our website:
https://educ.queensu.ca/research/CCESC

About the CCESC Development Grant

The CCESC Development grants are intended to support teams in preparation for major external grant opportunities through the Tri-Agency (e.g., Insight Grant, Partnership Grant, New Frontiers in Research) or other large granting opportunities. These projects will advance social change, strengthen community-university partnerships, and contribute to knowledge that is actionable, accessible, and relevant to communities. We are particularly interested in projects that elevate marginalized communities and social justice through participatory research. Research teams will benefit from the resources at the Centre, including project management support, secure data storage using myLaminin, established networks, research promotion and more.

 Preference will be given to projects that:

- **Demonstrate meaningful community engagement.** Projects should meaningfully involve community members, organizations, schools, or other local partners as applicable.

- **Center community and partner priorities.** Research questions, methods, and research products should be developed in consultation with, or co-designed alongside, those who will be most impacted by the work.

- **Ensure reciprocal benefit for those involved.** Proposals should outline how the research will provide tangible benefits to community partners.

- **Use community-engaged or participatory methods.** For example, co-design, storytelling, arts-based approaches, photovoice, participatory mapping, action research, or other methods that actively involve community members and center their knowledge and priorities.

- **Plan for meaningful outputs and impact.** Projects should indicate how findings will be shared with communities in accessible formats, support ongoing initiatives, or inform policy, programming, or local action.

Eligibility

❑ In order for the research proposal to be considered, the Principal Investigator (PI) must be a faculty member at Queen's University, and at least one PI or Co-PI must be appointed or cross-appointed to the faculty of Education. Additional team members may include faculty or staff from other higher education institutions, community organization members and/or staff, student researchers, and other related interest holders. In fact, we encourage multidisciplinary, and cross-organizational collaboration, especially those that include members from underrepresented groups, early-career researchers and/or student trainees. Projects must involve at least one committed community partner who is contributing (e.g. in-kind/cash) in order to apply.

❑ Applicants agree to work toward developing and submitting a major external grant proposal with the CCESC within 18 months of receiving support.

❑ Applicants may only submit/be part of one submission (but they can be named as co-researcher on other projects).

Deliverables

The intention of development grants is to support research projects on their journey to applying to external funding competitions. For instance, funds may be used to support preliminary research activities, partnership building, networking, knowledge mobilization, or other preparatory work required to develop a competitive external grant application. When submitting their budget, applicants must describe how the requested funds will directly support the development of a future external grant application. In addition to proposal-specific research deliverables to be outlined in your application, research teams will be required to complete a mid-point progress report to update the CCESC on research activities. Successful proposal team(s) are also expected to participate in knowledge-sharing sessions within the Faculty of Education and at a Community Advisory Board meeting.

Application Process

The Proposal Application form can be found [here](#).

Applications will close on April 7th, 2026 at 5:00 pm. Should you have questions as you prepare your application, please contact the CCESC Program Manager, Elizabeth Nelson, at een2@queensu.ca

Adjudication Information

All proposals will be reviewed by the Adjudication team comprised of representatives from the CCESC community advisory board, CCESC executive, and may include additional faculty or staff representatives.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Feasibility

- The extent to which the scope and proposed focus of the proposal is feasible with the associated budget and timeline.
- The extent to which the knowledge sharing plans are actionable to share research data and results, indicating how knowledge users have been considered and engaged.
- The feasibility of the plan for a major external grant application

Rigour

- The extent to which this proposal demonstrates a high degree of technical and academic merit in its discipline(s) and community engaged research, including but not limited to: sound data collection and analysis strategies grounded in knowledge (of the context/on the topic).
- Clear attention to ethical considerations, risk mitigation, and incorporation of I-EDIAA related principles and practices into research/engagement approaches and processes.

Relevance and Potential Impact

- The extent to which the research development is designed to address issues, produce outcomes and insights relevant to associated interest-holder groups and/or community, municipal, provincial, regional, national, or global contexts. This criterion will also assess the overall value of the research questions and potential for novel or original contributions (theoretical or practical) to the field or context.

Integration of Community Engagement

- Meaningful and embedded engagement with key interest holders and clear involvement and leadership in research/ approaches from interest holders and/or community partners.